

**SYSTEMS APPROACH TO THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON ZIMBABWEAN STATE-OWNED
ENTERPRISES' SURVIVAL**

A
Doctoral Thesis
By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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DECLARATION

I, Brian Mutangandebvu, declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Ph.D. in Management Sciences, specializing in Leadership and Complexity, at the Durban University of Technology is the result of my investigation, has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any other degree. I am the sole author of this thesis, and all citations are accurate.

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Human resource management systems and practices are essential to organizational survival. The thesis addresses the appropriate use of Human Resources Management (HRM) practices as well as internal and external challenges and issues, in the context of Zimbabwean State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The thesis argues that following international best practices and putting policies and standard operating procedures in place is key to survival and sustainability of an enterprise. The research problem is that these need to be operationalised cognizant of the context of an enterprise and that of the country, to minimise issues while improving organizational outcomes. The study examined issues related to the inappropriate application of HRM practices as well as internal and external challenges arising within state-owned enterprise environments.

The study followed a Soft Systems Methodology to explore and explain human resource management practices within state-owned enterprises. Purposeful sampling was used to source data from participants selected from three chosen state-owned enterprises. Semi-structured interviews provided the profound data and insights. Findings showed that inflation, natural disasters, political interferences, leadership style, recruitment and selection were derailing the efforts of HRM practices in supporting organizational survival. The study also found that lack of professionalism within SOEs allows corruption, in different shades. This subsequently leads to organizational instability, often forcing the organization to close or cease its operations.

The original contribution of the thesis is a theoretical and practical HRM framework, which may inform the improvement of HRM practices for State-Owned Enterprises' survival, notably in Zimbabwe. This framework is informed by interpretation of the study findings and the existing literature. The conceptualised HRM framework may greatly help managers and legislators by offering insightful information about organizational culture, employee experiences, and the efficacy of current standard operating procedures. A contextualised approach to organizational growth, policy implementation, and personnel management may be informed by this framework. The effectiveness of human resource management practices may subsequently contribute to the improvement and support organizational survival, notably in the context of Zimbabwe State-Owned Enterprises.

Keywords: Human resource management, HRM practices, HRM practitioners, Employee performance, Political interference, Systems approach

DECLARATION

I, Brian Mutangandebvu, declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Ph.D. in Management Sciences, specializing in Leadership and Complexity, at the Durban University of Technology is the result of my investigation, has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any other degree. I am the sole author of this thesis, and all citations are accurate.

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DEDICATION

In remembrance of my mother, Ednah Severa and my sister, Pheona, whom I will always remember though they got promoted and moved away from Earth. They started this journey with me, from point zero. To my father, Peter, my wife, Rudo and my sons, Ian, Ryan and Evan, for your prayers, your patience and your support. You are greatly appreciated for helping me walk through this journey.

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Lastly, I would like to thank the state-owned enterprises which participated in the study, for the time and access to their environments. Your shared insights substantiated this thesis.

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT



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Signed

Date: 16 August 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

This thesis contains various abbreviations and acronyms, and these are described below:

CHE	Council on Higher Education
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
HRM	Human Resources Management

RO	Research Objectives
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSM	Soft System Methodology
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
VUCADD	Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous, Diverse and
VSM	Viable System Model

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

Human resource management systems and practices are essential to organizational survival. The thesis addresses the appropriate use of Human Resources Management (HRM) practices as well as internal and external challenges and issues, in the context of Zimbabwe State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The thesis argues that following international best practices and putting policies and standard operating procedures in place is key to survival and sustainability of an enterprise. The research problem is that these need to be operationalised cognizant of the context of an enterprise and that of the country, to minimise issues while improving organizational outcomes. The study examined issues related to the inappropriate application of HRM practices as well as internal and external challenges arising within state-owned enterprise environments.

The study explored and describes the crucial role played by Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and HRM practitioners in Zimbabwean state-owned enterprises' (SOEs) survival. This chapter explains the field of study and provides the background to the research problem, which was the motivation for the study. The research problem is contextualized to a developing country, namely Zimbabwe.

Background to the field of study and the study location

This section focuses on human resource management and illustrates the complex and problematic situation in which HRM is situated, in the context of the study location, Zimbabwean state-owned enterprises.

As posited by Chiparo, Tukuta and Musanzikwa (2022) in both emerging and developed economies, SOEs are the principal providers of critical public services. Erumban and de Vries (2024) also explain that several economies throughout the world have relied on SOEs to generate economic growth, create employment, decrease poverty, contribute significantly to national GDP and ensure equitable, long-term development. SOEs account for more than 10% of economic activity in the region (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 2012).

SOEs are viewed as essential socioeconomic enhancers in Zimbabwe, where the private sector is unwilling to engage in socioeconomic activity due to a lack of cash, a scarcity of capital and a fear of excessive risk. SOEs play a major role in the economy since they may contribute around 42% of GDP as well as a significant portion of domestic capital formation, industrial investment and job creation (Chiparo, Tukuta and Musanzikwa 2022). The three authors mentioned that regardless of their contribution to economic development and prosperity, SOEs in Zimbabwe suffer from mismanagement, inefficient use of productive capital, corruption, decaying assets, a lack of credit lines and a debt overhang. Chiparo, Tukuta and Musanzikwa (2022) also mentioned that SOEs in Zimbabwe have become extensions of political patronage as well as havens for corruption and misuse of public assets.

Many governments in developing nations view state-owned enterprises as strategic assets to be used for political gain (Mazikana and Mabenge 2023). Zimbabwe is considered a failed state and a developing country on a global scale mainly due to politically motivated corruption in government. World Bank Group Country Opinion Survey (2017) backs up this claim, revealing that state-owned enterprises in many developing nations like Zimbabwe lack strong governance owing to political and government meddling.

Chiparo, Tukuta and Musanzikwa (2022) noted that the above-mentioned difficulties with the SOEs have had a negative impact on service delivery at these institutions. HRM is the process of determining organizational needs, recruiting, initiation, training and monitoring staff. Various actors in the form of human resources directors, human resources managers and other human resources professionals who are linked to other professionals in organizations, such as line managers, finance professionals, procurement specialists and information communications specialists, are involved in this process and practice. The field of HRM has the capacity to develop solutions to improve job performance and production, therefore, supporting organizational survival (Bieńkowska *et al.* 2022). All other professionals expect to receive help, guidance and support from HRM practitioners to ensure organizational survival through exhibiting expected and approved HRM practices, implementing approved policies and procedures as prescribed by good corporate governance as prescribed by the Corporate Governance Act, Chapter 10:31 in Zimbabwe and international best practices.

As stated by Zvitambo and Mhizha (2019), international organizations have been rocked by a plethora of scandals ranging from corruption, creative accounting, and nepotism, to name a few. All these malpractices are also inherent in Zimbabwean SOEs and signify governance model failure and call for other types of theories to direct business governance. Zvitambo and Mhizha (2019) further posit that, because of the significance of business governance models, various countries use different approaches to support the governance of state-owned enterprises. Countries such as France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have privatized state-owned businesses and strategic businesses under a mixed ownership model, a situation that has seen positive success. Zimbabwe's 109 SOEs are not privatized but engulfed in many problems, which calls for the HRM intervention. However, where HRM practices are themselves corrupt, they merely exacerbate the situation.

A further disruptor was the COVID-19 pandemic, which has wrecked economies and affected all businesses to varying degrees (Fraij, 2021; Mutanda, 2022; and Bieńkowska *et al.*, 2022). The outbreak had a negative influence on organizational processes and practices. Lockdown measures had a detrimental effect on business performance and individual health. As a result of the COVID-19 laws, managers and employees confronted new and unanticipated home-based work procedures that may not have been as productive as traditional working methods. Furthermore, the stress produced by crises had a negative impact on staff productivity (Favilukis *et al.* 2021).

According to the Auditor General's report on state-owned businesses and parastatals for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022, Zimbabwe has 109 SOEs and parastatals. A detailed report highlighting instances of non-compliance with the submission of financial statements to the Auditor General by certain SOEs and parastatals were presented during the fourth session of the Zimbabwean Parliament in May 2022.

This revealed a lot of sad realities about the status of such organizations. Organizations such as the Zimbabwe Media Commission, Media Laboratory and Clinical Scientists Council of Zimbabwe, ZIMPOST, Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) ZARNET, Nurses Council of Zimbabwe and the Auditor General's Office all blamed the COVID-19 pandemic for their failure to carry out their duties. This supports the fact that COVID-19 reared its ugly head in organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Non-compliance regarding submission of financial statements further pointed to the issue of skills flight as a contributory issue that incapacitated operations in state-owned enterprises and parastatals. Organizations like Zimbabwe Academic and Research Network, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation, National Libraries and Documentation and the National Handicrafts Centre confirmed the issue of inadequate staff as a disturbing fact in their organizations. At a higher level, the Zimbabwe Youth Council highlighted the shortage of board members within their organizations. Skills shortage was therefore flagged as an HRM issue that requires attention to support the survival of SOEs through HRM practices in Zimbabwe.

The negative aspects of hyper-inflation were also noted in the Zimbabwean Parliament's fourth session report in May 2022, where the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission (ZEC) alluded to their lack of compliance as a result of inflation. The same report also revealed that hyper-inflation also affected New Ziana (a Zimbabwean Government's official news agency), after they failed to pay hefty audit fees, they were charged to get audited financial statements. To worsen the situation about the organizations in question, the parliamentarians realized that ZIMSTAT's financial database, Sage Pastel Evolution Version 7, could not recognize the multicurrency brought by the hyper-inflation. As far back as March 2020, with annual inflation exceeding 500% annually, a new task force was created to assess the currency problems, but by July 2020, annual inflation was estimated at 737%.

From another end, ZIMPOST a Zimbabwean SOE and its subsidiaries' internal systems crashed and lost all accounting data in 2017, signifying a lack of enterprise risk planning matters, which could have blocked viruses that crashed these systems. In addition, ZIMDEF, another SOE, lost over USD 6 billion dollars in 2022 due to system hacking, an issue that can easily be controlled by enterprise risk management practices.

Zimbabwe has experienced many company closures between 2000 and 2019, creating a messy scenario in the HRM field in line with leadership and complexity in managing people. The closure problem is both a human resources and leadership crisis that should be investigated. HRM practitioners and the leadership should understand the causes and closures of many organizations to plan and avoid the same fate for the existing SOEs.

Some observations indicate problems like lack of ICT infrastructure and lack of e-government appreciation, no regard for backups, no ICT capacity like at the Auditor General's office and delays by ministers in appointing board members. All the issues

mentioned here call for the intervention of HRM practices to improve the status quo of the SOEs operating in Zimbabwe. The facts point out that 55 000 jobs have been lost in Zimbabwe because 4 610 enterprises closed their operations in 2011 alone. This is supported by The Financial Gazette (20 June 2014); Mutanga, Kaja and Moyo (2015); Zimbabwe Independent (1 July 2016); Mlambo (2017); Daily News (18 June 2017); Southall (2017); Hanke and Boger (2018) and Sithole, Sithole and Chirimuta (2018).

The city of Bulawayo was impacted the most by the rising number of business closures. Prior to and after the country's independence, Bulawayo, the second-largest city, in Zimbabwe served as its industrial center. Due to its advantageous location near Botswana and South Africa (both of which experienced deindustrialization at one point) the city was not only a national but also a regional industrial powerhouse, according to Munyaka (2014), Ndiweni *et al.* (2014) and Mbira (2015). However, national economic, political and corporate governance challenges, including national and foreign policies, ushered a once vibrant production industry to its early demise that could have been stopped if best international HRM practices were allowed to prevail.

The present study examines the impact of HRM practices such as pay, management style, communication, employee engagement, training and development, employee recognition, recruitment and selection and employee health (wellness; among other factors, on an organization's ability to survive. According to Stewart and Brown (2011), it is becoming more obvious that HRM activities have a competitive advantage and influence organizational efficiency. Organizations that engage in these practices are those that deploy effective people management methods. It is also noted that HRM practices influence organizational survival, as supported by Nana (2019); Alqudah, Carballo-Penela and Ruzo-Sanmartin (2022); Babalola *et al.* (2022); Kutieshat and Farmanesh (2022). These researchers claim that the field of HRM is a method for attaining organizational performance through integrated HRM policies and practices. An essential component of any competitive advantage and success is HRM and the actions that go along with managing it.

The present study, therefore, hinges on showing to what extent HRM practices assist in sustaining the viability and survival of organizations. This comes from the realization that Oppong (2017) argues that HRM professionals have integrated with important business

divisions and developed specialized HRM solutions to deliver quick and effective services in Zimbabwe and the world over, especially during times of hardship, economic meltdown and political interference. Thus, the founding assumption of the present study is that, despite the various contributing factors that cripple SOEs in Zimbabwe, human resource practitioners could make a positive contribution.

1.2. Background to the research problem and motivation for the study

This section gives the background to the research problem and provides motivation for the study. It discusses the challenges and issues to identify the knowledge gaps.

a) Look East Policy

In contrast to Youde's (2013) observation, former president Robert Mugabe boastfully remarked that Zimbabwe was increasingly hostile to Western governments and their allies, and we purposely proclaimed a Look East Policy (LEP). The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. President Robert Mugabe said so when he sought to undermine Western countries and their allies by working together politically and economically with Asia, especially China. In evaluating the view of Robert Mugabe, Ojajorotu and Kamidza (2016:35) argue that the demise of organizations in this era was a result of the Chinese presence in Zimbabwe. This notion was reinforced by the fact that the Chinese influence in Zimbabwe did contribute directly to the demise of, for example, David Whitehead, Cotton Printers, Merlin and Con Textiles. Chinese influence introduced cheap linens and fabrics, a move that forced the above-mentioned Zimbabwean organizations out of business (Ojajorotu and Kamidza 2016). This led to reservations about the greater value of Chinese influence in line with organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

b) Organizational closures

Chiboiwa, Samuel and Chipunza (2011) argue that achieving organizational success in a volatile economic environment such as one in Zimbabwe is a daunting task for managers. This gives a glimpse of the notion that organizations are facing challenges that are disturbing their survival in Zimbabwe. Munyavi (2015) provided examples of some of the organizations that crumbled and failed to survive in Zimbabwe due to various challenges; see Table 1.1 below:

Table 1. 1 Companies that closed shop from 2011 to 2016

Air Zimbabwe	Aman Investments	Apex Corporation
Asmara Company	Belmont Leather	Biticon
Blue Ribbon Foods	Builders' Depot	Barbican Asset Management Bank
Cairns Foods	CFX Bank	Cottco
Eagle moss Enterprises	Ekusileni Medical Center	Gulliver
Hubert Davies	Hunyani Forest Company	Interfin Bank
Julie White Dresses	JW Wilson International	Kenmark
Kingdom Bank Limited	Kukura Kurerwa Bus Company	Lancashire Manufacturing
Laurel creations	Marios Joinery	Marondera Sawmills
Matfield Operations	Mutare Associated tyres	National Blankets
Perfect Bakery	Phoenix Consolidated Industries	River Ranch Mine
Road Motor Services	Royal Bank Zimbabwe	Ruwa Export
Security Mills	Shoppa Stoppa Stores	Silicome
Star Africa	Steelnet	Tandara Inn
Treadwinds	Trishal Properties	United Builders Merchant (UBM)
World Radio Services (WRS)	Zimbabwe United Passenger Company	ZimPost

c) Informal Employment

The 2014 Labour Force Survey indicated that 98% of young people aged 15–24 and 96% of those aged 15–34 was in informal work, which Kanyenze, Chitambara and Tyson (2017) attribute to Zimbabwe's organizational decline. The country's informal sector was measured at 59.4% of GDP in the 1999–2000 fiscal year; by 2013, 84% of the nation's 5.4

million working population was employed in informal occupations, with just 11% remaining in official employment and the balance not documented. This proportion was thought to be the highest in Africa at the time, according to Mlambo (2017), while the average GDP was 42%. It is the world view of Kanyenze, Chitambara and Tyson (2017) that the problem with informality is that subsistence (survivalist thrust) is the motive for development, with so many workers living under precarious working conditions.

In most informal economies, employees are employed under precarious circumstances at the bottom of the social and economic ladder, not to mention that they typically have a decent work deficiency and are in casual employment, vulnerable, disqualified, unregistered, or unrepresented (Kanyenze, Chitambara and Tyson 2017). A report from the ILO reveals that 2 billion workers work informally, most of them in developed and emerging countries. Poor HRM practices remain costly and contribute to the total collapse of organizations, though from a systemic point of view, several factors reinforce failure. According to Bigirimana (2016), human beings are both participants and beneficiaries of sustainable development and until the human aspect is included, the definition itself remains incomplete. This is supported by Qehaja and Kutllovci (2015:2), who argue that the well-known Peter Drucker (1973; founder of modern management, has argued forcefully that any institution, including businesses, only has one real resource: people. This means that the importance of human resources to an organization's success has always increased and Qehaja and Kutllovci (2015) acknowledge this fact from both within and outside of businesses.

Good HRM practices are inevitably the missing links in organizations collapsing around the world and in Zimbabwe in particular. Therefore, in a bid to improve the Zimbabwe situation in matters of organizational survival, HRM practices should play a vital role in avoiding organizational demise.

Survival in this present study refers to the continuity of business despite difficult political and economic circumstances. There are considerable organizational challenges across Zimbabwe due to reasons ranging from macroeconomic to corporate governance. Mutanga, Kaja and Moyo (2015) confirm that twenty banks collapsed in Zimbabwe, while Chiboiswa *et al.* (2010) and Ojakorotu and Kamidza (2016) posit that the country's unemployment rate is

about 94%. To ensure employment, some of the Zimbabwean employees worked without pay for more than two years (Manyaya *et al.* 2016:1).

1.2.1. Chinese impact on organizational survival

Despite the unemployment rate in Zimbabwe, which is over 90 percent, as reported by Ojakorotu and Kamidza (2016) the authors also pointed out that Chinese companies opt for recruitment from China to work in Zimbabwe rather than utilizing locals for their projects or enterprises. Ojakorotu and Kamidza (2016) went on to say that bad HRM practices displayed by Chinese employers resulted in evidence of gross labor exploitation from most Chinese diamond mining firms, such as unfavourable working conditions, inadequate pay, lengthy workdays, poor hygienic conditions, unsafe circumstances and a lack of protective gear. According to Ojakorotu and Kamidza (2016:27), wherever their business's entrepreneurs operate or invest, the Chinese do not treat human rights, governance and democratic norms with much respect, which indirectly causes the closure of other Zimbabwean organizations.

In line with the claim of bad Chinese HRM practices, Kabemba (2012) posits that the Government of National Unity (GNU) failed to take serious action to address the Chinese bullying issue. In their contribution to this discussion, Moyo and Mdlongwa (2015) revealed that the Chinese made national headlines for torturing and beating up Zimbabwean workers as a kind of work-related punishment. This may have been because Chinese individuals are more used to relying on the decisions and experiences of people than on laws (Xian, Atkinson and Meng-Lewis 2017). Longhi (2012) contends that the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU - PF) government and GNU administration both granted diplomatic privileges to Chinese companies, to the degree that little was done to ensure good HRM practices, even though there is proof that they broke regional labor rules without consequence.

While Youde (2013) points out that Zimbabwe's foreign policy has been heavily influenced by China, making LEP a fact, most organizations operating in this country have struggled to survive and it can be argued that China has contributed to the promotion of corporate closures by disregarding national labor laws and implementing cheap and unendurable organizational closures due to Chinese operational mentality.

Youde (2013) lauds the fact that over the previous ten years, trade between China and Zimbabwe has increased dramatically, strengthening economic ties. This is supported by Maxwell (2011; who highlighted that a loan offer for US\$700 million quickly followed a trade agreement between Zimbabwe and China worth an estimated US\$585 million. The recognition that Chinese expansion into Latin America and Africa produces both a new regional demography in terms of international mobility and new comparative management trends complement this notion (Brewster *et al.* 2011). It is the opinion of Ojatorotu and Kamidza (2016) that affordable Chinese items are flooding the Zimbabwean market at an unprecedented rate every day, which has an impact on local businesses because consumers favor them over pricey local goods, thereby fueling the failure of other Zimbabwean organizations. Zindiye (2015) concluded that Zimbabwe has become a slave to China, while Kamidza (2017) and Pentz (2010) observed a potential flood of Chinese goods entering the Zimbabwean market, which resulted in business conflicts with local business owners and animosity between employer and employee.

1.2.2. Zimbabwe as the Switzerland of Africa

Zimbabwe was once dubbed "Africa's Switzerland", but terrible administration has converted it into a dismal basket case, according to Mangudhla and Mambo (2013). Cain (2016:1) supports Mangudhla and Mambo's (2013) sentiments by noting that gross violations of property rights have been committed against Zimbabweans, including state-sponsored expropriation and vandalism, corrupt government officials, onerous business regulations and an appalling monetary policy, all of which create enormous harm for a country that once glowed like the breadbasket of Africa.

It will then be argued that all these issues result in a net effect of inhibiting good HRM practices, and such practices should support organizational survival.

According to Rusvingo (2014), Ojatorotu and Kamidza (2016) and Makoshori (2017) the poorly governed country of Zimbabwe remains unattractive and questionable for international financing since there is now an external debt estimated at about US\$11 billion dollars. Rusvingo (2014) and Mugano *et al.* (2013) further posit that the environment is riddled with policy inconsistencies at the governmental level, such as the land reform programme of 2000, which saw white-owned commercial land seized without compensation. While Chinamasa, the then-Minister of Finance, was courting foreign investors, Mugabe's

nephew and Minister of Youth, Indigenization and Empowerment, Patrick Zhuwao, publicly questioned whether Zimbabwe really needed foreign investment. Foreign corporations that failed to submit proposals to the government for obtaining a 51% stake had their licenses threatened by Patrick Zhuwao (Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare between October and November 2017), (Southall 2017). He added notices to international banks that they faced confiscation of their funds if they missed his deadline. Raftopoulos (2016) wrote of the state of Zimbabwe as being in a 'chronic crisis' situation. It is further argued that government bureaucracy, inadequate infrastructure and restrictive labor laws such as SI 5 of 2015 have contributed to the jobless state of Zimbabwe and are also contributors to the instability of organizations in Zimbabwe. The challenges highlighted above herald the notion that it cannot be business as usual and there is a need for revised operating models, which includes revisiting the HRM practices' function to keep parastatal organizations operational and survive in the highly volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, disruptive and diverse environment in Zimbabwe.

1.2.3. Hyperinflation and organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Economic difficulties have persisted during 2019, aggravated by extreme weather shocks, according to Pinto (2022). As mentioned by Runganga (2020) inflation has a negative impact on economic growth, a point that should never be ignored when dealing with HRM issues in SOEs and parastatals operating in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's annualized inflation was expected to be 175.66% in June, up from 97.85% in May 2019. Furthermore, Leon (2019) argues that socioeconomic conditions have drastically worsened, with the UN projecting that 8.5 million people, or more than half of Zimbabwe's population, will experience food insecurity in 2019/2020. Annual inflation returned to triple digits in May 2022, up to 244% in December 2022, according to the World Bank in Zimbabwe report (2023). This was supported by the Africa Economic Development Institute's report (2017) which posits that this hyperinflation was only second to the Hungarian currency of 1946. Furthermore, Zimbabwe is the first nation in the twenty-first century to experience hyperinflation, according to Hanke (2008).

As presented in the May 2022 Parliamentary Report on Non-Compliance with regard to the submission of financial statements to the Auditor General, it is vital to point out that Zimbabwean organizations such as the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission (ZEC; New

Ziana, ZIMSTAT and many others not mentioned suffered severely due to hyperinflationary issues.

Most of the population in Zimbabwe depends on informal work for survival and formal work is the envy of many. As stated by Jones (2010) and Raftopolous (2013:84; most Zimbabweans started to engage as a survival tactic in the kukiya-kiya economy, which refers to multiple ways of making some things illegal; it replaced the real economy as early as 2000. This is necessary because employment opportunities are scarce. (Chiboiwa, Samuel and Chipunza 2010; given the collapse of the economy, as mentioned by Southall (2017:390) and Hanke and Boger (2018:5; which has led to the failure of many organizations. According to Southall (2017) in 2012, 72% of households were rated "poor" and 23% "extremely poor".

Some Zimbabweans have reverted to juggling through multiple survival techniques, such as engaging in backyard food preparation, bartering and market participation (Chagonda 2012). The government's fiscal policies contributed to this hyperinflation by requiring the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) to increase the capital supply. The alarming realization is that in October 2017, Zimbabwe entered its second hyperinflation episode in less than ten years (Hanke and Boger 2018:5). The decade of the 2000s, according to Barry *et al.* (2009), was when the Zimbabwean economy went headlong into destruction due to the weight of complete expropriation and mismanagement of larger farms, tax revenue erosion and declining public services, arbitrary efficient subsidies funded by capital and political repression. Zimbabwe ranks 161 overall and 183 in starting a company out of the 190 countries in the world that are listed. There is too much government bureaucracy and red tape surrounding it to the point where you cannot start a company in the formal sector; it is too expensive, Hanke (2016) said in a Zimbabwe Independent interview on 11 November 2016. It is almost difficult to start a business. Mapetere *et al.* (2018:484) concluded that in Zimbabwe, in 2008, the hyper-inflationary climate compelled many major organizations to wind up their activities or opt for temporary closure, a condition that can be argued at the time this research was being done was still common.

The above list of Zimbabwe's economic troubles creates an argument that state-owned enterprises operating in Zimbabwe are doing so in a hard and unfavourable economic environment. This may make organizational survival in Zimbabwe a far-fetched idea, which

may only be emancipated by realizing fruition through the experience and expertise of HRM practices.

According to Mapetere *et al.* (2018), recognizing the importance of HRM in institutional survival and growth, have raised concerns regarding the accomplishment of desired objectives in the application of HRM techniques in SOEs and parastatals. Positive (intended) effects have occurred in certain cases, whereas unanticipated repercussions have occurred in others. The research findings were inconclusive, hence the need to carry out this research.

1.3. Theoretical and practical Knowledge Gaps

Knies *et al.* (2022) revealed that four features that distinguished public sector HRM in the second half of the twentieth century are (1) paternalistic management style; (2) standardized employment procedures; (3) collectivist industrial relations; and (4) the desire to be a 'model employer'. Thus, public organizations were required to care for and defend their employees' well-being, which resulted in a focus on concerns like health, safety and welfare. This resulted in employees performing the same activities being paid the same compensation, rather than pay being dependent on individual performance, under the concept of equal treatment at work. Job security and lifetime employment were common employment practices. When it comes to defining, for example, wages and working conditions, trade unions and work councils have long had a prominent role in the public sector. Knies *et al.*'s (2022) world view is the real replica and basis of the Corporate Governance Act, Chapter 10:31 in Zimbabwe, which is an ACT enacted by the Zimbabwean parliament to govern parastatals.

The more recent and contemporary view differs from this more traditional approach. It is more sensitive to individuality and issues such as human capital, talent management and varieties in motivation. An individual's core and unique talent in the entrepreneurial or other operations of an organization or economy can be characterized as human capital, which is considered an essential resource in organizations. It entails the mixture of an employee's intelligence, skills, experiences, talent and creative ability that is directed at adding value to a product or service (Markjackson and Innocent 2020; Sawulski and Paczos 2021).

It is sad and unfortunate that investments in inventions or firm equipment, such as physical and financial assets, are the focal point of many businesses and research publications (Tadic *et al.* 2015). Long-term strategies in human capital investments, on the other hand, are achieved across the whole life-cycle and past research shows that "more than half of lifetime" human capital is collected via post-school training and educational investments in the organization (Knies *et al.* 2022).

In terms of investing in human capital, assessing the efficiency of life-long education programs and continuous training sessions is crucial for increasing productivity, proving to be paramount to healthy and resilient economies as well as to economic growth and sustainable development (European Commission 2017). In addition, it should be emphasized that, in the current context, specialists in human resources management encourage investments in education, training and personal and professional development to increase business performance, thus indicating the vital relationship that can be encountered between HR, human resources investments and business performance (OECD 2012). In addition, quality combined with business performance represents the key to successful entrepreneurship, especially in the post.

Šebestová and Popescu (2022) noted that the paramount importance of human resources and human resource management in the international business environment demonstrates that investments in human resources are crucial to the success of all businesses, positively and consistently supporting organizations' performance; hence, entrepreneurship will continue to remain a vital component of the activities belonging to the post-COVID-19 era.

Human resources (HR) are essential today. Current businesses are based on creativity, new ideas and innovations. For this reason, entrepreneurs decide on HR as an investment in human capital. They can be motivated by various factors, including tax savings and future revenues from implemented innovations. HR as an asset investment plays an essential role in supporting productivity and innovativeness in entrepreneurship (Kucharčíková, Mičiak and Hitka 2014; Popescu 2019a).

1.3.1. Observed first Gap: Role of HRM practitioners.

It is of paramount importance to note that many organizations in Zimbabwe set budgets aside, for example, for training and development, strategic planning, salaries and results-based management workshops, but fail to see the strategic importance of their HRM practitioners within their organizations. Many organizations in Zimbabwe fail to recognize the strategic importance of their HRM practitioners, viewing them as support staff rather than strategic partners in running the affairs of the organization. This hinders the ability of HRM practitioners and HRM practices to effectively support organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

1.3.2 Observed second Gap: Role of leaders.

Some leaders in Zimbabwe practice lip service to corporate governance and turn a blind eye to approved policies and procedures, abuse their powers, practice nepotism, avoid hiring on meritocracy, accept bribes and fuel corruption. The end result was running down SOEs and parastatals, as supported by Zvitambo and Mhizha (2019), who explained that poor governance was caused by political, economic and management factors, among other causes. In Zimbabwe, the new government is working feverishly to create new state-owned enterprise reforms. The question is: Will these policies be implemented?

The Board of Directors was believed to be weak or to have participated in governance malpractices. Rusvingo (2013–2014) demonstrated inadequate governance in Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, Air Zimbabwe, Harare City Council, Public Service Medical Aid Society and Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation; utilizing evidence obtained via interviews and documentary examination.

1.4. Problem Statement

Improper human resource management practices by HRM practitioners remain a cause for concern in Zimbabwean SOEs. Colak and Eleqel (2020) postulated that corporate governance is a concept that promotes long-term growth and stability in order to properly transmit firms to future generations. It also enables firms to be properly managed using a

professional, transparent, fair and responsible management strategy. Corporate governance is directly tied to human resource practices and business institutionalization levels. The most significant impediment to business institutionalization is the lack of any effort on human resource practices in organizations, or the absence of these practices.

