
Performance Appraisal Component of the Human Resource Management Practices and Productivity of selected Private Universities in South West, Nigeria

¹Aremu, Fayokemi Eunice, ²Faleye, Olubunmi Christianah & ³Adelugba Iyabode Abisola.

^{1,2,3}Department of Management Sciences

Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology

Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

E-mails: aremu.fayokemi@bouesti.edu.ng, faleye.olubunmi@bouesti.edu.ng
adelugba.iyabode@bouesti.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on performance in private universities in South West, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the performance appraisal component of HRM practices and its effect on productivity in selected private universities in South West, Nigeria. The investigation was compelled by the inadequate attention being meted out to adoption of HRM practices in private universities in the study area. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The study population frame is 3,261 (three thousand two hundred and sixty-one) involving all academic staff members from the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria. The Taro Yamane formula was used to statistically determine the sample size, which was 356 (three hundred and fifty-six). The study used primary data and collected responses from respondents in the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria through a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics employed for data analysis were frequency counts, simple percentages mean scores, and standard deviations, while the inferential statistics utilized was the multiple regression with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 23. The results of the study revealed that, performance appraisal of employees are carried out annually in the organization; performance appraisal shows area of inefficiency in the organization and helps employers to identify area of need in the organization. Human Resource Management methods have a considerable impact on job productivity in private universities in South West, Nigeria ($\beta=.754$; $t = 13.019$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that the adoption of performance appraisal encourages employee to perform to expectation and has enhanced organizational performance in private universities in South West Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that to allow for increased organizational performance, the university needs to rewards employees research output, teaching load poses a constraint on my productivity and The universities HRM practices should be such that the universities are able to cope with the employees needs through an efficient organizational structure and system.

Keywords: HRM Practices, Job Productivity, Private Universities, South West, Nigeria.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every organization is saddled with the setting of goals for the entire organization and individual employees. Achievement of these goals is a reflection of employee's performance and organizational progress (Newton, 2015). Performance describes the quantity and quality of work done by an employee in the execution of his or her job in alignment with the duties assigned to him or her (Osibanjo, Akinbode, Falola & Oludayo, 2018). Researchers have shown that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are important for enhanced organizational performance; the human resource strategy focuses on how the organization should manage its staff to assist in the achievement of organizational objectives (Adegoroye, Oladejo & Moruf, 2012; Walker, 2018).

Employee productivity has been the major discourse in the field of human resource management practices. Inadequate attention given to HRM practices especially in attracting applicants, motivating, and retaining desirable teaching staff is one of the major impediments for the inefficiency of the school system in Nigeria. An unattractive career structure, low salaries, poor incentives which has resulted in poor quality of service that schools offer are indicative of this fact. There is no industry that does not retain its staff because it knows what it will lose if the staff leaves and to recruit new ones requires more funds especially in tertiary institutions (Ogbu & Udensi, 2017).

Over the years, the higher education system in Nigeria underwent a considerable amount of growth and diversification to cope with modern centers of learning, influenced by various factors such as globalization, internationalization, and digitalization (Obasi, 2007). Moreover, the establishment of private universities in Nigeria was mainly due to the lack of capacity of public universities to accept students seeking admission to higher education institutions (Okoro & Okoro, 2014; Salihu & Jamil, 2015). In Nigeria, the need for private higher education stems from several major issues including the inability to meet access demands in higher education and the degrading quality of university graduates in the country (Akindele, 2013). Furthermore, the continuous high population growth is the current demographic issue threatening equal access to higher education (Etebong, 2018).

Similar to other developments in different fields, the development of private higher education in Nigeria also faces certain challenges. Atanda (2017) highlighted the challenges confronted by private higher education in Nigeria are more complex due to a combination of limited access to grants, increased cost, decreasing quality and inflexibility in course selection. Furthermore, other major challenges in the development of private higher education in Nigeria include lack of awareness and orientation, inadequate human resources, and cost of operation.

