

Resource-Based Theory: Institutional Factor for Effective Strategic Human Resource Management in Public Organizations

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Abstract

The thrust of this study was to examine the contribution of Resource-Based Theory (RBT) on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). Specifically, the study examined the influence of SHRM practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, performance evaluation, motivation management, job design, talent management and supervision basing on RBT. This conceptual paper employed a desk review of empirical and theoretical literature where journal articles, textbooks, working papers, conference proceedings and government publications were reviewed. To ensure quality and relevance of the review, selection criteria of literature included relevance, credibility, recency, rigorous studies together with methodological diversity. The findings revealed that effective management of human resources hinges on the basic understanding of the nature of employees as the key resources for public organizations to achieve competitive position and that the understanding is only possible with the adequate knowledge of the basic tenets of RBT. The paper argues that RBT has implications for effective implementation of SHRM practices on enhancing employees' performance. Therefore, SHRM practices when correctly orchestrated to public organizations' strategies can make them gain competitive advantage. The paper concludes that the RBT provides a theoretical lens for public organizations to effectively implement SHRM practices to enable public organizations achieve goals.

Keywords: *Resource-based theory, strategic human resource management, human resource, public organization.*

1.0 Introduction

In today's world of competition, effective management of human resources has become a backbone for organizations' success. This competition brought about by the upsurge of globalization has changed the way business organizations operate. The changes require organizations to be more adaptable and flexible in managing internal resources for them to compete and survive. According to Kehoe and Wright (2018), human resources are the key resources that organizations should cherish to survive. This comes after it had been widely realized that valuable, rare, inimitable, and no-substitutable resources will lead to competitive advantage. As Collins (2020) opined, human resources meet these criteria as they provide a pool of knowledge, skills, and competencies that are difficult to imitate by competitors, so they need to be managed effectively to realize organizational

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goals. Therefore, what is becoming a critical propeller of business operations today is the capability of organizations to effectively manage human resources by creating a conducive work environment capable of utilizing human potential and enabling them to create, sustain, and drive organization's winning strategies. This need has forced organizations today to develop appropriate human resource management practices needed to enhance knowledge, skills, and competencies that tap human potential towards achieving organizational goals.

However, the potentiality of utilizing human resources hinges on the basic understanding of the complexities inherent in managing this potential resource. Various scholars have identified resource-based theory (RBT) as the fundamental framework for effective management of human resources in private organizations with the argument that they are in constant competition leaving behind public organizations. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that public organizations are also competing in various areas including service delivery, education, technology, recruitment, retention, motivation strategies, and training and developing employees. Delery and Roumpi (2017) opined that RBT is a theoretical lens for understanding the proper management of human resources to enable organizations to gain a competitive edge. This implies that fundamental knowledge and understanding of key factors affecting employees at the workplace is critical in managing human resources to get the best out of them.

Managers in various organizations have a tendency to treat their employees like other resources. This limits employees' ability and willingness to use their potentials and direct their efforts towards realizing organizational goals. When this happens, organization's ability to compete is affected and this may jeopardize organization's success and survival. It is against this background that this conceptual paper examines the influence of RBT on the effective management of human resources in public organizations. Specifically, it provides answers to the following research questions; Why is employee's recruitment and selection important to the performance of public organizations? Why training and development are critical factors for public organization's performance? Why is compensation important to workers in public organizations? Why performance evaluation, motivation management, job design, talent management and supervision important to the performance of public organizations? What are the implications of RBT on the effective management of human resources in public organizations? These and other questions constitute the body of knowledge upon which strategic management of human resources is built to enhance organization's effectiveness and survival.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Origin of Resource-Based Theory (RBT)

The foundation of RBT is Penrose's 1959 work on a resource-based theory of the firm. In this article, Penrose argues that organization's unique resources and capabilities can enable it to achieve its competitive edge. She further argues that organizations can create economic value not only due to mere possession of resources but also due to effective, innovative, and strategic management of such resources. The key consideration here is that organizations are considered administrative systems with productive resources. Productive resources

are both physical and human resources. Physical resources are tangible resources such as machines, equipment, and materials. Human resources are employees of the organization. The key function of the organization is to make maximum utilization of these resources to achieve intended outcomes. To maximize utilization of these resources, organizations must be able to combine appropriate management of human resources with strategies of the organization.

According to this theory, an organization can outperform other organizations by effectively using its internal unique resources. The key argument is that by improving working conditions and coalescing appropriate management of human resources with organization strategies, public organizations can maximize the use of human resources to achieve performance above normal.

The idea of RBT was later on taken up by other scholars such as Chaudter (1962); Andrews (1971); Williamson (1975); Wernerfelt (1984); Rumelt (1987); Day and Wensley (1988); Barney (1991); Teece, Pisano and Shuen (1997) and others. These scholars emphasized the importance of internal resources to influence organization's performance.

