

Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Performance in Private Universities in South-West Nigeria: The Moderating Role of Organizational Culture

YOMI-DARAMOLA, Olukemi Mercy¹, DADA, Durotimi Amos², Prof. ARIBABA, Foluso Olugbenga³

^{1,2}Doctoral Student, Business Administration, Achievers University Owo, Nigeria

³Business Administration Department Federal University Oye-Ekiti

Doi <https://doi.org/10.55640/ijssll-06-03-04>

ABSTRACT

This study examined the moderating role of organizational culture on the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and employee performance in selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. In the rapidly evolving higher education sector, effective HRM practices are essential for enhancing employee productivity and institutional competitiveness. However, the effectiveness of these practices may depend largely on the organizational culture within which they are implemented. The study therefore investigated how organizational culture influences the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from academic and non-teaching staff of six selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. The total population of the study comprised 3,530 staff members, from which a sample size of 359 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. A multi-stage sampling technique involving purposive, stratified, and convenience sampling methods was employed to select participants. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression techniques to examine the relationships among the variables. The findings revealed that HRM practices significantly influence employee performance in private universities. Additionally, the results showed that organizational culture plays a moderating role in strengthening the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. Universities with supportive cultures characterized by innovation, shared values, and alignment between HR policies and institutional norms were found to experience improved employee performance outcomes. However, the study also identified areas where cultural alignment with HR practices remains weak, particularly in communication systems, performance appraisal processes, and reward structures. The study concludes that organizational culture is a critical factor in determining the effectiveness of HRM practices in private universities. Consequently, university management should ensure that HR policies are carefully aligned with institutional cultural values to enhance employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. Strengthening organizational culture will not only improve staff performance but also contribute to the overall effectiveness and competitiveness of private universities in Nigeria.

Keywords: Human Resource Management Practices, Organizational Culture, Employee Performance, Private Universities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture comprising shared values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors serves as a lens through which employees interpret management practices. In private universities, organizational culture can either support or hinder the successful implementation of HRM policies. For instance, a culture that values transparency, inclusion, and academic freedom may amplify the positive effects of HRM on employee performance. Conversely, cultures characterized by hierarchy, favoritism, and rigidity may suppress employee

engagement regardless of the quality of HRM practices (Ogunyemi & Aremu, 2023).

In the Nigerian context, private universities exhibit varied organizational cultures depending on their founding philosophies, leadership structures, religious affiliations, and ownership models. These cultural differences can significantly alter how HRM initiatives are received and executed across institutions. Yet, there is limited empirical research examining organizational culture as a moderating variable in the HRM-performance nexus within the country's educational sector. Such an exploration is necessary to unpack the complexities involved in achieving HRM effectiveness in diverse

cultural settings, thereby enabling more targeted and context-sensitive interventions.

While the direct impact of HRM practices on employee performance has received significant attention, the mechanisms through which this impact occurs remain underexplored. One possible pathway is through job satisfaction. Employees may respond positively to HRM practices such as fair compensation, employee recognition, and professional development by developing higher levels of satisfaction, which then motivates them to perform better (Adegbite & Akinola, 2022). **Job satisfaction is** increasingly being acknowledged as a mediating factor in the HRM performance relationship (Jung & Yoon, 2023). Satisfied employees are more likely to be productive, committed, and innovative. Yet, in the Nigerian context, especially within private university settings, limited empirical attention has been given to how job satisfaction transmits the effects of HRM practices to employee performance outcomes. Thus, the problem this study seeks to address is the insufficient understanding of the dynamics through which HRM practices influence employee performance in private universities, particularly the **moderating role of organizational culture**. The absence of these considerations may result in misaligned policies, ineffective HR strategies, and underperforming employees in the private higher education sector.

How does organizational culture moderate the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance in private universities in South-West Nigeria? **Explore the moderating role of organizational culture on the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance.** H₀₁: Organizational culture does not significantly moderate the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance in private universities.

2. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Human Resources Management Practices

Human Resources Management (HRM) practices constitute a critical framework through which organizations manage their workforce to achieve strategic objectives, enhance employee performance, and foster organizational competitiveness. Within the context of private universities in South West Nigeria, understanding HRM practices is essential, particularly as these institutions navigate challenges related to job satisfaction, organizational culture, and employee performance. HRM practices encompass a range of activities including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee relations, all of which collectively influence employee attitudes and behaviors (Martinson & DeLeon, 2017; Benchmarking - HR Practices, 2020).

The strategic alignment of HRM practices with organizational

goals is a key determinant of their effectiveness. Martinson and DeLeon (2017) emphasize the importance of horizontal and vertical alignment in HR practices to facilitate the realization of strategic organizational objectives. Horizontal alignment ensures coherence among various HR practices, while vertical alignment connects these practices to the overall strategic vision of the organization. This alignment is particularly relevant in private universities where the balance between academic excellence and administrative efficiency must be maintained. For instance, integrated HR practices that continuously support professional development can enhance faculty performance and institutional reputation. Similarly, Maheshwari and Vohra (2015) highlight that critical HR practices during organizational change, such as transparent communication and participative decision-making, significantly impact employee perception and commitment, thereby sustaining performance levels amidst change.

