

# Evaluating the Effectiveness of Human Resource Accounting Practices, Civil Servant Productivity in Osun State

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*The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of human resource accounting on performance. The effect of HRA learning costs (on the job training, special training and development programmes) on performance was examined. The study examined the effect of on-the-Job Training costs on performance of Civil servants in Osun State, Nigeria; evaluates the effect of Special Training Costs on performance and examined the impact of Development program Costs on performance of the respondents. Primary and secondary data were used for the study. Simple random and purposive sampling was used to select three hundred and ten (310) respondents. Ordinary Least Square Regression analysis (OLS) was used to analyze all objectives of the study. The HRA learning cost (on-the-job training cost) have positive and significant effect on employee competence; development program cost have a significant effect on employee competence while special training cost does not have significant effect on the level of competence of the employees. HRA learning cost collectively has positive and significant effect on performance of the respondents. The study concluded that HRA affects organizational performance positively and significantly.*

*Keywords: Human Resource Accounting, Employee Performance, Employee Competence and Learning Costs.*

## Introduction

The economy of the world has shifted from the industrial era that saw plants and machinery as the core assets of organizations to a knowledge economy that perceived human resources as the most important asset of organizations. The employees (human resources) are the custodian of knowledge, core competence; experience and innovation that is useful for organizations to actualize their objectives. These resources possessed by the human resources are measurable, both in market and non-market conditions. Therefore, the human resource is that factor of production that coordinates other factors of production (Edom, et. al., 2015). The Human Resource Accounting (HRA) involves the recognition of employees as assets, valuing, investing and reporting them accordingly to all interested parties. It is the measurement of all investment directed towards acquisition, maintenance and addition of knowledge and skills to the work force in a bid to achieve satisfactory organizational performance. In addition to this, Eric Flamholtz considers “HRA as the measurement of the cost and worth of the employees in the organization” (Mohiuddin & Meher, 2017; Bader, 2017; Aquilino, Elisabete, & Joao, 2017; Ananda & Kavitha, 2019). The need to establish that human resources are organizational asset has led to the execution of several studies seeking relationship between costs invested on employees and their performance (Surarchith, et. al., 2017) Employee performance is the accumulated end results of all the work processes and activities of employees; it is a proxy for organization performance. Organizational performance on the other hand is the difference of standard performance and actual performance, it can be measured economically or operationally or both (Hashem, 2015 and Sajuyigbe, et. al., 2020). The need to examine relationship between HRA-cost approach and performance of Public workers necessitated this study (Asha, 2012; Ondoro, 2015; Incise, 2018; Tine, et. al., 2019).

In literature, most works on HRA were conducted in the developed countries seeking relationship between HRA and organizational performance across both the public and the private sectors (Bullen & Eyler, 2010; Okeke, 2016; Aquilino, et. al., 2017) but most of the study on HRA in the African context are conducted in the private sector and Nigeria is not an exception. A c



HRA in the Public sector among African researchers especially in the Nigeria context necessitated this study. Edom, et. al., (2015) measured HRA (Human Resource Cost (HRC)) using cost of training & development; Omodero & Ihendinihu (2017) measured HRA with training & development, and motivation cost while Ogwuche, et. al., (2022) measures HRA with cost of training, health care and safety. Despite their unanimous acceptance of training cost as important to organizational performance, it was found that the indices of training costs which are, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Special Training (ST), & Development Program Costs (DPC) (Venus & Ibarra, 2016) were not independently addressed in all the studies. Also, all the studies focused on private firms and in addition to this, all these three cost are better considered as learning cost just as this study has treated them so as to accommodate more organizational learning programmes. Due to the need to examine HRA and performance of Public workers (Civil servant) so as to broaden the literature of HRA in the Nigerian context, the three indices of learning costs identified above were independently and collectively analyzed against performance so as to improve on previous studies (Amahalu, et. al., 2017; Sunil, & Priyanka, 2018; Akinjare, et. al., 2019). Also, the need to adopt operational index of performance measurement becomes obvious because the government departments sampled are non-profit oriented. As a result of this, operational measurement of performance like employee competence considered as an outcome of learning was considered more appropriate for this study (Asha, 2012; Incise, 2018).

The study is interested in the following questions: what is the effect of HRA (On-the-Job Training costs) on performance of Civil servants in Osun State, Nigeria? What is the extent of influence of HRA (Special Training Costs) on their performance? and what is the impact of HRA (Development program Costs) on performance of the respondents?