Fundamentally, RBT emerged at the midst of the debate among scholars on whether internal or external resources influence organization performance. A scholar such as Porter in the 1980's advocated Industrial Organization View (IOV) as the source of organization performance. IOV was based on the assumption that external resources are the source of organization's competitiveness and performance. IOV scholars believe that external environment such as organization's market niche and customers could make the organization gain its competitive edge (Porter 1991; Miller & Dess, 1993). Whilst there is a sound basis for acknowledging the role of external environment on the performance of organizations, scholars contend that IOV is overly concerned with outside forces and neglects organization's internal forces which are critical for the success and survival of any organization.

The observed shortcomings brought scholars back to Penrose's growth ideas. Thus, Barney (1991) acknowledged that advantage-creating resources must meet four major conditions namely value, rareness, inimitability, and non-substitutability (VRIN). He further argued that internal organizational resources such as knowledge, information, organization processes, capabilities, attributes, and assets can become the source of sustained organization's competitiveness if they meet VRIN criteria.

In the same line of argument, Wernerfelt (1984) holds that resources influencing organization performance should be rare and cannot be easily imitated by other organizations. That means organization will only enjoy superior performance if its resources are rare and inimitable. Akio (2005) opined that in addition to rareness and uniqueness, resources should be well coordinated and managed to make the organization achieve a competitive edge. Furthermore, Wright and McMahan (1992) opined that internal policies and systems can be a source of competitiveness when properly aligned with organization's competitive strategy. Thus, Newbert (2007) contends that realization of the potential value of resources is dependent on the strategy of the organization and how the strategy is implemented and resources utilized. Casting the same eye, Peteraf (1993) adds that the main reason for the organization to achieve its competitive edge is within itself.

Following some additional discussion and opinions on the subject matter, some confusion exists on whether to term the theory as resource-based view (RBV) or resource-based theory (RBT). Some studies prefer to use the term RBV, but arguments abound for the usage of the term RBT. Anecdotal evidence has shown that the view has evolved enough into a theory. Reflecting on the evidence provided in the literature using RBT, it is obvious that the view has now evolved into the theory as many researchers support the use of RBT (Utami & Alamanos 2023; Kozlenkova, Samaha & Palmatier, 2014).

From this discussion, one major question is “what constitutes a resource?” Penrose (1959) views a resource in terms of either physical or human capital. To her, physical capital constitutes tangible property of the organization including land and equipment together with human capital which consists of knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by organization’s workforce. On the other hand, Wernerfelt (1984) considers resources as those attributes of organization’s human, physical and organizational capital that enable organizations implement their strategies to achieve competitive edge. All these categorizations and definitions given culminate into the contention given by Barney (1991) that the valuable, rare, imperfectly inimitable and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources discern how it creates value to enable the organization achieve its competitive edge.

According to Barney (1991) a resource is valuable if it helps an organization meet its demands. Human resources meet this criterion through possession of skills, knowledge and capabilities that transform materials into valuable products or use their skills, knowledge and capabilities to provide quality services to meet customer needs. On rareness, Barney (1991) defines it as a degree to which a resource is unique or scarce relative to competitors. Human resource as a rare resource enable an organization to offer products or services that are distinct from those of other organizations and this can attract customers who value the unique benefits provided. Likewise, strategic human resource management can offer public organizations unique strategies to manage scarce resource in comparison to other organizations.

In the context of resource-based theory (RBT), “inimitable resource” refers to a resource that makes it difficult for competitors to imitate (Barney, 1991). That is, while it may not be impossible to imitate, doing so would be costly, complex, or time-consuming, providing a competitive advantage to the organization that possesses it. The management of human resources involves complex social interrelationships, interactions, cultures, or networks that are difficult to imitate. These create unique strategic organizational cultures that may be deeply ingrained and complex for other organizations to imitate. The human, social, and cultural intricacies are difficult to replicate because they involve intangible and intricate human, and social processes and relationships.

Non-substitutability on the other hand, refers to a key attribute of a resource that makes an organization outcompete other organizations. A resource is considered non-substitutable if there are no other resources or capabilities that can serve as an equivalent substitute to achieve the same strategic benefits (Barney, 1991). Human resources enhance an organization’s ability to sustain its performance because other organizations cannot easily replicate the resource with an alternative. Human resources cannot be replaced by something else that provides the same level of value. Skills, talent, knowledge, and capabilities possessed by an employee remain with him/her throughout one’s life. No

one can pluck out skills, talent and knowledge gained by an employee throughout work processes and experience.

This discussion indicates that resources that meet the VRIN criterion enable organizations to do things and behave in ways that lead to higher organizational performance. The emphasis is placed on implementing strategic human resource management practices that will create unique employee behaviour patterns to make full utilization of valuable human resources (Collins, 2020). Therefore, this study suggests that RBT offers a theoretical foundation for elucidating why SHRM practices have a positive effect on organizational performance. SHRM is a strategy for improving performance by connecting HRM practices with organizational strategic goals. Thus, RBT regards the implementation of SHRM practices as superior that provides a foundation for organizations to achieve higher performance.