Job satisfaction has been identified as both an outcome and a mediator of HRM practices. Nisar et al. (2017) provide empirical evidence demonstrating that effective HR practices positively influence employee loyalty and commitment through the mediating role of job satisfaction. This relationship is particularly salient in the academic environment of private universities, where faculty and staff satisfaction directly correlates with their engagement and productivity. Enhancing job satisfaction through tailored HR practices, such as recognition programs and equitable compensation, can therefore lead to improved employee loyalty and reduced turnover intentions. In a similar vein, Huo and Boxall (2017) argue that employee responses to HR practices are strongly mediated by their instrumental work values, suggesting that job satisfaction is contingent upon the alignment between HR practices and employees' personal and professional values. This insight underscores the necessity for private universities to customize HRM approaches to the diverse values and expectations of their workforce to optimize satisfaction and performance.

Knowledge-based HR practices have emerged as pivotal in fostering innovation and adaptability within organizations. Al-Tal and Emeagwali (2019) explore the relationship between knowledge-based HR practices and innovation in small and medium enterprises (SMEs), revealing that practices such as continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and intellectual capital development significantly contribute to organizational innovation. Transposing these findings to private universities, knowledge-based HR practices can stimulate academic innovation, enhance research output, and support the adoption of emerging pedagogical techniques. This is particularly important in the competitive landscape of

higher education in South West Nigeria, where universities must continuously innovate to attract and retain high-caliber staff and students. Bodla and Yu Ning-Tang (2017) further corroborate this perspective by demonstrating that transformative HR practices, including empowering leadership and adaptive training programs, bolster employee task performance by enhancing their adaptivity. This adaptability is crucial in academic settings faced with rapid technological advancements and evolving educational paradigms.

Recruitment and Selection Practices

Recruitment and selection practices are pivotal human resource management (HRM) functions that significantly influence employee performance and satisfaction within organizations, including universities. In the context of private universities in South West Nigeria, these practices are particularly critical given the competitive educational environment and the unique organizational cultures that shape employee experiences. The effectiveness of recruitment and selection processes directly impacts not only the quality of academic and administrative staff but also the broader organizational outcomes, including employee job satisfaction and performance. This section critically examines recruitment and selection practices in universities through the lens of job satisfaction and organizational culture, drawing on contemporary empirical studies and theoretical insights.

Recruitment and selection in universities are strategic processes designed to attract and identify candidates who not only possess the requisite skills and qualifications but also align with the institution's values and culture. The alignment of individual and organizational values is crucial for fostering job satisfaction, which in turn enhances employee performance (J, 2014; Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Job satisfaction, as established in the literature, is a mediator between HRM practices and employee performance outcomes. For example, J (2014) highlights that recruitment strategies that emphasize cultural fit and employee engagement contribute significantly to job satisfaction and subsequent performance. Similarly, Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2019) argue that selecting employees whose personal values resonate with the organizational culture mitigates turnover intentions and promotes sustained performance. Therefore, recruitment and selection processes in private universities must be designed to ensure congruence between candidates' attributes and the organizational culture to optimize employee outcomes.

Compensation and Reward Systems

Compensation and reward systems stand as pivotal components within human resource management practices

that significantly influence employee satisfaction and performance, particularly in the context of private universities in South West Nigeria. The intricate relationship between compensation, employee motivation, organizational culture, and performance has been widely acknowledged in the literature, underscoring the necessity for institutions to develop equitable and effective reward mechanisms that align with their strategic goals and cultural values.

The role of compensation in fostering job satisfaction and enhancing employee performance is underscored by empirical research that highlights its direct impact on motivation. Chien et al. (2020) establish that appropriate financial incentives serve as crucial motivators that directly improve employee output by satisfying fundamental economic needs and reinforcing a sense of fairness within the workplace. Their study in the hospitality sector illustrates that when employees perceive their compensation as commensurate with their effort and contribution, it results in heightened work engagement and better performance outcomes. This correlation is likely transferrable to academic institutions where faculty and administrative staff expect compensation systems that recognize their professional contributions and foster sustained commitment.

Complementing this viewpoint, da Cruz Carvalho, Riana, and de C. Soares (2020) argue that compensation is a fundamental antecedent to job satisfaction, which in turn mediates employee performance. They contend that organizations with well-structured reward systems that reflect employee input and achievement tend to cultivate a positive work environment, thereby strengthening employees' emotional and cognitive attachment to their roles. This attachment is integral to enhancing performance, especially in knowledge-intensive sectors such as higher education, where intrinsic motivation is paramount but can be significantly augmented through extrinsic rewards. Their findings underscore the necessity for private universities in South West Nigeria to design compensation frameworks that not only meet financial expectations but also resonate with employees' professional aspirations and recognition needs.

Employee Performance: Definitions and Metrics

Employee performance remains a critical construct in understanding the effectiveness of Human Resources Management (HRM) practices and organizational outcomes, particularly within the context of private universities in South West Nigeria. At its core, employee performance refers to the measurable output of employees' work activities, encompassing the quality, quantity, and timeliness of completed tasks as well as

broader contributions to organizational goals (Chen, Uen, & Chih-Chen, 2016). This multifaceted definition aligns with the perspective that performance is not limited to task completion but includes behavioral dimensions relevant to organizational culture and job satisfaction, both of which influence human capital productivity (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2015). Therefore, accurate definitions and metrics of employee performance are vital to assessing how job satisfaction and organizational culture affect HRM practices and, consequently, employee output.