In some Zimbabwean SOEs, HRM practices are not properly followed, creating greater chances of organizational failure. Zimbabwe has experienced many company closures between 2000 and 2019. The closure problem is both a human resources and leadership crisis that should be investigated. This realization of organizational closures presented a problem calling for a research study, as supported by the fact that 55 000 jobs have been lost in Zimbabwe due to such closures, among many other causes. Colak and Elegel (2020) further noted that human resources departments have the most essential function and obligation of guaranteeing full and effective implementation of human resources procedures in organizations facing distress and on the verge of collapse, if HRM practices are fully utilized. It is necessary to state that companies that establish human resource strategies and other people-oriented policies and then carry them out correctly will grow and will be sustainable. Furthermore, effective human resource procedures allow business management to be independent of people (Hamadamin and Atan, 2019).

1.4.1. Research Argument

It is general knowledge that HR is responsible for five primary functions: talent management, remuneration and employee benefits, training and development, compliance and workplace safety (Silva 2017). By efficiently managing the employee lifecycle, an HR department may contribute to organizational structure and the capacity to satisfy business demands. Therefore, the research argument is that there is a need to find out how HRM practices are not followed properly and how HRM practitioners fail to bring tangible change and guidance within SOEs in Zimbabwe, often resulting in them closing down. HRM practices should support organizational survival of SOEs in Zimbabwe, as expected with international best practices.

The research argument is that state-owned enterprises in Zimbabwe have ineffective HRM models to adapt when faced with difficulties presented by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, disruptiveness and diversity (VUCADD), due to fundamentally different approaches for recruiting, training and development, employee performance management and compensation. The present study has noted to the best of its knowledge that there are many HR models that focus on how organizations survive, but such models are more Eurocentric and do not include an African context, or to a greater extent, the Zimbabwean context.

There is a knowledge gap that called for the creation of an HRM framework that suits the Zimbabwean situation, as well as incorporating the Zimbabwean culture into HRM practices that would support the survival of SOEs. Taking cognizance of how HRM practices are affected by the Zimbabwean environment and cultural effects directly supports the need to mix international HRM best practices with the cultural demands and expectations of Zimbabwe to ensure the survival of SOEs.

1.6. Goal of the study

Zimbabwe lacks comprehensive Afrocentric Human Resource Management (HRM) models that provide detailed insights into how HRM practices can significantly support the survival of SOEs in the country. The goal of the present study was to conceptualise an Afrocentric HRM practice framework inclined towards Zimbabwean culture to support the survival of SOEs.

1.7. Study objectives

Study objectives were:

1. *To explore and describe the status of HRM practices in Zimbabwean State-Owned Enterprises.*
2. *To explore and describe systems and challenges influencing organizational survival of Zimbabwean SOEs.*
3. *To determine how Zimbabwean SOEs' survival could be improved, through a contextualised HRM framework.*

1.8. Research questions

Primary research question

How should HRM practices influence and improve Zimbabwean state-owned enterprises' survival?

Secondary research questions

- 1. How do HR systems and challenges influence organizational survival of Zimbabwean SOEs?*
- 2. How can HRM practices be improved to enhance Zimbabwean SOEs' survival?*

1.9. Delimitations of the study

The present study was confined to Zimbabwean state-owned enterprises, hereafter referred to as SOEs, commonly known as parastatals. The study did not analyse the actual HR systems such as electronic human resource management (e-HRM) applications.

1.10 Thesis Outline

The thesis is made up of six chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

This chapter introduced the thesis by offering the background to the studied field and the study location. It discussed the theoretical and practical knowledge gaps to provide context. The problem statement, study objectives and research questions were presented.

Chapter Two: Theoretical foundations and literature Review

This chapter examines HRM practices by analysing the available literature on the study topic and keywords. This comprehensive literature review informs and provides a foundation for the present study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The research methodology is described in this chapter. The research philosophy, approach and strategy employed are discussed.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and discussion of findings.

This chapter analyses the data and discusses the study findings.

Chapter Five: A framework for HRM practices in Zimbabwean state-owned enterprises

This chapter interprets the findings against literature. The framework is then conceptualised.

Chapter Six: Recommendations and future research directions

The last chapter makes recommendations, limitations and future research directions.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on HRM practices and techniques within organizations. The chapter guides the reader through a dashboard of HRM practices, including definitions of HRM and how Africa addressed HRM issues through endogenous and indigenous methods prior to the introduction of international HRM techniques. The chapter also sheds light on whether HRM practices help and support Zimbabwean organizations in highly VUCADD contexts. It also shows the HRM context, not ignoring the argument centred on HRM practices and showing the benefits and drawbacks of HRM practices, thereby casting a larger net on what to do with HRM practices as well as what not to do with HRM practices. The strategic goal of this chapter is to examine various HRM techniques employed in various organizations and nations in order to determine what is appropriate for Zimbabwean organizations. This led to an investigation into how culture contributes to, directs, or influences the use of HRM practices, demonstrating the need to separate the use of various HRM practices in accordance with favourable geographical locations as determined by surrounding cultures, as well as incorporating the best internationally recognized HRM practices when attempting to support the survival of struggling organizations.

Empirically, it is noted that organizational survival in the current century has witnessed massive changes in production, mobility, communication and energy (Akpaprep, Jengre and Mogre 2019; Sung and Kim 2021). Such changes happen inevitably, resulting in altering and disrupting everything, like patterns found in work scenarios, relationships inherent in societal values and geographical tranquility, according to the Global Risks Report (2017). A view of disruption was strongly supported earlier on by Nwuche and Anyawu (2016) and Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017). We therefore cohabit with sustainability arising from economies that are supported by technological knowhow, information and knowledge (Lonescu *et al.* 2011: 91). As it unfolds, all facts on these unprecedented happenings are hinged on VUCADD (Dhaheri 2017). We therefore cannot separate VUCADD from leadership since it is a world that leaders live in and are required to take all necessary actions to ensure that their organizations safely and successfully navigate through the VUCADD world (Dhaheri 2017).

2.2. HRM defined

As explained by Alasan and Eyanuku (2020); Knies *et al.* (2022) and Wikham, Styhre and Wikham (2022); the practices of recruiting, hiring, deploying and managing workers in a firm is known as human resource management (HRM). HRM is often referred to as human resources (HR). A corporation's or organization's human resources department is often in charge of designing, implementing and monitoring regulations that govern workers and the firm's contact with its employees. Human resources were first used to refer to all of the people who work for a corporation in the early 1900s and the term became increasingly popular in the 1960s. Human resource management (HRM) is the management of personnel with a focus on employees as corporate assets. Employees are sometimes referred to as human capital in this sense. As with other corporate assets, the objective is to optimize staff utilization while minimizing risk and optimizing return on investment (ROI).

Human capital management (HCM) is a more commonly used word in current HR technology than HRM. Large and medium-sized enterprises, as well as other organizations that utilize software to perform a range of HR responsibilities, have begun to adopt the term human capital management (HCM) (Kiran *et al.* 2022; Bonilla-Chaves and Palos-Sánchez 2023). Human capital management seeks to maximize the value and Return on Investment of an organization's workers. Human resource management is responsible for developing and managing the systems and processes required to acquire, train and retain the organization's staff (Hamadamin and Atan 2019).

HRM techniques manage people in the workplace to fulfill the organization's purpose and reinforce the culture (Alqudah, Carballo-Penela and Ruzo-Sanmartin 2022). When done correctly, HR managers may assist in the recruitment and induction of new professionals with the abilities required to further the company's goals, as well as in the training and development of present employees to achieve the organization's objectives.

2.3 Literature support on VUCADD

Calabrò *et al.* (2020) Gerhart and Feng (2021) and Kaliannan (2023) emphasize the importance of HR architecture, principles and programs in responsibilities and relationships, highlighting human capital as a key to corporate success. Efficient HRM is undervalued, and

high-performance work processes require people's initiative, commitment and efficacy (Kloutsiniotis and Mihail 2020; Omar 2021). HR departments must generate productive ideas and insights for profitability, value addition and risk minimization. Human capital practitioners aim to ensure employee retention, as employees are the greatest investment in an organization (Mujtaba and Senathip 2020; Al-Suraihi *et al.* 2021). Such highlights serve as a reminder to many in terms of organizational survival in times of political and economic challenges, as well as turbulent environments, with more arguments pointing to the suggestion that professionals seeking to improve organizational survival should not overlook the importance of HRM practices for sustainability and survival (Rodríguez-Sánchez *et al.* 2020; Zhong *et al.* 2021).

As highlighted in Chapter One, the entire literature review of this study is centered on three main questions, namely:

2.4. HRM Context

Emerging HRM results are driven by strategic planning for business sustainability and survival. It becomes apparent to note that HRM originated from the human relations revolution in the early 20th century, focusing on payroll, benefits and workforce organization. It has evolved to include acquisitions, mergers, succession planning and legal concerns (Misau 2023). It has been explained that what caused the growth of the HRM sector in the 1980s and 1990s was the decrease of conventional collective agreements and the quest for employee management individually (Ehnert, Matthews and Muller-Camen 2020). Hamouche (2021) alluded to the quest to promote the value of cooperative modes of HRM and, to some extent, ethical lines in business instances.

This researcher believes that HRM supports organizational survival.

The stages of human resource management include strategic human resource management and people management, according to Iroanwusi (2022). In developing countries with unscientific and non-strategic management, HRM is used to refer to the functional management of personnel (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Ferdousi and Abedin 2023).

Monks *et al.* (2013) explained that the HR philosophy and its processes are among the aspects of HR systems that have been disregarded. In trying to understand how HRM practices may assist organizational survival, Monks *et al.* (2013) explained HRM practices

as basic principles defining the worth and treatment of employees as embedded in a specific HRM system. What can be argued as of greater importance is looking at the value put upon employees and how they get treated in their working environment, since only the core of how people are valued and treated serves as a catalyst for the survival and sustainability of organizations as a whole. It remains Monks *et al.*'s (2013) view that the idea of "guiding principles" indicates that results are "generalizable or universal" at this point in the HR structure, so it becomes crucial to note that an HRM concept is the way in which organizations treat their employees and the role played by the HR departments in the overall performance of the entire organization.

2.4.1 HRM credo debate

It is debatable, based on the assumption of Monks *et al.* (2013) that decision-makers within companies influence the choice and use of HR structures, affecting organizational survival. HR styles and concepts play a significant role in HR genre formation, with high-investment HR structures representing the true worth of the HR epitome. Hamadamin and Atan (2019) and del-Castillo-Feito, Blanco-González and Hernández-Perlines (2022) argue that HR credo has not been given the authority it deserves, highlighting the need for inquiries to impact the human resources (HR) performance relationship, a critical system for organizational survival support.

Hamadamin and Atan (2019) argue that HRM strategies, implementations and practices are distinct components of an HR paradigm, with HR policies representing company goals and HR practices identifying broad HRM ventures for implementation. HRM practices are considered indicators of HRM practices affecting employees' behaviors and attitudes. Wang *et al.* (2021); Mehralian, Moradi and Babapour (2021) and Pak, Ok and Ryu (2023) suggest that a high-performance work system is not the ultimate HRM goal and that HRM bundles can improve organizational survival. suggest that investigators should move beyond past implementations to develop enactments and conciliatory practices. Shipton *et al.* (2016) emphasize the shift from HR information to HR operations.

2.5. HR Literature

Table 2. 1 HR Bundling process

HR Practices	HR Bundle	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
		AMO (Ability, motivation, opportunity)	AME	Results-based view: internally focused. Focuses on rarity, imitability and availability of resources in addition such resources should be intangible to create a competitive advantage
Recruitment		yes		
Induction	Competence			yes
Training (development)		yes		yes
Trust and good relationships				yes

HR Practices	HR Bundle	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Performance management/Appraisal Rewards				yes
1. Employee share ownership	Motivation	yes		

2. Individual performance related pay		yes		
4. Profit related pay		yes		
Employment security				
Equal opportunity	Commitment	yes		
Flexible working				Yes
Information sharing		yes		
Job design				
Team working		yes		
Consultation	opportunity to participate or contribute			
Dual Communication				
Involvement				

(i) **Results-based view model.**

The results-based view model emphasizes the importance of human capital growth and remunerations in creating a competitive advantage, with the combination of these factors enhancing organizational processes (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Oliveira 2021; Wongsansukcharoen and Thaweepaiboonwong 2023).

(ii) **AMO model**

Since 2000, the AMO HR model has emphasized the importance of individual capacity, motivation and the opportunity to participate in enhancing employee efficiency (Boselie 2010; Knies and Leisink 2018; Kroon, Van De Voorde and Timmers 2013; Munteanu 2014; Bayo-Moriones and Galdon-Sanchez 2010; Boselie 2010; Claudia 2015; Visitor 2011; Block and Pickl 2014; Demortier *et al.* 2014; Messyersmith, Patel and Lepak 2011).

The HRM field is often viewed as a mystery due to the lack of a clear role for clarifying HR arrangements, with AMO being a recommended technique for understanding this relationship (Demortier *et al.* 2014; Knies and Leisink 2014; Innocenti, Pilati and Peluso 2011). Understanding the HRM- performance linkage can significantly enhance the use of HRM practices in Zimbabwe to influence or support organizational survival.

(iii) **Understanding HRM-performance linkage**

Various authors suggest understanding HRM-performance linkage using AMO requires considering conciliatory changeable problems, including employee characteristics, immediate managers' traits and organizational-level factors like environment or community, to avoid misunderstandings and improve performance (Block and Pickl 2014; Kehoe and Wright 2013; Demortier *et al.* 2014; Marin-Garcia and Tomas 2016). Since 2000, numerous articles by authors have explored the link between HRM and performance, using the abstract AMO framework directly or indirectly (Ehrnrooth and Björkman 2012; Hutchinson 2013). The AMO framework promotes freedom, laxity, recruitment, training, rewards, recognition, employment security, knowledge sharing, participation, performance assessments and meritocratic inducements in the workplace (Bello-Pintando 2015; Boselie 2010; Choi 2014; Marín- García, Miralles, Garcia-Sabater and Perello-Marin 2011; Marín-García 2013). Many employees excel in their duties when stimulated in a favorable work environment and their ability is often explained by the term KSA (knowledge, skills and ability) (Fu, Flood, Bosak, Morris and O'Regan 2013).

The AMO substructure suggests that certain HRM practices enhance employees' knowledge, skills and willingness to take risks and utilize their talents in their jobs (Boselie 2010). Kroon *et al.* (2013) suggest boosting KSA components through hiring procedures and employment training while motivating the workforce through incentives or career

opportunities (Munteanu 2014). The AMO model offers a comprehensive approach to work design and empowerment literature, as noted by Kroon *et al.* (2013). Changes in the workplace recognize personal employee traits and workplace surroundings, including characteristics like consistency circles and teamwork, which contribute to the reach of opportunities (Marin-Garcia and Tomas 2016). Scholars argue that the impact of AMO on efficiency is complex due to employee instincts and HR data, necessitating differentiation between real and perceived HRM (Vermeeren 2017; Ehrnrooth and Björkman 2012).

2.5.1. HR Bundles

Shangahaidoni (2017) explains HR bundling's origins, citing the USA and Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT's) 1980s study on the World Automotive Industry, which highlighted Japanese vehicle achievements compared to their North American and European counterparts. Shangahaidoni (2017) suggests that HR bundling, a concept that focuses on enhancing employee performance through various bundles, is a strategic HRM approach that includes empowerment-enhancement, motivation-enhancement, skills-enhancement, control-enhancement and commitment-enhancement bundles, all of which are linked and consistent. HRM bundles are interlinked positions related to HRM enactments for output and standard.

In the past, studies focused on individual worker behaviors and characteristics, neglecting HRM bundling. Some HRM bundle activities aim to help organizations achieve competitive merit in any environment, according to Veth *et al.* (2019). The view is supported by numerous studies, including those by Vermeeren (2015) Saridakis *et al.* (2017); Beltar-Martin and Bou-Llusar, (2018); Fei (2018) and de Reuver and Van de Voorde (2019). The horizontal fit concept, as proposed by Batt and Banerjee (2012) aligns with the concepts of high commitment management and HR practice settings, promoting continuity in HR executions and aligning with other organizational milestones essential to high-performance work systems (Gardner *et al.* 2011; Jiang *et al.* 2012 and Choi 2014). The study by Bayo-Moriones and Galdon- Sanchez (2010); Della Torre and Solari (2013); Marn-Garca and Conci (2012) and Rabl *et al.* (2014) explores fused HRM approaches, which combine stringent selection and recruiting processes, training and skills growth, career development opportunities, performance reviews, incentive programs and employee engagement to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

2.5.1. (a) HRM epitome Analysis

The world view of bundling HRM executions is based on individual and organizational results, with the principle of equifinality being criticized for focusing only on mainstream organizations. This approach ignores small- and medium-sized organizations with dual goals and non-monetary benefits often have greater relevance than monetary rewards. This highlights the importance of considering both monetary and non-monetary benefits in HR packages (Jiang et al. 2012; Minbaeva 2013; Demortier *et al.* 2014; Napathorn 2018). Scholars argue that the pro-employee view of AMO representation is well represented in management worldviews, but it is not sure proof of proper implementation (Bos-Nehles, Van Riemsdijk and Kees Looise 2013). The choice of practices is based on intuition rather than empirical proof, making determining the most effective strategy challenging (Bainbridge 2015; Ozcelik and Uyargil 2015). The relationship between groups of activities and organizational performance remains uncertain. Many research studies mention the AMO model, but many do not experiment with it. Inspiration comes from compensation schemes, promotions, performance improvement practices, internal promotions and work security. Implementing the AMO model faces challenges like management complexity and issues with employee representatives (Bello-Pintando 2015).

Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016) clarified how the AMO model helps facilitate organizational success and survival and helps define the Black Box of HRM activities, as shown below, for ease of explanation:

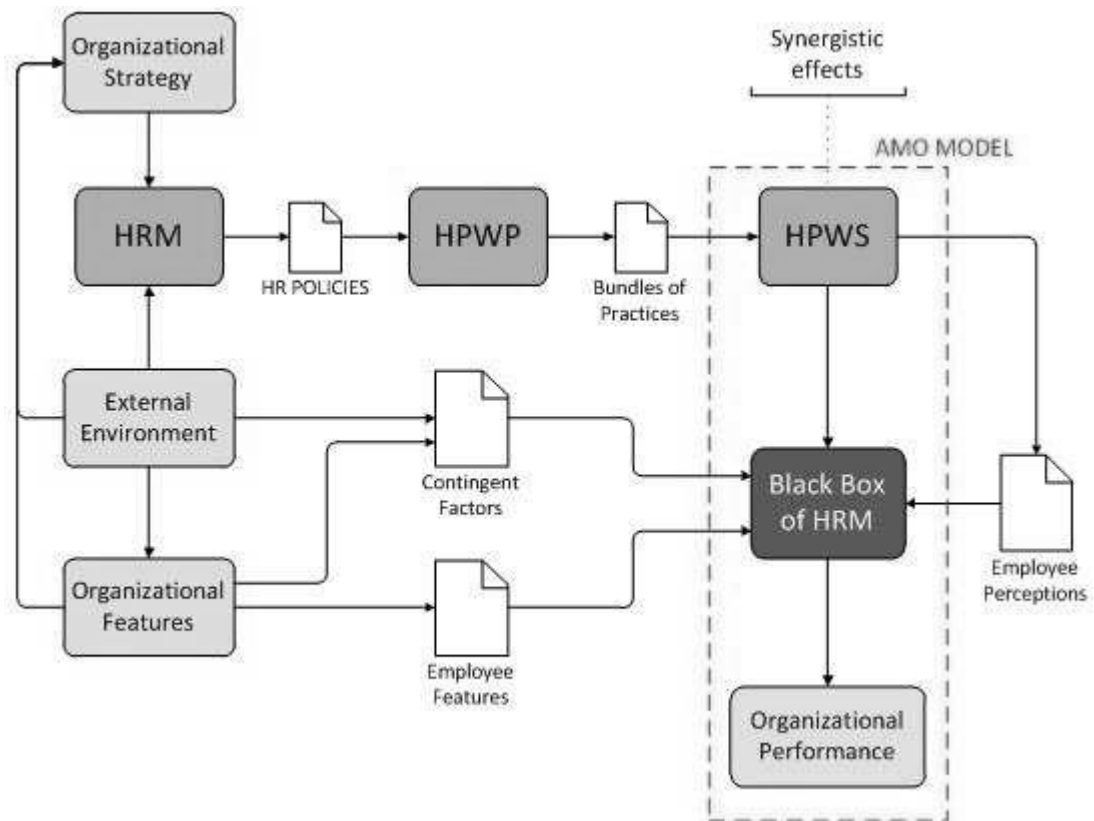


Figure 2. 1 AMO in support of organizational performance and helping in identifying the Black box

Source: Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016)

Skill as an HRM package, according to the AMO paradigm, is a God-given capacity to complete tasks to the highest standards (Kim *et al.* 2015; Marin-Garcia and Tomas 2016). Personal characteristics like experience, attitudes and knowledge contribute to ability. Training, growth and recruiting are critical HR practices that impact organizational survival globally (Minbaeva 2013; Boon, Belschak, Hartog and Pijenburg 2014). Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016) define these elements using the AMO model.

Table 2. 2 Ability-enhancing practices

Source: Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016)

AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research Papers
Ability (A)	Development and Training	<p>Block and Pickl (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Boselie (2010); Choi and Yoon (2015); Choi 2014; Claudia (2015); Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014); An, (2009); Armstrong, Flood, Guthrie, Liu, McCurtain and Mkamwa (2010); Bainbridge (2015); Bello-Pintado, (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014). Drummond and Stone (2007), Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2013); Ganli, Long and Ming (2012); Fu <i>et al.</i> 2014; Harney and Jordan (2008); Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Jiang, Lepak, Hu et al (2012); Gould-Williams and Gatenby (2010); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015).</p> <p>Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Katou and Budhwar (2010) <i>et al.</i> (2006); Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley (2000); Renwick, Redman and Maguire (2012); Knies and Leisink (2014); Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); Munteanu (2014).</p> <p>Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Boselie 2010; An (2009); Armstrong, Flood, Guthrie, Liu, McCurtain and Mkamwa (2010); Bainbridge (2015); Bello-Pintado (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Choi and Yoon (2015); Choi, (2014); Claudia (2015); Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014); Drummond and Stone (2007).</p> <p>Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Ganli, Long and Ming (2014).</p> <p>Harney and Jordan (2008); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Gould-Williams and</p>

AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research Papers
		<p>Gatenby (2010); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Knies and Leisink (2014); Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013); Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011).</p> <p>Scholarios and Harley (2000); Shih <i>et al.</i> (2007); Renwick, Redman and Maguire (2012); Ruzic (2015); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Schimansky (2014); Touli and Rowlinson ((2009)); Sterling and Boxall (2013); Shin, Jeong and Bae (2016).</p> <p>Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015); Vermeeren, Kuipers and Steijn (2014).</p>
	Selection and recruitment	<p>Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bello-Pintado (2015); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Ganli <i>et al.</i> (2014); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015); Harney and Jordan (2008); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Katou and Budhwar 2010; Ming <i>et al.</i> 2014; Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006).</p> <p>Shih <i>et al.</i> (2007); Vermeeren <i>et al.</i> (2014); Sarikwal and Gupta, (2013); Schimansky, (2014); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ruzic, (2015).</p>
	Performance Assessment	<p>Drummond and Stone (2007); An (2009), Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Knies and Leisink (2014); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015).</p>

2.5.1. (b) Motivation and AMO model

Motivation in organizations can be extrinsic or intrinsic, with external factors focusing on short-term rewards and personal engrossment. Inside inducement is often linked to long-term dedication, while a lack of external inducement can destabilize internal drive. Ability can also affect motivation, with workers who are less demotivated being susceptible to challenging tasks. Therefore, understanding both types of motivation is crucial for HR practice. Marin Garcia and Tomas (2016) also explained that when dealing with the AMO model, it is imperative to remember that inducement-enhancing enactments are inclined toward performance assessments and outside motivators.

Many argue that pay for performance is commonly used at personal and group stages. In several inquiries, however, encouragement can be found from HR practices such as gratitude, job security, possibilities for internal promotion (or professional development; social gatherings and a work-life balance, in line with non-monetary types of inducement according to Fahim (2018). In comparison, Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016) as seen in the following diagram, were unable to obtain examples of HR activities aimed at inside motivation, learning motivation, fulfilment on an individual or team level, readiness to succeed, organizational sense and a cooperative atmosphere. This is shown in AMO model showing on motivation enhancing practices below:

Table 2. 3 Motivation-enhancing practices, Source: Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016)

AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research papers
Motivation (M) (Extrinsic)	Performance Reviews	Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Vermeeren (2010); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bello-Pintado (2015); Gould-Williams and Gatenby (2010)
	Extrinsic Inducements	Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Katou and Budhwar (2010); An (2009); Bainbridge (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012).

	Pay for Performance (Individual)	Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Ganli <i>et al.</i> (2014) Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014); Choi <i>et al.</i> (2014); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013).
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AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research papers
Motivation (M) (Intrinsic)	Reward for Performance (Group level)	Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010) and (2014); Bello-Pintado (2015); Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); and Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015).
	Recognition	Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Bainbridge (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Claudia 2015.
	Job Safety	(Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Bello-Pintado (2015); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006).
	Inside Promotion	Bello-Pintado (2015); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Ganli <i>et al.</i> (2014); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013) and Wood (2015)
	Social Engagements	Harney and Jordan (2008); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005)
	Opportunities for a balanced work-life	Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Knies and Leisink (2014); Munteanu (2014); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Encouragement to Learn	Sterling and Boxall (2013)
	Individual or Group Satisfaction	Drummond and Stone (2007); Harney and Jordan, (2008); Tuuli and Rowlinson (2009); Block and Pickl (2014)
	Determination to Work	Bos-Nehles <i>et al.</i> (2013)
	Corporate Wisdom	Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014)

	Collaborative Environment	Kim <i>et al.</i> (2015)
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2.5.1. (c) Communication and the AMO model

HR practices play a crucial role in organizational survival, especially in Zimbabwe. They involve communication across all levels, ensuring information retention and sharing (Minbaeva 2013). Devolution in decision-making enhances autonomy from job executions (Sarikwal and Gupta 2013; Demortier *et al.* 2014; Marcin-Garcia and Tomas 2016). Inclusion promotes workforce involvement in organizational matters, reducing stress and labour turnover. Institutional investment in these practices can boost workforce identification and reduce stress levels (Schimansky 2014). This concept is outlined in the AMO model on opportunity enhancing practices.

Table 2. 4 Opportunity-enhancing practices

Source: Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016)

AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research Papers
Opportunity (O) (employee involvement)	Excellent Circles	Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Choi (2014); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010).
	Autonomous Work Teams	An (2009); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Sterling and Boxall (2013); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000)
	Teams for Solving Issues	Drummond and Stone (2007); Choi (2014); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010). Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013)

	Working together	Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Drummond and Stone (2007). Harney and Jordan (2008); Jiang Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013); Munteanu (2014); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Gould-Williams and Gatenby (2010); Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013).
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AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research Papers
Opportunity (O) (Knowledge - Sharing)	Participation in the Making of Decisions	(Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012); Boselie (2010); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Harney and Jordan (2008); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Munteanu (2014); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2012); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Gould-Williams and Gatenby (2010); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Sharing and Communication of Information	(Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); An (2009); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bello-Pintado (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Choi; Drummond and Stone (2007); Björkman and Ehrnrooth Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Harney and Jordan (2008); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Shih <i>et al.</i> (2007); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2016).
	Systems for Suggestions, Complaints, or Surveys in Place	(Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015;) Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Choi (2014); Ganli <i>et al.</i> (2014); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015)

Opportunity (O) (Job Design)	Career Profile	Katou and Budhwar (2010); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Knies and Leisink (2014); Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2016); Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015); Bainbridge (2015); Block and Pickl (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Bos-Nehles <i>et al.</i> (2013)
	Assistance from HR experts	(Choi and Yoon (2015); Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2012); Schimansky (2014); Bos-Nehles <i>et al.</i> (2013).
AMO's Dimension	HRM practices	Research Papers
Opportunity (O) (Freedom-enhancing)	Job Rotation	(Boselie (2010); Choi (2014); Budhwar and Katou (2010); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2016)
	Internationalization Level	Kim <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Favourable working circumstances	Block and Pickl (2014)
	Freedom	Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005 and; Boselie 2010); Bello-Pintado (2015) Kroon <i>et al.</i> (2013); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014), Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); Drummond and Stone (2007); Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012), Knies and Leisink (2014); Sarikwal and Gupta (2013); and Vermeeren (2010).
	Flexible in both regular and irregular ways	Drummond and Stone (2007); Wood <i>et al.</i> (2015); Bal and De Lange (2015); Claudia (2015)

Organizations can support work performance, a personal act related to executing expectations, through HR practices (Marin Garcia and Tomas 2016). HRM bundles can help achieve work performance and workforce performance relies on beliefs in HRM information (Bos-Nehles *et al.* 2013; Vermeeren 2015; Bello-Pintado 2015; Beltar-Martin and Bou-Llugar 2018; Fei 2018; de Reuver, and Van de Voorde 2019). Research articles highlight the importance of determining which bundles require specific measures for organizational and personal objectives.

Table 2. 5 Outcome enhancing practices

Source: Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016)

Bundle	Measures	Research Articles
Financial Outcomes	Market portion	Jiang, Lepak, Han <i>et al.</i> (2012); Alagaraja (2012); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Munteanu (2014).
	Profitability	Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Shih <i>et al.</i> (2007); Alagaraja (2012); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Kaufman (2015); Kim <i>et al.</i> (2015).
	Asset Returns (ROA)	Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Ruzic (2015); Alagaraja (2012); Choi and Yoon (2015); Choi (2014); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012)
	Sales Increase	Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Kaufman (2015); Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Alagaraja (2012); Drummond and Stone (2007); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012).
	Job Execution	Demortier <i>et al.</i> (2014); Bal and De Lange (2015); Choi and Yoon (2015); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ehrnrooth and Björkman (2012); Gould-Williams and Gatenby (2010).

Operational Outcomes	Efficiency and Productivity	Obeidat <i>et al.</i> (2010); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Vermeeren <i>et al.</i> (2014); Alagaraja (2012); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bello-Pintado (2015); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Kim <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Product or Service Excellence	Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Fu <i>et al.</i> (2013); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> (2000); Sterling and Boxall (2013); Alagaraja (2012); Bello-Pintado (2015)
	HRM efficiency	Gilbert, De Winne and Sels (2015); Harney and Jordan (2008); Shih <i>et al.</i> (2007); Bainbridge (2015); Bos-Nehles <i>et al.</i> (2013)

Bundle	Measures	Research Articles
	Customer Contentment	Alagaraja (2012); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Hughes (2007)
	Transition Intention	Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Alagaraja (2012); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Gould Williams and Gatenby (2010); Ramsay <i>et al.</i> 2000, Sarikwal and Gupta (2013).
	A belief in management	Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Harney and Jordan (2008); Bainbridge (2015)
	Job Contentment	Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); Vermeeren <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Choi and Yoon (2015); Claudia (2015); Drummond and Stone (2007).