2.2 Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Before Industrial Revolution, the relationship between employers and employees was informal. People lived in small groups where the main economic activities were small-scale farming. Artisan handcrafts also played a significant role in enhancing people's living and this went hand in hand with the agricultural activities. Artisan handcraft was a one-man show, with the master and the learners. The master was responsible for the learners' welfare and survival. In this case, the nature of employment was informal and today's formal methods of managing employees were non-existent.

The emergency of the factory system and ultimately Industrial Revolution changed completely the nature of work relationships. People moved from their agrarian lives and headed to towns and cities to find paid employment. This trend changed completely employment relationships as people were demanding paid jobs. The demand for paid jobs necessitated the need to develop mechanisms to manage people at work. But most strategies used were rudimental as they were directed towards treating employees like machines or any other resources. In this case, people were not considered as strategic assets to the performance of an organization.

During that time, the philosophy of managing people was centered on Henry Ford's views that workers were only to carry out their duties based on the orders given by their employer. This notion limited the breeding of new ideas, innovation, and knowledge sharing. This suggests that work and production rates were more important than employees. Managers who were in charge of workers had the major objective of protecting the organization's interests at the expense of workers. Employers believed that workers would perform better in achieving organization goals when rudimental mechanisms of managing them were in place. Consequently, rudimental, rigid, uncouth practices and un-standardized systems of managing workers to promote their efficiency and organization's productivity were considered significant.

People were highly discouraged as their physical, psychological, and mental health were affected. This affected their work performance and ultimately organization's productivity. It is against this background that scientific management approaches led by scholars such as Fredrick W. Taylor emerged. Taylor believed that work processes could be analyzed, measured, and improved by using scientific methods. He believed that it was possible to determine the most efficient ways to perform tasks and thereby improve employees'

performance. He advanced the idea that workers and managers need to cooperate to achieve optimal performance and those workers should be scientifically selected and trained for their specific roles to be more productive.

From Taylor's scientific determination of employer-employee relationships, other important perspectives for managing workers followed suit including the human relations perspective advocated by Elton Mayo (1920s) which was built on the premise that social and psychological factors such as worker's satisfaction, interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics significantly impact organization's effectiveness. Also, Maslow's hierarchy of needs perspective with the key assumption that people have needs that are arranged in a hierarchical order of importance from the most basic needs to the more complex needs, and that these needs influence their behaviour.

Other perspectives included Herzberg's two-factor theory, McGregor's theory X and Y; Expectancy perspective, Alderfer's perspective, and many others. Fundamentally, all these perspectives marked a more refined beginning of strategic human resource management in organizations. Therefore, SHRM has evolved from a rudimentary level to the modern level and has now become an indispensable tool for organization's success and performance.

SHRM is a comprehensive approach that aligns an organization's human resource practices with its overall business strategy to achieve long-term goals and enhance organizational performance. It emphasizes the integration of HR practices with strategic business objectives, ensuring that human resources are utilized effectively to support and drive the organization's vision and mission. Wright and McMahan (2011) define SHRM as the process of linking human resource management practices and policies to an organization's strategic objectives to improve performance and foster competitive advantage. It involves systems; processes and practices intended to influence competencies, attitudes, and behaviour of the workforce towards exerting much of their efforts to achieve the strategic goals of the organization.

Caliskan (2010) views SHRM as a means of creating a strategic focus between the general strategic goals of the organization and the organization's strategy of managing human resources. Likewise, Boxall and Purcell (2011) define SHRM as the process of managing work and people in an organization to achieve organization goals. What is common in all these definitions is that SHRM is geared towards influencing the human aspect of the organization to achieve its competitive edge.

Originally, the SHRM concept took its root from 1980s and was dominated by US scholars such as Dyer (1984); Beer *et al.* (1984), and Fombrun *et al.* (1984). Their concern was to find ways of explaining the role of human resources in enhancing organization performance and to design an appropriate model of HRM that would link the management of human resources with organizational strategy. However, the roots of SHRM go back to the 1950s when scholars such as Drucker and McGregor emphasized the need for visionary goal-oriented leadership and the management of business integration (Yahiaoui *et al.*, 2015). These scholars placed a great value on human resources and emphasized that human resources are key to the success of any organization.

In effect, the proliferation of SHRM was initiated to reverse the traditional human resource management (personnel management) where people were managed like any other

resources and were not considered as strategic assets to the performance of an organization. As such, the responsibilities of HRM department were based on routine tasks such as hiring and firing employees together with running payroll system. In this case, the core functions of HRM professionals were administrative and regarded as cost to an organization without any profit value. As such, it was considered bureaucratic and hierarchical in nature. It relied on strict rules, regulations and procedures to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. This indicates that HRM professionals were not involved in making strategic decisions in an organization.