The effective performance of an organizations and universities in particular, depends on many factors one of which human resource management practices plays a major role. Employees are pivotal to the achievement of organizational goal and enhancing the competitive advantage of the organization in the global world and within the industry where the organisation is operating. Yet, there are several factors on the job that may maximize what an employee does on the job (Lake, 2007). Many of the activities undertaken in an HR System are designed to influence individual or organizational productivity. Pay, performance appraisal, training, promotion, selection, job design and compensation are HR activities that are directly concerned with productivity.

The study therefore, examined performance appraisal component of the human resource management practices and its effect on performance, measured by job productivity in selected private Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Concept of Human Resource Management Practices and productivity

Business organizations world-wide use promotions to assign employees to a higher-level job position where they can best contribute to organizations' performance. Promoted employees may experience an increase in earnings and may receive opportunities to acquire new capabilities while organizations are able to retain valuable employees (Cobb-Clark & Dunlop, 1999). The ultimate objective of HRM practices is to appropriately manage the HR as an asset (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Armstrong and Taylor (2014) defined HRM as a strategic, integrated and clear perspective to employment, development, and wellbeing of the person functioning in organizations. Similarly, Wall and Wood (2005) defined HRM as a term representing an organization's activities of attracting, developing and managing employees.

Human resource management practices have been defined in many ways for instance; it has been defined as organizational activities that are directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensuring that resources are employed towards the fulfilment of organizational goals (Farnham, 2010). Neal, West and Patterson (2004) conceptualized HRM practices as a set of internally consistent policies and practices designed and implemented to ensure that a firm's human capital contributes to the achievement of its business objectives. Several scholars have also noted that managing people is more difficult than managing technology or capital. However, those organizations that have learnt how to manage their human resources well would have an edge over others for a long time to come because acquiring and deploying human resources effectively is cumbersome (Waiganjo & Kahiri, 2012; Dessler, 2013).

Human resource management practices have two approaches, soft and hard. The hard approach is a factor for the organization efficiency focusing on the employee's affairs including methods and guidelines leading to the balanced input and output of an organization, on the other hand, the soft approach reacts to the human resource management practices through the behaviours of the employees (Shahram, 2017). Human resource management practices are those elements that administrators and managers can use to retain their workers. It is of interest to know that university lecturers are one of the major building blocks of any progressive nation (Sorasak, Jirasek & Nutthawut, 2014).

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a regular and planned evaluation of an employee's performance in his assigned tasks (Hassan, 2016). Performance Appraisal is the process that involves planning, observing, measuring and evaluating an individual's performance against a set of performance expectations using a set criterion (Malik & Grover, 2018). Dulewica (1989) defined performance appraisal as an official planned meeting between an employee and his supervisor that takes place from time to time to determine the organizational accomplishment. Rahman, Affandidan, and Matore (2018) asserted that performance appraisal has been deliberated as the most significant and essential tool for performance management system in an organization.

Thus, if this activity is properly or correctly done and supervised, it leads to staff's high level of commitment to their career and organization thus enhancing performance (Rahman, Affandidan and Matore, 2018). The underlying purpose of performance appraisal is to know the rate of individual performance, increase motivation and volunteer's self-esteem which could be done monthly, quarterly or yearly depending on the private universities. Sing (2016) citing Kumar (2014) stated that performance appraisal has been used extensively in uplifting the proficiency of personnel and enterprises as a result of its approval in many organizations. It is commonly accepted that performance appraisal dictates the wages and promotions of workers, especially, at businesses where pay-for-performance is the rule and where promotion is influenced by productivity in the work place.

Supervisors can also focus on performance appraisals to influence their judgment during down scaling processes (Radebe, 2015; Rowland & Hall, 2015). Radebe (2015) also refers to Faizal (2005) who states that an effective performance appraisal system is a method through which South Western private universities can move the general efficiency of their operations forward. Dwomoh, Kumah and Amponsah (2014) declared that on the whole, performance appraisal is perceived to be a performance management utility that may be used to assess the accomplishment of workers in an establishment. It is an incentive that are employed by the employer to encourage the employee to do more (Pushpasiri & Ratnayaka, 2018).