Employee performance (EP) refers to the extent to which employees effectively fulfill their job responsibilities and achieve organizational goals within a given period, often measured against predetermined standards of quantity, quality, and efficiency. Cacio (2018) conceptualizes EP as the extent to which an employee accomplishes the tasks that comprise his or her job. Robbins and Judge (2019) views EP as the behaviors and results that contribute to the organization's goals. To Armstrong and Murlin, (2017), EP refers to the contribution made by an individual to the objectives of the organization. Similarly, Aguinis (2019) defines EP as the extent to which an employee performs his or her job duties and responsibilities at a level expected by the organization. Dessler (2017) opine that EP the extent to which an employee's contribution meets the expectations of the organization in terms of productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency" (Dessler, 2017).

The conceptualization of employee performance often differentiates between task performance and contextual performance. Task performance pertains to proficiency in completing core job duties, while contextual performance refers to voluntary behaviors that support the organizational environment, such as cooperation and initiative (Chen et al., 2016; Currie, Burgess, & Hayton, 2015). This duality is particularly poignant in academic institutions where employees' roles extend beyond routine tasks to include knowledge sharing, mentoring, and contributing to the institutional culture. Currie et al. (2015) emphasize the influence of professional hierarchy and social dynamics on performance outcomes, suggesting that in university settings, contextual performance linked to organizational culture plays a pivotal role in fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence and institutional growth. Thus, HRM practices that nurture a positive culture and enhance job satisfaction are likely to elevate both task and contextual performance dimensions.

In measuring employee performance, organizations frequently employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative metrics. Quantitative indicators include productivity rates, error frequency, and service delivery timelines, while qualitative assessments focus on employee behavior, adaptability, and teamwork (Islam, Bangish, Muhammad, & Jehan, 2016; Yahiaoui, Chebbi, & Weber, 2016).

In the context of private universities in South West Nigeria, these metrics must be tailored to capture both academic and administrative employee outputs. For instance, faculty performance metrics might include research publications, student evaluations, and participation in institutional committees, whereas administrative staff performance could be evaluated through service efficiency and internal collaboration. Yahiaoui et al. (2016) argue that context-specific HR practices and performance metrics enable better knowledge transfer and organizational learning, which reinforces the importance of aligning performance definitions with organizational culture and job satisfaction.

The relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance has been extensively documented, underscoring that employees who experience higher satisfaction levels tend to demonstrate enhanced performance outcomes (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2015; Islam et al., 2016). Job satisfaction influences motivation, commitment, and the willingness to engage in discretionary behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness. Kundu and Gahlawat (2015) highlight that socially responsible HR practices that promote job satisfaction can reduce turnover intentions and improve performance, indicating a mediating role of job satisfaction in HRM effectiveness. This finding is crucial for private universities where retention of skilled academics and support staff directly affects the institution's ability to maintain competitive advantage and quality education delivery.

Organizational culture serves as an indispensable lens through which employee performance must be examined. The shared values, beliefs, and norms within an institution shape employees' attitudes and behaviors, ultimately influencing performance metrics (Chen et al., 2016; Trullén & Valverde, 2017). Trullén and Valverde (2017) note that HR professionals' ability to effectively implement HR practices is heavily contingent on their understanding and manipulation of the prevailing organizational culture. In private universities situated in the socio-cultural context of South West Nigeria, cultural nuances such as collectivism, respect for hierarchy, and community orientation may affect how performance is defined and rewarded. Consequently, HRM practices designed without consideration of these cultural factors may fail to elicit optimal employee performance. Therefore, performance metrics must integrate assessments of cultural alignment and employee engagement with organizational values to present a holistic view of performance outcomes.

Organizational Culture and Its Dimensions

Organizational culture constitutes a pivotal factor

influencing the efficacy of human resource management (HRM) practices and employee performance within private universities in South West Nigeria. It embodies the shared values, beliefs, and norms that shape the social and psychological environment of an organization. The criticality of organizational culture stems from its ability to align employee behaviors and attitudes with institutional goals, thereby fostering a conducive atmosphere for enhanced job satisfaction and performance. As corroborated by Latorre et al. (2016), organizations with strong, positive cultures tend to implement HR practices that promote high commitment and, consequently, improve job performance. Similarly, Mostafa (2016) emphasizes that person-organization fit, which is deeply rooted in cultural compatibility, significantly modulates the impact of HR practices on employee outcomes such as work stress and turnover intentions.

A comprehensive understanding of organizational culture necessitates an exploration of its multidimensional structure. Several scholars have identified key dimensions that collectively influence HRM effectiveness and employee performance. Ma et al. (2016) delineate organizational culture dimensions such as control versus commitment orientation, which distinctly affect job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Control-oriented cultures emphasize hierarchical structures, formal rules, and compliance, often correlating with lower job satisfaction and increased turnover, particularly in rigid institutional settings. Commitment-oriented cultures, on the other hand, foster employee involvement, trust, and participation, which are positively associated with job satisfaction and reduced turnover. This dichotomy is particularly relevant in the context of private universities in Nigeria, where cultural attributes can either constrain or facilitate effective HR practices.