In contrast, SHRM focuses more on the fit between human resources, management practices and organizational strategic goals to make organizations successful (Mitchell et al., 2013). It aims at increasing efficiency and effectiveness in performance by relying on conditions that encourage employees' involvement in decision-making and commitment to the goals of an organization and their willingness to exert considerable efforts to make organizations achieve their competitive edge. Thus, scholars such as Kehoe and Wright (2018) opined that SHRM places more emphasis on investments in human capital to enhance employees' performance than personnel management. In SHRM human resource professionals are directly involved in making important decisions as well as formulating organizational strategies (Delery & Roumpi, 2017). Such strategies enable employees to develop competencies, attitudes, and behaviors which in turn impact public servants in delivering quality services.

According to Storey *et al.* (2019), SHRM differs from personnel management as it focuses on HRM practices that stimulate employees' attitudes and behaviors needed to implement an organization's strategy. It emphasizes more on the importance of using appropriate reward systems and other HRM measures to enhance employees' performance and achieve the strategic goals of the organization (Mitchell et al., 2013). This signifies that SHRM creates a better work environment that enhances higher levels of output from public servants. Therefore, SHRM focuses more on the management of internal resources (human resources) to enhance the organization's competitive advantage. In this regard, it is linked with the resource-based theory (Kehoe & Wright, 2018; Barney, 1991). They argue that SHRM helps an organization procure competent, skilled, talented, motivated, committed, and knowledgeable employees who can work to enable the organization to gain a competitive advantage. This implies that SHRM practices create exceptionality that makes the management of human resources difficult to imitate. It, therefore, satisfies the conditions necessary for organizations to achieve a competitive edge. In this case, human capital needs to be managed and coordinated appropriately to enhance the performance of public organizations.

Given these arguments, this conceptual paper adopts resource-based theory as a theoretical lens for the proper management of human resources in public organizations. The argument is that proper management of human resources is a panacea for public organizations to achieve super performance. Public service organizations need to ensure that human resources' crucial attributes of knowledge, skills, talents, and know-how are better harnessed by proper and effective utilization of SHRM practices to enable them to deliver quality services.

2.3 SHRM and Organization's Effectiveness

Many public organizations face a volatile economic condition backed up by the global competitive nature. To create and sustain competitive advantage in this type of environment, these organizations need to continually improve their daily performance operations. Increasingly, both public and private organizations are recognizing the potential of their human resources as the source of sustained competitive advantage. Linked to this view, SHRM has taken a ride as an appropriate model for managing human resources to achieve organizational goals.

The key assumption underpinning SHRM is that people are the organization's key resources and organizational performance largely depends on them. This implies that if the appropriate range of SHRM practices are developed and strategically implemented, then human resources will make a substantial impact on the organization's competitiveness.

In recent times, there has been a growing number of studies showing a positive relationship between SHRM and organizational performance. These studies have initiated a hot debate among organizations and academics trying to view SHRM as a new model of managing human resources to exploit their knowledge, skills, talents, and capabilities in accordance with organization strategies to achieve organization goals (Mitchel *et al.*, 2013). The essence is that by aligning HR strategies with organizational goals, better allocation of human resources to areas that drive growth and competitive advantage is achieved.

In this conceptual paper, it is argued that various SHRM practices if properly deployed can make a substantial impact on organizational performance. Such practices include recruitment and selection, training and development, employee compensation, performance evaluation, motivation management, job design, talent management, and supervision.

Recruitment and selection: Strategic human resource management enables organizations to recruit employees with the needed knowledge, and skills. According to Wright *et al.*, (2001), recruitment and selection processes when strategically aligned with organizational goals help in building a workforce capable of achieving long-term objectives of an organization. By targeting appropriate employees with specific competencies, talents, and potentials, organizations can enhance their strategic capabilities and sustain competitive advantage. According to Jiang *et al.* (2012) structured recruitment process and the use of technology in selection lead to improved job performance and organizational success. That is, by strategically positioning recruitment and selection processes with strategic organization's objectives, public organizations can better identify individuals whose skills, knowledge, experience, talents, values, and competencies align well with the organization's performance goals and culture. This alignment enhances employee engagement, reduces turnover, minimizes training costs, attracts high-quality employees, and enhances team collaboration while promoting a harmonious working environment and increased productivity. All these influence the direction of public organizations toward achieving their strategic goals.

Training and development: They are very indispensable SHRM practices that help in enhancing employee's skills, knowledge and competencies capable of improving employee's ability to perform more efficiently. Many scholars are of the view that training and development not only improve knowledge, skills and competencies of employees, but also help to change employees' attitudes and behaviour (Karia *et al.*, 2016; Tahir *et al.*, 2014).

For instance, the study by Chechi and Sresh (2023) demonstrated that effective training and development programs significantly boost employee morale and engagement, leading to lower turnover rates. It promotes greater creativity and adaptability leading to higher levels of innovation and flexibility in response to today's global competition. Cameron and Quinn (2024) highlighted that well-structured training and development programs contribute to a stronger organizational culture and alignment. It enables employees to understand the scope, expectations and depth of their jobs and acts as building blocks to employees' professionalism as they progress through their career. Adekola (2012) holds that training and development results in increased organizational commitment therefore, organizations that invest in employees' training and development are more successful in attracting and retaining top talents that drive organization's competitive advantage. This implies that if training and development are correctly aligned with organization strategies, public organizations may not only reduce not only turnover cost but also organization's dependence on outside consultation.