Organizational Performance and Productivity

Organizational performance is a vital indicator of any organization success or failure. Nowadays, organizational performance plays a significant role for organizations especially in that environment where organizations face issues regarding higher competition (Cania, 2014). Organizational success is among the most widely utilized dependent factors in organizational research today and yet remains one of the most inaccurate and vaguely defined concepts (Warrick, 2016). Furthermore, it is the ability of an organization to attain its goals by using resources in an effective and efficient manner (Pamela, Umoh & Worlu, 2017).

Organizational performance is measured in terms of both quantitative as well as qualitative term, and it is achieved through the efforts of individual employee and departments (Zehir, Yildiz, Kole & Basar, 2016). Moreover, the success of an organization is based on its performance and objective achievement (Randeree & Al Youha, 2009). Moreover, organizational performance plays a vital role in the existence of any kind of organizations such as universities (Abu-Jarad, Yusof & Nikbin, 2010). Furthermore, it is the ability of an organization to attain its goals by using resources in an effective and efficient manner (Pamela, Umoh & Worlu, 2017). Ramazan and Fatih, (2015) pointed out that organizational performance can be improved, especially through improved productivity and employment elasticity, by ranging entire employees' performance outcomes with wide strategic business and human resource management practice obligations.

It is therefore important that an institution embraces human resource management practice that makes the best use of its employees. This trend has led to an increased interest on the impact of human resource management practice and organizational performance, and several studies have found a favourable relationship between the alleged high-performance work practices and different measures of institution performance (Ramazan & Fatih, 2015).

Abdullah and Othman (2019) concur that HRM practices is considered to be the most crucial of these in the organization, as it influences the efficiency and actions of employees. In other words, making sure the processes and procedures of human resource management are critically relevant to organisational success. Nilakanth and Ramnarayan (2008) pointed out that the performance of the private university is determined by three factors. Firstly, the financial performance of the university which is generally a function of the number of students it can attract, secondly, the success of the university in terms of quality assurance reviews: such reviews are critical to the success of the universities as they can fundamentally affect their ability to offer degree programmes and thirdly, is the reputation of the university for providing high quality education. It is important that these are considered when examining the link between human resource management practices and institutional performance of the universities. An organization's talent can be a source for a sustained competitive advantage and can affect important organizational performance such as survival, profitability, customer satisfaction level, and employee performance (Pfeffer, 1994; Prahalad, 1983).

According to Mathis, Robert and John (2003) productivity is a measure of the quantity and quality of work done, considering the cost of the resources used. The more productive an organization is, the better its competitive advantage. This is because of the efficiency of the resources that have been used. McNamara (2005) further affirmed that, results are usually the final and specific outputs desired from the employee. They may be in terms of financial accomplishments, impact on a community. McNamara (2005) also asserted that measuring productivity involves determining the length of time that an average worker needs to generate a given level of production. It could also be the amount of time that a group of employees spends on certain activities such as production, travel, or idle time spent waiting for materials or replacing broken equipment. The method can determine whether the employees are spending too much time away from production on other aspects of the job that can be controlled by the organization.

Employee productivity may be hard to measure, but it has a direct effect on a company's profits. An employer fills his staff with productivity in mind and can get a handle on a worker's capabilities during the initial job interview. Furthermore, Bernardin (2007) maintains that controlling labour costs and increasing productivity through the establishment of clearer linkages between pay and performance are deemed to be crucial component of human resource management so as to achieve competitive advantage. In addition, increased concerns over productivity and meeting customer requirements have prompted renewed interest in methods designed to motivate employees to be more focused on meeting (or exceeding) customer requirements and increasing productivity.

As result, the implication of this research gap created in relevant literature necessitated the conduct of this empirical work in order to ascertain the effect of performance appraisal component of Human Resource Management Practices on productivity in selected Private Universities in South West, Nigeria. Hence, the objective of this study set to measure the effect of performance appraisal component of Human Resource Management Practices on Productivity in selected Private Universities in South West, Nigeria.

2. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Kipkebut (2010) explored human resources management practices and organizational commitment on higher educational institutions. He found out that HRM practices were more important than demographic characteristics in influencing organizational commitment. He further established that private universities had more superior HRM practices than public universities. He recommended that there was need for both qualitative and quantitative data for research to reveal pertinent issues of human resources management that enhance performance in higher institutions of learning. Also, Balatbat, Lin and Carmichael (2010) considered the impact of human resources management practices on turnover, productivity and corporate financial performance. The results based on a national sample of nearly one thousand firms indicated that these practices have an economically and statistically significant impact on both intermediate employee outcomes and short- and long-term measures of corporate financial performance.

Fomude, Kang, Abangbila, Ganiyu, Mukete and Meena (2020) investigated the impact of HRM practices (compensation, promotion, performance appraisal, training and development) on organizational performance using Microfinance institutions in Cameroon as case study. In the study used closed ended questionnaire to 240 respondents for data collection. The findings of the study revealed that motivation and compensation have a greater impact on graduate volunteer performance with a significant beta coefficient of 0.388. Simarmata (2020) studied the effects of HRM practices and human capital on organizational performance in Indonesian SMEs. The findings revealed that HRM practice is an important factor influencing organizational performance, as it aimed at increasing employees' contributions towards the success of an organization. However, the study revealed that HRM practices were ignored in Indonesia MSMEs due to lack of quality of human resources.

Obi (2016) carried out a research on how performance appraisal could be used to enhance productivity in an organization. The study adopted a descriptive research design and data obtained were carefully analyzed using tables and percentages. Various interview sessions were held with managers who are involved in the appraisal of subordinates. The study found out that performance appraisal helps an organization to position employees adequately for optimum productivity. The study recommended modern corporate organizations to take the issue of performance appraisal seriously and to encourage the appraising managers to remain objective about the assessment of subordinates in the interest of increased productivity in the organization.

Nnorom, Akpa, Egwuonwu, Akintaro, Shonubi and Herbertson (2016) examined the effect of compensation administration on employee productivity. The data gathered from the structured questionnaire on 50 respondents in Dangote Nigeria Headquarters in Lagos Nigeria, revealed that effective compensation administration has significant positive effect on employee productivity.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research design used survey research that involves using questionnaire. The entire academic staff of the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria of the study constitute the population used for the study was 3,261 from Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, 2018. The questionnaire was used to collect data for the study.

The questionnaire was constructed on a Five point Likert Scale. The Cronbach alpha method was used to test the reliability of the research instrument and coefficient of 0.831 was obtained. This indicate that the instrument is reliable for data collection. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher with help of two trained researcher assistance to administer questionnaire and all the classes of lecturers in the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria was taking care of in this study. Out of the 356 Copies of questionnaire administered, 334 copies of questionnaire returned for the analysis, which represented 93.8% of the total. Data were analysed using descriptive test and the data were subjected to multiple regression method of analysis to examine the effect of performance appraisal component of HRM practices (Independent variable) on productivity (Dependent variable).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Performance Appraisal Practices

S/N	Items	Responses (n) (%)						
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	There is annual appraisal of employees in the organization	163 (48.8)	69 (20.7)	47 (14.1)	38 (11.4)	17 (5.1)	4.00	1.24
2	Performance appraisal helps to determine the capability of employees in the organization	128 (38.3)	85 (25.4)	59 (17.7)	37 (11.1)	25 (7.5)	3.80	1.27
3	Performance appraisal displays area of inefficiency in the organization	117 (35)	70 (21)	64 (19.2)	46 (13.8)	37 (11.1)	3.59	1.38
4	Performance appraisal helps employee to identify area of need in the organization	117 (35)	82 (24.6)	64 (19.2)	46 (13.8)	25 (7.5)	3.70	1.29
5	Performance appraisal encourages employee to perform to the expectation of the organization	119 (35.6)	92 (27.5)	54 (16.2)	41 (12.3)	28 (8.4)	3.74	1.30
Grand Mean							3.77	1.30

Source: Author's Computation, 2021

Table 1 presents results of descriptive statistics on performance appraisal practices. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 48.8% of the respondents strongly agree that there is annual appraisal of employees in the organization, 20.7% agree, 14.1 were undecided, 11.4% disagree, and 5.1% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that there is annual appraisal of employees in the organization (mean = 4.00, standard deviation = 1.24). Further, 38.3% of the respondents strongly agree that performance appraisal helps to determine the capability of employees in the organization. 25.4% agree, 17.1% were undecided, 11.1% disagree and 7.5% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents were further in agreement that performance appraisal helps to determine the capability of employees in the organization (mean = 3.80, standard deviation = 1.27).