Further, Li and Frenkel (2017) highlight the significance of cultural dimensions related to supervisor-subordinate relationships and perceptions of HR practices. Their study, focusing on the Chinese context, finds that supervisors' cultural attitudes towards fairness, support, and recognition substantially influence employee work engagement. Transposing these findings to South West Nigeria, it is plausible to argue that organizational cultures promoting supportive supervisory behaviors enhance HRM practices' impact on employee motivation and performance. Such cultures underscore the importance of interpersonal trust and communication, which are instrumental in fostering a positive working environment and enhancing employee outcomes.

In a complementary vein, Bal, Polat, and Jansen (2017) investigate how developmental HR practices interplay with organizational culture to motivate employees, particularly in contexts involving career transitions such as early retirement. Their findings suggest that cultures emphasizing continuous learning, growth, and recognition of employee contributions are conducive to sustaining high motivation levels. These

cultural dimensions are crucial in private universities where academic staff seek not only financial rewards but also professional development and meaningful engagement. The alignment of organizational culture with developmental HR practices thus emerges as a strategic lever for enhancing employee performance and retention. Moreover, the perceptions of HR practices are invariably filtered through the lens of organizational culture, which mediates their outcomes on job motivation and work-life balance. The 2016 study on Perceptions of HR Practices on Job Motivation and Work-life Balance underscores the mixed drives and outcomes that arise from the complex interplay between cultural expectations and HR initiatives. Cultures that endorse flexibility, respect for work-life boundaries, and employee autonomy tend to amplify positive perceptions of HR practices, culminating in enhanced job satisfaction and performance. Conversely, cultures with rigid norms and limited support for employee well-being may diminish the effectiveness of even well-designed HR interventions.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement (EE) is an important component of HRM which reflects the level of passion, commitment, and emotional asset that employees have towards their job and organization. It refers to the degree to which employees are passionate about their jobs and how committed they are to contributing to the achievement of organisational goals and success (Kahn, 2020). EE are usually more inspired, industrious and satisfied with their job, as they are deeply link with the organisational missions and values (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2024). EE is regarded as a major determinant of performance, as engaged employees exhibit high level of efforts and dedication, thereby increasing their capacities to contribute positively to the achievement of organizational goals, (Harter et al., 2022).

In private universities in South West Nigeria, EE plays a significant role. Regarding lecturers, EE is usually determined by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors include autonomy granted to lecturers in teaching, research, and course design while extrinsic factors include compensation and professional development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). Engaged lecturers have higher tendency of delivering higher quality teaching, contribute to research, and engage with students and the broader university community. On the other hand, disengaged employees might encounter burnout, lower job satisfaction, and low productivity, which can affect the quality of education lecturers provide to students (Osibanjo et al., 2018).

One major component of EE in the academic environment

is the level of participation of lecturers in decision-making processes and academic autonomy. For lecturers in private university, granting autonomy to lecturers in areas such teaching methods, research, and the ability to structure academic programs can have significantly improve their of ownership and engagement (Ajayi & Adeniji, 2019). When employees feel trusted and empowered to take decisions regarding their jobs, there is higher tendency that they will go outside their primary work expectations and contribute in an innovative way to the realisation of organisational goals. Private universities in South West Nigeria usually compete with public universities for qualified lecturers. Therefore, high level of EE is key for retaining qualified employees and enhancing long-term commitment.

Role of Organizational Culture in Shaping Employee Behavior

Organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping employee behavior, which directly influences human resources management (HRM) practices and ultimately impacts employee performance. Culture embodies the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that define the social and psychological environment of an organization. Within private universities in South West Nigeria, where the competitive landscape demands high levels of engagement and adaptability, understanding the role of organizational culture is crucial for enhancing HRM effectiveness and employee outcomes.

Firstly, organizational culture serves as a contextual framework through which employees interpret their roles and the expectations placed upon them. As Mostafa and Gould-Williams (2014) emphasize, the alignment between individual values and organizational culture, often conceptualized as person-organization fit, mediates the relationship between HR practices and positive employee outcomes. When organizational culture fosters values such as collaboration, innovation, and accountability, employees are more likely to internalize these norms, leading to behaviors that support organizational goals. This cultural alignment improves employee motivation and commitment, which are essential for the effective implementation of HRM practices such as performance appraisals, training and development, and reward systems. In the context of private universities, where academic and administrative staff must navigate complex interpersonal and professional demands, a strong culture that promotes mutual respect and shared purpose can significantly influence their behavioral responses to HR initiatives.

Self Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) was developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in 1985. The main idea of the theory

is that individual intrinsic psychological needs are crucial in explaining what motivate them. The theory identifies three psychological needs which needs to be satisfied. These needs include autonomy (the need for an individual to control one's action), competence (the need to feel competent and capable) and relatedness (the need to feel connected and valued by other people) (Deci & Ryan, 2020). According to the theory, the fulfilment of these needs increases the likelihood that individuals' actions are more likely to be driven by intrinsic motivation doing something because it is intrinsically exciting or enjoyable instead of extrinsic motivation stimulated by external rewards or pressures. SDT has enjoyed wide application in different sectors which include education, healthcare, and workplace settings, signifying those settings which support these basic needs promote improved performance, persistence, and psychological welfare (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The theory has many assumptions. One of the key assumptions is that is that human have intrinsic psychological needs which include autonomy, competence and relatedness are critical to psychological growth, welfare and integrity of an individual (Deci & Ryan, 2020). These needs cut across cultures and life domains. The meeting of these needs makes an individual to be satisfied and contribute optimally to the organisation while inability or failure to meet them reduces the individual motivation and job performance.