Employee Compensation: It is a SHRM practice dedicated to deal with all direct and indirect monetary and non-monetary rewards given to employees in return for their service. Direct compensation includes salaries, wages, bonuses and overtime payment. Indirect compensation include things such as medical benefits, housing allowance, meal allowances, leave allowances and other fringe benefits (Dessler, 2005). As Ramli (2018) highlighted good compensation stimulates innovation and creativity and makes the health of the employees also good. Healthier employees make maximum contribution to the organization. He also emphasized that compensation has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction and performance. This is because people work to gain material needs and money is one of them. As Jiang *et al.* (2024) contend that organizations that align their compensation strategies with organization's strategic goals achieve better performance. This implies that by linking compensation to performance metrics, public organizations can increase motivation and productivity as employees are incentivized to achieve performance above normal to attain organization goals.

Performance evaluation: Armstrong and Taylor (2014) consider performance evaluation as the process through which employees and their supervisors gain a common understanding of work expectations and goals, share performance feedback, identify learning and development needs and opportunities and evaluate performance results basing on pre-determined standards. According to Muhammad and Surayya (2013), performance evaluation is one of the important SHRM practices that provide useful information for managerial decisions. Its results can be used for administrative decisions, employee training and development and in improving employee and organization performance. Other scholars are of the view that performance evaluation enables the organization to create and sustain a workplace environment that values continuous improvement; adapts changes, strive to achieve goals; career development, rewarding and involving employees in decision making. It provides feedback on employee performance, increases motivation, identifies training needs and provides information necessary for making promotion decisions (Ademola, 2017; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Performance evaluation has a direct role in ensuring that employees are motivated and have the opportunity to use their skills. In this case, public organizations can rely on the performance evaluation practices to guide in the strategic direction of the organization. When employees see that their efforts are valued and that they have opportunities for growth, they are more likely to be motivated and productive.

This implies that performance evaluation enables public organizations identify knowledge and skill gaps and therefore, provide training and development opportunities that enhance employees' competencies and adapt to changing organization needs.

Motivation management: It is a crucial SHRM practice that when properly aligned with organization goals influences employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organization success. By effectively managing motivation, organizations can enhance employee performance, reduce turnover rates, and achieve strategic goals. As Jiang and Kleiner (2023) suggest, motivation management strategies such as recognition and opportunities for advancement, contribute to higher job satisfaction. Satisfied employees are more likely to put in discretionary efforts and are less likely to leave, which reduces turnover and the associated costs of recruitment and training. Meyer and Allen (2023) hold that employees who are effectively motivated tend to exhibit greater organizational commitment. That means they are more likely to align their personal goals with organizational objectives and work towards achieving them. Also, motivated employees are more likely to collaborate effectively and contribute innovative ideas. When motivation strategies are aligned with organization strategies, employees work more collaboratively, share knowledge, and drive innovation. This leads to higher achievement and enables organizations to attain a competitive edge.

Job design: It significantly impacts organizational performance by enhancing job satisfaction and motivation, improving job performance, reducing turnover, increasing efficiency and productivity, and fostering innovation. According to Fried and Ferris (2023), job design signifies structuring jobs to improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and performance. It leads to increased motivation and better quality work. Employees become more engaged when their roles are meaningful and provide opportunities for skill utilization and personal growth. This will limit the chance for employees to seek other employment opportunities elsewhere (Lee & Mitchell, 2023). As Parker and Axtell (2024) noted, well-designed jobs streamline workflows and reduce inefficiencies, minimizing redundancy while encouraging innovation and creativity.

Talent Management: Davies and Davies (2015) view talent management as a systematic process of identifying, attracting, developing, engaging, retaining and deploying employees with high potentials. Armstrong (2014) holds that talent management enables organizations to retain best employees in the most strategic roles and this facilitates achievement of sustainable competitive advantage. All in all, talent is harder to find and nurture and easier to waste and lose, therefore organizations need to leverage their top talents in order to remain competitive. If public organizations integrate correctly talent management capabilities with the strategies and embed this in their daily operations, they can better achieve their goals. Kuvaas and Dysvik (2023) hold that, effective talent management strategies such as career development plans, recognition programs and competitive compensation improve employee engagement and satisfaction. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with the organization, driving innovation, reducing turnover and associated costs. This implies that effective talent management strategies enhance a culture of learning and organizational agility to enable them respond more effectively to the changes in the external environment

Employee supervision: Supervision refers to the process with designated functions involving overseeing people at work to produce the best possible results (Rulandari, 2017).