Arising from this, this study examined the effect of HRA (On-the-Job Training costs) on performance of Civil servants in Osun State, Nigeria; evaluates the effect of HRA (Special Training Costs) on their performance and examined the impact of HRA (Development program Costs) on performance of the respondents. This study therefore examines effect of HRA-learning cost on performance of Civil servants in Osun State, Nigeria.

## Reviews

### Conceptual Review

#### *Human Resource Accounting*

American Accounting Association defined Human resource accounting as an act of recognizing, measuring and reporting the financial information (the cost needed to recruit, train and develops, evaluates and reward employees etc.) of the human resource so as to help professionals at all levels of management get the best out of their employees (Ofurum & Adeola, 2018; Sunil, & Priyanka, 2018). The American Accounting Society Committee on Human Resource Accounting (HRA) defines HRA as an act of identifying and measuring information concerning the human resources of an organization and communicating it to interested parties". As a new area in Accounting, it does not negate the usual matching of cost and revenues but goes further to identify and measure the benefits that costs invested on the human resource yields to the organization (Amahalu, et. al., 2017). Therefore, the position of HRA remains that the capitalization of costs invested on employee (Learning costs in this context) depicts that they are recognized as organizational asset. These are costs invested to improve employees' skills, knowledge and abilities so as to improve the qualities of organizational performance. These are costs of training (costs of on-the-job-training, costs of special training and development programs) but were recognized in this study as learning costs (Venus & Corazon, 2016).

#### *Organizational Performance*

Organizational performance (OP) defines the degree of an organization's ability to meet the expectations of its constituents (Hashem, 2015). OP measures the degree of achieved result to the expected result (Market Business News, 2021). Luo, et. al., (2012) and Da Silver, (2021) stated that OP can be categorized broadly into two namely; economic performance and operational performance.

i.) The Economic Performance: This refers to measuring OP using market share, share holders' value, sales, and other metrics that are financial defined. These indices are commonly used when studying HRA and performance of profit oriented firms.

ii.) The Operational Performance: measures organization performance by using indices like customer satisfaction and loyalty, firm's social capital, employees' commitment and competence. Operational performance index (employee competence) was used in this study because non-profit oriented employees were sampled and employee competence was considered critical to this study because the respondents are professional Accountants.

Employees' Competence: This is the quality of being qualified, skilled and knowledgeable to perform a given role. Requisite knowledge (information in a field) and skills to handle a given task are the key predictors of employee competence. It is also the degree of measuring employees' willingness to devote their competence, character, consistent response and self-image to work (Tine, et. al., 2019). Employees' competence is a predictor of organizational performance. According to the Head of Civil Service agency release (2003), employees' competence can be streamlined to knowledge, skills, demonstration of high ethical standard of conduct, concise and courtesy filled communication, focus on quality customer service, diligence and availability as at when due (Core Competence Report, 2022). The measures of competence for Accountants are excellent utilization of information technology, computer programmes, spreadsheet, and mathematics skills among others (Conscienti, 2022), these are crucial to the study.

## **Theoretical Review**

### *The Human Capital Theory*

The Human Capital Theory (HCT) was developed by Becker and Schult in early 1960s based on their submission that employees and capital equipment are all organizational asset alike, this theory states that the productive capacity of employees increases through acquiring higher education, skill training, and development and other forms of knowledge. Scholars believed that the excess value created by labour is an incremental capital to an organization. This theory state the condition (i.e. investment in labour) to improve firm performance but this condition is cost-intensive but they have some anticipated future values in returns as well. If employers invested on employees to improve them, it tends to have a motivating effect on them towards their work and can tell on their commitment to work, this is the relevance of this theory to the study while its strength lie in its submission on outstanding employee performance as an offshoot of human capital development. Additional degree and professional qualifications, some specific training and acquisition of some special skills no doubt affects performance within a clearly defined scope of application. HCT may not be able to capture organization's specific need but it gives a general opinion on the need for human capital investment. State governments in order to be custodian of value discharging workforce are expected invest on employee learning so as to earn work outcomes that can portray them as responsible. The government investment in employees is born out of the need for growth, sustainability objective and overall economic benefit for the society (Ekundayo and Odhigu, 2016). In conclusion, the HCT describes the relationship between learning costs (invested by employers) and employees' competence at work (Spender, 1996; Sweetland, 1996; Bassey & Tapang, 2012; Amahalu, et. al., 2017).

## **Empirical Review**

Ogwuche, et. al., (2022) carried out a study on the effect of human resource accounting on performance deposit money Bank in Nigeria listed on the Nigeria stock exchange. The analysis of the secondary data collected using multiple regressions revealed that learning costs (staff training costs) has a positive and significant effect on performance of the organizations.