Further, findings revealed that 35% of the respondents strongly agree that performance appraisal displays area of insufficiency in the organization. 21% of the respondents agree, 19.2% were undecided, 13.8% disagree and 11.1% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that performance appraisal displays area of insufficiency in the organization (mean = 3.59, standard deviation = 1.38). Also, findings revealed that 35% of the respondents strongly agree that performance appraisal helps employee to identify area of need in the organization. 24.6% agree, 19.2% were undecided, 13.8% disagree and 7.5% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that performance appraisal helps employee to identify area of need in the organization (mean = 3.70, standard deviation = 1.29). The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 35.6% of the respondents strongly agree that performance appraisal encourages employee to perform to the expectation of the organization, 27.5% agree, 16.2% were undecided, 12.3% disagree, and 8.4% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that performance appraisal encourages employee to perform to the expectation of the organization (mean = 3.74, standard deviation = 1.30).

The overall mean score of responses was 3.77 with a standard deviation of 1.30 which indicates that the respondents agree with the statements on performance appraisal practices in the selected private universities.

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of Job Productivity

S/N	Items	Responses (n) (%)						
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	The university rewards my research output	151 (45.2)	72 (21.6)	49 (14.7)	35 (10.5)	27 (8.1)	3.89	1.31
2	I have a robust scholastic achievement	119 (35.6)	93 (27.8)	57 (17.1)	36 (10.8)	29 (8.7)	3.75	1.29
3	The teaching load poses a constraint on my productivity	121 (36.2)	75 (22.5)	61 (18.3)	51 (15.3)	26 (7.8)	3.68	1.32
4	The administrative responsibilities hinder my productivity	109 (32.6)	75 (22.5)	72 (21.6)	48 (14.4)	30 (8.9)	3.60	1.32
5	There is time constraint in carrying out my research	91 (27.2)	75 (22.5)	60 (18)	49 (14.7)	59 (17.7)	3.32	1.46
Grand Mean							3.65	1.34

Source: Author's Computation, 2021

Table 2 presents results of descriptive statistics on job productivity. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 45.2% of the respondents strongly agree that the university rewards their research output, 21.6% agree, 14.7% were undecided, 10.5% disagree, and 8.1% strongly disagree.

On average, the respondents agree that the university rewards their research output (mean = 3.89, standard deviation = 1.31). Further, 35.6% of the respondents strongly agree that they have a robust scholastic achievement. 27.8% agree, 17.1% were undecided, 10.8% disagree and 8.7% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents were further in agreement that they have a robust scholastic achievement (mean = 3.75, standard deviation = 1.29).

Further, findings revealed that 36.2% of the respondents strongly agree that the teaching load poses a constraint on employee productivity. 22.5% of the respondents agree, 18.3% were undecided, 15.3% disagree and 7.8% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that the teaching load poses a constraint on my productivity (mean = 3.68, standard deviation = 1.32). Also, the table revealed that 32.6% of the respondents strongly agree that the administrative responsibilities hinder my productivity. 22.5% agree, 21.6% were undecided, 14.4% disagree and 8.9% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that the administrative responsibilities hinder employee productivity (mean = 3.60, standard deviation = 1.32).