Purity *et al.*, (2017) on the other hand, contend that supervision is a key SHRM practice concerned with efforts to guide the day-to-day activities of the work group by stimulating, directing, and coordinating the workers and their efforts toward realizing organizational goals. The gurus of management such as Henry Fayol argue that supervision ensures that the efforts of subordinates are properly directed towards set goals. This helps to identify weaknesses and correct mistakes to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the overall performance of the organization.

Katz and Khan (2024) highlight that effective supervision contributes to achieving organizational goals by ensuring that employees are aligned with organizational objectives, working efficiently, and performing at their best. Roelofsen (2002) holds that improved supervision results in a reduction in several complaints and absenteeism. It creates dynamic growth; and establishes high professional standards and better quality services. It also creates a parallel relationship between employees and management that can be replicated in the relationship between employees and customers. It encourages employees to undertake their tasks using all their efforts and abilities to achieve organizational goals. Thus, Ardanyah and Wasilawati (2014) highlight that an employee will exert all his/her ability to carry out the work when there is a coordinated supervisory system and rules of discipline. Baker and Smith (2023) argue that effective supervision fosters open communication and positive team dynamics. Clear communication helps prevent misunderstanding and conflicts, leading to better team collaboration and performance.

Table1: Summary of SHRM practices that impact organizational performance

SHRM Practices	How it impacts organizational performance
Recruitment and selection	When strategically aligned with organizational goals, public organizations can better procure individuals with the knowledge, skills, experience and talent who are capable to drive organizations competitive advantage. By ensuring a good job fit, reducing turnover, increasing organizational effectiveness, improving morale and aligning with strategic goals, public organizations can enhance their overall success and competitive position
Training and development	Enlarge the knowledge and skill base of employees and develop the competence and experience needed for the workforce to drive organization's competitive edge. It encourages discretionary learning that helps to change employees' attitude and behaviour. If strategically positioned, it helps employees build their profession, increase commitment to attain goals while reducing turnover and organization's dependent on outside consultations. All these promote public organizations to attain their competitive edge.
Employee compensation	If strategically aligned with organizational goals, it can attract, retain, and motivate employees to enable public organizations to achieve their competitive advantage. It can significantly impact commitment, motivation, and satisfaction and enhance organizational performance.
Performance evaluation	If strategically positioned with organizational goals, it can enhance employee engagement, continuous development, informed decision-making, and improved public organization's outcomes.

SHRM Practices	How it impacts organizational performance
Motivation management	If strategically aligned with organizational goals, it can enhance employee productivity, job satisfaction, and retention; improved commitment, fostering team collaboration and innovation that ultimately enable public service organizations to achieve their competitive edge.
Job design	It impacts positively public service organizations by enhancing job satisfaction, motivation, and improved job performance; reducing turnover; increase efficiency and productivity while fostering innovation and creativity.
Talent management	When strategically aligned with organizational goals, it can enable public organizations to identify, attract, develop, engage, retain, and deploy appropriate employee potentials to achieve a competitive edge. It can enhance employee performance and productivity, and foster agility and innovation towards driving better performance.
Employee Supervision	Impacts public organizations' performance by enhancing productivity, job satisfaction, motivation, improved communication and team dynamics; supporting employee development, and reducing turnover while creating sustainable relationships between employees and management that can be replicated to customers. It facilitates clear communication that prevents misunderstanding and conflicts enabling the organization to achieve better performance.

Source: Researcher own Construct (2024)

3.0 Methodology

This is a conceptual paper that employed a desk review of empirical and theoretical literature. The study is descriptive where academic journal articles, textbooks, reports, working papers, policy papers, conference proceedings, and government publications were reviewed. To ensure the quality and relevance of the reviewed material, the selection criteria for sampled literature included relevance, credibility, recency, rigorous studies together with methodological diversity. The reviewed literature were sorted, organized, and categorized based on the themes and framework of the study. The researcher observed key arguments presented in the existing literature, patterns, contradictions, and gaps to gain a holistic view of the literature.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

The reviewed literature has indicated that RBT provides theoretical knowledge on understanding the crucial role SHRM plays in managing human resources for organizations to achieve a competitive edge. The theory has spawned considerable attention to contend that human resources are the key resources that drive an organization's performance. Hence, if a proper assortment of SHRM practices, policies, procedures, and systems are developed and deployed effectively, then SHRM will register a huge impact on employees

and organizational performance. Implicitly, public organizations can achieve their strategic goals and have a competitive advantage over other organizations if they can synergize their SHRM practices appropriately in response to the changing nature of the global business environment. This is supported by Moss and Tansky (2023) who noted that effective use of SHRM practices fosters employee motivation, engagement, and satisfaction leading to better performance. It indicates that the effective use of SHRM practices among public organizations has a huge impact on employee performance by fostering motivation, development, job satisfaction, and alignment with organizational goals. These practices when well executed result in better productivity, engagement, and overall performance.