HR Outcomes	Behavior of Organization Citizens (OCB)	(Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Boselie (2010); Harney and Jordan (2008).
	Absenteeism	(Sarikwal and Gupta 2013; Sterling and Boxall 2013; Boselie <i>et al.</i> 2005; Ramsay <i>et al.</i> 2000)
	Fresh Approaches	Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Katou and Budhwar (2010); Schimansky (2014); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2016).
	Employee dedication	Innocenti <i>et al.</i> (2011); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ming <i>et al.</i> (2014); Raidén <i>et al.</i> (2006); Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ruzic (2015); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2016); Tuuli and Rowlinson (2009); Block and De Lange ((2015)); Block and Pickl (2014); Boselie <i>et al.</i> (2005); Boselie (2010); Ganli <i>et al.</i> (2014)
	Extra-effort	Boon <i>et al.</i> (2014); Knies and Leisink (2014).
	Climate of the organization	Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2015); Jiang, Lepak, Hu <i>et al.</i> (2012).
	Retaining personnel	Alagaraja (2012); Drummond and Stone (2007).

HRM bundles, such as high involvement work systems (HIWSs) high-performance work systems (HPWS) or a system of high engagement work (HEW) are essential for organizations to achieve the desired performance. These bundles should be coherent with personal HRM practices and support three key employee goals: skill enhancement, workforce empowerment, inclusion in all processes and incentives (Panigrahi, Mohanty and Mishra 2019). However, there are disparities in the effects of skill-enhancing techniques on human capital recruitment, training, compensation management and employee relationships. Time-based output steps, such as new product creation times and flexibility, are more conducive to HRM activities aimed at increasing staff inclusion in all organizational matters (Bello-Pintando 2015).

2.6. HRM Practices



Figure 2. 2 General HRM practices commonly used.

HRM exercises are crucial for organizational sustainability and survival, as they control individuals and promote production (Kutieshat and Farmanesh 2022; Mohiuddin 2022). However, barriers to HRM practices exist, such as economic imbalances and political dichotomization (Vincent 2020; Ngaka and Mtshokotshe 2020). The Global Risks report (2017) suggests that strong human capital strategies can improve the status quo by boosting employees and embracing technological advancements. Schwab (2016) the founder of the World Economic Forum, advocates for a tomorrow that works for everyone by prioritizing people and recognizing that we have generated new technology. Leaders must be cognitively flexible to adapt to the changing environment and ensure organizational survival and evolvability. This requires a shift in mindset and a focus on the impact of disruptions and creativity (AINuaimi *et al.* 2022; Fry and Egel 2021; Hillmann and Guenther 2020).

2.6.1. HR Practices unbundled

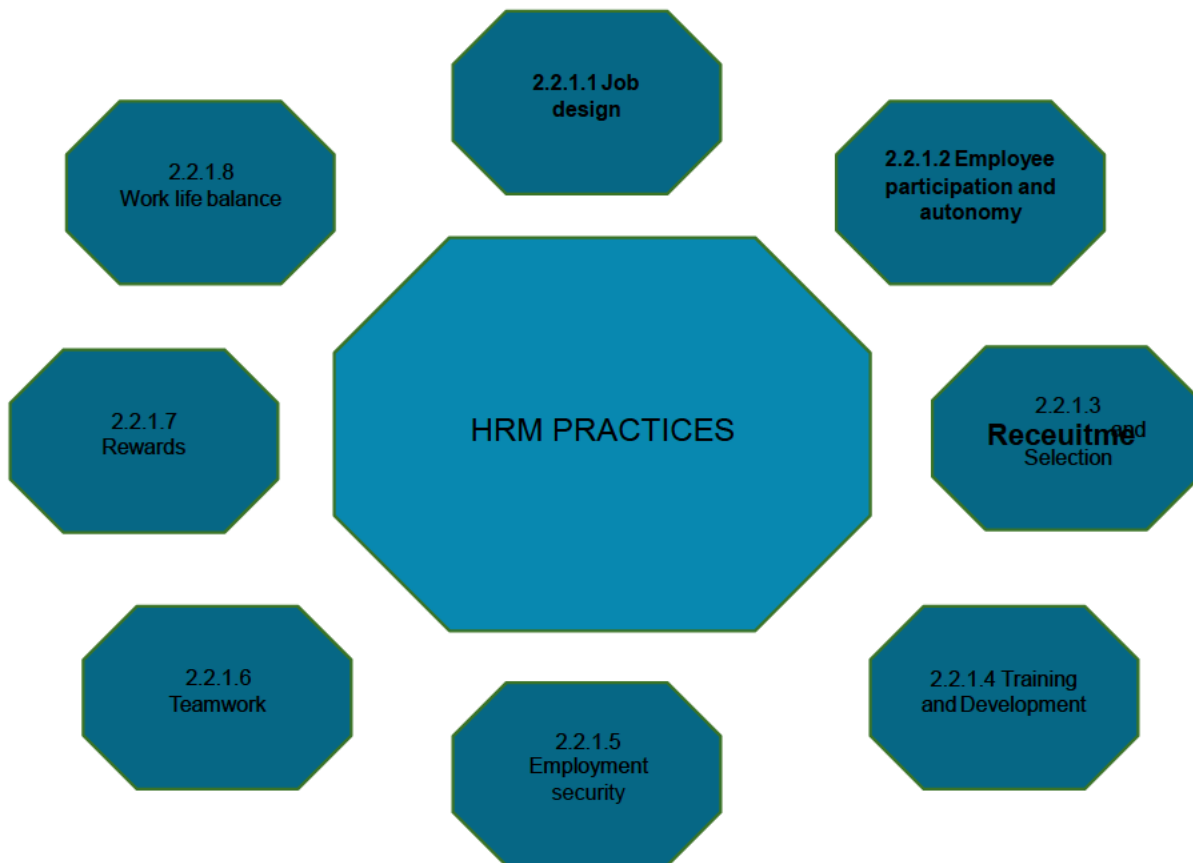


Figure 2. 3 HRM Practices

HRM practices are crucial for organizational survival, increasing productivity and impacting results, making them popular in first- and third-world countries, as pointed out by Werner (2011).

2.6.1.1. Job Design

Grobler, Grobler and Mathafena (2019) highlight the significance of including authority and performance results in job design for employees. The inclusion of authority and performance results in job design for employee engagement, motivation and overall performance is crucial

for enhancing organizational image (Elrehail *et al.* 2020; Davidescu 2020; Hasan, Jawaad and Butt 2021).

2.6.1.2. Employee participation and autonomy

HRM practices play a crucial role in employee participation and autonomy, as they influence job demands and job satisfaction. Employee inclusion in organizational matters leads to rational decision-making, a positive mindset and desirable attributes. Autonomy is involved in self-determination, which is influenced by the theory of emancipation which emphasizes intellectual growth and responsibility (Ciobanu Androniceanu and Lazaroiu 2019; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Bieńkowska 2022).

The desire for freedom requires choice, attentiveness and anti-discrimination values.

These attributes can help organizations survive by acknowledging the influence of HRM practices in operational matters. Employees with more experience, independence and duty sensitivity in their tasks are more motivated to stay in their organizations, helping them develop survival strategies (Dwivedi *et al.* 2022).



Figure 2. 4 Evolution of Employee Experience, Source: Morgan 2020

Morgan (2014) highlights the importance of human capital in achieving productivity and the shift towards organizational priorities. He argues that modernity has led to a focus on utility, but this has changed to recognize the importance of human capital. This has led to the

emergence of employee engagement, which aims to retain the best employees for better performance (Barrett *et al.* 2019; Arslan *et al.* 2022; Malik *et al.* 2022; Muzam 2022). Employee experience, which includes interactions throughout their life cycle, is crucial for determining customer behavior and can be incorporated into HRM practices to help organizational survival (Carnevale and Hatak 2020; Apasicaritei and Elvira 2022; Zhang and Chen 2023).

2.6.1.3. Recruitment and Selection

Competent managers understand core HRM functions like staffing, rewards, labor matters, safety and training (Maharjan 2018). They identify challenges and ensure uninterrupted progress through recruitment and selection, as illustrated in Figure 2.5 below.



Figure 2. 5 Recruitment and selection process Source: Maharjan (2018)

Maharjan (2018) emphasizes the importance of technical know-how and socialization in recruitment and selection for organizational success. Ofori (2011) emphasizes the role of sifting through candidates for the right employees, while Jibrin-Bida *et al.* (2017) define recruitment and selection as attracting potential employees. Recruitment is the process of finding and selecting potential employees to fill vacant positions within an organization (Sreenu and Vijaya 2016). It is crucial for achieving organizational goals and connecting all

subsequent human resource activities. HRM actions aim to enlist high-caliber employees and maintain staff retention (Saifalislam, Osman and AlQudah 2014). In a collectivistic organization, attracting employees with similar morals, teamwork and cooperative duty traits is essential (Babagana 2014); Saleem and Khurshid 2014). Organizations can attract new recruits by offering better compensation packages and incentives. The goal is to enlist the best candidates for the job and retain them for long periods (Ntiamoah *et al.* 2014; Sreenu and Vijaya 2016; Grobler, Grobler and Mathafena 2019).

2.6.1.3 (a) Enlisting process

HR practitioners should focus on recruitment and selection processes to ensure a match between the workforce and their roles, improving organizational productivity and sustainability (Cloutier *et al.* 2015; Grisp 2021; Al-Surahi *et al.* 2021). Staff retention is crucial to avoid costly replacements and retraining, as it helps avoid losing talent and productivity. Retaining employees after recruitment is also important due to the high cost of replacing lost talent, including recruitment, training and sales (Amushila and Bussin 2021; Towns 2019). In today's challenging world, job insecurity is a reality and retaining the workforce is the cheapest option. A mutual understanding between employees and the organization can boost productivity (Basyouni and El Keshyky 2021; Stankevičiūtė, Sanchez-Hernandez, and Staniškienė 2021). HRM enactments are crucial for maintaining productivity and access to resources (Karunathilaka, Yajid and Khatibi 2016; Boon *et al.* 2018; Ludwikowska 2022). There are two types of enlistment: inside and outside. Internal enlistments target the workforce available through transfers, promotions, or rehiring ex-staff. External recruitment sources, such as unsolicited applicants, advertisements, employment agencies, colleges, universities, or contractors, can be used to attract professionals and create competitiveness (Anand *et al.* 2018; Muduli and Trivedi 2020). Networking can also enhance the work atmosphere by promoting similarity in behavior. However, recruiting like-minded individuals may limit individuality and may limit diverse thinking, promoting teamwork. Understanding these sources of recruitment and selection can help HR practitioners make informed decisions (Zajac *et al.* 2021; Dwivedi *et al.* 2022; Bhudwar *et al.* 2023; as shown by Aswathappa 2010). See Figure 2.6 below:

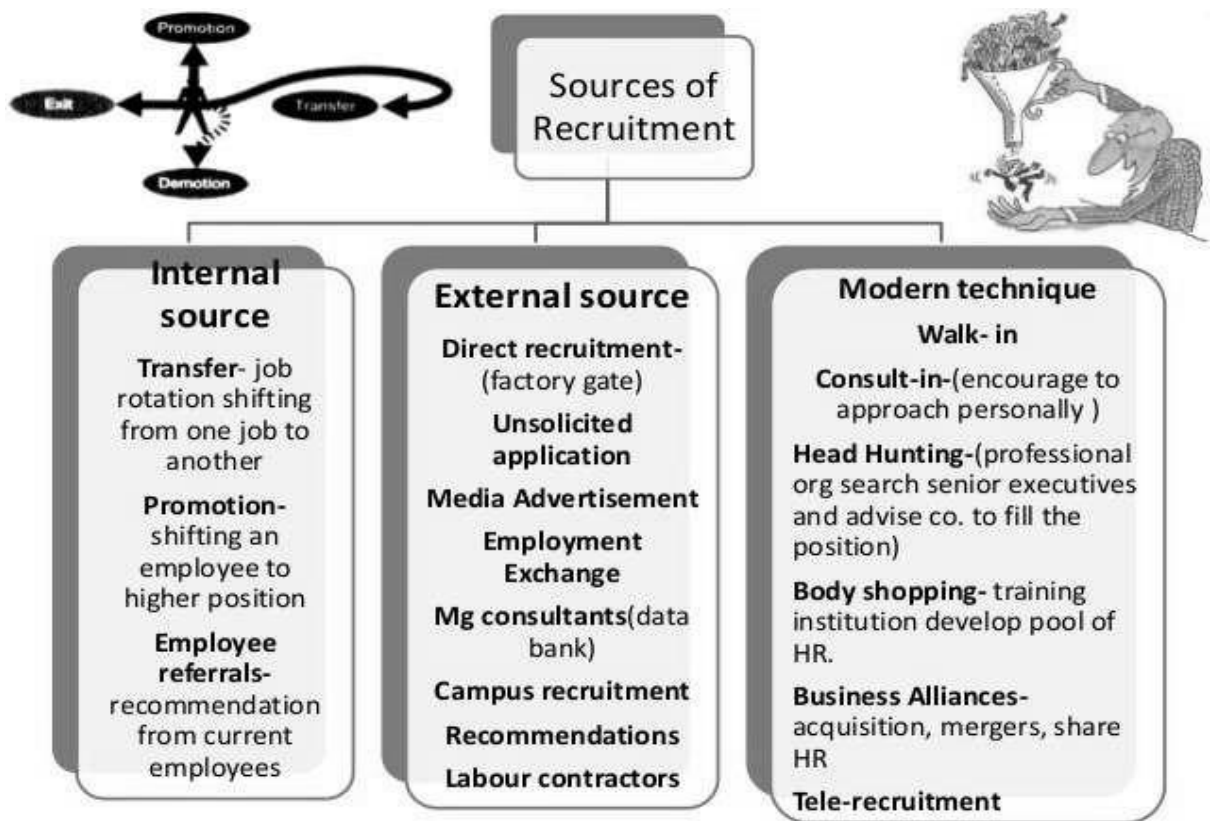


Figure 2. 6 Sources of Recruitment and Selection

Source: Aswathappa (2010)

Enlistment is crucial for companies to attract competent candidates, enhance productivity and gain a competitive edge. Effective human resources policies, job design and career plans are essential for attracting and retaining competent candidates (Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma 2015). Nyagadza, Gwiza and Hove (2022); Dongrey and Rokade (2022) and Croitoru *et al.* (2022) emphasize the importance of equality in workforce management, while Mutapha *et al.* (2013) highlight the role of recruitment in personal growth and teamwork. Negrin *et al.* (2022); London, Sesha and Shelley (2023); Pessach *et al.* (2020); Li (2022); and Chen (2023) emphasize the impact of recruitment decisions on an organization's future and investment.

2.6.1.4. Training and Development

Rajagopalan (2019); Francescato (2022); and Paglayan (2022) emphasize training to enhance organizations by imparting knowledge, indoctrinating employees about general

laws and providing technical expertise. Training programs are initiated by human resource development beliefs, which encourage employees to become content with their duties (Davidescu 2020; Torraco and Lundgren 2020; Mikołajczyk 2022). Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) argue that training and development aim to improve personal, group and operational productivity through the transfer of skills, intellect and capacity (Li 2022 and Dwivedi *et al.* 2023). Training is seen as an experience, discipline, or regime that promotes individual growth and adapts to the environment. The main HRM activities in training and development focus on evaluating training needs and designing and delivering training (Fuentes 2020; Boehm, Schröder and Bal 2021; Ercantan and Eyupoglu 2022).

2.6.1.4. (a) Vitality of Tutelage in Training and development

HRM's key concerns include tutelage and development, which enhance employee knowledge and human capital and create valuable intangible assets (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Hitika *et al.* 2019). Effective staff retention can benefit the organization. HRM often uses tutelage to change white collar growth and capitalize on workforce determinations, enhancing overall performance (Xuecheng, Iqbal and Saina 2022). Communist lifestyles enhance employees' professions, networking and future skills, preparing them for complex tasks and enhancing organizational survival (Matasci 2020; Piwowar-Sulej 2021). Research shows that better remunerations and freedom in duty execution led to more tutelage programs (Lauri 2020). High labor turnover negatively impacts training, with low-turnover companies investing more time in standardized preparation (Al Mamun and Hasan 2018). Failure to finance tutelage programs can hinder organizational growth, while establishing internal aptitude through tutelage can elevate the workforce to higher positions, enhancing staff commitment to their duties (Al Balushi *et al.* 2022; Zhenjing *et al.* 2022).

Engagement in an organization boosts staff retention and commitment, providing a competitive advantage. Grego (2019); George *et al.* (2021); Siltaloppi, Rajala and Hietala (2021); Jiatong *et al.* (2022); and Sypniewska, Baran and Klos (2023) suggest that commitment aligns personal and company goals. Prakash (2017) and Li (2022) emphasize the importance of workforce quality and growth through training for productivity. HRM writings link tutelage and growth with duty principles, philosophy changes and organizational commitment (Labetubun and Dewi 2022).

Human capital development through training is crucial for organizational survival in today's competitive market (Geue 2017; Khayinga and Muathe 2018; Rhee, Park and Shin 2020; Aman-ullah *et al.* 2022). Companies are shifting their focus from targeting weaknesses to enhancing an environment that promotes human growth (Mensah and Casadevall 2019; Bocken, Niessen and Short 2022). As uncertainty increases, resilience becomes important for organizational survival. People tend to experience pleasing emotions when faced with tough tasks, as they believe in opportunities with better rewards (Anderson *et al.* 2019). The goal is to leverage development initiatives plans to boost HR creativity and abilities, guiding changes in technology and the competitive merits of companies. Policymakers, practitioners and researchers are realizing the importance of human capital in creating global competitive advantages (Amesho *et al.* 2021; Ojo, Fawehinmi and Yusliza 2021; Lianf and Cao 2021). HRM practices can help organizations survive in any environment through training and development (Hamouche 2021; Sungwa 2021; Piwowar-Sulej 2023). This is a form of "deficit thinking".

2.6.1.5. Employment Security

Employment security is the process of ringfencing one's official duties by respecting signed contracts and policies. It is crucial for the workforce to exhibit devotion to the company and exchange their individual thoughts and ideas to improve productivity (Muller 2017). Long-term contracts are essential in Japanese firms and job ringfencing is a main concern for the workforce (Yokoyama, Higa and Kawaguchi 2021). A top priority between the workforce and employer is managing employment relationships, which should fit the company's objectives and personal needs. Trust in the performance of duties is diminished when there is no adequate assurance and trust is crucial in High-performance work systems (Wardlaw 2019; Zhang *et al.* 2023; Caprar *et al.* 2023). Organizations can avoid retrenchment by retaining the workforce when demand decreases, creating flexible hours and reducing working hours through work sharing, a concept that was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe (Bussin and Swart-Opperman 2022). Companies that create trustworthy promises to their workforce and ensure they cannot be dismissed without a genuine cause will improve productivity and employee satisfaction (Khadka and Maharjan 2017; Osborne and Hammoud 2017).

2.6.1.6. Teamwork

Teamwork involves employees working together for a common purpose, despite personality clashes. It is influenced by political, economic, social and technological factors. Internal factors include leadership style, diversity, communication and cohesiveness (Smiley 2018; Morrison- Smith and Ruiz 2020; Shakeri and Khalizadeh 2020; Salas *et al.* 2020). HRM practices can help organizational survival by addressing these factors. Teamwork has specific criteria to achieve set goals and deliver high-quality efficiency (Ghani *et al.* 2022). HR practitioners must maintain control to ensure organizational sustainability. It enhances employee collaboration and contributes to the happiness and goals of the team and organization (Ren *et al.* 2023). Grobler, Grobler and Mathafena (2019) emphasize the importance of enhancing team togetherness, socialistic inclination and membership prowess in authoritative society for operational improvements and organizational performance. HRM practices should use teamwork for sustainability and survival (Navajas-Romero 2022).

2.6.1.7. Rewards

Recommendations are defined as pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits offered to employees in exchange for their efforts in performing their duties. They are considered critical aspects of the workplace, as they increase employee motivation and job satisfaction (Kajackaite and Sliwka 2020; Guo and Hou 2022). In today's economic environment, organizations must adapt their reward and talent structures to retain skilled workers. Factors such as lack of advancement opportunities, poor rewards and poor executive decisions can lead to skilled workers leaving organizations (Liu and Liu 2022; Lazarova *et al.* 2023). Enticing and maintaining talent remains a complex matter for human capital management, and downsizing and cost-saving practices can decrease employee trust and job commitment (Lloyd and Aho 2020; Mujtaba and Senathip 2020). Navigating talent management principles, such as organizational compensation, is crucial for businesses' survival during competitive times. Incentives come in two forms: extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, which require further examination (Mabaso *et al.* 2020; Musakuro 2021; Elrayah and Semlali 2023).

(i) Extrinsic Rewards

External rewards, such as salary, promotion and bonuses, are essential for attracting and retaining employees. Extrinsic rewards, defined as tangible benefits, have been recognized since 1968 (Niguse and Getachew 2019; Manzoor, Wei and Asif 2021; Kumari *et al.* 2021). These rewards can be monetary or non-monetary, such as praise and recognition. Examples include social awards that foster interpersonal interactions between employees and superiors. These incentives are crucial for maintaining a productive workforce (Whilans 2019). Extrinsic incentives can enhance employee motivation, but critics argue they do not necessarily improve performance. Financial rewards can erode interest in activities and are unrelated to long-term enjoyment (Liu and Liu 2021; Ogunmakin 2023). Emphasizing compensation and security can lead to high expectations and costs for organizations (Coyle-Shapiro *et al.* 2019; Sanchez and Hernandez 2019; Edú-Valsania, Laguía and Moriano 2023). Hermerl *et al.* (2020) and Pfajfar (2022) argue that financial incentives promote satisfaction quickly. Managers who allow employees to use extrinsic incentives struggle to maintain a motivated workforce, Mdhlalose (2024).

(ii) Intrinsic Rewards

Intrinsic incentives are job-related experiences that employees derive from their work, promoting emotional, optimistic and meaningful work. They can be categorized into three dimensions: a sense of importance, employment interest, pleasure, and self-determination (Wang and Shaheryar 2020; Kaur and Mittal 2020; Monje-Amor *et al.* 2021). The theory of determination suggests that employees seek self-determination when they feel capable and independent. Independence is the level of decision-making and confidence in carrying out responsibilities. Intrinsic rewards are based on life cycle experiences that provide a worthy duty or mission, collect pleasure and satisfaction, and reflect confidence in one's independence in their work (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan 2017; Ryan and Deci 2020; Goldfarb, Golan and Gal 2021). They significantly impact job satisfaction and organizational survival, as highlighted by various studies.

HRM practices should ensure adequate and genuine rewards to enhance workforce commitment and retention. Definitive incentive strategies include financial, non- financial, intrinsic and extrinsic incentives (Fahim 2018; Alhmoud and Rjoub 2019; Sadiq *et al.* 2022; Uzochukwu, Nwankwo and Okafor 2023). These strategies help organizations attract, retain and satisfy committed workers (Alves *et al.* 2020; Slatten *et al.* 2020; Sorn *et al.* 2023). Competition for qualified professionals has become a daunting task in human capital management, and proper compensation is crucial for organizational survival (Kiran *et al.* 2022; Gerhart and Feng 2021; Tessema *et al.* 2022). Research has validated the pay-performance nexus and remuneration, and benefits are part of overall incentives aimed at attracting and retaining talent (Laundon 2018; Baral and Baral 2019; Haddad, Khatib and Ashaal 2023). Total rewards can enhance organizational productivity and promote employee engagement, and these rewards, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, remain relevant HRM practices that can improve organizations' assistance in different countries, including Zimbabwe (Gile and BuljacSamardzic 2018; Sarkar, Honig 2021; Jena and Sahoo 2021; Chikwariro, Bussin and De Braine 2021; Mazorodze and Mhkize 2022) .

2.6.1.8. Work-life balance

Employment significantly impacts workers' lives, affecting their psychological state of mind and requiring a balance between work and life (Veth *et al.* 2019; Lonska *et al.* 2021; Panda and Sahoo 2021; Ugwu 7 Mazei 2022). Work-life balance is the proper prioritization of tasks, not equal time between paid and volunteer activities. It is essential for creating harmony in life by balancing time and effort put into personal and job activities (Sheppard 2016; Tran 2017; Rothbard, Beetz and Harari 2021). The term "work-life balance" has replaced "work-family balance" due to the dynamic business climate and changes in demographic, economic and cultural factors. Flexible working is crucial for a balanced life, and work-life arrangements were introduced to enhance organizations' work-life arrangements (Gragnano, Simbula and Miglioretti 2020; Khateeb 2021; and Hayasingam, Teng and Zain 2021). Examples of non-paid operations include research, travel, sports, charitable work, personal growth, leisure and eldercare.

2.6.1.8. (a) Valuing work-life balance

Work-life balance is crucial for employees' well-being and job satisfaction, and it can be achieved through various HRM practices (Mabaso and Dhlamini 2018; Laba and Geldenhuys 2018; Susanto *et al.* 2022; Lamovsek *et al.* 2022; Saks 2022; Shirmohammadi, Au and Beigi 2021). Employees value their life roles and work-life balance helps them manage stress and reduce absenteeism, injuries and productivity loss. Fostering positive work-home interlinkages can improve health and well-being, reduce turnover and improve overall employee satisfaction, Obrenovic *et al.* 2020; Yunus and Mostafa 2021; Alblihed and Alzghaibi 2022). HRM enactments linked to autonomy and flexible conditions within the workplace can help organizations achieve work-life equilibrium. Family-friendly techniques include flexible working hours, job sharing, extramural jobs, shortened work weeks, parental leave, telecommuting and on-site daycare facilities, Simons 2019; Ray and Pana-Cryan 2021). Additionally, employers can provide health and wellness benefits to their employees, like health insurance or physical exercise, Mbiba *et.al.* (2020). When HRM practices are professionally followed, this can create a positive common ground and help organizations survive (Rurkklum 2023).

2.6.1.9. HRM practices value chain to organizational survival

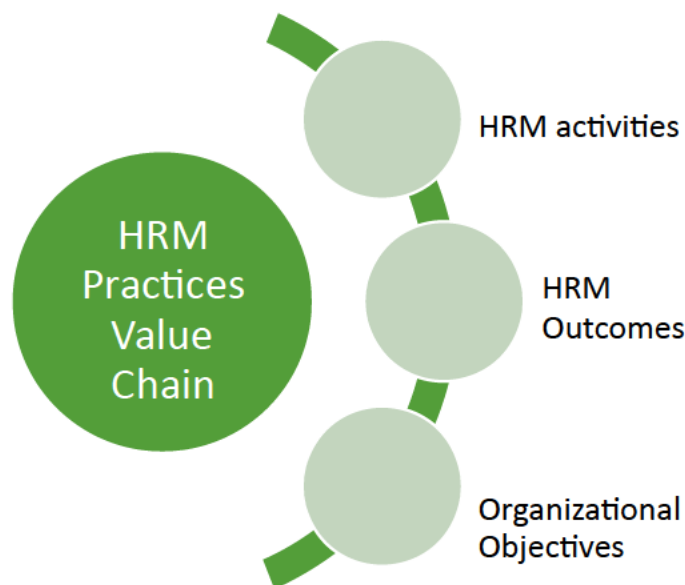


Figure 2. 7 HRM practices value chain

Alnidawi and Omran (2016) argue that the knowledge-based economy has led corporations to seek new ways to compete, survive and generate value through the value chain model.

HRM activities can help boost efficiency and effectiveness, enabling companies to create skills and improvements. Vulpen (2018) highlights the importance of HRM operations in achieving organizational objectives and survival, as depicted in the following Figure 2.8 shown below:



Figure 2. 8 HRM contributions to organizational objectives

Source: Vulpen (2018)

Human resource operations are crucial for an organization's capacity and competitive advantage, enabling efficient market competition (Zeuch 2016). HRM practices can increase long-term competitive advantage and productivity. Human capital has become a foundation for national competitiveness, with its importance increasing since the 21st century (Eneh and Awara 2016; Fareed *et al.* 2022). Dao and Khuc (2023) emphasize the importance of prioritizing human capital in businesses for performance and development. They argue that economic globalization and better education necessitate successful HR management and that increasing human capital is crucial for achieving development objectives (Kiran *et al.* 2022).

Douwes, Stuttaford and London (2018) emphasize the importance of building human resources in the public sector for translating the Millennium Declaration's values into policies and strategies (Ayala and Meier 2017; Schultz 2021). There is a need for organizations to

attract human capital over financial capital for survival. Kucharčíková, Mičiak and Hitka (2018) highlight the importance of human capital as a resource for future success. Spears (2012) and D'Angelo (2022) emphasize the Human Resources management feature's role in securing return on investment and overcoming challenges.

2.6.1.9. (a) Matching employee needs and organizational needs

Human resource management (HRM) plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational effectiveness and performance, fostering knowledge assimilation, transition, sharing and development, and creating competitive advantages through innovation (Alfawaire and Atan 2021; Nicolás-Agustín, Jiménez-Jiménez, and Maeso-Fernandez 2022; Martin-Rios, Erhardt and Maney 2022; Farzaneh *et al.* 2022). HR activities, such as policies, performance reviews and training, are essential for employee participation, low levels of anxiety and depression and high job satisfaction (Lu, Yu, and Shan 2022; Aboramadan *et al.* 2019; Badre, Taori and Gulhane 2021; Yang and Yasmin 2022). The main objective of HRM is to match individual ambitions and interests with those of the business.

The value chain, as suggested Qin, Xie and Jia, (2024) is a driver that enhances knowledge flow between different parties in the chain. HRM can be used as an unofficial steward for good work, not only for direct staff but also for those who work indirectly. The social network theory suggests that interactions are shaped by factors such as confidence, reputation and power, as well as trust. HRM activities typically cover topics related to trust, control and credibility (Sheresheva *et al.* 2022). In conclusion, HRM plays a significant role in enhancing organizational effectiveness and performance, fostering knowledge assimilation, transition, sharing and development, and fostering employee loyalty (Abubakar *et al.* 2019; Siral *et al.* 2022). Effective HRM practices are essential for achieving efficiency and fostering a positive work environment.