Onyekwelu & Ironkwe (2021) examined human resource accounting and financial performance of quoted insurance organizations in Nigeria. The least square regression analysis carried out on the secondary data collected revealed that human resource accounting disclosure and training/learning costs exerted a positive and significant effect on financial performance of the organizations. Akinjare, et. al., (2019), studied the impact of human resource accounting on performance of an oil and gas firm in Nigeria. Results arising from the ordinary least square regression analysis revealed that learning cost (staff cost and training and development cost) exerted a positive and significant impact on the financial performance of the companies. In another development, Otniel & Yohanis (2019) examined the effect of human resources development on the financial performance and its impact on corporate governance. The result of the structural equation model analysis conducted on the secondary data

collected revealed that human resources investment results into a better financial performance and lower costs of good governance in private organizations.

Kumar & Priyanka (2018) examined relationship between HRA and organizational performance. The result of OLS regression run on the secondary data collected revealed that HRA have significant relationship with organizational performance. This current study examined HRA and nonfinancial measurement of performance.

Ofurum & Adeola (2018) studied the effect of HRA on organizational profitability in some selected quoted companies in Nigeria. The result of the Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient conducted on the secondary data gathered revealed that there existed no significant relationship between HRA and the profitability of the studied companies.

Etale, et. al., (2016) studied human resource costs and productivity in some selected Universities in Nigeria. Based on secondary data collected from 2002 – 2011, the result of the multiple regression analysis revealed that costs invested on employee learning showed a positive and significant correlation with the productivity of those institutions studied. The study at hand examined the effect of indices of learning costs independently on performance as a contribution to literature of HRA.

Venus & Corazon (2016) also studied on the awareness of the Human Resource Accounting Practices and HRA costs of some selected business organizations in Carmelray Industrial Park Calamba City. Primary data was used to gather employees' perception of their awareness of HRA cost approach. The results showed that there is low level of HRA awareness among the employees. The model used by these authors did not only showed acquisition, learning/training and welfare costs as basic HRA historical cost indices but also states the indices of each of these three indices and sampled employees' perception on them. The current study examined learning costs and operational performance of employees as a contribution to literature of HRA. Akindehinde, et. al., (2015) studied the relationship between HRA and performance of eighteen (18) publicly quoted Banks in Nigeria. Secondary data was used for the study and a regression model was applied, the result revealed that HRA significantly affect the performance of the studied Banks.

Edom, et al., 2015 examined the impact of HRA on the financial performance (profitability) of a Bank in the South Western part of Nigeria. The result from the OLS multiple regression analysis conducted on the secondary data gathered showed that learning cost impact positively and significantly on profitability learning cost was found to impact positively and significantly on profitability. Contrary to the economic measurement used by Edom, et. al., (2015) and Ofurum & Adeola (2018) and some other authors, this study examined the effect of indices of HRA-Learning costs independently and collectively on operational performance of employees as contribution to the literature of HRA. Also, since none of these studies was conducted in a government Civil service; this study therefore examined HRA among government employees of Osun State Civil service.

Arising from the reviewed studies above, the following hypotheses were raised for the study in a null form:

HO1: HRA (on-the-job-training costs) has no effect on performance of the employees  
 HO2: HRA (development programme costs) exert no impact on employee performance.  
 HO3: HRA (Special learning costs) has no impact on performance of employees.

## Methodology

The use of experimental research is necessarily because the study examines the cause and effect being studied. Historical research was used since there is need to draw inference from past occurrence; it shows the importance of past events on present outcomes. The focus of the study is to know how HRA practice affected the services being rendered by the professional accountant in the Civil service of Osun State. These staff were selected due to the capital intensive nature of their training and the huge commitment required of their services. The perception of all employees on cost invested on them and performance of their organization was harvested in both the Accountant-General and Auditor-General office of the Osun State governor resulting to the sample size of 310 respondents; they were selected based on the relevance of their discipline to the study. Civil servants in Osun State

were selected based on the reports of commitment of the states to their human asset development (Nigerian News Direct, 2022). The Aggregate Cost Model was used for the human resource cost valuation and not individual approach in line with Onyekwelu & Ironkwe (2021). A closed ended structured questionnaire rated on 5 point Likert Scale was used to sample the opinion of the respondents from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Descriptive (Tables and percentages) and inferential statistical tools were used for data analysis. Ordinary Least Square Regression analysis (OLS) was used to analyze the effect of indices of learning cost on employees' performance. The homogeneity and heterogeneity of the dataset for the study constructed were also tested.