RBT contends that employees possess implicit knowledge, skills, talents, and capabilities that if properly deployed can enhance the performance of public organizations. As Wright and McMahan (2023) argue, human resources satisfy VRIN conditions and therefore, serve as sources of organization's competitiveness. Thus, Muriithi and Bayene (2014) hold that SHRM practices should be correctly linked to organization's strategic objectives to achieve super performance. This implies that public organizations must develop a clear link between SHRM systems and their strategic goals to ensure that employees are optimally utilized for the attainment of a sustained organizational competitive edge.

The findings from the reviewed literature also show that in practice, RBT supports public organizations, in particular, to be more competitive and facilitates workers' adaptation to government-changing roles from the need for knowledge, experience, skills, and talent to the development and management of delivering quality services. The global competition is forcing public organizations to provide services that surpass the services provided by private organizations. Customers are becoming more aware of the quality of services and products offered, therefore, the role of public organizations is to satisfy customer expectations. As Kuse and Wanyoike (2022) contend, to achieve these objectives most effectively, public organizations must improve their operations, human resource management styles and capabilities, policies, and systems while reducing cost without compromising quality and differentiation in all aspects.

Based on the foregoing, the RBT provides a theoretical lens for understanding that human resources are vital resources for public organizations and that SHRM is the appropriate system of managing them to achieve superior performance. This implies that in a workplace, these resources bring with them knowledge, skills, intelligence, talent and capabilities that when properly deployed enable public organizations become more competitive. The findings are supported by Wright and McMahan (2023) who stated that human resources have potentials that need to be managed effectively for the organization to achieve its goals. The SHRM practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance evaluation, motivation management, job design, talent management, and supervision can influence employee's knowledge, skills, attitude, competencies, and behaviour towards exerting much effort to achieve strategic goals of the organization.

The findings from the reviewed literature indicate that RBT provides an insight into the understanding of the need for systematic recruitment and selection to increase the possibility of public organizations procuring the right caliber of employees. This shows that a well-structured and evidence-based recruitment and selection process ensures that public organizations acquire employees who are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-

substitutable. This not only enhances employee performance but also fosters long-term organizational success and competitive advantage. By focusing on the right fit, reducing turnover, enhancing motivation, predicting job performance, and supporting strategic goals, systematic recruitment and selection practices help public organizations maximize the potential of their workforce and improve overall performance. The findings are supported by Chukwuka (2010) who emphasized that a well-articulated recruitment, selection, and placement of qualified personnel will lead to increased productivity, work efficiency and effectiveness, heightened employee morale and motivation, reduced supervision, organization stability, and flexibility. But when recruitment is poorly conducted and not linked to organization strategies, the most insidious consequence is poor performance and survival of the organization.

It is pathetic to note that irrespective of how laudable the roles of public organizations are, they will remain non-achievable without appropriate recruitment, selection, and placement (Chimwendu & Godbless, 2023). This implies that potential attributes of employees are needed for public organizations to meet their sustained performance. These attributes are obtained only when recruitment, selection, and placement are given due consideration and aligned with organizational strategies. Many organizations both public and private have gone moribund in their performance due to improper recruitment and selection processes.

On training and development, the findings from the reviewed literature indicate that RBT increases knowledge of the importance of training and development among public service organizations. The theory claims that the internal resources of an organization are the source of its competitiveness. Therefore, these resources are key to the performance of public organizations to achieve strategic goals. Public organizations are labor-intensive and service-oriented as opposed to manufacturing organizations. As such, the uniqueness of their internal resources (human resources) is guaranteed and nurtured through the application of effective SHRM practices. Practices such as training and development produce employees with the knowledge, skills, talent and competencies required to enhance the provision of quality services. The implication is that human resources' uniqueness in public organizations is not only based on improved knowledge, skills, talents and competencies, but also on other behavioural outcomes such as satisfaction, motivation, commitment, trust and retention. These outcomes shape employees' attitudes and behaviors that in turn influence employees' willingness to exert considerable efforts to provide renowned services. In the rapidly changing environment of public administration, investing in these practices ensures that employees are equipped to deliver high-quality services to citizens, maintain ethical standards and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organization. The findings are supported by Saks (2020) who recommended that training and development in the public sector is essential for meeting the demands of modern governance and ensuring the successful delivery of public services.

The findings from the reviewed literature show that RBT brings to understanding the critical role of compensation in the performance of employees and organization in general. Lawler (2023) supported this by indicating that compensation enhances employees' motivation when it is perceived as fair and strategically aligned with organization goals. It was also spearheaded by Fulmer *et al.* (2023) who emphasized that effective compensation is a powerful determinant of job attraction and employee retention, enhances the relationship between employees and management, and helps to reduce stress all of which contributes to

improved performance. This implies that by deploying fair and competitive compensation strategies in terms of salaries, allowances, and other incentives both financial and non-financial, public organizations can enhance employees' willingness to exert more efforts to achieve organizational goals. Furthermore, it can increase employee morale, motivation, and commitment to achieve goals, attract top talent, and reduce turnover and complaints among employees which could otherwise lead to delayed service delivery.