2.6.1.9. (b) HRM as the driving force of the economy

Human capital (HCM) is a crucial factor in driving economic growth in service sector companies, as it combines an individual's natural and acquired knowledge, skills, abilities and experience. HRM operations are essential in the value chain model, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of organizational activities (Bradley 2017; Malik 2018;

Kucharčíková, Mičiak and Hitka 2018). HCM is a strategic concept that reflects on the entire organization, focusing on producing the value of the business through individuals. As competition in organizational existence increases, companies must attract and retain global talent to achieve optimum business goals (Mtetwa 2019; Dhanpat *et al.* 2020; Yusof 2023; Ismail 2023). Therefore, HRM remains a subsystem within an organization, providing professional and accountable staff to achieve optimum business goals (Boon *et al.* 2019; Alketbi, del Rio and Fernandez 2022; Apascaritei and Elvira 2022; Memon *et al.* 2022). HRM is essential for achieving organizational and individual objectives and performance, as human resources are valued and a source of competitive advantage (Nafari and Rezaei 2022; Abunaila 2022; Phiri and Phiri 2022).

HRM activities can be assessed through five activities: preparation, acquisition, retention, employee relations, and growth – only four are mentioned here – (Brown *et al.* 2018; Armstrong and Brown 2019; Abu-Mahfouz *et al.* 2022; Sindhura 2022). These practices can improve organizational sustainability, competitive advantages and survival if handled professionally from the HRM's point of view (Eneh and Awara 2016; Munteanu *et al.* 2020; Karman and Savanevičienė 2020).

HRM practices typically involve job design, employee engagement and autonomy, recruitment and selection, training and development, job protection, teamwork, rewards and work-life balance (Saks 2022; Ngobeni, Saurombe and Joseph 2022; Ali *et al.* 2023). Cultural practices and behaviors in host countries may be affected by normal HRM operations, such as hiring and selection, training and development, incentives and performance evaluation (Ismail *et al.* 2019; Mahapatro 2021; Sixpence *et al.* 2022). HRM practices may reflect a company's culture, making uniformity across the globe impossible, (Tedla 2016; Alsarhan and Valax 2020; Snell 2020; Fachrunnia and Hussain 2020; Sogg *et al.* 2022).

HRM is a critical component in achieving success, quality, sustainability, competitiveness, performance and cost-effectiveness in achieving set goals (Agudelo and Saavadera 2016; Ehnert, Matthews, and Muller-Camen 2020; Cachón-Rodríguez *et al.* 2022). Its fundamental goal is to maximize return on investment, reduce financial risks and ensure the quality of human resources (Elrehail. 2020; Piwowar-Sulej 2021). The corporate environment and culture are inextricably linked to stakeholder satisfaction. Human resource management methods can help organizations survive by increasing employee engagement and

discretionary work effort (Malik *et al.* 2021; Anshuh-Mensah, Marfo and Amoako 2021). However, the HRM value chain can only be realized by adhering to a specified protocol or sequence. It is critical to guarantee that newly hired staff receive perks, wages, or other types of compensation (Ercantan and Eyupoglu 2022).

To clarify the importance of HRM practice value chain, Louw-Potgieter (2012) elaborated the HR value chain with the aid of a diagram, so that it will be easy to understand, as shown in Figure 2.9 below:



Figure 2. 9 Importance of HRM Value chain Source: Louw-Potgieter (2012)

As explained by Louw-Potgieter (2012), it remains inevitable to witness the HRM value chain if one focuses on issues of recruitment, pay and rewards, training and growth, management of success and relationships with staff, as shown in Figure 2.9 above. HRM must become an essential skill for achieving organizational and individual objectives and performance, as human resources are valued and a source of competitive advantage (Battour, Barahma and Al-Awlaqi 2021; Oliveira *et al.* 2021; Nafari and Rezaei 2022). However, there are challenges in defining HRM systems due to inconsistencies in structure and internal linkages (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Ehnert, Mathews and Muller-Camen 2020; Hamouche 2021). HR practices are based on objective people management procedures but can be damaging or beneficial depending on internal and external circumstances and the business context

(Chen 2021; Apascaritei and Elvira 2022; Zhenjing *et al.* 2022). HR practices can be assessed through five activities: preparation, acquisition, retention, growth and employee relations. These activities help understand how HR practices can complement each other and their potential positive and negative effects (Yang and Yasmin 2022; Stirpe, Profili and Sammarra 2022; Dwivedi *et al.* 2023). The debate also focuses on the potential synergistic effects of HR practices (Leslie 2020; Wood 2021; Kubiak 2022; Hauff *et al.* 2022).

HRM activities, such as job design, employee engagement, recruitment, training and development, can improve organizational sustainability and competitive advantages (Saks 2022; Lu *et al.* 2022; Yimam 2022; (Đorđević 2016; Hutnek 2016; Tedla 2016; Abyaba and Achibane 2023). High-performance, high-involvement and family-friendly HRM practices can affect employee attitudes and outcomes (Pattnaik and Sahoo 2019; Dorta-Afonso *et al.* 2021; Li, Chughtai and Le 2022; Guedes 2023). To ensure efficient HRM systems, companies should align their HRM systems with their internal and external environments, using a 'best-fit approach' (Eneh and Awara 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Fuertes *et al.* 2020; Lee 2021; Koster 2019; Moropane 2023). This research aims to investigate HRM activities and models in Zimbabwe by examining models from first-world countries before focusing on third-world countries. HRM is seen as a political and competitive advantage in advanced Western economies, whereas in emerging and agrarian nations, it is seen as an organization for routine administrative activities (Alfawaire and Atan 2021; Hronova and Spacek 2021; Anwar and Abdullah 2021; Hamouche 2021).

2.7. Organizational Behaviour HR practices and the meaning of work



Figure 2. 10 Unbundling OB Practices

Organizations are social systems that achieve controlled efficiency in pursuit of common goals (Gschwantner and Hiebl 2016; Tylor 2018; Kennedy and Widener 2019; Lloyd 2020; Greve 2023). The study of organizational behavior focuses on the structure, activity and success of organizations and their actions (Aithal and Suresh 2016; Akparep *et al.* 2019; Cakir and Adiguzel 2020; Higgins and Pinelli 2020). The meaning of work is crucial in providing meaning, security and a sense of belonging. Careers have become a religion in people's lives, driving them to find greater meaning in their employment (McLeod 2018; Etherington 2019; Villani *et al.* 2019; Cholbi 2022). Meaning is about constructing mental representations of the world and identifying plausible linkages between phenomena. Communication is about finding meaning and meanings are intentional relationships and interactions observed (Hiller 2016;

Kotchoubey 2018; Kaushik and Walsh 2019; Darling-Hammond 2019; Alhazmi and Kaufman 2022). Understanding the complexity of meaning structures is essential for employees' views of their profession (Bai, Tian and Liu 2021; López-Cabarcos, Vázquez-Rodríguez, Quiñoá-Piñeiro 2022; Blustein, Lysova and Duffy 2023).

Providing jobs that are enjoyable and serve a greater purpose is crucial for organizational sustainability. Various people attach different sensations to their work, such as a means of obtaining a salary, prestige and promotion, or as a calling for fulfilment. Meaningfulness and

significance are distinct concepts, with meaning being about the amount of meaning added to something and significance being the production of meaning (Cholbi 2021; Kollman *et al.* 2021).

2.7.1. (a) Meaningful work

The study of work significance in HRM activities in first-world nations has been influenced by factors such as socio-moral atmosphere, job-role fit and internal regulation (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Ehnert, Matthews, Muller-Camen 2020; Lu *et al.* 2022; Mohiuddin 2022). Job significance is linked to intrinsic motivation, career commitment, affective well-being, supervisor-rated performance, reduced turnover intent and ideals. Organizational researchers have shifted their focus to understanding what makes work meaningful (Allan 2017; Barancanenko *et al.* 2019; Khan *et al.* 2020; Khan *et al.* 2020; Gagne *et al.* 2022). Organizations, primarily business organizations, are societal entities involving people to achieve specific goals. Informal aspects of organizations are interrelated with divisions, laws, policies, rewards, punishments and principles (Martela 2019; Amis, Mair and Munir 2020; George, Haas and Tracey 2021; Dwivedi 2023). Institutional theory emphasizes that institutions are influenced by their institutional meaning, which includes social, cultural, legal and normative aspects. Institutionalization is the process by which social institutions take on a rule-like status (Carvalho 2017; Kostova *et al.* 2020; Karbhari, Alam, and Rahman 2020; Banaji, Fiske and Massey 2021).

2.8. Barriers to HRM practices

In today's competitive economy, managing people is crucial for organizational effectiveness. Employees possess the necessary skills and abilities for strategy and planning (Osborne and Hammoud 2017; Brobler, Warnich and Mokobane 2018; Fuertes *et al.* 2020; Cakir and Adiguzel 2020; Naveed *et al.* 2022; Tan and Olaore 2022). However, due to legal battles, HR management has received little attention (Wärnich *et al.* 2018; Boon *et al.* 2018; Hamouche 2021; Tessema *et al.* 2022). Factors influencing

HRM include culture, the economic system, the political system, legal structure and human capital. Many HR professionals only become involved after CEOs disregard regulations, leading to organizational downfall. HR practice is sometimes used as a scapegoat (Driel 2018; Juarez-Tarraga, Santandreu-Mascarell and Marin- Garcia 2019; Roulet and Pichler 2020; Chen 2021).

2.8. (a) HRM practices sidelined

HRM is a crucial strategic position in businesses, but its effectiveness in promoting competitive advantage is often overlooked (Elrehail 2019; Gallardo- Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion 2020; Alfawaire and Atan 2021; Gerhart and Jie Feng 2021). HR departments are often less significant than finance, IT and marketing departments (Purcarea 2019; Piwowar-Sulej 2021; Schloemer- Jarvis, Bader and Böhm 2022; McCartney 2022). Many corporate decisions prioritize HRM over other departments, such as training, wages and headcounts (Piwowar- Suleji 2021; Hronova and Spacek 2022; Rodgers *et al.* 2022). There is a significant gap between the effectiveness and execution of HRM practices, which can affect employee views and the effectiveness of HRM activities. HRM operations have not significantly influenced employee service or social life in poor countries (Eneh and Awara 2016; Najam *et al.* 2020; Amegayibor 2021). HRM practices are perceived as vacillating and vulnerable to internal contradictions. Some businesses view HRM as an objective reality, while others treat people as resources. A lack of HR risk management contributes to poor governance and the absence of corporate governance is seen as a threat to organizational survival (Ibrahim and Abdul Zulkafli 2016; Oyewunmi 2017; Mundlak 2020; Onyoin 2020).

2.8. (b) Universalistic approach to HRM practices

The universalist approach to HRM is different from relational models, which emphasize multiple stakeholders and operational climate (Ali and Wei 2018; Sabiu *et al.* 2019; Boon, Hartog and Lepak 2019; Gooderham, Mayrhofer and Brewster 2019). This approach faces challenges due to the application of "proper science" and the lack of qualitative research (Vardot *et al.* 2018; Guimaraes *et al.* 2019; Bickley, Chan and Torgler 2022). Traditional theoretical frameworks focus on the micro-level and are positivist, ignoring the dynamic context of HRM. This approach aligns with the strategic conceptualization of organizations

as atomistic actors, with little attention to operational climate or political environment (Vincent *et al.* 2020; Kroon *et al.* 2022; Ecartan and Eyupoglu 2022). The limited data available on HR activities also limits the capacity of previous studies to gather information (Synder 2019; Dahlbom *et al.* 2020; Taherdoost 2021; McCartney and Fu 2022). The oversimplified "true science" approach may not provide universally applicable solutions, leaving consultants without a service to offer, (Branch-Smith,2019; Fix 2022). Research on technology in HRM has only been conducted in the last 15-20 years, hindering its incorporation into HR activities (Cooke and Varma 2020; Quaasar and Rahman 2021; Anguelov 2022; Murugesan *et al.* 2023).

2.8. (c) World market effects on HRM practices

The current market changes present numerous obstacles for leaders, but optimists believe that a business can achieve success if its leaders master these obstacles (Edwards 2021; Kraus *et al.* 2022; Wang, Hou and Li 2022; Karimi, Malek and Farami 2023). Challenges are job requirements that can lead to development, mastery, or future achievement, while hazards can result in failure or obstruct personal development (Lodge *et al.* 2018; Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2019; Saunders 2020; Brandstatter and Bernecker 2022). Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity diversity and disruption are inherent systemic behavioral and organizational failings that should be examined when determining how HRM practices can help a business survive (Rimita 2020; Baran and Woznyj 2020; Mwenje and Manyanga 2023). Strategic leadership must consider the challenges and opportunities inherent in instability and leaders should possess entrepreneurial orientation to mitigate threats and harness opportunities through HRM practices (Zhu, Liu and Chen 2018; Martinez-Climent, Rodriguez-Garcia and Zeng 2019; Lazarova *et al.* 2022; Leite and Rua 2022).

2.8.1. Environmental factors

The HR function in Zimbabwe and globally must support organizational survival by pushing beyond basic tasks and focusing on employee-oriented HR actions that increase capacity, commitment and productivity (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Hamouche 2021; Chikwariro, Busin and Debraine 2021; Gumbie, Dhanphat and Joseph 2023). HRM policies and practices have a positive impact on organizational success, providing resources for capturing and expressing the strategic vision and goals of the organization (Armstrong and

Brown 2019; Anwar and Abdullah 2021; Alqullah, Carballo-Penela and Ruzo-Samartin 2022). However, barriers to HR practices may hinder their application in Zimbabwean organizations. Adam and Alarifi 2021; Piwovar-Sulej 2021; Memon et al. 2022, argue that a well-thought-out and competent human resource strategy is essential to an organization's ability to survive. Hence successful HRM activities are viewed as guaranteeing the organization's ongoing success and sustainability, since HRM is a managerial profession that collaborates with employees to achieve workplace organizational goals (Barrena-Martinez, Lopez-Fernandez and Romero-Fernandez 2018; Qureshi et al. 2021; Tabassum and Nayak 2021; Mohiddin et al. 2022). HRM practices are heavily influenced by the external market climate, making it crucial for organizations to adapt and thrive in the face of challenges (Ukolie and Udom 2019; Yu *et al.* 2022).

2.8.2. General HRM practices

Western analysts argue that firms can gain a competitive edge by maintaining a complex link with the outside environment, operational strategy and organizational structure (Islami and Latkovikji 2020; Farida and Setiawan 2022; Handoyo *et al.* 2023). KPMG Report highlights the need for HR to address business-critical problems in organizations. Analyzing HRM practices in first-world countries is crucial for organizational survival (Fuertes *et al.* 2020). Key HRM tasks include recruiting, compensation, benefit management, training, assessment and discipline (Votto *et al.* 2021; Böhmer and Schinnenburg 2023; Ferdousi and Abedin 2023). International organizations like Lenovo, Haier and Phoenix Touch exhibit the best HRM practices that deserve emulation worldwide (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Eneh and Awara 2016).

2.9. Haier Organization HRM practices

Haier, a multinational brand with a presence in over 100 countries, has been largely attributed to its self-management culture (HRM practice) founded by its chairman (Fryans, Mol and Mellahi 2018; Andreev *et al.* 2018; Lee 2019; Klett and Arnulf 2020; Auribe 2021; Ren, Jing and Zhang 2023). The company's transformation from a resource-poor organization to a formidable global behemoth is linked to the organization's cyclic approach, which gives employees autonomy on their operations (Sun *et al.* 2017; Zhou 2020; Li *et al.* 2021; Abou-Shouk, Hamad and Muhammad 2023). Haier's leadership style is described as "people and aims integration," or the win-win paradigm of combining individual aspirations

(Li *et al.* 2020; Weixu 2020; Moore, Rang and Zhang 2022; Calza, Sorrentino, and Tutore 2023). The Haier Group has developed management technologies that are appropriate for a fast-paced environment, adopting a management strategy called Rendanheyi, which combines leadership practices rather than a single new method (Dhillon and Nguyen 2020; Teece 2020; Li *et al.* 2020; Goodson 2021; Zohar 2022). This case demonstrates how a high VUCADD background in an emerging market can affect creative management practice (Schik, Hobson and Ibisch 2017; Du and Chen 2018; Fryans, Mol and Mellahi 2018; Nowacka and Rzemieniak 2022; Sempiga and Liedekerke 2023). Haier's HRM concept focuses on the management model, nurturing and servicing of its employees, with the "OEC" principle as the starting point (Lv *et al.* 2018; Kotler and Pfoertsch 2021). The company's market structure is equal, egalitarian and efficient, with education and training being the most fundamental (Zhou, Riine and Kallo 2018; Durrani 2020; Shelley 2021; Sarin 2021). Pre-service planning, adaptive training and growth training are provided, ensuring further preparation of management teams and short-term training for science research personnel (Mitchell, Hirn and Lewis 2017; Nicol, Turawa and Bonsu 2019; Anjum 2020; Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2020). Haier's training method increases employee productivity and helps tackle employee growth issues, Nama *et al.* 2022). To implement the incentive and compensation system, Haier has a special value allocation structure based on performance assessment, including quantity and quality (Haier, Sleeman and Schäfers 2020), Li *et al.* 2020).

2.9.1. Haier Organization's HRM Practices Criticized

The organization's HRM architecture aligns all HR operations with its business strategy, emphasizing growth, quality and innovation. However, some HRM practices, such as the Elimination Quota, culling of bad performers and termination of under-performers, are at odds with contemporary first-world countries' HRM practices, (Elrehail *et al.* 2019; Arbeláez 2020; Mashavira *et al.* 2022). The 6S footprints, smiling face charts and race-track career development framework may reflect Cultural Revolution rituals and subjective HR practices (Nowell, Norris and Moules 2017; Mahapatro 2021; Bhudwar *et al.* 2023). Haier's management stock options, based on Maslow's motivational principles, focus on job performance of both managers and employees. Critics argue that Haier's approach is an updated form of scientific

management, with workers often overworked and removal quotas often overworked, making it inequitable in Western contexts.

2.10. Lenovo Organization HRM practices

Lenovo's "necklace theory" emphasizes the effective use of people's resources, akin to a strand of pearls. The company's HR strategies focus on organizational cohesion, fostering collaboration among executives (Junwen 2018; Minghua 2022; D'Angelo *et al.* 2022). They use scientific job reviews to establish normative work standards and position qualifications, which are used in employee expectations and pay and benefit processes (Bonaccio *et al.* 2020; Christensen *et al.* 2021; Shtembari, Kufo and Haxhinasto 2022; Sull 2022). Lenovo also employs a "conversion expense" method to reduce turnover, reducing turnover intentions. The company's incentive strategy considers short-term, medium-term and long-term rewards and actively promotes employee development through various opportunities for improvement and innovation.

2.10.1. Lenovo HRM Practices Criticized

Lenovo's People First philosophy focuses on employee growth, value enhancement and work-life quality, aligning with Western HRM practices (Boon, Hartog and Lepak 2019; Xu, Xie and Tang 2020; Koeijer *et al.* 2022; Stor 2023). The company fosters innovative, talented individuals, fosters friendly partnerships, encourages leaders and promotes productive work (Kozioł-Nadolna 2020). Lenovo is the first major Chinese company to design a modern HRM architecture, replacing its personnel department with an HR department and dedicated HR professionals (Persson and Shrivastava 2016; Chen 2019; Buchelt, Frączkiewicz-Wronka, Dobrowolska 2020). However, critics argue that Lenovo's rhetoric may not always align with its practices, treating Chinese workers as disposable items (Ngai *et al.* 2016; Yang *et al.* 2019).

2.11. Phoenix Contact HRM Practices

Phoenix Touch, a global leader in electrical engineering, electronics, and automation, employs over 16,500 people worldwide and generated a revenue of EUR 2,2 billion in the 2017 Global Compact report. The company values innovation and human capital, focusing

on mutual devotion, friendship, and integrity. Phoenix Touch China (PC-CN) uses a creative management philosophy, high-efficiency management, and scientific choices to support sustainable development (Ma *et al.*, 2023; Xu *et al.*, 2023; Zhang and Rujian Lian, 2023). The company prioritizes staff education and recruitment, using a dual-channel career advancement system that allows employees to choose their growth based on their personalities, specialty, value orientation, and career preparation (Branka 2016; Huyes and Bulat 2017; Hall, Yip, and Doiron 2018; Dhawan 2020). The company integrates corporate development with individual growth requirements, providing more opportunities for education (Davenport 2019; Singh and Gupta 2023). The Global Compact Report (2017) highlights the need for staff to adapt to digital transformation and to changing working environments and processes. Phoenix Touch also emphasizes the importance of certification in ensuring future sustainability, as digital transformation impacts employee requirements and skills (Vial 2019; Bikse *et al.* 2021; Hamburg 2018; Trenerry *et al.* 2021). The company's approach includes introducing unique certification measures at the workplace and using e-learning resources like "Industry 4.0 Live @ Phoenix Touch" (Mita *et al.*, 2021).

2.12. Comparing and Contrasting HRM practices in the first-world countries

Chinese multinational corporations (MNCs) have developed sophisticated HRM systems that mimic western approaches, but their practices may be at odds with their rhetoric (Geary and Nyiawung 2021; Malik *et al.* 2022; Ren *et al.* 2023; Cooke, Schuler and Varma 2023; Stor 2023). Their HRM architectures are at different stages of global development, illustrating partial convergence and partial divergence depending on the issues involved (Budhwar, Varma and Patel 2016; Banyai 2019; Zhu and Warner 2019; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Brewster and Haak-Saheem 2020; Moonan 2021). There is no one simple HRM model that can be recommended across the board and there are family resemblances to consider when making strategic choices (Wang and Shaheryar 2020; Dwyer 2022; Dacko-Pikiewicz 2022; Stredwick 2022). Organizational survival is guaranteed with the help of technology, especially in China.

2.13. Various facets of HR activities and their contribution to the survival of the organization

HR activities are crucial for organizational productivity, attracting, retaining and improving employee skills and knowledge (Grobler, Grobler and Mathafena 2019; Wasseem *et al.* 2019; Rodríguez-Sánchez *et al.* 2020; Gabriel Cachón-Rodríguez *et al.* 2022). HR techniques must be strategically used to maintain clear boundaries and retain workers in a competitive market (Armstrong and Brown 2019; Caligiuri *et al.* 2020; Cross and Swart 2021; Battour, Barahma and Al-Awlaqi 2021). HRM practices include recruiting, selection, pay, benefits, promotions, training and relationship management (Grobler, Grobler and Mathafena 2019; Najam 2020; Alqudah, Carballo- Penela and Ruzo-Sanmartin 2021). HR policies have ethical, legal and financial implications that impact workers' views (Ogwoka, Namada and Sikalieh 2017; Murphy 2018; Simoes *et al.* 2018; del-Castillo-Feito, Blanco-González, Hernández-Perlines 2021). HR activity expectations are important for employee attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction, attachment, interest, commitment, turnover and social exchange (Ahmad 2018; Hui 2021; Balushi *et al.* 2022).

2.14. Use of Technology as an HR Practice in First World countries

(Ghurair 2018) emphasizes the need for HR to adapt to the changing work environment due to the impact of Artificial intelligence (AI).

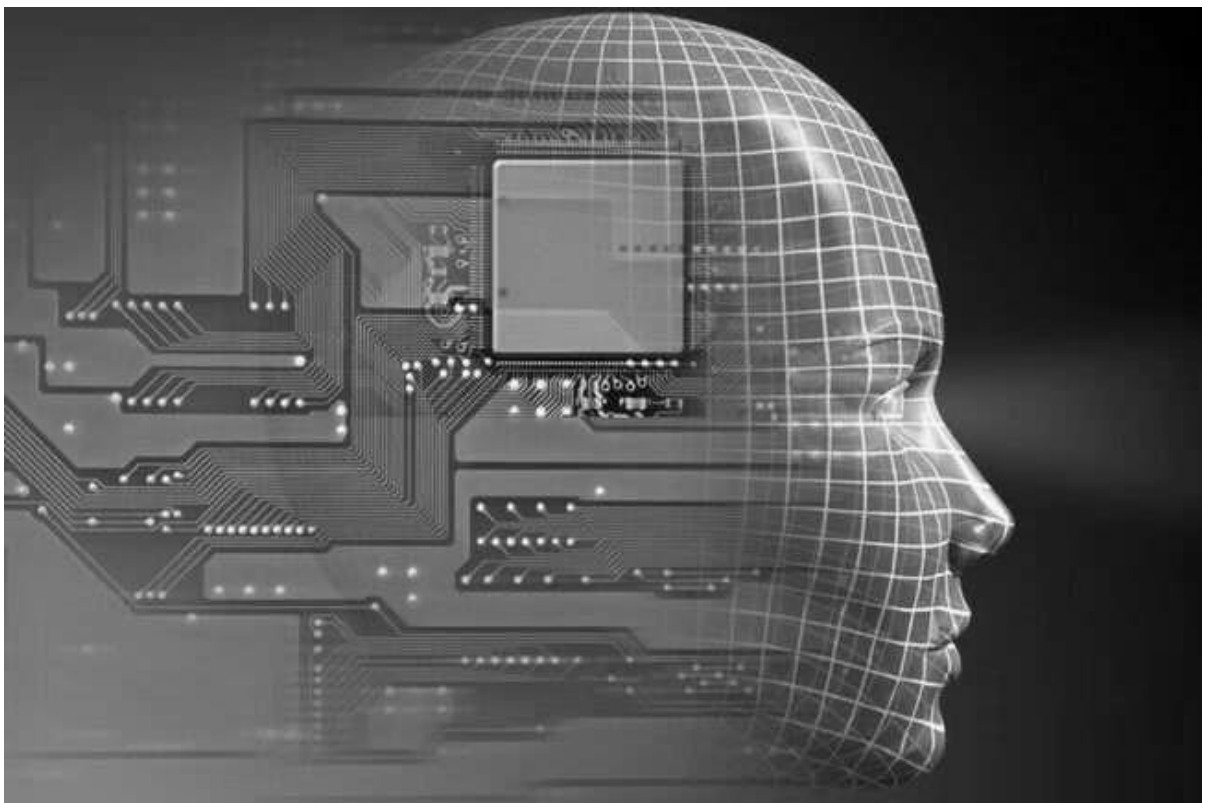


Figure 2. 11 A Diagram depicting the use of Artificial Intelligence in HRM practices

Source: Ghurair (2018)

Business dynamics are rapidly changing, necessitating companies to adapt quickly to consumer needs (Kucharčíková, Mičiak and Hitka 2018; Hacklin, Björkdahl and Wallin 2018; Mufudza 2018; Dubey *et al.* 2023). Innovation and technological advancements are crucial for the sustainability of e-business and society (Corejová, Rostášová and Corejová 2017; George, Merrill and Schillebeeckx 2022; Xiao and Su, 2022; Ahmad *et al.* 2023). IT has significantly impacted HR systems and procedures, leading to widespread implementation of Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) across various industries (Tursunbayeva 2019; Belizon and Kieran 2021; Hamid *et al.* 2022; McCartney and Fu 2022). HRIS involves gathering, storing, manipulating, retrieving and distributing relevant information on human resources. As businesses face globalization, technological advancement and a knowledge-based economy, traditional HR systems are becoming redundant (Corejová and Al Kassiri 2016; Quasor 2018). HR and IT are now used as strategic tools to deal with new changes, with IT-based HR taking HR management to a new level (Boon *et al.* 2019).

2.15. Globalisation, AI and HRM practices

The KPMG report highlights the increasing importance of human resources in a company's people agenda, with areas such as workforce analytics, talent management and technology becoming more relevant. This has led to a "Robot Apocalypse" era where employees fear robots will take their jobs (Wolla 2018; Elliott 2018; Nishant and Ambarkha 2019; Parry and Battista 2019; Hzrolu 2021). However, it is crucial to remember that robots and inventions are created by humans and must be managed or monitored by humans. AI, a computer science discipline, has the potential to alter HR from recruitment through employee experience and talent management (Gosh, Chakraborty and Law 2018; Johansson and Herranen 2018; Torresen 2018; McLeay *et al.* 2021; Cox 2021; Taye 2023).

AI is driven by machine learning and deep learning and its impact on employment depends on how employees react to technology (Acemoglu and Restrepo 2018; Biswas 2019; Ramachandran *et al.* 2022; Soori, Arezoo and Dastress 2023). Physical capital refers to the equipment and machinery used in production, while technology refers to the knowledge, procedures and techniques employed in the production of goods and services (Wolla 2018; Pheng and Hou 2019; Cepal 2021). In the future workplace, major HR responsibilities of

attracting, selecting, creating, motivating and sustaining will potentially necessitate alternative ways (Bardoel and Holland 2016).

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Physical capital refers to the equipment and machinery used in production, while technology refers to the knowledge, procedures and techniques employed in the production of goods and services (Wolla 2018; Pheng and Hou 2019; Cepal 2021). In the future workplace, major HR responsibilities of attracting, selecting, creating, motivating and sustaining will potentially necessitate alternative ways (Bardoel and Holland 2016). Technological breakthroughs like AI have a significant impact on the workplace, with increased remote work leading to reduced effort and 47% of total employment likely to be automated within the next decade or two (Frey and Osborne 2017).

This disintegration of traditional employment relationships and the arrival of a new generation of employees with different attitudes towards the previous workforce present challenges for HR and people management. To ensure organizations survive with technology, HR professionals should develop strategies to make the most of these technologies, such as establishing efficiencies and improving decision-making accuracy (Osbourne and Frey 2017). Parry and Battista 2019). HR practitioners should also consider how employees can be re-skilled or up-skilled to replace outdated skills, ensuring their retention in the workforce.

2.15.1. Flexibility in Technological HRM Practices

Flexible work practices are becoming increasingly popular to meet employee expectations and avoid costs associated with physical workspaces (Davidescu 2020; Weideman and Hofmeyr 2020; Mache, Servaty and Harth 2020; Vyas 2022; Jain, Vyas, and Rawat 2023). Advancements in internet and mobile technology have improved remote work, with increased female labor force participation and flexible pension plans also contributing to this trend (Atkinson 2017; Parry and Battista 2019; Jain *et al.* 2023; Jaumotte *et al.* 2023). Employers must ensure these practices do not negatively impact employees and contribute to job intensification (Bunner, Prem and Korunka 2018; Chung and van der Lippe 2020; Green *et al.* 2021; Mauno *et al.* 2022).