**Model Specification**

The model adopted for this study was that of Venus & Corazon (2016) but was modified to suit this study. The model 3.1 was used to measure the effects of HRA-cost on employee performance.

$$Y = f (B_1 + B_2 + B_3 + \mu)$$

Y (Dependent Variable) is the Employees Performance (EP), measured via Employee Competence (EC). The denotation for independent variables is human resource accounting measured by indices of Learning Cost (on-the Job Training Cost (JTC), Special Training Cost & Development Program Cost), and f represents the function of the notations. It can therefore be stated specifically as:

$$Y = f(\text{HRA (AC) practice, } \mu)$$

Model for objective three (LC):

The regression equation was based on functional effect as:

$$EP = B_0 + B_1 JTC + B_2 STC + B_3 DPC + \mu \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^n EC_2 = B_0 + B_1 \sum JTC + B_2 \sum STC + B_3 \sum DPC + \mu \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Transforming equation (3) to natural logarithm, it changed to:

$$\sum_{n=1}^n \text{Log } EC_2 \text{ dimensions} = B_0 + B_1 \sum_{n=1}^n \text{Log } JTC + B_2 \sum_{n=1}^n \text{Log } STC + B_3 \sum_{n=1}^n \text{Log } DPC + \mu \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

JTC- On-the-Job Training Cost

STC- Special Training Cost

DPC- Development Program Cost

Y – Dependent variable (Employees' Performance (EP))

B<sub>0</sub> – is the constant of the model

B<sub>n</sub> coefficient of the explanatory variables

μ – is the stochastic or error term

**Results and Discussion of Findings**

The mean, minimum and maximum, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. Arising from this presentation, the result of the descriptive statistics revealed that the values of standard deviations are closer to their respective mean values, this infer that the data is homogeneous while the values for skewness and kurtosis are within the acceptable range. This implies that the data is symmetrical.

The analysis of reliability of the research instrument for this study using Test-Retest Reliability Statistics to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. Values above 0.5 are considered satisfactory (Segal and Coolidge, 2018). The result showed that the values of consistency of the construct used for the study ranges from 0.631 to 0.980 for human resource cost and employee commitment, they are therefore considered acceptable because they are above 0.5

The analysis of effect of learning costs on employee competence. It was revealed that on-the-job training cost has a positive and significant effect on employee competence (β = .0235642 and the P

value = 0.013 at 5% level of significance). Development program cost also has a significant effect on employee competence ( $\beta = .0393221$ ,  $P = 0.000$  at 1% level of significance) while it was found that special training cost has no significant effect on the level of competence of the employees at ( $\beta = .0092587$ ,  $P = 0.388$ ) at 10% level of significance. The R-square of 0.5357 implied that indices of learning cost accounted for about 54.0% changes in employee competence which implied that HRA-learning cost is a predictor of organizational performance. This result of on-the-job training cost and development program cost on performance agreed with Edom, et. al., (2015) and Akinjare, et. al., (2019) that cost of on-the-job-training and development programs have positively and significant effect on employee competence while results from relationship between special training cost and performance is positive but insignificant and this findings contradicts them. This might give us clues to the fact that the departments of Civil Service sampled are not committed much to conducting special training for employees that should have contributed more to the competence of their employees.

The indices of learning cost collectively have positive and significant effect on employee competence. The R-square of 0.5767 from the relationship implies that learning cost accounted for about 58% changes in employee competence in the sampled organizations. This R square is higher compared to that of indices of learning cost independently analyzed against competence suggesting that collective investment on learning (both on and off the job training) have higher predictive power on performance of employees. This result is consistent with Surarchith, et al., (2017) and Akinjare, et. al., (2019) that learning cost affects employee competence positively and significantly but contradicts Ofurum & Adeola (2018) who concluded that human resource accounting has no significant effect on performance. This contradiction could be because of the compatibility of index of performance used against HRA-learning cost in their study.

In lieu of this, hypotheses one and two are therefore rejected while hypothesis three was accepted.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The study examined the effect of Human Resource Accounting on the performance of the Civil Service employees in Osun State Nigeria. The model of Venus & Corazon (2016) was found useful. Arising from the empirical findings of this study, we concluded that HRA Learning cost affects performance of the Civil Service employees positively and significantly. Based on the result from the study, the study recommends that there should be adequate performance enhancing learning for employees to boost their contributions to their employers and employers should endeavor to invest into all kinds of requisite training so as to increase both the individual and collective performance of employees.

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