The second major assumption of the theory is that motivation exists along a continuum or are in levels, starting from amotivation (absence of motivation) to extrinsic motivation and lastly to intrinsic motivation, which is the most self-determined type of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Instead of viewing motivation as a concept consisting two dimensions (intrinsic and extrinsic), SDT states that extrinsic motivation can become more autonomous when people adopt and incorporate external values or regulations. This level of motivation shows changing degrees of autonomy in motivation, signifying the dynamic and evolving nature of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The rationale for this design lies in its capacity to investigate patterns, relationships, and interactions among variables in a natural, real-world setting. A survey design was particularly suitable for collecting primary data through standardized questionnaires, enabling the researcher to gather information from a broad population within a defined period. This methodology supports the study's objective of exploring how specific HRM practices

such as employee training and development, performance appraisal systems, compensation strategies, and organizational culture influence employee performance.

The study was situated in Southwestern Nigeria, one of the six geo-political zones in Nigeria, consisting of six states: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo. This region was economically vibrant and educationally advanced, hosting a large concentration of private universities known for their progressive academic and administrative practices. It was considered the educational hub of Nigeria due to its high concentration of universities, including private institutions such as Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo (ACU) – Oyo State, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin – Ondo State, Chrisland University, Abeokuta – Ogun State, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) – Ekiti State, Kings University, Odeomu – Osun State and Anchor University, Lagos – Lagos State. These universities vary in size, ownership structure, and HRM policy

frameworks, making them suitable for comparative analysis. The socio-economic diversity of the region, coupled with its concentration of tertiary institutions, makes it an ideal setting for assessing the effectiveness of HRM practices in enhancing employee outcomes. The strategic importance of the South West zone to Nigeria’s educational development also reinforces its suitability as the geographical focus of this study. These institutions have demonstrated varying levels of academic excellence, infrastructural development, and administrative sophistication, making them ideal for a comparative study of HRM practices and employee performance. Additionally, the South West geopolitical zone is widely regarded as Nigeria’s educational nucleus, with a strong history of private sector involvement in higher education (Ogunleye & Ojo, 2023).

Table 1 Population of Academic and Non- Teaching Staff of Universities

S/N	University	Academic Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Total Staff
1	Ajayi Crowther University (ACU)	380	320	700
2	Elizade University	300	270	570
3	Chrisland University	240	220	460
4	ABUAD	520	430	950
5	Kings University	190	170	360
6	Anchor University	260	230	490
Total		1,890	1 as Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo (ACU) – Oyo State, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin – Ondo State, Chrisland University, Abeokuta – Ogun State, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) – Ekiti State, Kings University, Odeomu – Osun State and Anchor University, Lagos – Lagos State.,640	3,530

Source: Registry Departments of Selected Universities (2026)

Thus, the overall population (N = 3,530) comprises a diverse mix of academic disciplines and administrative departments, allowing for a holistic analysis of HRM practices and their effect on performance outcomes.

The sample size for this study was 359. This sample size was adequate to provide reliable estimates of the relationships among the variables being studied. To ensure a representative and manageable sample from the total population of staff members across the six selected private universities, this study employed a multi-stage sampling technique. At first stage, purposive Sampling was used to select six private universities in Southwestern Nigeria based on criteria such as institutional size, diversity of staff, operational structure, and visible human resource management practices. At the second stage, stratified Sampling was used within each university, the

population will be stratified into academic and non-teaching staff to ensure proportional representation across both categories. At the final stage, convenience sampling was applied for questionnaire administration, based on the availability and willingness of staff to participate. To determine an appropriate sample size, Taro Yamane’s (1967) formula was employed:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1+N(e)^2]}$$

Where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population (2,400)
- e= margin of error (0.05)

$n = \frac{3,530}{1+3,530(0.0025)} = \frac{3,530}{1+8.825} = \frac{3,530}{9.825} = 359.28$
 $n = 359$

Hence, the sample size was 359 respondents, deemed

statistically adequate and logistically feasible for this research. The sample was proportionally allocated to each university based on the institution’s total staff strength as follows:

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution was determined to be statistically adequate and representative.

S/N	University	Academic Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Total Staff	Academic Staff Sample	Non-Teaching Staff Sample	Total Sample
1	Ajayi Crowther University (ACU)	380	320	700	39	32	71
2	Elizade University	300	270	570	31	27	58
3	Chrisland University	240	220	460	22	22	47
4	ABUAD	520	430	950	53	44	97
5	Kings University	190	170	360	20	17	37
6	Anchor University	260	230	490	26	23	49
	Total	1,890	1,640	3,530	191	168	359

Source: Author Survey Field (2026)

This method of proportional allocation ensures inclusiveness, accuracy, and the representativeness of various staff categories across the six universities, thereby enhancing the generalizability and validity of the study’s findings. This proportional distribution ensures inclusivity and representativeness across institutions and staff categories. Hypothesis was tested at a 5% significance level ($p < 0.05$), and results was interpreted in light of existing literature and theoretical frameworks underpinning HRM and performance. These analytical techniques enabled hypothesis testing and robust interpretation of results in line with the study objectives.