2.15.2. Danger of technological flexibility in HRM Practices

The advancement of technology in HR has led to a shift towards a more connected and contactable workforce, resulting in increased stress levels and reduced efficiency (Chron 2017; Ghani *et al.* 2022; da Silva *et al.* 2022; Murugesan *et al.* 2023). This shift has also led to a rise in the gig economy, where workers are involved in self-employment contracts, subcontracts and various types of gig-work (Abraham *et al.* 2017; Vallas and Schor 2020; Hafeez, Gupta and Sprajcer 2022). This has led to higher economic insecurity, low productivity, diminished autonomy and rising personal debt levels. HR professionals must consider how businesses can benefit from the versatility of this gig economy approach while ensuring workers are not put at risk due to a lack of help and job security (Larsson 2020; Amis, Mair and Munir 2020; Warren 2021; The gig economy has also led to higher stress and burnout among workers, making it crucial for HR professionals to address concerns such as employee well-being policies (Kowalski and Loretto 2017; Zhang *et al.* 2022; Cropanzano *et al.* 2023).

Technology will open new doors for HR, improving service delivery efficiency, reducing administrative work and contributing to the strategic direction of enterprises (Lei and Jing 2016; Mujtaba and Senathip 2020; Dwivedi *et al.* 2023). However, the extent and speed of this impact depend on technological developments and companies' willingness to adopt them. Therefore, maintaining digital involvement in the future workplace is critical (Beer and Mulder 2020; Nikou, De Reuever and Kanafi 2022; Mergel, Edelman and Haug 2019).

2.16. Organizational Development as an HR Practice

Organizational development (OD) is a systematic approach to enabling sustained organizational success through people's involvement (Sweetman 2023; El-Dirani, Houssein and Hejase 2020; Errida and Lotfi 2021; Khaw *et al.* 2023). It helps companies execute strategy by optimizing human assets. HR components play a crucial role in enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and market trends (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Fuertes *et al.* 2020; Apascaritei and Elvira 2022; Yu *et al.* 2022). Leadership and OD are symbiotic, enhancing the ability of organizations and individuals to achieve goals better (Choi 2021; Lam *et al.* 2021). OD provides meaning, purpose and profile to strategic HR efforts, resulting in a valuable, valid and welcoming HRM program.

2.17. Challenges of organizational survival resilience

Organizations should be designed to resist and combat external forces that may lead to shutting down (Burnard and Bhamra 2011; Valente, Lourenco and Nemeth 2020; Sull and Sull 2022). See diagram below for illustration purposes.

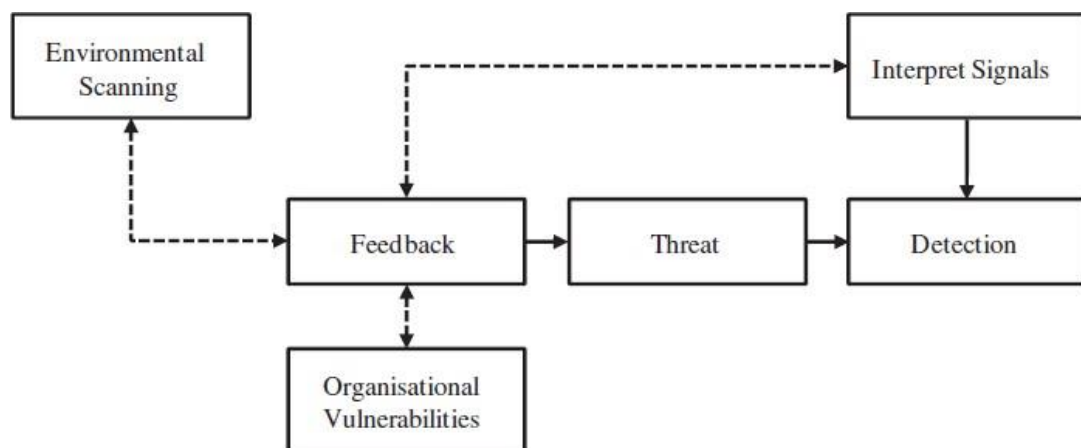


Figure 2. 12 Detection Framework, Source: Burnard and Bhamra (2011).

Burnard and Bhamra (2011) argue that event recognition is crucial for an organization's ability to respond effectively to changing external circumstances, promoting organizational sustainability (Bennett *et al.* 2018; Li *et al.* 2019; Dreier, Nabarro and Nelson 2019; Errida and Lofti 2021). They argue that environmental scanning and environmental variations are essential for organizational survival and that HRM activities remain relevant for survival (Steele, Brink, and Scott 2018; Adam and Alarifi 2021; Bieńkowska, Salamacha and Tworek

2022; Kim, Vaiman and Sanders 2022). They also emphasize the importance of embedded knowledge in organizational structures, which can be generated through environmental input controls and human evaluation of environmental conditions (Chowdhury 2016; Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2019) Li *et al.* 2019; Javaid *et al.* 2022). They suggest that adaptation of systems' reactions to disturbances can be achieved through integrated intelligence or human evaluation of environmental conditions (Matos *et al.* 2022) Burzagli *et al.* 2022; Malhi *et al.* 2020; Makarius *et al.* 2020). They also emphasize the need for understanding an organization's constraints, such as the vulnerability of traditional system reactions during decision-making (Horita, João Porto de Albuquerque, Victor Marchezini 2018; Stanton and Roelich 2021).

2.17.1. Organizational Resilience

Holbeche (2018) emphasizes the importance of resilience in system robustness, which allows organizations to recover from mistakes and adapt to unexpected changes (Meuwissen *et al.* 2019; Duchek 2020; Frigotto, Young and Pinheiro 2020; Hillmann and Guenther 2020). Resilience is crucial for long-term corporate survival and should be capitalized on using HRM practices (Khan *et al.* 2019; Su *et al.* 2020; Douglas 2021; Shaya *et al.* 2022). Organizations need to understand their processes and resources to respond to crises and transform challenges into opportunities (Duchek 2020; Eismann, Posegga and Fischbach 2021; Gkeredakis, Lifshitz-Assaf and Barrett 2021; Riggio and Newstead 2023). Employees should have the will and zeal to succeed and HRM strategies should be implemented. Organizations are structures made up of interconnected pieces and sub-systems that interact to produce a distinct identity (Tuner and Baker 2019). Burnard and Bhamra (2011) suggest that unchecked emergent activity can lead to a company closing down and that resilience strategies can help companies adapt to changing risk situations (Dubbeling, Veenhuizen and Halliday 2019; Hsu *et al.* 2021). By focusing on resilience, organizations can thrive in times of increased uncertainty and adapt to changing risk situations (Jasiūnas, Lund and Mikkola 2021; Aldianto *et al.* 2021).

2.16.2. (a) Resilience as an HRM practice to recovery

Organizational resilience is a crucial aspect of human resource management strategies that can help organizations survive in times of threats, difficulties, or challenges (Duchek 2020; Hillman and Guenther 2020; Yu *et al.* 2022; Hepfer and Lawrence 2022). It is defined as a company's ability to absorb, construct situation- specific answers and engage in innovative activities to capitalize on disruptive surprises that threaten its survival (Sonnet 2016; Alosaimi 2016; Dreier, Nabarro and Nelson 2019; Saad *et al.* 2021; Hossain, Akhter and Sultana 2022) Organizational resilience mechanisms aim to improve a company's situational awareness and serve as a homeostasis mechanism for self-regulating control and communication systems operating in complex and unpredictable environments (Kraft and Kraft 2021; Chen, Liu and Zhou 2021).

Resilience is not just a science but an art practice that employees can learn, derived from various fields such as psychology, environmental and disaster management ecology (Breda 2018; Parker 2020; Rose and Palattiyil 2020; Chen, Xie and Liu 2021). Resilient organizations focus on producing excellent results in line with the company's goals and continuously innovating. Resilience is a skill constructed at the organizational level through a mix of cognitive, behavioral and contextual skills and routines (Ma, Xiao, and Yin, 2018; Liang and Cao 2021). Resilient people are naturally capable of turning adverse situations to their advantage and the benefit of the company (Dantzer 2018; Hoegl and Hartmann 2021).

2.17.2. Categories of resilience

Burnard and Bhamra (2011) propose an integrative model for resilience, categorized into four areas: perceptual role, contextual honesty, strategic capacity and strategic action.

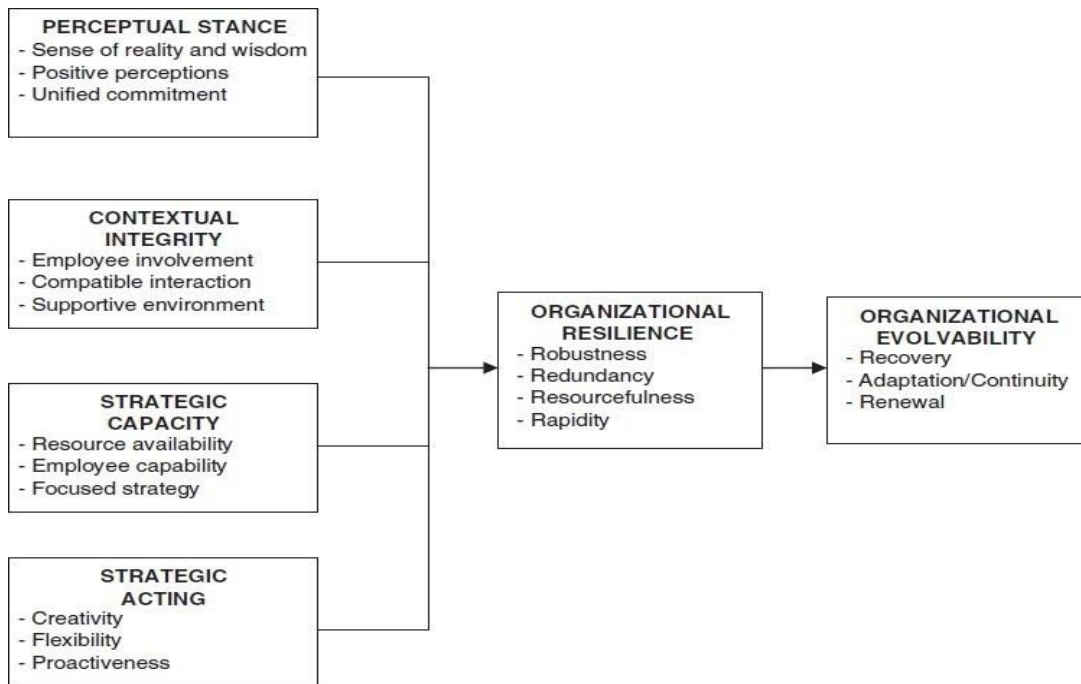


Figure 2. 13 Integrative Framework, Source: Burnard and Bhamra (2011)

Resilience is a crucial aspect of organizational success, requiring organizations to recognize their strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities (Ford *et al.* 2020; Shepherd and Williams 2022; Talubo, Morse, and Saroj 2022). It involves enduring structural changes and adapting to new risk settings. Organizations like Morgan Stanley, which suffered only seven casualties in the 2001 World Trade Center attack, demonstrate resilience due to their understanding of the past and their systems thinking (Dwivedi *et al.* 2022). Meaning-making under systems thinking helps organizations derive impacts from past adverse situations, promoting proactive problem-solving (Darling- Hommand 2020; McNab *et al.* 2020; Monat, Amisshah and Gannon 2020; Voulvoulis *et al.* 2022). Coping is a dimension of organizational resilience, involving training, employee awareness and behaviour modelling. Access to capital, employee capacity and a concentrated approach contribute to greater organizational resilience, sustaining organizational survival (Lv, Chen, and Wang, 2019; Ducheck 2019; Ducheck 2020; Liang and Cao 2021; Fietz, Hillmann and Guenther 2021).

Strategic HR management can develop individual skills among key employees to effectively absorb uncertainty, create threat-specific responses and engage in disruptive activities (Ducheck 2020; Hepfer and Lawrence 2022). Organizational resilience is centered on the capacity to recover performance, process environmental input effectively and move

information and resources in a flexible manner to address specific disruptive cases (Duchek 2020; Hartwig. *et al.* 2020; Chen, Xie and Liu 2021; Evenseth, Sydnes and Gausdal 2022). However, stressing rigidity as the primary response to a danger may limit organizational options for growth and survival (Hillman and Guenther 2020; Struckell *et al.* 2022; Hepfer and Lawrence 2022). To prevent panic and increase creative solutions, tolerance is required under uncertainty and ambiguity (Iannello *et al.* 2017; Hillen *et al.* 2017; Mahmoud, Kamel and Hamza 2020; Chashmi *et al.* 2023).

Organizational resilience is a three-dimensional concept influenced by human capital, organizational capabilities and organizational factors such as strategy, leadership and learning (Barasa, Mbau and Gilson 2018; Ma, Xiao and Yin 2018; Chen, Xie and Liu 2021; Evenseth, Sydnes and Gausdal 2022) Resource management and expanding and building theory suggest that positive events accumulate over time to create lasting resources that improve resilience in the face of resource loss (Hobfoll *et al.* 2018; Hartman *et al.* 2022; Lu *et al.* 2022). Organizational resilience can be developed over time, is path dependent and ingrained in organizations before the need arises as shown in Figure 2.14 below (Barasa, Mbau and Gilson 2018; Schäffer 2020; Fietz, Hillman and Guenther 2021).

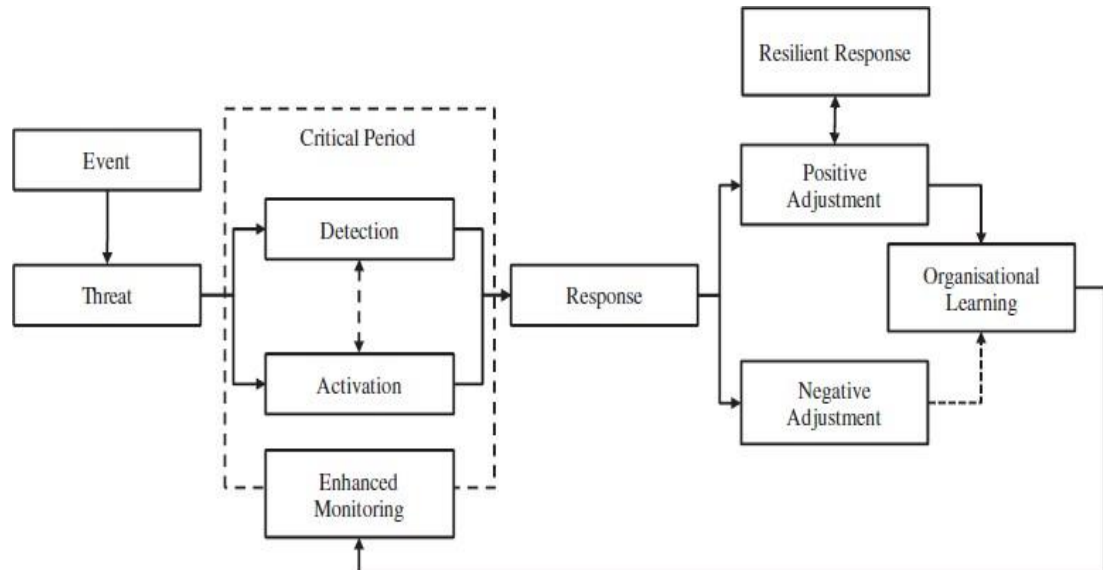


Figure 2. 14 Resilience and preservation, Source: Burnard and Bhamra (2011)

The diagram illustrates how flexible responses affect resilience and adjustment to turbulence. HRM practices should be people-centered, valuing employee contributions

(Hamadamin and Atan 2018; Garengo, Sardi and Nudurupati 2021; Kwong *et al.* 2021; Gu *et al.* 2023). Executives should prioritize HR over production or performance (Torraco 2019; Azizi *et al.* 2021; Ludwikowska 2022). Morgan Stanley Bank's preparedness to the World Trade Center attack in 2011 supports this view, as they contained casualties after building organizational resilience from the 1993 attack (Campbell *et al.* 2019; Goodrich 2020; Davis, Worthington Jr and Schnitker 2023). Employees share opinions in the organization's best interests (Osborne 2017; Metwally 2019; Cakir and Adiguzel 2020; Wang, Hou and Li 2022).

2.17.3. Developing Creativity for Organizational survival

Creativity is a vital HRM dimension that should be inherent within a functional organization (Sözbilir 2018; Peiro 2019; Gazzaroli, Gozzolli and Sanchez-Gardey 2019; Gazzaroli *et al.* 2023). It is dependent on the individual's experience and integration of knowledge. Without an organizational structure that promotes creativity, innovation, teamwork and high HR output, businesses may not grow or survive (Zhao *et al.* 2020; Koziol-Nadolna 2020; Rezaei, Khalilzadeh and Soleimani 2021). The production of innovative ideas is the starting point for innovation, fostering fresh opportunities for survival (Rajapathirana and Hui 2018; Hendricks and Meyer 2020; Juliana *et al.* 2021).

2.17. (a) The Important Phases: Activation and Detection

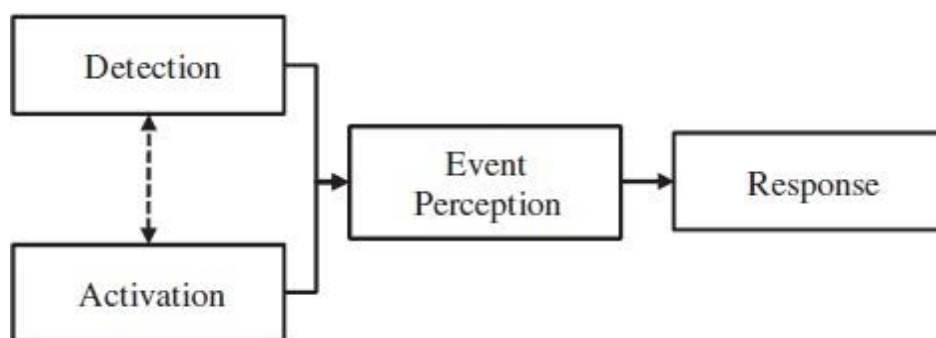


Figure 2. 15 Important Phases: Activation and Detection, Source: Burnard and Bhamra (2011)

Burnard and Bhamra (2011) emphasize the importance of organizational resilience and survival (Börekçi *et al.* 2018; Cao 2021; Wut, Lee and Xu 2022). They suggest that an organization's ability to respond positively to disturbances is crucial for identifying potential threats and developing proactive threat mitigation strategies (Supriadi and Pheng 2017;

Riggs *et al.* 2023; Tariq *et al.* 2023; McGowan, Wojahn and Nicolini 2023). They also highlight the importance of adaptive ability, which is linked to response capacity, in a system's ability to adapt to environmental changes (Cohen *et al.* 2016; Thurman *et al.* 2020; Vallury *et al.* 2022; Dilling *et al.* 2023).

2.18. Developing Leadership Agility for Organizational Survival

Organizational resilience relies on leadership agility, which involves leaders adapting to changes in the VUCADD world (Levey and Levey 2019; Baran and Haley M. Woznyj 2020; Nowacka and Rzemieniak 2022). Al Dhaheri (2017) suggests that HRM practices should focus on five critical abilities: anticipating change, generating confidence, initiating action, liberating thinking and evaluating results (Alwis, Andrić and Sostar 2022).

Leaders should anticipate change, generate confidence, initiate action, foster new ways of thinking and evaluate results. They should understand their people's capacities, balance stakeholder needs and inspire trust and commitment (Smiley 2018; Steinmann, Klug and Maier 2018; Dreier, Nabarro and Nelson 2019; Eva *et al.* 2019). They should also differentiate between tactical and strategic thinking and assign decision-making responsibilities (Buehring and Bishop 2020; Fuertes *et al.* 2020). By embracing ideas from both internal and external sources, leaders can foster innovation and improve organizational performance (Akpaprep, Jengre and Mogre 2019; Koziol-Nadolna 2020; Shafiet *al.* 2020; Konopik *et al.* 2022).

2.19. Positivism

Successful firms generate high performance and profitability by exploiting employees' individual traits and abilities, bringing out the best in them, and designing meaningful work for individuals (Neessen *et al.* 2019; Huang, Lin and Hsieh 2021; Adam and Alarifi 2021; López-Cabarcos, Vázquez-Rodríguez and Quiñoá-Piñeiro 2022). Earlier on, Dong *et al.* (2014) argued that enterprises can improve their HRM stock by improving employee capabilities while lowering the cost of hiring, selecting and socializing new workers (Adam and Alarifi 2021). Developmental job experience (DJE) is directly linked to a job's information features, enabling workers to process a lot of data and inspiring them to learn different skills. HRM practices set the tone and status of the employer-employee interaction,

motivating more inventive personnel (Hentschel 2017; Sonnentag 2017; Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2020; Zhenjing *et al.* 2022). Leadership is important, and effective management contributes to the identification and growth of skills, which can help organizations succeed in tumultuous times (Smiley 2018; Benmira and Agboola 2021; Canavesis and Minelli 2022; Benmira and Agboola 2021; Canavesi and Minelli 2022; Santaella and Raso-Sánchez 2023).

Servant leadership emphasizes service over self-interest, ethical moral acts and altruistic philosophy (Tanno and Banner 2018; Lemoine *et al.* 2019; Fatima *et al.* 2021; Kauppila 2022 McGhee 2023). Effective leadership involves attitude, transparency, decision-making and addressing difficult issues (Feyes 2018; Nicolaidis and Duho 2019; Chak and Carminati 2022; Korkmaz *et al.* 2022).

Empirical research studies show that businesses "do well because they "do well," and when employees bring out the best in one another, the results are beneficial to all employees (Hussain *et al.* 2020; Määttä and Uusiautti 2020; Daffin 2021).

The ability of citizens and organizations to produce creativity is an integral part of public sector innovation (Moussa, McMurray and Muenjohn 2018; Palm and Algehed 2017; Gullmark 2021; Azamela *et al.* 2022). HR professionals in Zimbabwean parastatals should be familiar with positive practices, which encompass behaviors, attitudes and values, strategies and rituals reflecting exemplary and virtuous attitudes and behaviors (Muller 2017; Mutandwa 2020; Gumbie, Dhanpat and Joseph 2023) .

2.19.1. Positive organizational behaviour

Psychological capital (PsyCap) consists of four psychological instruments: positive hope, motivation, effectiveness and resilience (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan 2017; Biricik 2020; Finch, Farell and Waters 2020). The concept of perceived organizational support (POS) establishes a link between positive behaviors and positive results for individuals and organizations (Gupta *et al.* 2019; Maan *et al.* 2020; Eisenberger, Shanock and Wen 2020). POS focuses on generative dynamics that foster human power, resilience, healing and regeneration (Berta *et al.* 2018; Vasconcelos 2018; Qi *et al.* 2019; Mabasa, Ngirande and Shambare 2022). Organizations with struggling workers may struggle to foster entrepreneurial projects (Errida and Lofti 2021; Engidaw 2022; Sull, Sull and Zweig 2022). Empowerment, participation, autonomy, relationships and compensation systems impact

organizational survival (Ukil 2016; Khalid and Nawab 2018; Maartje 2020; Murray and Holmes 2021).

Emotional intelligence (EI) helps employees stay motivated and enthusiastic about their talents and creativity (Bhattacharjee and Rahman 2016; Silva and Coelho 2018; Ivcevic 2021; Ahsan 2023). EI can lower turnover intention by helping employees detect, understand and regulate negative emotions (Szczygiel and Mikolajczak 2018; Giao *et al.* 2020; Burki, Khan and Saeed 2020; Mustafa, Vinsent and Badri 2023).

This HRM technique is crucial for organizational survival, especially in complex contexts (Knies *et al.* 2018; Bienkowska *et al.* 2022; Burke and Morley 2022; Jotabá *et al.* 2022).

2.19.2. Positive energizers in HRM practices

Positive energizers in working teams enhance performance and can negate low positivity, leading to increased positivity and performance (Rego *et al.* 2019; Cameron 2021; Dirzyte and Patapas 2022). High-performance businesses have three times as many positive energizers as ordinary firms (Parker and Gerbasi 2016; Cross, Edmondson and Murphy 2019). Positive practices, such as positive meaning, agency, emotions and information, generate feelings of vitality and contribute to positivism in employees (Park, Konge and Artino 2020; Stoloff *et al.* 2020; Jebbouri *et al.* 2022; Percio 2022). Cameron *et al.* (2011) suggest that positive practices impact organizational effectiveness through enhancement, buffering and heliotropism. Behavioral integrity (BI) is crucial for organizational effectiveness, as it focuses on the strength and reliability of others' words (Aldossari and Mokhtar 2020; Nazri *et al.* 2020; Paulino 2022; Raed *et al.* 2023).

Positive framing involves compassionate leaders expressing empathy and creating an environment for the voice of personal and professional concerns (West *et al.* 2017; Sibiya 2018; Zulueta 2021; Arghode *et al.* 2022). HR managers must have reliable advice to avoid triggering the fight-flight or freeze instinct, which can hinder creative solutions. Job stress affects employees physically and mentally, burdening companies and communities economically (Cohen Murphy and Prather 2019; Banerjee and Raj 2020; Chen *et al.* 2022). Systems thinking suggests that understanding and improving situations from different world

views is essential for overcoming stress and achieving organizational survival (Rosas 2017; Shaked 2019; Amissah, Ganon and Monat 2020; McNab *et al.* 2020).

2.19.3. HRM practices for diverse situations

Organizational survival relies on a balance between management and leadership, with servant leadership being an employee-oriented style that promotes positive activities at work and improves efficiency (Eva *et al.* 2019; Chi *et al.* 2020; Fatima *et al.* 2021; Costa, Padua and Moreira 2023). This style fosters a promotion mindset, recognizing and addressing all stakeholders' wants and desires (Steinmann, Klug and Maier 2018; Smiley 2018; Macassa *et al.* 2021; Pfajfar *et al.* 2022). Communication is crucial for organizational survival, and the absence of confidence can lead to inefficiency (Rajhans 2018; Shannon 2018; Musheke and Phiri 2021; Khaw *et al.* 2022). A positive working environment (PWE) is essential for trust and respect, which create relational capital and encourage self-determination and autonomy (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan

2017; Kleine, Rudolph and Zacher 2019; Berraies, Lajili and Chtioui 2020; Li *et al.* 2021). PWE is defined by the ideals of transparency, cooperation, partnership, inspiration, personal liberty and confidence, promoting positive impact and well-being (Bennet 2017; Towah 2019). Developmental job experience is important as it alludes to one's potential for effective performance at higher employment levels (Galbraith and Mondal 2020; Amegayibor 2021; López-Cabarcos 2022; Cao and Hamori 2023). Alignment between a manager's words and deeds can be a function of contextual factors and the power of how the job is conducted is generally accepted as a key driver of personal authority (Rosen *et al.* 2018; Metwally *et al.* 2019; Roszkowska and Melé 2021). Work organization modes that give workers greater opportunities for involvement in decision-making create conditions for better learning, enhancing employee confidence (Osborne and Hammoud 2017; Abubakar *et al.* 2019; Vo, Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2020; Tuliao and Chen 2022). This strategy of HRM goes a step further in fostering trust and motivation in the organizational setup, helping to preserve organizational survival as a buffer (Collins and Kehoe 2017; Linton 2017; Hobfoll *et al.* 2018; Zeng, Zhao and Zhao 2020).

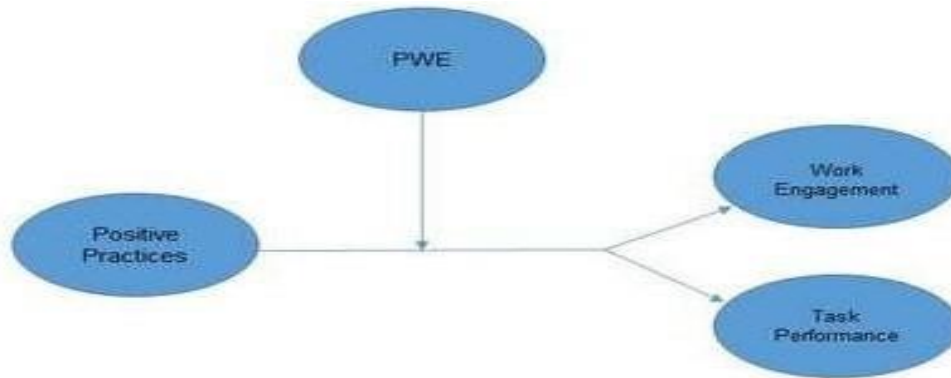


Figure 2. 16 Diagram for Positive Working Environment, Source: Gue (2017)

The diagram illustrates the connection between positive practices like respect, care, support, intention, encouragement and forgiveness and the positive effects of work engagement and job success in an appositive working environment.

2.20. Negative signs of a lack of positivism as a threat to organizational survival

Duchek (2020) highlights the importance of addressing daily work hassles to improve organizational survival (Musheke and Phiri 2021; Sonnentag, Hillmann and Guenther 2020; Chen and Parker 2022). These include disliking job assignments, somatic symptoms and spending time in doctor's rooms. HRM practices should provide a positive environment, encourage communication and call for medical aid facilities to address health matters (Cogin, Ng and Lee 2016; Goldsby *et al.* 2020; Mahapatro 2021; Park 2023). This shows employees that organizations value their staff and are concerned about their health (Eisenberger, Malone and Presson 2016; Adams 2019; Koinig and Diehl 2022).

2.21. Employee engagement for organizational survival

Dedication and adsorption are crucial aspects of work involvement, influencing job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (Jaya and Ariyanto 2021; Abd- Allah 2016; Bhardwaj and Kalia 2021; Corbeanu and Iliescu 2023). High-quality relationships between employees, centered on shared respect and confidence, can excite the workplace and promote involvement (Osborne and Hammoud 2017; Tran *et al.* 2018; Zhao *et al.* 2022).

Positive HRM practices are essential for fairness, equity and justice, as supported by the General System Theory (Fu *et al.* 2018; Aboramadan *et al.* 2019; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry 2019; Najam and Ishaque 2020). HRM due diligence and input from senior HR executives are essential for organizational survival, especially in complex circumstances (Eneh and Awara 2016; Adam 2018; Fuertes *et al.* 2020; Mohiuddin *et al.* 2022). A good fit between personality and workplace physiognomy leads to positive reactions, while a mismatch results in unfavorable results (Mileva 2017; Oliver-La Rosa, Arango-tobon and Ingram 2019; Kuwabara and Thébaud 2017; Kozwik *et al.* 2022). However, it is impossible to eliminate all challenges due to task success (Oyama, Manalo and Nakatani 2018; Ferget *et al.* 2020; Basar *et al.* 2021; Barrot, Llenares and del Rosario 2021).