The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 27.2% of the respondents strongly agree that there is time constraint in carrying out their research, 22.5% agree, 18% were undecided, 14.7% disagree, and 17.7% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that there is time constraint in carrying out their research (mean = 3.32, standard deviation = 1.46). The overall mean score of responses was 3.65 with a standard deviation of 1.34 which indicates that the respondents agree with the statements on job productivity in the selected private universities.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: Human resource management practices has no significant effect on job productivity of selected private Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Table 3. Regression Analysis for effect of Human resource management practices on job productivity

Variables	Coefficient	Std-Error	T-Stat	P-value
Constant	0.799	0.223	3.580	0.000
HRM	0.754	0.058	13.019	0.000
R-Square	0.331			
Adjusted R-Square	0.329			

Source: Author's Computation, 2021

Table 3 presented influence of human resource management practices on job productivity. It was discovered that positive relationship exists between human resource management practices and job productivity. This indicated that human resource management practices have the ability to enhance job productivity in the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria. The coefficient of human resource management practices supports the claim with the value 0.754. This shows that 1% increase in human resource management practices will lead to an increase of 75.4% in job productivity. The reason for behaviour was that human resource management practices through training and development was able to assist job productivity in the selected private universities. However, in this study Table 4.17 revealed that the predictor variable of human resource management practices adopted by the universities predicts job productivity with ($\beta = .754$; $t = 13.019$; $p < 0.05$).

The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. In addition to this, the coefficient of determination (R^2) with the value 0.331. This indicates that human resource management practices account for 33.1% variation in job productivity.

Table 4 ANOVA^a for Job Productivity

Model	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-Stat	P-value
Regression	113.341	113.341	169.496	0.000 ^b
Residual	228.694	0.669		

Source: Author's Computation, 2021

Table 4, the F-value which is obtained by the Mean Square Regression (113.341) divided by the Mean Square Residual (0.669), yielding $F = 169.496$. In the fourth hypothesis, the independent variable (human resource management practices) was found to have significantly predicted the dependent variable (job productivity). Therefore, there is an effect of human resource management practices on job productivity at $F_{(1,342)} = 169.496$. Table 3 shows that the test of human resource management practices on job productivity is significant at 0.000 p-values. The null hypothesis is thereby rejected. The finding reveals that human resource management practices (compensation, promotion, performance appraisal, training and development) have a significant effect on employee job productivity. This is because job productivity is very vital for an organization increasing performance which agrees with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory that assumes correlation between job satisfaction and job productivity.

5. DISCUSSION

Finding revealed that human resource management practices significantly affect employees job productivity and that job productivity is very vital for an organization increasing performance. It was revealed that, performance appraisal of employees is carried out annually in the organization; performance appraisal shows area of inefficiency in the organization and helps employers to identify area of need in the organization. It was discovered that positive relationship exists between human resource management practices and job productivity. This indicated that human resource management practices have the ability to enhance job productivity in the selected private universities in South West, Nigeria.

The finding support the study of Obi (2016) who found out that performance appraisal helps an organization to position employees adequately for optimum productivity. Similar to the findings of this study, Balatbat (2010) reveals that HRM practices have an economically and statistically significant impact on both intermediate employee productivity and short- and long-term measures of corporate financial performance. This is because job productivity is very vital for an organization increasing performance which agrees with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory that assumes correlation between job satisfaction and job productivity. The study is in line with the findings of Fomude, Kang, Abangbila, Ganiyu, Mukete and Meena (2020) which stated that HRM practices (performance appraisal, training and development, promotion and compensation) have impact on organizational performance. Also, it is in consonance with Simarmata (2020) whose findings revealed that HRM practice is an important factor influencing organizational performance, as it aimed at increasing employees' retention and contributions towards the success of an organization.

The finding is in agreement with that of Nnorom, Akpa, Egwuonwu, Akintaro, Shonubi and Herbertson (2016) who revealed that effective compensation administration has significant positive effect on employee productivity.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that the adoption of HRM practices such as performance appraisal improved organisational performance in terms of productivity in private universities in South West Nigeria. The role of the employee's in achieving this cannot be underestimated and to this end, adequate measure must be put in place by the organization through well managed appraisal structure. The study therefore recommended that to allow for increased organizational performance, the university needs to rewards employees research output, give commensurate teaching load so as not to hinder employees' productivity and the HRM practices should be such that the universities are able to cope with the employees needs through an efficient organizational structure and system.

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