To assess the empirical link between job satisfaction and employee performance in private universities in South-West Nigeria. This objective was achieved through correlation analysis using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Additionally, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to estimate the predictive effect of job satisfaction on employee performance. This dual approach provides both relational and predictive insights into the link between these two constructs.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
AGE	18-25Yrs	69	19.2	19.2	19.2
	26-35Yrs	124	34.5	34.5	53.8
	36-45Yrs	106	29.5	29.5	83.3
	46-55Yrs	49	13.6	13.6	96.9
	56Yrs and Above	11	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	359	100.0	100.0	
MARITAL STATUS	Single	58	16.2	16.2	16.2
	Married	238	66.3	66.3	82.5
	Divorced/ Separated	32	8.9	8.9	91.4
	Widowed	31	8.6	8.6	100.0

	Total	359	100.0	100.0	
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	OND/NCE	21	5.8	5.8	5.8
	B.Sc/B.Ed/B.A	84	23.4	23.4	29.2
	M.Sc/M.Ed/ M.A/MBA	86	24.0	24.0	53.2
	Ph.D	96	26.7	26.7	79.9
	Others	72	20.1	20.1	100.0
	Total	359	100.0	100.0	
ACADEMIC DESIGNATION/RANK	GA	17	4.7	4.7	4.7
	AL	60	16.7	16.7	21.4
	LII	42	11.7	11.7	33.1
	LI	70	19.5	19.5	52.6
	SL	78	21.7	21.7	74.4
	AP	29	8.1	8.1	82.5
	Prof	17	4.7	4.7	87.2
	N-Teaching	46	12.8	12.8	100.0
	Total	359	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey; 2026

The analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents reveals a relatively young and academically inclined group, largely drawn from the higher education sector. A closer look at the age distribution shows that the majority of participants fall within the 26 to 35 years (34.5%) and 36 to 45 years (29.5%) age brackets. Combined, these two categories account for over 64% of the sample, indicating that most respondents are in their early to mid-career stages. Additionally, 19.2% of the respondents are between 18 and 25 years, suggesting a fair representation of younger professionals or recent entrants into the academic workforce. Meanwhile, those aged 46 to 55 years constitute 13.6%, and only a small fraction (3.1%) are 56 years and above. This pattern highlights a predominantly youthful and active workforce.

Furthermore, the marital status distribution reflects a largely settled population, with 66.3% of respondents being married. This suggests that many of the participants may have established family lives, which could influence their perspectives on work-life balance and institutional commitment. In contrast, 16.2% of the respondents are single, while 8.9% are either divorced or separated. An additional 8.6% are widowed, indicating some diversity in personal circumstances.

Moreover, the educational qualifications of the respondents point to a highly educated sample. A significant portion of about 26.7% holds doctoral degrees (Ph.D), while another 24.0% possess master's degrees such as M.Sc, M.Ed, M.A, or MBA. First degree holders (B.Sc, B.Ed, B.A) make up 23.4%, and a smaller percentage (5.8%) hold OND or NCE qualifications. Interestingly, 20.1% of the respondents reported having other qualifications, possibly including professional certifications or international degrees. This distribution underscores the academic depth and intellectual capacity of the participants, indicating that their responses are grounded in a strong educational background.

In addition, the occupational distribution of respondents shows a broad representation across various academic ranks. Senior Lecturers account for the highest proportion at 21.7%, followed by Lecturer I (19.5%) and Assistant Lecturers (16.7%). Lecturer II and Associate Professors represent 11.7% and 8.1% of the sample respectively, while Professors and Graduate Assistants each constitute 4.7%. Notably, 12.8% of the respondents are non-teaching staff, reflecting a mix of academic and administrative perspectives. This diverse composition suggests that the study captures insights from a wide spectrum of institutional roles, enhancing the richness of the data.

The Moderating Role of Organizational Culture on the Relationship Between HRM Practices and Employee Performance in Selected Private Universities in South West Nigeria

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	NS (%)	D (%)	S D (%)	Mean	St. Dev	Median
-----------	--------	-------	--------	-------	---------	------	---------	--------