Figure 2. 17 Diagram for Organizational Culture

Source: hrbartender.com

Research shows that individuals respond positively to organizational environments when their personalities match the workplace's physiognomies, while a mismatch results in poor performance (Zheng and Liu 2017; Margiadi and Wibowo 2020; Liang *et al.* 2020; Shwartz *et al.* 2022). HR practices influence company success through dependability and employee engagement (Pradhan *et al.* 2019; Saad, Gaber and Labib 2021; Jarrar 2022; Kavyashree *et al.* 2023). An innovative organizational culture helps organizations achieve competitive advantage through superior performance outcomes (Hao and Ahmed 2019; Joseph and Kibera 2019; Scheepers 2019; Azeem *et al.* 2021). Trust and mutuality are essential for organizational competitiveness and culture serves as an ethical code (Engelbrecht, Heine

and Mahembe, 2017; Nicolaides and Duho 2019; Teresi *et al.* 2019, Vilas-Boas 2019; Malik et al. 2023). Vardarlier

(2016) highlights problems in traditional HRM procedures compared to current setups (Babapour, Gholipourb and Mehralian 2018; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Harney and Collings 2021; Zhang and Chen 2023).

Table 2. 6 A diagram showing the difference between how Traditional and Modern HRM practices deal with issues

Source: Vardarlier (2016)

Impact of Crisis on People and Companies	Traditional HR Practices	Modern HR Practices
Panic in the organisation	Nothing	Crisis Management Team
Loss of Key Staff and Knowledge	Taking Productivity and efficiency measures	Talent management to develop loyalty
High turnover in labor	Cut down employees or hiring cheap alternative labour	Training, education, professional development
Lack of moral and motivation, causing low performance.	Individual Treatment-case by case, no formal policy	Employee assistance programme, Motivational and Psychological, professional help, outplacement, coaching, mentoring.
Increasing health benefits costs	Cancellation or trimming health benefits	Partial payment or sharing and negotiating with insurance firms
HR-related costly litigations	Case by case solutions, taking legal and financial risks	Compromising with employees
Emerging compensation policy	Paying and taking legal and financial risks	Serving funds before crisis, budgeting

Negative reputation and image in public	Nothing	Outplacement policies, taking commercial and advertising support
Misinformation and disinformation	Threatening, mobbing and dismissing	Utilize all Internal communication channels , and proper usage of social media
Impact of Crisis on People and Companies	Traditional HR Practices	Modern HR Practices
Leadership and faith loss	Blaming others	Gossip management
Difficulty at understanding psychological problems in responding and recovery phases	Nothing	Mentorship

2.22. Organizational Innovativeness

Innovation is crucial for achieving competitive advantage and organizational survival (Alharbi *et al.* 2019; Lee and Yoo 2019; Onileowo *et al.* 2021; Farida and Setiawan 2022). It is a primary determinant of a company's performance and competitive advantage (Kamasak 2017; Ferreira, Coelho and Weersma 2019; Tudose *et al.* 2022) to foster a creative culture; management should focus on strategic, operational, open communication, extrinsic motivation and management encouragement (Naranjo- Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle 2016; Felipe *et al.* 2017; Ramos *et al.* 2018; Musheke and Phiri 2021). Organizational culture demonstrates collective beliefs and ideals, and HRM practices can help improve survival in complex environments

(Tedla 2016; Joseph and Kibera 2019; Tulcanaza-Prieto, Aguilar-Rodríguez and Artieda 2021; Kim and Jung 2022; Alqudah, Carbello-Penela and Ruzo-Sanmartin 2022).

Emphasis should be placed on issues such as corporate culture, talent shortages, incompetence, employee productivity, unethical conduct, low morality, grievances, excessive absenteeism, employee well-being, sabotage, workplace violence, and noncompliance with industry regulations and laws (Grobler and Wörnich 2016; Frixou and Charambous 2016;

Sheehy, Body and Murphy 2021; Edmonson 2019; Magau, Gerha, Roodt and van Zyl 2021; Sull *et al.* 2022). HR practitioners should aim to enhance organizational survival in their daily tasks.

2.23. HRM practices in Third-world countries

Western organizations have attempted to export HRM systems to African countries, but pre-historic methods for selecting tribal leaders indicate that HRM activities originated for improving organizational configurations (Meyer *et al.* 2020; Darwish *et al.* 2022; Oseghale *et al.* 2023; Dwivedi *et al.* 2023). The tradition of hunting safety and health has been passed down through generations, with the Chinese and Greeks using different methods. In affluent countries, there is a lack of understanding among HR professionals, while developing countries have a wealth of HRM literature (Gherghina *et al.* 2020; Makapela and Mtshelwane 2021; Rudolph *et al.* 2022; Gamage *et al.* 2023). The scarcity of research on HR roles in developing countries raises concerns about the extension of systems and job recommendations (Babapour, Gholipourb, and Mehralian 2018; Quosar and Rhaman 2021; Bhudwar *et al.* 2023; Nyathi and Kekwaletswe 2023).

2.23. (a) HRM practices in the private sectors as compared to public sectors

HR practitioners in developing nations have more flexibility to introduce and propose creative ways to HRM processes, which is beneficial for promoting organizational survival (Sharma and Nisar 2016; Aibaghi-Esfahani *et al.* 2017; Adam and Alarafi 2021; Sungwa 2021). However, the lack of self-regulation in private sector organizations and bureaucratic practices in developed countries may lead to isomorphism, influencing public sector HR practitioners to focus more on administrative roles (Carvalho and Santiago 2017; Alsharari 2021; Nyamita 2022). Cultural factors also influence HRM strategies and activities in third-world countries, emphasizing the importance of cultural awareness in managing human capital (Latukha and Malko 2019; El-Farr and Hosseinholizadeh 2019; Brewster and Haak-Saheem 2020; Cooke, Schuler and Varma 2020; Haziazi 2021; Rezaei, Khazadeh and Soleimani 2021). Indigenous knowledge relies primarily on the understanding of practitioners in human resource management practices (Nyumba *et al.* 2018; Greenwood

and Lindsay 2019; Mazzocchi 2022; Tuner, Guerrier and Joseph 2022; Ercantan and Eyupoglu 2022; Redvers *et al.* 2022).

The importance of cultural values for management practices in Africa has grown in recent years, as many expectations of African organizations and institutions have been generated and handled in accordance with Western management assumptions

(Gheasi and Nijkamp 2017; Collier 2017; Nilson and Thorell 2018; Akinola *et al.* 2020; Schultz, Horn and Githaigu 2022). This has led to the loss of social and political leaders, innovators and household leaders, each with their own social and political costs (Bayeh 2016; Alvelino 2021).

2.23. (b) Loss of indigenous HRM practices

The introduction of indigenous management practices plays a critical role in invoking efficient business organization decision-making practices in developing nations (Hates and Bulat 2017; Nyumba 2018; Orlove *et al.* 2020; Sanchez-Flores *et al.* 2020; Idrobo *et al.* 2021). Many Africans have poor knowledge of their cultural principles and the consequences of African organizations for management practice (Ekore and Lanre- Abbass 2016; Nicollaides and Duho 2019; Kwame and Petrucka 2021; Debrah *et al.* 2021; Givler, Bhatt and Maani-Fogelman 2023). The integration of indigenous management methods and good policies in line with cultural values and fundamental business objectives is dependent on suitable human resource management and organizational effectiveness practices (Khan and Law 2018; Jongen *et al.* 2019; Fietz, Hillmann and Guenther 2021; Taufe'ulungaki and Benson 2021).

The Black Cloth industry has historically benefited from indigenous knowledge in management activities, contributing to the African economy by using the capital available (Kiiza and Basheka 2018; Ewane and Ejagbe 2018; Sousa and Raizada 2020; Ellis 2021; Estrada *et al.* 2022). Curriculum reform is expected to provide the foundation for Western managers to make educated HRM decisions in an African environment, while educators should actively spread indigenous awareness to prevent reliance on Western ideologies (Nowell *et al.* 2017; Danquah and Analoui 2017; Dube and Munsaka 2018; Marnewick, Erasmus and Joseph 2018; Lin, Li, and Roelfsema 2018; Coman *et al.* 2020; Pene, Taufe'ulungaki, and Benson 2021).

2.24. Cultural factors and HR Practice

Edward B. Taylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) defined culture as a complex system encompassing intellect, religion, art, morals, law, conventions and other human capacities (Davis and Nicholls 2016; Robert 2016; Causadias 2018; Karimzadi 2019; Taylor 2019; Harrison-Buck and Fridel 2021). Idang (2015) argues that culture is the sum of a person's way of life established in response to their environment, giving their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms structure and meaning (Amponsah, Omoregie and Ansah 2016; Chu and Karr 2017; Okeke, Ibenwa and Ikeke 2017). Culture is essential for maintaining organizational sustainability worldwide, and it is not necessary to know all definitions of culture to understand its meaning (Tedla 2016; Tran 2017; Mensah and Cassadevill 2019; Metz, Iliès and Nistor 2020; Ketprapakorn and Kantabutra 2022). In sub-Saharan Africa, transforming attitudes towards human resource management involves aligning local values with Western management ideas (Sharma and Nisar 2016; Losch 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Ren *et al.* 2019). The spread of indigenous HRM concepts and capabilities in emerging economies considers the diversity of cross-cultural values and norms within countries (Ugoani 2016; Cooke, Schuler and Varma 2020; Stor 2021; Malik *et al.* 2022; Stephan 2022). HRM practitioners in developing countries must possess versatility and the ability to cope sensitively with cultural challenges (Nyumba 2018; Chen 2019; Mahapatro 2021; Dwivedi *et al.* 2023).

2.24. (a) Cultural categories as cognitive containers in Africa

Africa has experienced the fastest rate of westernization in the non-western world this century, with indigenous human capital expertise being based on cultural values and systems ideas (Garcia-Olp 2018; Koç and Kafa 2019; Zaidan 2019; Thiaw and Mack 2020; González, Carvacho, and Jiménez-Moya, (2022). Local cultural effects can significantly impact culture and informal rules and regulations, and developing countries should consider cultural categories as cognitive containers for defining, categorizing, arguing, negotiating and working out social interests (Sudhinaraset *et al.* 2016; Faundez 2016; Sacco, Firelli and Blessi 2018; Han Park and Rhee 2021; Stephan 2022). Some researchers suggest that African and Asian employees, exemplified by cultural principles such as Ubuntu and Guanxi, are culturally comparable and that HRM practices will evolve in the direction of an Afro-Asian

nexus, based on several global, indigenous and situational elements (Xing *et al.* 2016; Osabutey 2019; Ofori 2023). Ubuntu is a derivative of the East African Bantu word 'muntu', which simply means a person or human being (Sakupapa 2018; Laryea 2023; Simba 2021). Corporate cultures exist in both visible and conscious practices, and culture is often related to personality as the interaction aggregate (Miska, Szócs and Schiffinger 2018; Adler and Aycan 2018; Khan and Law 2018; Diener, Lucas and Cummings 2019; Yip *et al.* 2020; Hassan *et al.* 2023). Individuals live in multi-layered cultures, from national culture as a larger macro-level culture to state/prefecture as a mid-level culture and organization as a micro-level culture (Uchida and Oishi 2016; Wang *et al.* 2019).

2.24. (b) Africa as pioneer of HRM practices

The study by Iguisi (2014) reveals that HR practices were present in third-world countries before the colonialist arrival and their political, economic and administrative infrastructures became operational (Goldin 2019; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Ansar and Khaled 2021; Oseghale *et al.* 2022). This suggests that these countries could use HRM practices to enhance organizational survival (Arbab and Mahdi 2018; Gile, Buljac-Samardzic and Klundert 2018; Li *et al.* 2019; Elrehail *et al.* 2020). However, the development of African models has been unusual, with a focus on political rather than industrial terrain (Chirikure 2020; Gazzola *et al.* 2020; Gouzoulis, Constantine and Ajefu 2023). It is crucial to recognize that only Africans can construct successful African management models, or at least in close partnership with private organizations, through Public-Private partnerships (Oleribe *et al.* 2019; Chapman *et al.* 2022; Al-Zu'bi *et al.* 2022). Culture is a collective phenomenon connected with people living in the same social context, including social structures, legal systems, government forms, family patterns and social standards (Liottle 2016; Wallis 2017; Bedford and Yeh 2019; McKeown 2021; Muller *et al.* 2021; Roth 2022). The study on culture by various scholars has sparked an ongoing discussions between those who argue that management is a science informed by universal principles and those who contend that it is a relative culture (Kivunja 2017; Kaushik and Walsh 2019; Barrett-Maitland and Lynch 2019; Mensah and Casadevall 2019; Varkey 2021). Respect for cultural diversity is an ethical necessity and the best way forward for global diversity (Lozano and Escrich 2017; Gopalkrishnan 2019; Frémeaux 2020; Fisher 2020; Ponomareva 2022). Despite the importance of politics, economics, bureaucracy and public

office holders, the role of culture in African development affairs is often overlooked (Warf 2017; Chigudu 2018; Igbokwe-Ibeto 2019; Towah 2019).

In traditional African culture, individualism is suppressed and only those with sufficient maturity and experience have a say (Kitirattarkarn, Araujo and Neijens 2020; Mpofu and Steyn 2021; Gilbert 2021). Traditional African contributions have traditionally been credited to group efforts, with emphasis placed on balancing hostilities between members (Flaux and Haas 2016; Cerrato and Cifre 2018; Morrison-Smith and Ruiz 2020). The late President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, described traditional African family-hood as cooperative and non-competitive (Mukhungulu, Kimathi and K’Odhiambo 2017; Fouéré 2017; Fagunwa 2019; Sanga and Pagnucco 2020).

2.25. HRM practices in third-world countries in contrast to First-world countries



Figure 2. 18 Importance of HRM practices in supporting organizational survival Source: Anon

African academics and practitioners often overlook the sociocultural expectations of society in formal studies on organizational and management theory (Brown *et al.* 2018; Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2019; Costello and Laub 2020; Wanh, Hou and Li 2022; Pfajfar *et al.* 2022). This can lead to a lack of understanding of each African nation and the challenges associated with establishing an HRM operating system (Muriithi 2017; Kimathi 2017; Govender and Bussin 2020; Kuteyi and Winkler 2022). Western HR managers may not perform the same job and regulations may differ slightly, increasing management operational ignorance in Africa (Govender and Bussin 2020; Bieńkowska 2022; Bhudwar *et al.* 2023). Indigenous human resource management activities are essential for defining the cultures and core values that form the focus of decision-making processes (Curtis *et al.* 2019; Allen *et al.* 2020; Orlove *et al.* 2020; Mazzocchi 2020; Zidny, Sjöström and Eilks 2020).

African countries often adopt the ideologies of their former colonial masters rather than forging their own sociocultural norms (Nkomazana and Setume 2016; Guyo 2017). This fusion of indigenous knowledge with Western ideologies is complicated and may not address problems associated with their colonial masters' experiences (Maunganidze and Halsall 2016; Tharakan 2016; Tanyanyiwa 2019; Makhubele, Matlakala 2018). African organizations must make a concerted effort to incorporate indigenous knowledge and capability into their decision-making processes (Musarandega, Chingombe and Pillay 2018; Ezeanya-Esiobu 2019; Wheeler and Root-Bernstein 2020; Tengö *et al.* 2021). African business companies have the potential to grow and expand but do not maintain their capital (Bushe 2019; Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary 2016; Mukoro, Sharmina and Gallego-Schmid 2022).

Most developed countries, such as China, North Korea, Sweden and Japan, are at the forefront of indigenous knowledge and ideals (Heyneman and Lee 2016; Song and Wright 2018; Ezell and Cory 2019; Zidny, Sjöström and Eilks 2020). Most scholars and practitioners of human resource management are aware of the benefits and disadvantages of neglecting their own cultural practices and accepting the Westernized mixed competitive model (Mockaitis, Zander and De Cieri 2018; Piwowar-Sulej 2021; Caprar *et al.* 2022). Indigenous leadership practices drive group engagement and call on members to engage in new organizations and solve their own problems (Kuhnlein, Chotiboriboon 2022). Indigenous governance systems in East African countries focus on socio-cultural values and institutional governance policies within the community (Basheka and Auriacombe 2020; Obiero *et al.* 2022).

2.25.1. Age factor in HRM practice

Supervisors in Africa are expected to make judgments and pass them down to subordinates, reflecting the respect for age and seniority (Bell 2017; Davidescu *et al.* 2020; Woodhead *et al.* 2022; Schrage *et al.* 2021; Girei 2023). Management theories like consultative or participatory leadership are not suitable for African cultures, as they do not align with the expectations of power-distance societies (Karacay *et al.* 2019; Aju and Beddewela 2020; Fisher 2021; Fietz, Hillmann and Guenther 2021; Lerutla and Steyn 2022).

Management by Objective (MBO) leadership packages, which focus on shared goal setting and regular assessment, may not be practical in African cultures (Matete 2016; Mabasa 2018; Lill, Roodt and de Bruin 2020; Xanthopoulou, Sahhinidis and Bakaki 2022; Cardona and Rey 2022). Management models based on participation and consultation are also not applicable in African cultures (Swierad, Vartanian and King 2017; Mabunda *et al.* 2022; Muzondiwa, Swarts and Schultz 2022). African workers are driven by affectionate relationships between superiors and subordinates more than recognized achievements (Tran 2017; Tabassum and Nayak 2021; Yang, Jiang and Cheng 2022; Baer *et al.* 2022).

Universal theories like Maslow, Herzberg, McClelland and Vroom's emphasize human motivation as a value option (McLeod 2018; Liu 2023; Zheng, and Hau 2023; Urhahane and Wijinia 2023). However, evidence suggests these theories are not entirely accurate and not applicable in African organizations, making them questionable for inspiring African high-power distance employees and collectivist societies (Yates and de Oliveira 2016; Khan and Law 2018; Ansah and Louw 2019; Banaj, Fiske and Masey 2021; Lu *et al.* 2021).

2.25.2. Suitability of HR Practices in Third-world countries

Iguisi (2014) argues that Western management theories have not adequately addressed the needs and aspirations of African people (Anaemene 2018; Igbokwe- Ibeto 2019; van Breda 2019; Omodan *et al.* 2020; Gatwiri, Amboko and Okolla 2020). Despite the adoption of Western management models, Africa, south of the Sahara, has largely embraced these principles, leading to a lack of effectiveness in implementing them (Azevedo 2017; Shyllon

2018; Segura-Salazar and Tavares 2018; Agwanda *et al.* 2021; Ibrahim *et al.* 2021). The continent's lag in global growth is a result of its failure to catch up with the rest of the world (Oloo 2016; Verter 2017; Chan *et al.* 2019; Bwire *et al.* 2022).

2.25.3. Discipline and Conflict Resolutions in Third-world countries

African culture places great importance on discipline, as seen in unwritten norms of conduct found in traditional occupations. This homogenous culture makes it easy to monitor behavior and enforce discipline within employees (Idang 2015; Kumasey 2017; Nota 2017; Muzingili and Chikoko 2019). Karumazondo's 2017 concept, where two sides agree to maintain peace and understanding, can be applied to modern management to enforce discipline within employees' ranks (Darling-Hammond 2020; Errida and Lotfi 2021; Singh 2022). This approach contrasts with Western societies, where courts interpret laws and pronounce judgments (Sivakumar 2016; Bamzai 2017; Boin and Schmidt 2020; Olejarczyk and Young 2022; Amponsah, Omoregie and Ansah 2022). The homogenous culture makes it difficult to tolerate indiscipline and ensures a broad field of consent (Ngwokabuenui 2015; Simba, Agak and Kabuka

2016; Joynes Rossignoli and Amonoo-Kuofi 2019; Morrison-Smith and Ruiz 2020; Brown 2023). This perspective can be applied to HRM activities, particularly in third-world countries, to ensure organizational survival (Eneh and Awara 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Mohiuddin *et al.* 2022; Alqudah, Carballo-Penela and Ruzo-Sanmartín 2022).

2.25.4. Balancing traditions from modernity in third-world countries

Western-educated Africans are increasingly occupying community societies, leading to individualists who prioritize collectivism or communalism (Enslin and Horsthemke 2016; Táiwò 2016; Smith *et al.* 2019; Abakare and Okeke 2021). This shift is influenced by the lack of an autonomous economic ideology in postcolonial African states (Wolf 2017; Guyo 2017; Patel 2023). As societies transition from traditional to modern, individuals often return to traditional values when necessary (Idang 2015; Sun and Ryder 2016; Ndemanu 2018; Sproesser *et al.* 2019; Fagunwa-Fagunwa 2019). However, individualist and collectivist beliefs can clash in situations of cognitive and political change (Farrell 2018; Albarracin and Shavitt 2018; Xiang *et al.* 2019; Koyuncu and Chipindu 2020; Czerniawska, Czerniawska and Szydło 2021). Individualist and collectivist beliefs clash when cognitive and social talents are combined, posing challenges for African managers (Jang *et al.* 2018; Koyuncu and Chipindu 2020; Ibekwe 2015) suggests a return to traditional African ways of living for

poverty, inequality, unemployment and corruption solutions (Flahaux, De Haas 2016; Ayoo 2022).

2.25.5. Recruitment styles in third-world countries

In traditional African societies, job strength is based on personal knowledge, loyalty and family history (Awoniyi 2015; Eegunlusi 2017; Ndemanu 2018; Ezeanya-Esiobu 201). Focus is on common interests, not rivalry (Warnaar, Zaccra and Aarts 2016; Rowe 2019; Goldstein 2020; Valente et al. 2022). Employee relations issues arise from the constraints of office-based employment, as observed in the Mongolian case, according to Chimed-Ochir (2022). To address poverty and hunger, it is imperative to implement local content policies that regulate or restrict jobs available to locals. The involvement of local Human Resource Management (HRM) team members is essential for engaging with managers and employees (Osborne and Hammoud 2017; Govender and Bussin 2020; Navajas-Romero 2022).

2.25.6. Paternalism leadership style

African culture is known for its paternalistic and hierarchical management style, which emerged from the shift from a patriarchal social order to a free society of autonomous and equal individuals (Rugerinyange 2016; Burden-Stelly 2016; Saigol and Chaudhary 2020). This style is valued differently across countries and is considered to be more effective in third-world countries, such as Korea, China, Taiwan, Pakistan, India, Turkey and Mexico. It is also beneficial in Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American cultures, where it is considered humanizing in workplaces. However, the debate surrounding paternalistic management has been marked by controversy (Zampini 2018; Haworth, Miller and Schaub 2018; Dedahanov, Bozorov and Sung 2019; Hands 2021; Shahzad *et al.* 2022) with some academics describing it as a "benevolent dictatorship" or a subtle form of discrimination (Rivers 2019; Almarshd 2021; Hinai 2022). Jackson (2016) defends paternalistic leadership as a style that incorporates fatherly benevolence with strict discipline and authority. Implementing paternalistic managerial leadership could be a step towards integrating African cultural values into modern management (Sharma and Nisar 2016; Olay, Şen and Arun 2020; Lloyd, and Wayne 2020; Vilakati and Schurink 2021; Islam *et al.* 2022). The traditional paternalistic definition of leadership, established in the family, is more likely to create superior staff management efficiency and productivity (Erden and Otken 2019; Wang *et al.* 2019; Mert and Ozgenel 2020; Fries, Kammerlander and Leitterstorf 2021). However, it is

important to note that paternalistic management is valued differently across countries, and its positive or negative outcomes depend on their dominant contextual and cultural values (Ünler and Kılıç 2019; Takeuchi, Wang and Farh 2020; Safdar, Faiz and Mubarak 2021; Islam *et al.* 2022).

2.25.6. (a) Effects of paternalism

Paternalistic management is a management style that emphasizes the importance of employees' well-being and employment within the organization (Li and Wang 2021; Jiang 2021; Amegayibor 2021). This model can be innovative and can be defended as a conventional HRM standard in third-world countries (Oliveira *et al.* 2021; Govender 2021; Ferdousi and Abedin 2023; Budhwar *et al.* 2023). Paternalistic leadership involves managers participating in non-work-related ceremonies, such as weddings and funerals, and offering long-term benefits beyond short-term monetary rewards (Maqsoom *et al.* 2022; Lu *et al.* 2022).

Supportive leadership improves reciprocity by aiding subordinates experiencing challenges and rewarding those who behave appropriately (Li *et al.* 2019; Chen *et al.* 2020). This contributes to organizational sustainability by making workers feel intimately engaged with the organization's goals. Paternalism can be classified into soft, hard, weak, pure, impure and welfare paternalism (Barnett 2015; Dedahanov, Bozorov and Sung 2019). Soft paternalism ensures that individuals are aware of the potential negative consequences of their choices, while hard paternalism discourages choices that are detrimental to their well-being (Anker 2016; Roberts 2016; Molander and Torsvik 2022). Paternalism is comparable to patriarchy, which believes in men's superiority (Estevan- Reina, Lemus and Megías 2020; Pedro 2020), while separate, paternalism and patriarchy have some overlap in concept formulation (Khader 2020; Woodly 2021; Durmuş 2022). Understanding certain aspects of paternalistic management theory is crucial for understanding how HRM practices can affect organizational survival globally (Melé 2016; Shahzad *et al.* 2022; Harney *et al.* 2022).

2.25.6. (b) Dimensions of paternalistic theory of leadership

The paternalistic style of management in HRM involves a father-son bond, characterized by absolute power and authority and benevolent leadership (Dedahanov, Bozorov and Sung

2019; Asfaq and Siddiqui 2021; Lu *et al.* 2022). This style is rooted in Confucianism, which emphasizes the importance of the father-son bond and the five cardinal relationships that give rise to benevolent leadership (Shek, Chung and Dou 2019; Csikszentmihalyi 2020; Chen 2023). In HRM practice, this style ensures workers are protected from errors and outcomes, leading to increased supervisor confidence and work success (Akarep, Jengre and Mogre 2019; Khaw *et al.* 2023; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Kuehnl *et al.* 2019). The trust placed in superiors is a key factor in leadership effectiveness (Hyman-Shurland 2016, Aristovnik 2019; Chen and Sriphon 2021; Farmanesh and Zargar 2023). This style is particularly evident in fatherly positions in third-world countries, where the father is responsible for the entire family until all children survive and grow up (Zhao *et al.* 2018; Starkweather *et al.* 2021). This paternalistic management style can impact organizational survival and foster a strong sense of responsibility among subordinates (Khuwaja *et al.* 2020; Fries, Kammerlander and Leitterstorf 2021; Li and Wang 2021).



Figure 2. 19 A diagram resembling Paternalism leadership style Source: Liberman (2014)

2.25.7. Induction Issues in third-world countries

Induction rites in traditional African cultures could be replaced by initiation rites in HRM traditions in third-world countries (Sharma and Nisar 2016; Beddewela 2020; Bonache and Festing 2020; Ruparel 2020). Religion plays a significant role in African cultures, as it is an ontological phenomenon and a core aspect of operations (Ndemanu 2018; Etim 2019; Nwosimiri 2019). Induction ceremonies should involve the recruitment of new workers or elevating them to higher positions (Gowhor 2022; Hack-Polay and Mahmoud 2023; Stor 2023; Reddiar and Schultz 2023). Respecting cultural and moral diversity is an ethical imperative in HRM activities in third-world countries (Erolin 2016; Lozano and Escrich 2017; Tamunomiebi and Ehior 2019; Hanić and Jevtić 2020; Daradkeh and Mohammad 2023). By utilizing technology and knowledge transfer, HRM policies and practices can be more effectively distributed by local human capital (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Xie *et al.* 2022; Yáñez-Araque Moreno-Garcia and Hernández-Perlines 2023). The indigenous concept of induction could be linked to modern management in Africa, as it can be used in the local economy for the diffusion of new technologies and knowledge (HRM; Marnewick *et al.* 2018; Sungwa 2021). Oaths of allegiance and offices are made by swearing on the Bible or the Koran, with references to ancestral spirits and community shrines (Oladipupo 2021). When adapted and properly executed in modern settings, the degree of involvement, loyalty and honesty of organization members will increase (Metwally *et al.* 2019; Abubakar *et al.* 2019; Khaw *et al.* 2023). Management positions should regularly incorporate oath-taking into their careers.

2.25.8. Training aspects

Association members should receive training in contemporary management methods through day releases, workshops, seminars and conference attendance (Desmond 2017; Dwivedi *et al.* 2022; Yeo *et al.* 2023). Africans value oral traditions, which foster a sense of identity and connection to their roots (Sone 2018; Smart 2019; Mukhongo *et al.* 2023). Continuous training in management tactics and traditional values can reproduce African culture and tradition for modern management (Tran 2017; Ozioma and Chinwe 2019). However, it can be costly and result in job losses (Burdet 2020; Mujtaba and Senathip 2020; Parschau and Hauge 2020). Education and vocational training programs can influence

companies' promotions, compensation policies and growth strategies in host countries (Hayes and Bulat 2017; Raghupathi and Raghupathi 2020; Montiel *et al.* 2021). Teaching in African cultures is inspired by the past and the present, encouraging young individuals to copy their ancestors' great deeds and achieve worldly success (Ekore and Lanre-Abass 2016).

2.25.9. Motivation and Incentives

Traditional African culture's motivation differs from modern companies', with non-materialistic techniques and status symbols demonstrating admiration for hard effort as a method for incorporating traditional values into contemporary management (Garcia-Olp 2018; Ozioma and Chinwe 2019).

2.25.10. Welfare

Traditional African societies prioritize the health of their people, with extended families and inter-marriage being common practices (Abera *et al.* 2020; Church *et al.* 2023). However, modern management activities in Africa are less extensive than those of traditional businesses (Small 2016; Touray 2021; Caruana *et al.* 2021; Oliveira 2022). Africans, whether as managers or workers, continue to live and be guided by the larger culture, regardless of their participation in modern businesses (Tran 2017; Tabassum and Nayak 2021; Engidaw 2022). While many receive education and training in Western countries or institutions, most maintain ties with the larger African community, which are deeply ingrained in their being (Agbaje 2023; Knowells *et al.* 2020). Despite struggles to understand Western ways of working life and problem-solving methods, Africans never truly forget their culture and the burden it brings (Idang 2015; Ndemanu 2018).

2.25.11. Dark side of adopting western HRM practices in Africa

The adoption of Western management theories and models in African nations has led to challenges in determining effectiveness and appropriateness within a specific culture (Collier 2017; Azevedo 2017; Mehdi 2018; Alifuddin and Widodo 2022). Anthropological concepts should be used to understand the pre-colonial era of African organizations and institutions

(Natukunda 2016; Tilley 2016; Guyo 2017; Holden 2021). African academics and managers should focus on their culture and traditions to achieve success in modern business (Nyumba *et al.* 2018; Bushe 2019; Vereschak 2021). In developing nations, HR activities face challenges such as low wages, a lack of rule of law, and a lack of value systems (Naheer *et al.* 2020; Rodrigues 2020; Singh 2022). Traditional HR paradigms prioritize office work operations, with less attention paid to capital development, strategic management, capacity building and performance pay (Sheppard 2016; Mutandwa 2020). To address these issues, HR professionals should supplement or replace non-linear methods with linear thinking about company operations (Goulielmos 2018; Park 2019; Petropoulos *et al.* 2022). Corporate management should focus on tangible and intangible assets that remain vital for organizational survival (Kamasak 2017; Bratton 2017; Battilana 2018; Carabel *et al.* 2021). Emphasizing the distinction between people management and human resource management is essential for understanding the nature of HRM activities and fostering organizational survival (Melé 2016; Barnabas *et al.* 2016).