The reviewed literature has also revealed that RBT brings to the fore the need for effective performance evaluation among public organizations. When performance evaluation is correctly aligned with organization strategies, it influences organization's effectiveness. This implies that performance evaluation provides employees with an opportunity to set performance goals. Setting goals provides guidelines and direction to employees on how their efforts are directed toward achieving organizational goals. This triggers employees' commitment, confidence inter alia belongingness to perform to achieve the set goals. Equally important is how employees communicate with management and among themselves through feedback received. Sharing such necessary information is a powerful tool for managers in public organizations to develop and sustain employees' and organizations' performance. This implies that employees are rational human beings who wish to know what happens around them particularly when evaluated. The feedback they get related to their performance goes a long way to affect their morale, motivation, and efficiency in undertaking their work.

Furthermore, the reviewed literature indicates that RBT provides insight into the understanding of the role motivation plays in enhancing employees' efficiency and effectiveness. Akinsanya and Oludayi (2020) supported this by indicating that motivation is a factor that energizes, directs and sustains human behaviour; therefore, knowledge of motivating employees at work is as important as the work itself. Omolawal (2017) on the other hand holds that adequate knowledge of motivational issues in public organizations is indispensable for effective management of employees. This implies that effective SHRM hinges on the understanding of and ability to manage motivational issues and use them as tools to get the best out of them.

Implicitly, the findings from the reviewed literature have revealed that RBT adds knowledge to job design by indicating that well-structured jobs improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and performance. This was supported by Moussa and Al-Hawari (2022) who stated that well-designed jobs lead to increased productivity and higher employee performance in public organizations. They argue that clear task definition, task variety, and appropriate autonomy result in more efficient service delivery and higher organizational effectiveness. This implies that by emphasizing elements such as job enrichment and job enlargement and considering factors such as achievements, recognition, and nature of work itself, job satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty can be achieved.

The findings have also revealed that RBT brings to understanding talent management as a critical SHRM practice that if correctly aligned with organization strategies can enhance the organization's competitive advantage. Effective talent management leads to higher employee productivity and better service delivery, which directly benefits the public by improving the quality and efficiency of services provided by government bodies and public institutions. According to Morris and Williams (2023) when organizations invest in talent

management, they create an environment that encourages innovation and allows for flexibility in responding to changing policies, economic conditions, and citizen needs. This agility is crucial in a public sector environment where new challenges emerge frequently. This implies that effective management of talent among public organizations helps in retaining top talent which is crucial for maintaining performance levels. Therefore, public organizations should leash talent management practices such as career development opportunities, recognition programs, recruitment and selection processes, performance management, and motivation programs as all these enhance employee performance and organizational success.

Lastly, the findings have revealed that RBT brings to the fore the need for effective supervision. Katz and Khan (2024) support this by indicating that effective supervision contributes to achieving organizational goals by ensuring that employees are correctly aligned with organizational goals to work effectively to achieve such goals. They further argue that supervisors who offer resources, training and development opportunities, support, and performance feedback and reduce role ambiguity lead to improved job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. This implies that public service organizations need to ensure proper and effective supervision practices and this can foster open communication, reduce conflicts and misunderstanding, and create dynamic growth while establishing professional standards. When good communication between management and employees prevails employees will perform amicably toward the best possible organizational outcomes.

5.0 Conclusion

From the issues raised above, it is evident that RBT has made remarkable contributions to and forms a theoretical lens for the effective implementation of SHRM practices by showing the crucial role of human resources as the key resources for sustained competitive advantage. Effective implementation of SHRM practices entails full knowledge of employees in the workplace, their interaction with management, and how management in public organizations can nurture SHRM practices to enhance the motivation, satisfaction, competencies, and productivity of employees. The theory provides an insight into the nature and important considerations when implementing SHRM practices, particularly for public organizations. SHRM practices need to be manipulated and utilized effectively to get the best out of employees. Public organization leaders are therefore challenged to be fully knowledgeable about the tenets of the RBT and those common factors considered pertinent to the management of people at work. When public organizations take this on board, employees can be managed easily towards achieving an organizational competitive edge.

6.0 Recommendations

Given the study findings from the reviewed literature, the following recommendations are put forward;

- i. Public organizations should implement a well-structured and evidence-based recruitment and selection process to attract and retain individuals with the necessary skills, competencies, and values to meet their strategic goals and deliver high- quality services to the citizens.
- ii. They should continue investing in the development of the workforce to improve organizational effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and public service delivery and meet the challenges of the changing work environment.
- iii. They should implement competitive compensation packages in order to retain skilled and talented employees in the public sector for effective service delivery.
- iv. They should emphasize the need for fair and transparent performance evaluation as this helps to identify areas for improvement, optimize resources, and align employees' efforts with organizational goals.
- v. They should focus on well-structured jobs and effective talent management strategies as such practices are critical for achieving organizational goals, improving service delivery, and ensuring a motivated, capable workforce.

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