The organizational culture in my university supports innovation and continuous improvement.	92 (25.6%)	110 (30.6%)	75 (20.9%)	42 (11.7%)	40 (11.1%)	3.48	1.29	4.00
HRM practices are effectively aligned with the values and norms of the institution.	95 (26.5%)	95 (26.5%)	82 (22.8%)	57 (15.9%)	30 (8.4%)	3.47	1.26	4.00
Organizational culture positively influences how HR policies are implemented in my workplace.	96 (26.7%)	95 (26.5%)	75 (20.9%)	59 (16.4%)	34 (9.5%)	3.45	1.30	4.00
Employee performance improves when HRM practices reflect the organizational culture.	103 (28.7%)	92 (25.6%)	74 (20.6%)	53 (14.8%)	37 (10.3%)	3.48	1.32	4.00
The reward and recognition system is consistent with the university's cultural values.	94 (26.2%)	100 (27.9%)	70 (19.5%)	61 (17.0%)	34 (9.5%)	3.44	1.30	4.00
There is a shared understanding of goals and values across all departments.	77 (21.4%)	70 (19.5%)	77 (21.4%)	64 (17.8%)	71 (19.8%)	3.05	1.42	3.00
The university's culture encourages open communication between management and employees.	63 (17.5%)	77 (21.4%)	66 (18.4%)	79 (22.0%)	74 (20.6%)	2.93	1.40	3.00
Organizational culture moderates the effect of recruitment and selection on employee performance.	73 (20.3%)	61 (17.0%)	62 (17.3%)	91 (25.3%)	72 (20.1%)	2.92	1.43	3.00
Training and development	63 (17.5%)	72 (20.1%)	76 (21.2%)	82 (22.8%)	66 (18.4%)	2.96	1.37	3.00

programs are tailored to fit the university's cultural environment.								
Performance appraisal systems are culturally sensitive and fair.	72 (20.1%)	59 (16.4%)	77 (21.4%)	78 (21.7%)	73 (20.3%)	2.94	1.41	3.00
Employees are more committed when HRM practices reflect organizational norms and values.	62 (17.3%)	67 (18.7%)	80 (22.3%)	69 (19.2%)	81 (22.6%)	2.89	1.40	3.00
Organizational culture enhances teamwork and collaboration among staff.	80 (22.3%)	65 (18.1%)	75 (20.9%)	70 (19.5%)	69 (19.2%)	3.05	1.43	3.00
The influence of HRM practices on performance is stronger in organizations with a supportive culture.	77 (21.4%)	76 (21.2%)	63 (17.5%)	72 (20.1%)	71 (19.8%)	3.04	1.44	3.00
A mismatch between HRM practices and organizational culture reduces employee productivity.	78 (21.7%)	71 (19.8%)	67 (18.7%)	68 (18.9%)	75 (20.9%)	3.03	1.45	3.00
Organizational culture strengthens the link between compensation systems and staff motivation.	58 (16.2%)	71 (19.8%)	65 (18.1%)	76 (21.2%)	89 (24.8%)	2.81	1.42	3.00

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The data reveal that respondents generally perceive organizational culture as playing a moderately positive role in supporting innovation and aligning HRM practices with institutional values. For instance, a majority of respondents agreed that their university's culture supports innovation and continuous improvement, with over 56% expressing agreement. This is reflected in a relatively high mean score of 3.48 and a median of 4.00, indicating a tendency toward agreement. Similarly, participants acknowledged that HRM

practices are effectively aligned with institutional norms, with a combined 53% agreeing or strongly agreeing, supported by a mean of 3.47 and median of 4.00. Moreover, respondents perceived a positive influence of organizational culture on the implementation of HR policies, and a belief that employee performance improves when HRM practices reflect organizational culture. Both statements received over 50% agreement and had similar mean scores of 3.45 and 3.48, respectively, suggesting that

alignment between culture and HRM is viewed as beneficial to employee performance.

Likewise, more than half of the respondents believed that the reward and recognition systems are consistent with the university's cultural values (mean = 3.44), reinforcing the idea that HRM practices aligned with organizational culture foster better employee outcomes.

However, opinions became more divided when considering other cultural dimensions. For example, the statement regarding a shared understanding of goals and values across departments revealed split perceptions, with just over 40% agreement and nearly 38% disagreement. The mean score of 3.05 and median of 3.00 suggest a neutral stance, indicating that goal alignment across departments may not be clearly established.

The data also highlight a noticeable lack of consensus regarding communication, recruitment, and HRM policy sensitivity. Only 38.9% agreed that the university's culture encourages open communication between management and employees, while 42.6% disagreed. This suggests a communication gap that could hinder the effectiveness of HRM practices. Similarly, the belief that organizational culture moderates the effect of recruitment and selection on performance was met with skepticism, with a mean of 2.92 and nearly equal levels of agreement and disagreement.

Training and development programs, performance appraisals, and compensation systems were also perceived as insufficiently adapted to the institutional culture. In particular, only 36% of respondents agreed that performance appraisal systems are culturally sensitive and fair, and a larger proportion (46%) disagreed that organizational culture strengthens the link between compensation systems and staff motivation. These responses indicate a perceived mismatch between HRM functions and cultural realities, with most mean scores in this category hovering below 3.00, reflecting weak or negative perceptions.

Furthermore, while some respondents acknowledged that organizational culture enhances teamwork and strengthens the influence of HRM on performance, these sentiments were not overwhelmingly shared. A similar pattern was observed for the view that a mismatch between HRM practices and culture reduces productivity, with responses almost evenly distributed across agreement and disagreement.

Conclusion

This study examined the moderating role of organizational culture on the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance in selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that HRM practices significantly influence employee performance, while organizational culture independently contributes to employee productivity. More importantly, organizational culture was found to significantly moderate the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. This indicates that the

effectiveness of HR policies largely depends on the cultural environment within which they are implemented. Therefore, for private universities to achieve improved employee performance, HRM strategies must be designed and implemented in alignment with institutional cultural values. A supportive organizational culture enhances employee motivation, strengthens commitment, and amplifies the positive effects of HRM practices.