2.26. Separating human resource management from personnel management to improve organizational resilience

Human abilities are essential for organizational growth and renewal, leading HR practitioners to adopt non-linear approaches to business operations (Rotich 2015; Walger, Roglio and Abib 2016; Kucharčíková, Mičiak and Hitka 2018). To improve organizational survival, HR should focus on tangible and intangible assets (Schwab 2015; Eneh and Awara 2016; Barnabas *et al.* 2016; Gueldenberg and Hoffmann 2018). However, the HRM practices inherent in first-world countries can create confusion between staff management and human capital management (Hutnek 2016; Ugoani 2016; Boon *et al.* 2019). Personnel management, which includes tasks like hiring, training, pay management and labor relations, often lacks strategic components (Fahim 2018). Staff management has created monotonous, insecure and hazardous occupations, dividing the working class from the ruling elite (Jervis 2016; McKee *et al.* 2017). To address this, HR should focus on strategic management, as staff management has traditionally evolved (Ahammad 2017; Wright and Ulrich 2017). Understanding these theories can help HR managers adapt their activities more effectively to organizational needs and reality (Duchek *et al.* 2020; Hewett and Shantz 2021; Bieńkowska 2022).

HR should shift its focus from promoting options to providing services, as the HR role allows organizations to operate in critical markets like financing, talent and marketing (Torraco and Lundgren 2019; Kaliannan *et al.* 2023; Zhang and Chen 2023). HR professionals should be consultants, providing advice on various employee-related issues and supporting the organization's goals (Silva and Lima 2018; Juarez-Tarraga, Santandreu-Mascarell, and Marin-Garcia 2019). It is crucial to focus on how "systems" or "bundles" of HR practices collectively assist firms in achieving strategic goals (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Boon *et al.* 2019). The beauty of the distinction is that it can be claimed that personnel management and HRM are presentable when they are combined into a diagram, as seen below.

Table 2.26.1. Distinction between Personnel Management (PM) and HRM.

	Personnel	HRM
Time and planning	Short term, reactive	Long term, proactive, strategic, integrated
Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control System	External	Self-Control
Employee relations	Pluralist, collective, low trust	Unitarist, individual, high trust
Structures and systems	Bureaucratic/Mechanistic, Centralised formal	Organic, devolved, flexible
Roles	Specialist/professional	Largely integrated in management
Evaluation criteria	Cost minimisation	Maximum utilisation

Source: Rodrigo (2012).

Vardarli (2016) argues that HR practices and decision-making evolved from traditional to modern approaches, influencing organizational survival globally (Eneh and Awara 2016; Ahmad and Alqaarni 2023, Zhang and Chen 2023). Moran (2019) suggests five major HR innovations for 2019 and beyond: employee engagement, essential training, AI streamlining, combating unconscious bias and expanding employee wellness (Giermindl *et al.* 2022; Abernethy *et al.* 2022; Koivunen *et al.* 2023). These observations can help Zimbabwean organizations use HRM practices to ensure organizational survival.



Figure 2. 20 HRM innovations in 2019

Source: Moran (2019)

Muller (2016) highlights HR analytics' main issues as employee turnover rate, retention, wage and benefits decision-making, employee training system design, and workload analysis (Ghani *et al.* 2022). These issues can be discussed to prevent an organization's company and overall results from being impacted (Rasool *et al.* 2021).

Workforce Analytics and Planning



Figure 2. 21 Workforce Analytics and Planning in HRM practice Source: Muller (2016)

2.27. Challenges facing Zimbabwean Organizations

2.27.1. Introduction

Zimbabwe, a landlocked country bordered by South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia, and is vulnerable to natural and man-made hazards like droughts, floods, veld fires and hurricanes, resulting in roughly 7000 deaths as from 1900 to 2017, Climate Change Knowledge portal, (Mhlanga, Muzingili and Mpambela 2019).

2.27.2. Natural Challenges

i) Cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe

In March 2019, Cyclone Idai hit Zimbabwe, affecting 270 000 people (Chatiza 2019). The storm, as well as the subsequent flooding and landslides, killed 340 people and left many more missing. Agriculture, schools and infrastructure were all severely impacted, and many people were displaced (Chikowore 2023; Musarandega 2023). The HRM practices were interrupted based on the fact that the storm damaged a variety of tourist attractions in the Chimanimani district, including natural, archaeological, cultural and scenic features. These occurrences impaired the smooth continuity of enterprises, resulting in reputational digital data and financial losses, among other things. Disasters like Cyclone Idai can have a significant impact on the growth and performance of most organizations and their supply networks (Moyo *et al.* 2023). The Chimanimani Mountains, which border Mozambique and Zimbabwe, as well as Tessa's Pool, Bridal Veil and Digby's Falls, are among the key attractions. Although reactions to the devastation at some attractions were diverse, there was agreement on the damage to roads, some lodges, bridges, ICTs and power and water delivery systems. The cyclone showed deficiencies in Zimbabwe's disaster risk management system's capacity and policy. The report presents several recommendations, including improving disaster legislation and policy as well as disaster risk governance (Munsaka *et al.* 2021).

(ii) Drought in Zimbabwe

The frequency and scale of natural disasters are increasing globally, particularly in Zimbabwe, where agriculture is crucial for the country's GDP (Hlophe-Ginindza and Mpandeli 2021; Watambwa 2021; Bari and Dessus 2022). Floods, droughts and cyclones pose significant threats to global food security (Tirivangasi 2018; Atanga and Tankpa 2021; Godde *et al.* 2021). These issues affect Zimbabweans, especially those in rural areas (Kabonga 2023). The country's reliance on natural resources makes it vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation. HRM factors may affect organizational survival in Zimbabwe, but it is crucial to focus on psychological set-ups and demonstrate commitment to the organization's cause (Akersson, Wingqvist and César 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Chigeda, Ndofirepi and Steyn 2022).

Addressing these issues is crucial for the well-being and food security of Zimbabweans. Human resource development is a factor that determines the execution of drought management techniques in the same way that it is in any other company (Githae, Ogada and Mwangandi 2020). This gives HRM practices a significant strategic role in aiding organizations that deal with drought relief matters.

2.27.3 Inflationary Challenges

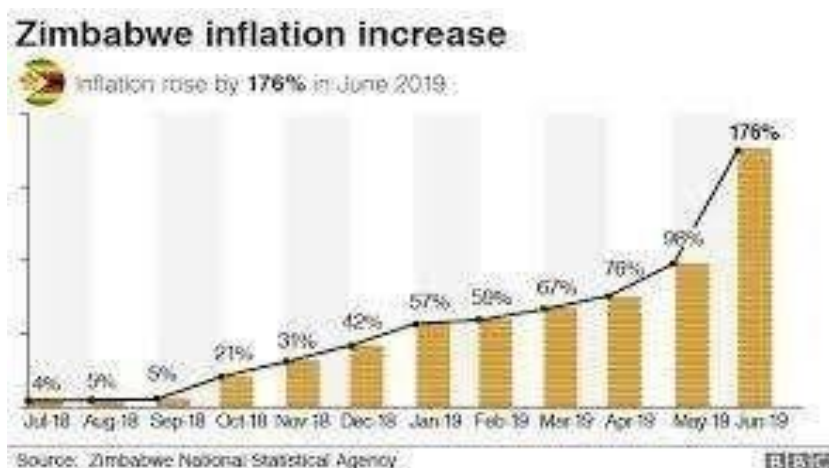


Figure 2. 22 Zimbabwe inflation

Zimbabwe's economic crisis has been exacerbated by high inflation, political instability and economic collapse (Kanyenze, Tyson and Chitambara 2017; Malikane and Chitambara

2017; Masiyandima and Edwards 2018; Pasara and Garidzirai 2020). The country lost 52% of its GDP between 1999 and 2008, and the removal of 25 currency zeros did not help (Kanyenze, Tyson and Chitambara 2017; Masiyandima and Edwards 2018). The country's government has weak creditworthiness, making investors hesitant to lend (Majukwa 2019; Gehring and Lang 2020; Shim 2022). Monetary policy instruments are lacking, and Zimbabwe's central bank has no policy rates to direct the economy's market interest rates (Kavila and Le Roux 2017). The economy is slowing down, and the human resource planning process has become increasingly complex due to economic uncertainty (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Raj *et al.* 2022). This has led to rivalry and forced the closure of organizations. Zimbabwe lacks a national credit rating agency, limiting access to information about potential customers' credit standing (Yoshino and Taghizadeh 2016; Feyen *et al.* 2021). High levels of poverty and unemployment have led to professionals seeking greener pastures in other countries (Njanike 2019; Okunade and Awosusi 2023). Zimbabwe's recent political and socioeconomic crises have also contributed to the deterioration of the rule-based system (Chigudu 2014; Musemwa 2021). HRM activities should be used to facilitate organizational sustainability, but organizations often fail to consult stakeholders and adopt an 'instruction' approach, leaving no room for a resilient, dedicated and motivated workforce (Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Stankevičiūtė, Živilė and Savanevičienė 2018). Furthermore, Zimbabwe's dependence on the mining sector has resulted in numerous uncoordinated fiscal and non-fiscal demands, aged infrastructure and disruption of key services (Kaseke, Chaminuka and Musingafi 2015).

2.27.4. Political Interferences

Magaisa (2019) argues that an organization's success is not due to rules and structures, but to ensuring that there are no corrupt human agents who operate these institutions (Das 2021; Singh 2022). Bribery, pressure and intimidation can undermine the human element, leading organizations to use cost-cutting measures, causing unemployment and poverty (Peters 2018). Mangeni and Atta-Mensah 2022). Parastatals in Africa have become vital for political patronage, offering favors or incentives to clients, such as public office, employment, contracts, subsidies and reputation (Sigman 2015; Khasoane 2019; Quaresima 2019). This has resulted in widespread retrenchments, unemployment and poverty (Rudra and Tobin 2017; Bah *et al.* 2018). HR managers face challenges in choosing workers due to political

polarization between major political parties (Ahlquist 2017; Jost, Baldassarri, and Druckman 2022).

Patronage politics has created an atmosphere where condescending politicians exploit everyone's actions to extend their power (Brown 2020); for example, the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) paid 12% of its total earnings to one person, exacerbating accountability issues. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) paid 12% of its total earnings to one person, causing employees to go without wages for six months, according to NewsDay (11 December 2013). Political interference is a challenge to Zimbabwe's organizational survival (Mutandwa 2020; Shoko and Naidu 2020; Muchadenyika and Williams 2020), as evidenced by the suspension of the CEO of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) and the Town Secretary of the then-Harare City Council. These scenarios are also present in parastatals like Zimbabwe Electricity, Zimbabwe National Water Authority, National Social Security Authority, Zimbabwe National Road Administration, Zimbabwe United Passenger Company, Zimbabwe National Water Authority, District Development Fund, NETONE, Agricultural, Research and Development Authority, Grain Marketing Board, Zimbabwe National Railways, and Medical Assistance.

2.27.5. Advertisement Costs

Almost every aspect of traditional media is influenced by new media technology, including subscriptions, readership, circulation and advertising revenue. The ability to acquire information and receive fast updates via the internet, in particular, has jeopardized the viability of traditional newspapers (Hassan *et al.* 2021). The newspaper industry's economic decline is attributed in part to a decrease in gross domestic product, a reduction in consumer disposable income, and the increasing costs of production, among other factors. (Adima 2015; Kavila and Le Roux 2017). Zimbabwe's print media, including newspapers and television, is expensive and challenging for firms to advertise job openings (Kandiero 2017; Kalombe and Phiri 2019). Mistakes in selecting larger audiences can lead to ineffective recruitment efforts (Brishti and Javed 2020; Nkomo, Kandiro and Bigirimana 2017). Small and medium- sized enterprises struggle to cover these costs, resulting in a smaller labor pool and recruitment of less skilled individuals (Gherghina *et al.* 2020; Ye 2022).

2.27.6 Fake Qualifications

In Zimbabwe, credential fraud involving academic and professional prizes and recognitions has actually increased (Garwe 2015; Heher 2017; Mushawatu 2022). The fraudulent operations were fuelled by credentialism and the increasing demand for higher education credentials, the high unemployment rate, and the desire for recognition and achievement (Jimu 2018; Gallagher 2019; Ntshangase and Msosa 2022). Honorary degrees were at the top of the list of illegally obtained credentials, followed by professorial awards, doctorates, master's degrees, bachelor's degrees and secondary level certificates, in that order (Garwe 2015). Unregistered degree-awarding organizations, degree mills, forgeries and unscrupulous authorities were among the sources of fake documents (Ntshangase and Msosa 2022). HR practices in Zimbabwe face challenges such as fake qualification (Charlton Chihuri, the former loss control director of ZIMRA, is a case in point, faking 'O' level, 'A' level and degree level, Herald Zimbabwe, 29 October 2016, as well as Grace Mugabe, former First Lady; not forgetting Misheck Nyakswa and Florence Chimbumu. Some of the challenges include poor communication and inadequate disciplinary procedures (Ye 2022; Gumbie, Dhanpat, Joseph 2022; Sishi 2022). The country's shortage of skilled workers is a significant obstacle (Walwei, and Deller 2021; Aryeetey, Baffour and Turkson 2021) and HR practitioners should avoid hasty recruitment to support organizational survival (Hahey *et al.* 2017; Okolie and Udom 2019).

To improve organizational survival, management priorities should be adjusted in line with employee expectations (Aguinis and Burgi-Tian 2021). The organization's vision and mission are not being properly sold to workers, leading to low interest alignment and performance (Kopaneva 2019; Musheke and Phiri 2021; Slåtten, Mutonyi and Lien 2021). Management complaints do not meet disciplinary procedures and many employees' disciplinary cases result in terminations (Khumalo 2020; Papinaho, Häggman-Laitila and Kangasniemi 2022). Communication problems and management issues leave workers unhappy and unaware of organizational events (Sibanda, Muchena and Ncube 2017). Other challenges include outdated infrastructure, an economic recession and regulatory tariff regulation. Public agencies are increasingly demanding greater results with less funding, leading to a need for a new paradigm of organizational HR to help organizations sustain themselves (Zinyama, Nhema and Mutandwa 2015; Aust, Matthews, and Muller-Camen 2020). This study focuses

on understanding how general HR practices can facilitate organizational sustainability in Zimbabwe.

2.27.7. Performance Management

Performance management (PM) is crucial for organizations to thrive, but in Zimbabwe, employees are dissatisfied with the implementation of Results Based Management (RBM), (Mahapa, Dzimbiri and Maphosa 2015; Chikwariro, Bussin and De Braine 2020; Paulakos *et al.* 2015). Insufficient technological knowledge and a lack of proper training have led to a lack of motivation (Mupa and Chinooneka 2015; Mynaříková and Novotný 2020). In countries with strong financial foundations, RBM has been successful, but Zimbabwe's lack of human resources has impacted its competitiveness (Chilunjika 2016; Dandira *et al.* 2020). The lack of trained workers threatens RBM implementation and hinders the provision of services (Mutambatuwisi 2016).

Addressing these issues is essential for ensuring the success of RBM in Zimbabwe.

2.28. HRM practices used in Zimbabwe as compared to other African countries

2.28.1. Introduction

HRM research has two schools of thought: the best fit school and the best practice school. The best-fit school emphasizes HR practices aligning with company strategy to add value, while the best-practice school claims universal HR procedures lead to superior business results (Subhash 2019; Armstrong 2019). HRM has been criticized for its promises and morality and for being excessively prescriptive and simplistic (Reilly and Williams 2016; Guest 2017; Nielsen *et al.* 2017; Oppong 2017). Some argue that HR should focus on business needs and be coercive in shaping human behavior at work (Armstrong and Taylor 2015; O'riordan 2017; Emeagwal 2018).

2.28.2. Zimbabwe

The study examines the HRM practices used in Zimbabwe to support organizational survival and compares them to other African countries. It highlights the importance of understanding

the relationship between people management practices and company competitiveness in Africa. Zimbabwe's economy is often unstable, with high unemployment, falling output, bankruptcies and financial crises, Bushe (2019). The country is classified as a fragile state by DFID and the World Bank, and the study identifies certain HR practices that may help support organizational survival (D'Aquino *et al.* 2019).

2.28.3. (i) Employee training and career planning

The Zimbabwean economy has been significantly impacted by the global economic downturn, leading to low and unstable aggregate demand levels, high unemployment rates, inflation, currency depreciation, radical monetary policy shifts, a lack of foreign currency, a fall in business confidence and financial illiquidity (Mkandatsama and Nyanhete 2017; Masiyandima and Edwards 2018). This has led to difficulties in human resource planning as organizations have surplus workers and struggle to scale back operations (Nyarota *et al.* 2016; Kanyenze 2017; Mkandatsama and Nyanhete 2017; Gukurume 2018; Pettinger 2019; Muronzi 2019; Pasara and Garidzirai 2020). The

Zimbabwe Labour Act Cap 28:01, Sections 12 C and D, requires companies to provide salary structures, total wage bills and past measures to avoid retrenchment, which can lead to a surplus labor pool (Sithole and Munyai 2017). The Zimbabwe Labour Market Assessment (2014) reports that household investment in schooling has decreased due to budgetary restrictions, impacting higher education institutions' revenue and human resource procedures like recruitment, training and development (Mkandatsama and Nyanhete 2017; Gukurume 2018). The Zimbabwean labor market is characterized by a large labor supply and low labor demand, leading to high unemployment due to poor capitalization and a low production environment (Zhou and Pindiriri 2015; Moyo 2023). Many university graduates are hesitant to pursue entrepreneurship as an alternative to traditional employment, as psychological factors, particularly fear of failure as an entrepreneur, impede or prevent it from being seen as a feasible career option among university graduates in Nigeria (Kazungu 2020; Al-Mamary and Alshallaqi 2022; Dada, Adegbuyi and Ogbari 2023).

Labor mobility is increasing in Zimbabwe, with potential skills leaving the country due to economic recession and moving to growing economies, particularly the SADC and Diaspora (Machemedze *et al.* 2018; Makina 2020; Takaindisa 2021). Companies are unsure about

their viability in the current economic conditions, leading to high interest rates and reduced borrowing power (Yoshino and Taghizadeh Hesary 2016). This uncertainty affects human resource planning, making it difficult to employ the appropriate personnel for the appropriate roles at the appropriate times due to a lack of resources (Mujtaba and Senathip 2020; Hamouche 2021; Apascaritei and Elvira 2022).

2.28.4 (ii) Employee training and career planning

Organizations that invest in strong training programs can enhance employee skills and knowledge, leading to lower staff turnover and increased employee commitment (Salah 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Al-suraihi 2021).

2.29. Flexible resourcing

Flexibility in HR has become a prominent topic in management studies, with research showing that Zimbabwe's HR functions practice flexible labor deployment (Krishna *et al.* 2015). However, definitions of HR management functions associated with deployment can be ambiguous. Zimbabwe has implemented a rural allowance since the 1990s to enhance rural posts, but rural staffing has not increased due to low allowances and hyperinflation (Mashange *et al.* 2016; Mwenda and M Gomezulu 2018; Chirwa *et al.* 2019). To achieve sustainable competitiveness, businesses can establish, integrate, reorganize and enhance their human resource base (Qehaja *et al.* 2015; Wike and Stokes 2016). In Zimbabwe, multiskilling creates a pool of personnel with the necessary skills for flexible HR deployment (Brooker and Hayward 2018; Mashange *et al.* 2019). This practice can help organizations survive in a deteriorating economy like Zimbabwe.

2.30. Rewards systems

A reward is something that recognizes a person's contribution, (Nwokocha, 2016) He argued that people are rewarded financially for the job they are in (basic pay) and, often, for the levels of their performance, competence or skill (contingent or variable pay) or for their services in the job (service-related pay). Krietner and Kinicki (2007) concur with these views that reward is compensation for doing work well assigned to an employee, which can come in the form of both financial and non-financial incentives. Reward systems are crucial for HRM as they attract and retain talented workers, inspire them, and improve company

performance (Franco-Santos and Gomez-Mejia 2015; Nwokocha 2016; Elrayah and Semlali 2023). They directly impact the financial statement and are strategic as they influence individual behavior and performance. Vroom's expectation theory suggests that employees are more likely to work for rewards if offered desired rewards (Hay Group 2015; Victor and Hoole 2017; Hoole and Hotz 2016; Fitz-Lewis 2018). In Zimbabwe, organizations are using performance-based rewards to attract and retain skilled employees. Reward systems are supported by various studies, and allowances, merit-based promotions and bonuses are examples of effective HR practices (Hewitt 2015; Omolawal and Bawalla 2017; Amewugah and Glover 2018).

Employee turnover will be caused by a lack of reward programs (Victor and Hoole 2017). Some organizations in Zimbabwe are using high rewards contingent on performance as a tool to attract and retain highly skilled employees (Chiboiwa 2010; Chazuza, Negwaiya and Mapira 2013; Nyanhete and Bhebhe 2014). The use of reward systems was also supported by Nienaber (2010), Hay Group (2015), Hoole and Hotz (2016) and Fitz-Lewis (2018) as a good HR practice. There are a range of reward systems on offer (McMullen 2010; World at Work 2010; Hewitt 2015; Omolawal and Bawalla 2017). According to Vroom's Expectation Theory, an employee is more likely to work in a way that will earn him or her a reward if the employer offers rewards that the person wants. A lack of reward programs can cause employee turnover. Mupemhi and Mupemhi (2011) posit that allowances are a relief to employees as they boost employees' disposable income. In addition, we also have, for example, merit-based promotions and bonuses (Nyamuparwa and Mupani 2013; Wilton 2013; Aguinis 2013; Anku, Amewugah and Glover 2018; Nwokocha, 2016). The organization's incentive system should be built with clear strategies that are embedded in the organization's culture; management should consider employees' needs and preferences while establishing the organization's compensation structure. The application of these concepts, when combined with a good managerial disposition, will enable organizations to develop effective, long-term strategies for equitable and adequate employee compensation, which will improve employees' performance, retention and productivity in the organization.

2.31. Job security

Employee security is crucial for maintaining commitment and fostering confidence within an organization (Latorre *et al.* 2016; Osborne 2017; Zhenjing *et al.* 2022). Businesses that offer

job security demonstrate a long-standing commitment to their staff, while denying job security can break the psychological contract between businesses and their workers (Abela and Debono 2019; Ngobeni, Saurombe and Joseph 2022). However, some studies suggest that demotivation due to low job security can result from a hostile economic environment, highlighting the importance of maintaining job security (Chakanya 2016; Wushe and Shenje 2019; Kasuso and Madebwe 2021).

Fontinha *et al.* (2018) mentioned that HRM practices are also connected to perceived job security and perceived internal employability, both of which are indicators of employment security, but these later variables are not significantly associated with adjustment to the host nation. Valizade *et al.* (2023) explained that job security and the industrial relations climate show a serial mediation effect between union strategic influence and HPWS adoption: union strategic influence improves job security, which improves the industrial relations climate, increasing the likelihood of HPWS adoption. This suggests that if employees perceive investment in career-oriented HRM practices, they are likely to perceive more job security. A robust set of career-oriented HRM practices is thus likely to be negatively related to perceived job insecurity.

According to the survey done by industrial psychology consultants, employees identified job security as the second most influential factor in opting to stay with a company, second only to prospects for advancement available at the firm. Although 97% of respondents believe job security is important in their jobs, only 62% can swear to have it in their current position. The section was completed by 1 718 participants out of the 1 926 participants. This indicates that approximately 87% of Zimbabwean employees value job security and consider it a vital part of their profession.

Job security is rated higher than the organization's reputation, rules and processes and even more than the long-term remuneration element. Could this imply that employees care more about knowing that their job will be theirs for the foreseeable future than an insignificant retention bonus? In a country beset by socioeconomic reasons, this conclusion is intriguing, especially given that only 42% of Zimbabwean employees are satisfied with their pay.

2.32. Internal promotion

Internal promotion is a crucial aspect of job security, as it demonstrates value to staff and acknowledges their achievements (Mvula 2018; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Desai and Asaari 2020). Many organizations consider internal promotion as a vital strategy for retaining valuable employees. We know remarkably little about the methods and causes of promotion systems in companies, despite their importance as a primary vehicle of mobility in organizations and a mechanism for identifying and controlling talent and aptitude. Managers are unlikely to want to see the 'right kind of people' leave the organization after they have recruited, developed and trained them. Internal promotion, on the other hand, may be a less enticing alternative if managers are looking for short-term outcomes and huge profits. Individuals who are promoted from within have a better awareness of the operational and other key components of the organizational environment.

Furthermore, promoting from within the firm is more likely to sustain a 'favorable' organizational culture. Retaining and motivating human capital is critical for value generation, while promotions provide a matching role by sorting individuals into occupations that are best matched to their talents and abilities (Njiraine 2019). This practice fosters organizational engagement and a sense of fairness among employees (Osborne 2017; Luu, Rowley and Vo 2019). The presence of career opportunities within organizations fosters a strong sense of worth, motivation and low employee turnover (DeVaro and Kauhanen 2016; Smith and Rees 2017; Desai and Asaari 2020). This is supported by the fact that the influence of incentives on employee performance is lacking in terms of incentive structures, types of incentives, and how they are applied, ranging from wage emoluments to training and promotion procedures and consequences for bad performance.

This approach is particularly effective when there is a strong sense of worth and low turnover (Ashkanasy 2016; Mamun and Hasan 2017; Vasconcelos 2018; Zimmerman, Swider and Boswell 2019). Estimating the influence of both promotions and promotion expectations on job satisfaction aids in understanding the significance of promotions as a tool for eliciting higher effort from employees. The finding that promotions contribute to higher job satisfaction, even after adjusting for earnings and salary increases, lends credence to the idea that workers enjoy the promotion itself. This provides organizations with a non-monetary weapon for extracting effort and other positive behaviour from their employees. Accurate assessments of these impacts indicate how effective advertising may be at generating effort. Furthermore, promotion expectations might have a significant impact. Workers who know

they will not be promoted this time may reduce their work effort, unless they believe they are still in the run.

2.33. Dispute resolution and employee welfare systems

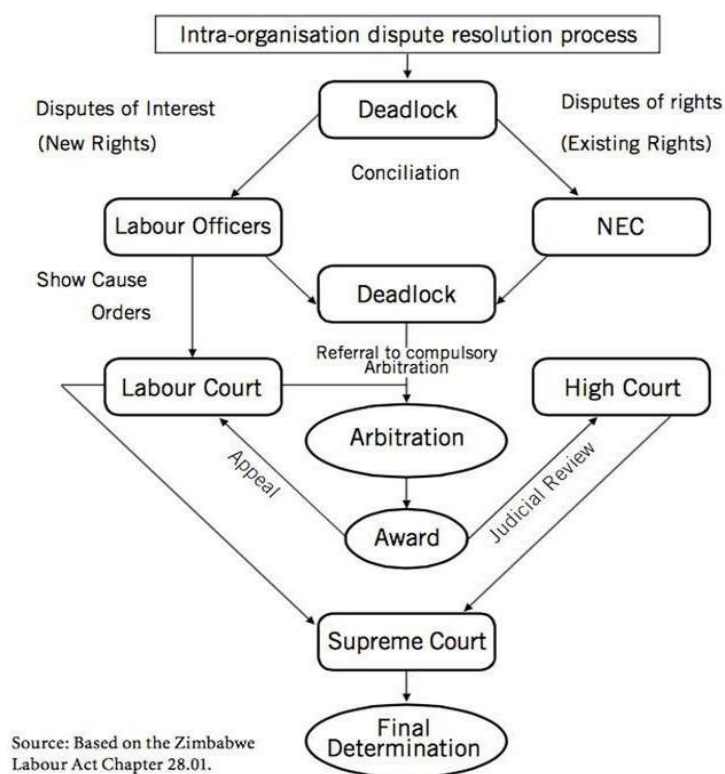


Figure 2. 23 Dispute resolution and welfare systems

Source: Anon

The arbitration system has been criticized for its abuse and manipulation, with parties filing appeals to avoid responsibility or buy time (Gaillard 2017; Lighthizer 2020). This has led to arbitration becoming irrelevant for resolving disputes and overburdening the justice system (Mahapa and Watadza 2015; Watadza, Mahapa and Muchadenyika 2016; Mucheche 2021). Conflict between employers and employees arises from conflicting interests between production owners and labor suppliers (Sithole and Munyai 2017; Edwards and Hodder 2022). A practice called "social duty" has been introduced in Zimbabwe to lower arbitration costs and improve accessibility (Lobato 2023). However, due to lack of legal framework, it is only being used in the capital city. Traditional perspectives suggest that conflict should be avoided as it indicates social dysfunction, devastation and a lack of trust (Madalina 2016; Solaja 2017). Focusing on more

significant issues can lead to better dispute resolution and improved performance. High levels of conflict can negatively impact an organization's ability to function effectively.

2.34. HRM practices and conflict management

Much of the recent focus on conflict resolution has been on the rise of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) as a more effective means of settling workplace disagreements (Mahony and Klaas 2016; Nash and Hann 2017). This is not exhaustive when seriously looking at conflict management because of a variety of resource-based and isomorphic causes, demographic characteristics such as organizational size, nationality of ownership and industrial sector, are found to be associated with the diffusion of ADR techniques (Osabiya 2015). Some scholars argue that there should be more focus on early responses to individual employment conflicts and the increased utilization of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) processes (Osabiya 2015). It has to be remembered that the manifestation of a conflict-resolution strategy through the use of diverse techniques can be expressed in a variety of ways, including employers proactively seeking to elicit employee concerns and align the interests of employees and employers (Bray, Budd and MacNeil 2015). Creating long-lasting and balanced conflict management systems is a desirable goal that is now widely supported by practitioners and policymakers (Bradley 2019). Differing goals and assumptions regarding the sources of conflict have implications for the link between human resource management methods and dispute systems in businesses, and they play a determining role in constructing conflict management system outcomes (Budd and Colvin 2014; Smiley 2018).