REFERENCES

1. Adegbite, O., & Akinola, A. (2022). Human resource management practices and employee performance in Nigerian organizations: The mediating role of job satisfaction. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 12(2), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v12i2.19876>
2. Aguinis, H. (2019). *Performance management* (4th ed.). Chicago Business Press.
3. Ajayi, O., & Adeniji, A. (2019). Employee engagement and academic staff productivity in Nigerian private universities. *African Journal of Business Management*, 13(6), 210–220.
4. Al-Tal, M. J., & Emeagwali, O. L. (2019). Knowledge-based HR practices and innovation in SMEs: The role of intellectual capital. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 6(3), 210–230. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-12-2018-0100>
5. Armstrong, M., & Murlis, H. (2017). *Reward management: A handbook of remuneration strategy and practice* (7th ed.). Kogan Page.
6. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2018). Multiple levels in job demands–resources theory: Implications for employee well-being and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(3), 181–189. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2236>
7. Bal, P. M., Polat, T., & Jansen, P. G. (2017). Developmental HR practices and employee motivation. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27(4), 568–584. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12154>
8. Bodla, A. A., & Yu Ning-Tang. (2017). Transformational HR practices and employee performance: The role of employee adaptability. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 55(2), 213–231.
9. Cascio, W. F. (2018). *Managing human resources: Productivity, quality of work life, profits* (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
10. Chen, S. Y., Uen, J. F., & Chih-Chen, H. (2016). Transformational leadership and employee performance: The role of job satisfaction. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 11(6), 114–123.

11. Chien, G. C., Mao, I., Nergui, E., & Chang, W. (2020). The effect of compensation on employee motivation and performance. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 42, 105–113. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2019.11.004>
12. Currie, G., Burgess, N., & Hayton, J. (2015). HR practices and knowledge sharing in organizations. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 25(2), 123–142.
13. da Cruz Carvalho, A., Riana, I., & de C. Soares, A. (2020). Motivation on job satisfaction and employee performance. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 7(5), 13–23.
14. Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2020). Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. *Guilford Press*.
15. Dessler, G. (2017). *Human resource management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.
16. Diamantidis, A. D., & Chatzoglou, P. (2019). Factors affecting employee performance: An empirical approach. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 68(1), 171–193. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-01-2018-0012>
17. Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2022). Business-unit-level relationship between employee engagement and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268–279.
18. Huo, M. L., & Boxall, P. (2017). Employee responses to HR practices: The role of work values. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27(4), 553–567.
19. Islam, T., Bangish, S. B., Muhammad, H., & Jehan, A. S. (2016). The impact of HRM practices on employee performance. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(10), 1–15.
20. Jung, H. S., & Yoon, H. H. (2023). The role of job satisfaction in HRM practices and employee performance. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 107, 103–118.
21. Kahn, W. A. (2020). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692–724.
22. Kundu, S. C., & Gahlawat, N. (2015). Socially responsible HR practices and employee performance. *Human Resource Development International*, 18(3), 266–284.
23. Latorre, F., Guest, D., Ramos, J., & Gracia, F. (2016). High commitment HR practices and job performance. *European Management Journal*, 34(4), 424–435.
24. Li, X., & Frenkel, S. (2017). HR practices and employee engagement: The role of supervisor support. *Human Resource Management*, 56(6), 971–986.
25. Ma, S., Yu, K., & Cheng, B. (2016). Organizational culture and employee turnover intentions. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 37(6), 928–945.
26. Maheshwari, S., & Vohra, V. (2015). Role of HR practices during organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 28(3), 429–450.
27. Martinson, B., & DeLeon, P. (2017). Strategic alignment of human resource practices and organizational performance. *Human Resource Development Review*, 16(2), 145–167.
28. Mostafa, A. M. S. (2016). High-performance HR practices and employee outcomes: The mediating role of person–organization fit. *Public Organization Review*, 16(3), 341–363.
29. Mostafa, A. M. S., & Gould-Williams, J. (2014). HR practices and employee outcomes: The role of person–organization fit. *Public Management Review*, 16(8), 1090–1110.
30. Nisar, Q. A., Haider, S., Ali, F., Naz, S., & Ryu, K. (2017). Depletion of psychological contract and employee loyalty. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 5(1), 1–9.
31. Ogunleye, O., & Ojo, A. (2023). Private universities and educational development in Nigeria. *African Educational Research Journal*, 11(2), 240–250.
32. Ogunyemi, O., & Aremu, A. (2023). Organizational culture and employee performance in Nigerian private universities. *Nigerian Journal of Management Studies*, 23(1), 95–112.
33. Osibanjo, A. O., Adeniji, A. A., Falola, H. O., & Heirsmac, P. T. (2018). Employee engagement and performance in Nigerian universities. *Cogent Business & Management*, 5(1), 1–16.
34. Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2019). *Organizational behavior* (18th ed.). Pearson Education.
35. Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination perspective. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 61, 101860.
36. Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2024). Employee engagement: Theory and practice. *Routledge*.
37. Trullén, J., & Valverde, M. (2017). HR professionals and organizational culture implementation. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(3), 431–444.
38. Yahiaoui, D., Chebbi, H., & Weber, Y. (2016). HR practices and knowledge transfer. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(6), 607–631.