Approaches to strategic human resource management advocate for enhanced managerial practices and policy-based interventions as optimal conflict resolution methods. In contrast, the literature on ADR emphasizes proactive, interest-based solutions that address the root causes of conflict (Valente *et al.* 2022). Many ADR approaches, such as mediation, negotiation, arbitration and litigation can be used (Şimşek and Bölten 2017). In large institutions, installation management should focus on informal social processes that aid in the discovery of issues at an early stage and the promotion of more consensual remedies to them (Currie *et al.* 2017; Qandil *et al.* 2021). Air Zimbabwe's conflict management procedures were found to be ineffective, leading to financial losses and disciplinary action (Ngcobo and Komichi 2015; Chigudu 2023). In 2011, the airline failed to resolve compensation conflicts, leading to strikes and grounded flights. The airline used various

conflict resolution techniques, including disagreements and collective bargaining, to dissuade striking workers (Chigudu 2023). The Zimbabwean administration also threatened vague disciplinary punishment, resulting in millions of dollars and a loss of Air Zimbabwe's standing as a competitor in the aviation industry.

2.35. Wage theft and HRM practices

Wage theft is a prevalent HR practice in Zimbabwe, affecting over 22 000 employees in urban councils, 12 000 in agriculture, and 7 500 each in security, the auto industry and railways (Muchichwa 2016; Deakin, Kshatriya and Sunderland 2016; Lee and Smith 2019; Cole et al. 2022; Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union Report, 22 February 2017). On average, 80 000 workers have not yet received their salaries and benefits (Zimbabwe Independent, 16 September 2016; Connell 2016; Manyaya *et al.* 2016; Sachikonye *et al.* 2018). Disgruntled workers often file lawsuits against their employers after trying various dispute resolution methods, which can be laborious and confusing (Mutambudzi 2015; Currie and Teague 2016; Freehills 2016). The process takes years to complete and can hinder justice due to protracted judicial proceedings.

Disciplinary procedures used in Zimbabwe are adversarial and not ideal for resolving disputes (Chivasa 2018; Chivasa 2022). Factors such as emerging scientific and technological advancements, increased employee awareness of rights, competitive challenges, globalization and leadership behaviors make it challenging for human resource managers to downplay the crucial role ethics play in business operations, employees' daily activities and HR functions (Akpaprep, Jengre and Mogre 2019; Harney and Collings 2021; Budhwar *et al.* 2023).

Many workers in Zimbabwe are unaware of labour court requirements and the lapse of time between obtaining judgment and seeking registration for enforcement may make it impracticable to get an effective remedy (Mahapa 2015; Main 2015; Waite *et al.* 2018). The lack of resources in the Labour Relations Board and Tribunal has resulted in a significant backlog of cases, a major setback for angry workers seeking justice (Myambo and Munyanyi 2017; Ombanda and K'Obonyo 2019). Local labor courts in Zimbabwe have limited competence, with few budgetary allotments, no own space and deplorable working conditions. They rarely invoke international principles to make more wise rulings, and they have no supervisory oversight over the work of arbitrators. This puts the labour courts in a

position similar to firefighters who only react upon the outbreak of a fire, inhibiting HR practices to support organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

2.36. Safe and Healthy Work Environment



Figure 2. 24 Work safety Care Source:

Anon

Zimbabwe has a long history of risky jobs, with mine safety records being appalling (Moyo *et al.* 2015; Potts, D. and Bowyer-Bower 2016; Jerie 2016). The need for a safer work environment has driven workplace reform, with HRM practices heavily influenced by employee health and safety (Mabika 2018). Current HR practitioners in Zimbabwe are concerned about the well-being and security of their staff, demonstrating ongoing safety training, offering safety gear and occasionally offering free healthcare facilities (Barney and Mackey 2016; Balashova and Gromova 2016; Bromiley and Rau 2016; Tahseen 2019; Jasinska 2020; Tamás Bányai 2019). The human development index (HDI) ranks Zimbabwe 150 out of 189 countries and territories, placing it in the medium human development category (Roser 2019). Zimbabwe is still struggling with human capital development, healthcare and income, which is a sad observation in a country struggling to survive in an economy that is melting down (Haley *et al.* 2017; Chimusoro *et al.* 2018;

Pasara, Mutambirwa and Diko 2020). The country's HR managers must constantly acquire, grow and upgrade their resources and competencies to stay effective and competitive in the tumultuous economic environment (UNDP Human Development Report 2019).

2.37. South Africa

HRM aims to find, cultivate and retain talent, align the workforce with company goals and contribute to company success (Okolie and Udom 2019; Sims and Bias 2019; Zhenjing *et al.* 2022). Despite South Africa's top-ranked status in sub-Saharan Africa, there are still unfavorable aspects of the HRM environment, such as labour market efficiency and higher education and training (Grobler, Wörnich and Mokobane 2018; Grobler and De Bruyn 2018). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in South Africa are lagging in using best HR practices, leading to the need for an HRM-centric model (Nyamubarwa and Chipunza 2019; Harney and Alkhalaf 2021). HR practitioners who successfully implement strong employee retention techniques can bring long-term benefits to organizational success and contribute to economic growth (Cloutier, Felusiak and Pemberton-Jones 2015). The emergence of new technologies, the need for contemporary management and leadership skills, and a lack of technical skills are exposing the shortcomings of conventional organizational systems in South Africa (Ateba, Prinsloo and Gawlik 2019; Grobber, Grobber and Mathafena 2019; Stoddard 2020).

2.38. Kenya

Recent studies show that unethical labor practices are prevalent in Kenyan organizations, leading to high levels of skilled worker unemployment, subpar services, business closures, legal disputes and employee layoffs (Njeri 2016; Mujtaba and Senathip 2020; Kapel 2021). While Kenya is committed to using best HR practices for organizational survival, it is essential to avoid these practices to ensure the betterment of organizations, as they can be more ethically supported (Sang, Murage and Ngure 2018).

2.39. Zambia

“You can keep the salary” – Man snatches his Chinese Boss’ wife over salary in Zambia



Figure 2. 25 Diagram showing salary revenge in Zambia

Source: za.studio.opera.com

Zambia's HR practices are not up to international standards, according to various studies (Luwabelwa, Banda and Chama-Chiliba 2017; Phiri and Phiri 2022). Regional differences and over-reliance on mining have led to the uneven distribution of benefits despite Zambia's rapid economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa (Kapotwe 2021). The country's Human Development Index (HDI) value increased from 0.418 to 0.586 between 1980 and 2014, placing it in the medium human development category (United Nations Development Programme 2017; Zambia Human Development Report 2016). However, there is a need for better allocation of authority, financial and human resources to relevant bodies, as well as monitoring and accountability. The medical sector faces challenges in human capital development, with doctor and nurse population ratios being significantly lower than WHO-recommended ratios. Factors such as brain drain, a lack of training, and a lack of medical personnel contribute to this issue (Osigbesan 2021). Zambia also faces high vacancy rates, insufficient education capacity, inadequate pay, and poor working conditions, resulting in a significant reduction in profitability. Zambia is one of the poorest countries in the world, with over 60% of its population living below the national poverty line and 42% in extreme poverty (Rajaram, Chiwele and Phiri 2022). Nepotism, tribalism and corruption are prevalent in some departments, leading to incompetent and underqualified individuals being given preference for senior positions or promotions (Burhan, Leeuwen and Scheepers 2020; Ignatowski, Sułkowski and Stopczyński 2021). Political

involvement can also affect recruitment and selection processes (Ikechukwu, et al.2019; Muna, Ferdous and Azam 2022).

2.40. Mozambique

Mozambique's economy has experienced rapid growth over the past 20 years, with an average annual real GDP growth of 7.4% (Jones and Tarp 2015; Balchin *et al.* 2017). However, the African Development Bank Report 2012) states that 27% of Mozambicans are unemployed and that an estimated 300 000 new employees enter the labor market each year (Crush, Skinner and Chikanda 2015; Fredriksen 2023). Despite these high rates of growth, Mozambique remains one of the world's poorest nations, with a GDP per capita of US\$650 in 2012 (Revised Diagnostic Trade Investment Study for Mozambique 2015; Karlberg 2015; Sallwey, Hettiarachchi and Hülsmann 2017; Antingi-Ego, Timuno and Makuve 2021). Despite the economic collapse and instability in the early years of independence, Mozambique still retains institutional elements and related practices from the past, affecting human resource management (Dibben *et al.* 2017). Only 19% of enterprises in Mozambique have accredited training programs, demonstrating the formality or informality of their commitment to training and development (Aga *et al.* 2021; Barletta *et al.* 2022). Common HR practices for workers in Chinese organizations operating in Mozambique include missing the New Year's bonus, firings without cause, physical assaults, a lack of written work contracts and poor health and safety conditions (Abdalla *et al.* 2017; Carciotto and Chikohomero 2022). These workers find their resentment originating in complicated issues of segregation and mistrust (Kuptsch 2020; Banaji, Fiske and Massey 2021). The Mozambican government's inadequate ability to enforce labor laws contributes to the mismatch between workers' hours according to their contracts and the actual hours worked (Kuddo, Robalino and Weber 2015; Dibben *et al.* 2016; Abdalla *et al.* 2017; Madede *et al.* 2017; Zvobgo 2019; Salite *et al.* 2021; Steege 2020). Mozambican employees express humiliation and a lack of motivation at the Chinese disdain for work categories and feel deprived of the prestige and reputation they had built through past jobs (Merrah and Li 2018; Tu *et al.* 2022). They also experience glaringly segregated health and canteen facilities between Chinese and Mozambican workers (Wethal 2017; Pollak 2023). Employee strike tactics fall short of bringing about any change in the workplace environment due to their ad hoc nature, lack of institutional support and political scale (Zhenjing *et al.* 2022).

2.41. Malawi

Malawi's human development index (HDI) was 0.477 points in 2017, ranking the country in 171st place out of 189 nations. The country was ranked 134 out of 138 nations in the Global Competitiveness Report (2016–2017), with the higher education and training pillar ranking Malawi at 134 out of 138 nations (World Economic Forum Report 2016; Jamu 2017). This low ranking may explain why a workforce with insufficient education is one of the biggest obstacles to doing business in the nation. Numerous socioeconomic issues plague the nation, such as Chipeta's inadequately skilled human resources (Mandeville 2016; Dzimbiri 2016; Kadzandira 2018; Mamman *et al.* 2019). One-third of these businesses list the poor education of the labor force as one of the top five problematic concerns. Despite economic and structural reforms, Malawi is still one of the world's poorest nations (The World Bank in Malawi, 31 July 2020 Report; Debucquet and Martin 2018). Nearly 80% of the population is employed in agriculture, which is dependent on external shocks, particularly climate shocks (Osman 2023).

2.42. A wrap-up on HR Practices used in Zimbabwe in comparison to other countries.



Figure 2. 26 United employees

Source: *hrbartender.com*

In most African countries, HRM practices align with international best practices, but the challenge lies in implementing them effectively for organizations to survive (Machemedze 2018; Hamadamin and Atan 2019; Sungwa 2021). Performance is determined by the workforce's ability to produce results using their abilities and Zimbabwe's performance management process is inadequate (Dable, Jagero and Nyauchi 2015; Zinyama, Nhema

and Mutandwa 2015; Chikwariro, Bussin and De Braine 2021). Organizational cultures should change in Zimbabwe to improve international best HR practices (Ntini and Dewah 2023; Gumbie, Dhanpat, Joseph 2023). To maintain competitiveness in the market, businesses must constantly reshape their HR practices and plans. Human resource planning should be goal- oriented, eliminate uncertainty, balance the supply and demand for labor and guarantee that the organization has the necessary skills through a four-stage process: investigation and analysis, forecasting, resource allocation, planning, execution, and control (Ndudzo 2015; Zinyama, Mutandwa and Nhema 2015; Mahapa, Dzimbiri and Maphosa 2015; Abidi, Leeuw and Dullaert 2020). The European legacy in Africa, including economic and political underdevelopment, ethnic and religious groupings and rivalry between anglophone and francophone countries, continues to be a source of rivalry and prevent meaningful regional integration (Matasci, Jerónimo and Dores 2020). The relationship between SHRM practices and firm competitiveness outside of the Anglo-Saxon setting is complex, with sub-Saharan Africa ranking last on the global competitiveness index (Adeleye and Anibaba 2014; Amaugo 2016). Becker and Huselid (2011) found that when practices are used, firm value is likely to increase, such as recruitment and selection systems in line with firm strategy, reward systems reflecting successful strategy implementation and training and development strategies that develop from performance management systems and the organization's goals (Eneh and Awara 2016; Hamadamin and Atan 2019).The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) places a strong emphasis on sustainability as a gauge of a nation's long- term competitiveness, with 12 "pillars" supporting sustainable growth in any economy (Schwab 2017). An effective labor market ensures proper compensation and motivation for HR, increasing the economy's appeal to talented people and ensuring equal opportunities for men and women (Stamarski and Son Hing 2015; Mahapatro 2021).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research framework developed to investigate the problem situation, specifically to identify the systemic causal factors influencing organizational ineffectiveness while accounting for the complexity present, and then to theoretically construct a learning framework for improvement. This chapter explains the research methodology, the research design, the methodologies used in the study design application, and the data gathering tactics employed. Additionally, the prior chapter's theoretical framework of the research discussed in the prior chapter is revisited.

3.1 Systems Thinking

Systems thinking has a long history of theory and application (Spector *et al.* 2023). The field of systems thinking encompasses more than just a set of techniques and instruments; it also has a fundamental philosophy. Systems thinking involves being sensitive to the circular nature of the world we live in, understanding how structure shapes the circumstances we encounter, realizing that there are strong laws of systems at work that we are ignorant of, and realizing that our actions have unintended consequences. Systems thinking is a useful diagnostic tool (Seibert 2018; Verhoeff *et al.* 2018; Grewatsch 2021). After considering Jackson's theory of creative holism, the researcher decided to build the research framework around Checkland's idea of soft systems methodology (SSM) in this study. The researcher accepts that he took this decision based on the belief that there is enough logic and goodwill in the circumstances to engage with the agents to commit to changing the issue. As a result, the researcher felt that political meddling and other uncontrollable issues could be managed. SSM was designed primarily as a qualitative research methodology to deconstruct problematic circumstances in which people groups struggle to find meaning and purpose in their work and seek learning support to focus their efforts in a coordinated and constructive manner.

As a result, SSM is a type of action research in which the researcher collaborates with agents entrenched in the situation to gain a better knowledge of who the actors are, their various roles and views and the nature of their interactions. SSM follows a logical research construction approach, as depicted in Figure 3.1 below.

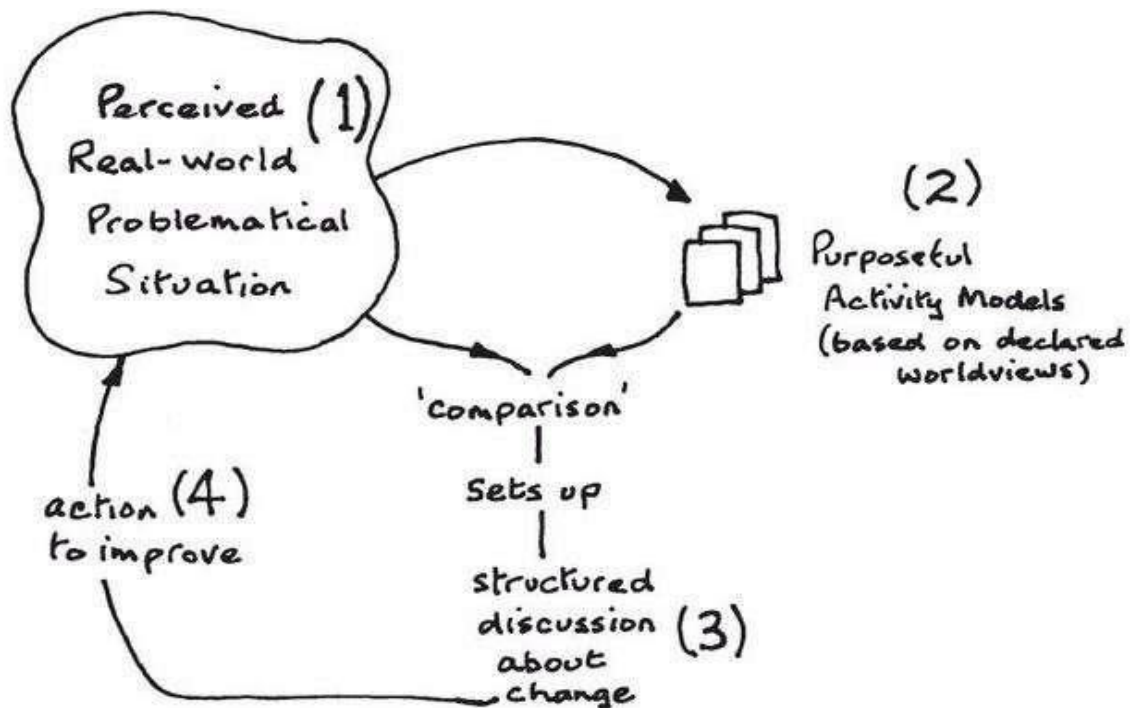


Figure 3. 1 Diagram for SSM process

Source: Checkland (1999)

3.2. Rich picture of employees and the external environment,

It should be noted that in this chapter, parts of the image may be inspected in detail while observing their connection to one another. As a result, a rich image might serve as an 'entry point' to a complicated system with numerous elements. Importantly, the rich image is not intended to provide an objective portrayal of a study. As mentioned by Conte and Davison (2020), rich images are often developed by the participants or groups themselves early in an inquiry process as an initial orienting and sense-making activity; it is not an aim in and of itself in systems thinking literature and SSM. Various understandings of the system emerged during the creative process, revealing the authors' mental models, including the emotional or political characteristics of the system. Rich images may be employed throughout the investigation process.

3.3 Soft Systems Methodology

Amissah, Gannon and Monat (2020) supported Checkland (2000) and Jackson (2003) upon proposing that the type of holistic thinking that at the time was prominent and the focus of a newly formed organization was that which explicitly uses the concept of "system" and that today "systems thinking" in its various manifestations would be taken to be the very paradigm of thinking holistically in a bid to improve the complex issues faced by today's leadership (Daher *et al.* 2017; Purvis, Mao and Robinson 2019). The researcher found the SSM to be the most applicable method to analyze this study.

It was asserted that a soft systems approach will find every problem with requirement procedures and recommend fixes appropriate to the organization's circumstances. Lopez, Niu and Cheng (2011). One can introduce and implement a performance management system based on the SSM. It consists of a strategy deployment process, a framework for performance evaluation, a performance plan and methods for feedback and review (Liu *et al.* 2012). Soft systems methodology (SSM) is used for analysis and critical thinking in complex and challenging circumstances. In the action research, learning, and reflection process, SSM uses "framework thought" to understand the different experiences that occur in the minds of the many parties engaged in the circumstance. It is especially suitable for complex management frameworks and seeks to assess the various choices that might be required under these circumstances.

This approach is applicable in many fields, including board reform, HRM and medical fields, data frameworks, planning systems, teamwork analysis frameworks and development specialist systems. SSM is specifically utilised in the fields of engineering, construction, management and information, among others. Soft systems of reasoning explore the 'muddled' risks that occur in human activities. However, as mentioned by Gracy and Andrews (2023), soft systems attempt to draw from the various discernments that exist in the psyches of the various people involved in the situation., rather than aiming to scientifically demonstrate the complexity of the 'wreck'.

Vickers (1968) was highly inspired by the sense of grateful processes in the management of human unpredictability. Checkland (1999) and Checkland and Scholes (1990), tried to transform the definition of processes into a technique known as SSM. Checkland's explanation is that SSM examines the frameworks needed to apply their art to big situations with multiple unspecified aspects, attempting to comprehend the

murky and floppy world of complex interactions. This is accomplished from a learning paradigm standpoint (Checkland 1999).

3.4. Research Approach

To appreciate systems thinking, one needs to consider the major differentiators in research methodologies, namely quantitative, qualitative and critical research. The notion of holism, as contrasted with reductionism, overlays systems thinking. In organizational terms, this means that one seeks to understand systems embedded in systems and to see the interplay of hard systems—the technologies and work structures embedded in the workplace—as well as the constructions of interaction between the agents in the system and the cognitive interpretations they bring to their experiences and interactions. The critical aspect focuses on the broader parameters of meaning brought about by the structures of power in place. A theory, while strictly not systems thinking per se, but broadly compatible and useful in its constructs, is phenomenology.

This chapter presents the research's methodology. The researcher employed phenomenology as the predominant research philosophy, which is defined as the philosophical study of the structures of experience and consciousness by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Husserl (2023) established phenomenology as a philosophical movement in the early 20th century, and a group of his adherents, including Fuch (2015), De Palma (2015), and Breyer and Gutland (2016) later developed it. According to Gallagher (2012), Gutland (2018) and Kapoor (2018), the first-person point of view is crucial when researching complex issues in the field of leadership and in the highly VUCADD environment. It means that the phenomenologist, the investigator of consciousness, studies his or her own experiences from the point of view of living that experience. An allowance was made for future research efforts in this study. However, specific issues need to be addressed in the most logical way possible.

Research, according to Goundar (2012), is the methodical quest for fresh information on a given subject. Objective methodical analysis is used to identify solutions to scientific and societal challenges (Kumar 2011; Bhattacharjee 2012; Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi 2013). It is a quest for knowledge, which entails the discovery of unknown

facts and the method of obtaining trustworthy solutions to issues through planned and intentional organization, study and translation (Green *et al.* 2016).

Through these descriptions, it appears to be understood that there is a question that needs to be discussed to find solutions to problems; in this case, the question is: Why organizations are struggling to survive in Zimbabwe in the 21st century when there are best HR practices prescribed by international standards (Ndoda 2010; Tevera 2010; Mazikana 2017). In fact, the hunt for future solutions will start with the hunt for data to be collected to analyze and appreciate the significance of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Sibanda, Mavenga and Ncube 2013; Kahlke 2014; Manyaya *et al.* 2016; Sovacool, Axsen and Sorell 2018). According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) and Mohajan (2018), research is a methodical effort to address questions and researchers must carefully and deliberately develop a plan for direct research. Loreli *et al.* (2017), Pare and Kitsiou (2017), and Synder (2019) posit that an analysis does not need to adhere to a highly specific structure, but rather should follow a progressive guide to keep one going in the right direction.

3.5. Research Design

A highly designed research framework will describe the game plan and conditions under which knowledge will be gathered and broken down to ensure the value of analysis (Bhattacharjee 2012; Grant and Osanloo 2014), while also providing value to the economy. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used in this analysis (Ostlund *et al.* 2011; Tonkin-Crine *et al.* 2016). The quantitative approach has the characteristic of estimating target realities using variables where the data is segregated from the hypothesis. Gratton and Jones (2010) and Kura (2012) measured, objectively tested and emphasized unequivocal consistency. Quantitative research places a strong emphasis on data collection and analysis and makes an effort to look into the responses to the questions of how many, how much and to what extent (Bryman 2012; Rasinger 2013) The methodology used in quantitative terms is used to explore the use of factual procedures, such as tables, charts and other factual estimates, to demonstrate the links between factors such as recruitment, selection, human resource research and development, hence increasing trustworthiness, (Taherdoost, 2021).

On the contrary, quantitative research methods have a handicap in failing to ascertain deeper underlying explanations and meanings (Van den Bergh and Sanders 2015). Quantitative research can also be used to explore and assess linguistic abilities, competency, scores and other factors (Meilijson and Katzenberg 2014). In this investigative inquiry, various research designs are grouped into some specific forms, with a primary classification based on the key reason for the research: explanatory, exploratory and descriptive., Babbie (2010), who specializes in research methods believes that exploratory inquiries are normal in areas under investigation and require a hypothesis for subsequent research, a point supported by Pedaste (2015); David (2018) and Elliot *et al.* (2016).

Yin (2012) is of the view that descriptive research aims at producing depictions of the phenomenon observed, which in turn best depict the circumstance in detail. Descriptive research seeks to establish a reason and a relationship that could be responsible for the phenomenon observed (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas 2013; Andersen 2015; Bengtsson 2016). Clarifying this phrase in qualitative research is difficult because it is seen to lack a unique philosophy, paradigm, or set of clear practices that are only its own (Lincoln and Denzin (2011). Occasionally, qualitative research supports “empirical” regression analysis, while some qualitative researchers view quantitative work as too reductive (Kaplan 2015). The term qualitative research also encompasses a wide range of techniques and strategies within various research fields, including Rahman (2017). On a positive note, qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Rahman 2017).

This study used a mixture of the two ways to increase a superior understanding of the question under consideration, as hinted by Miller and Daly (2013) and Gurbiel (2018). Peersman (2014) indicated that combining methodologies has the main benefit of overcoming the limitations of each method when used alone. This leads to a greater understanding of research problems when the methods are done in combination rather than separately (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2010; Lisle 2011; Bryman 2012; Creswell 2013; Morgan 2014). This purpose is generally dominant, even though the methodologies can be reasonably differentiated and characterized by numerous needs (Cronholm and Hjalmarsson 2011; Schoonenbom and Johnson 2017; Almeida, Faria and Queirós 2017; Kansteiner and König 2020). The reason was explained in this research and information was

collected to confirm a few realities around the importance of human resources procedures to state-owned companies' survival (Sitalaksmi and Zhu 2010; Sturesson, McIntyre and Jones 2015; Muzapu and Mandizvidza 2016).

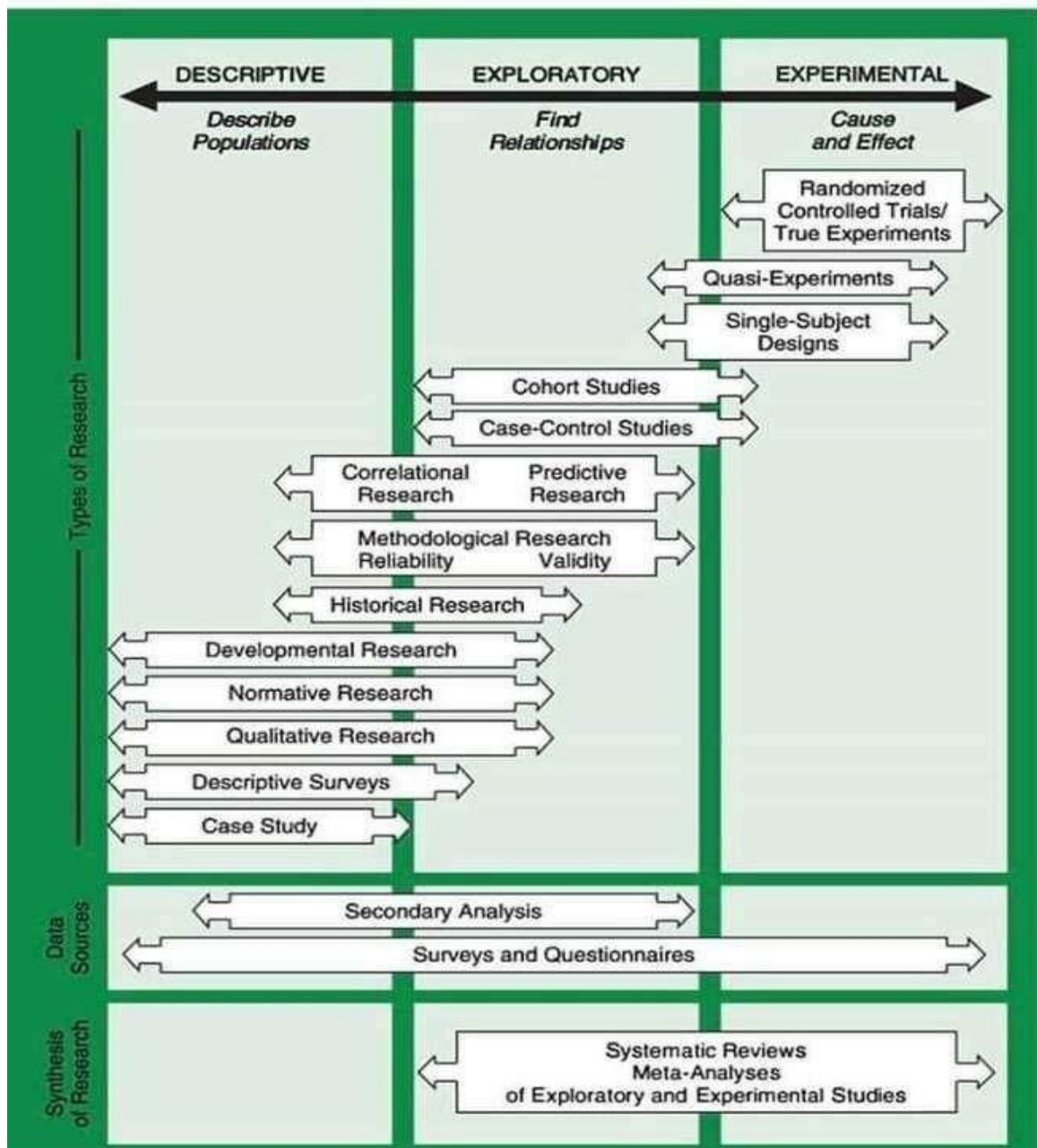


Figure 3. 2 Research Design methodologies

Source: Anon

This study analyzed the HR practices on the resilience of parastatals and their effect on organizational resilience and survival (Mafabi and Ntayi 2012; Denyer 2017; Duchek, Raetzke and Scheuch 2019; Sapeciay 2019). Additionally, the study is expected to provide a clearer understanding and evaluation of the essence of HRM practices in parastatals and the reasons behind these rates of performance and survival strategies. Therefore, the study was restricted to and based on three parastatals and confined to Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city.

The topic of human resource practices and the implications of these endurance practices, however, generally studied around the world (Hong *et al.* 2012; Gannon, Hoper and Doherty 2015; Sanders, Cugin and Lin 2017; Hack-Polay, Opute and Rahman 2020) have all been taken into consideration in Zimbabwe, especially in the parastatal sector. Research on HR practices, especially in Zimbabwe, ignored the implications of HR practices on the survival of organizations, more so of state parastatals (Nyamubarwa, Mupani and Chiduro 2013). This creates a knowledge gap that needs to be investigated to offer explanations for the phenomenon.

In this study, an exploratory research strategy was helpful in creating a conceptual framework for the follow-up investigation. Rubin and Babbie (2011) noted that exploratory research is important at any point that a researcher enters a virgin field, initiating a new learning process and thus adding support for grounded theory (Dunne 2011; Thornberg 2012; Carmichael and Cunningham 2017; Fehring 2017; Smith 2019; Tie, Birks and Francis 2019). Since there is limited existing research on organizational survival phenomena and HR practices of parastatals in Zimbabwe an exploratory research design was appropriate as a very few reviews in this area exist in Zimbabwe.

3.6. Data Gathering Approaches

Aside from the descriptive research highlighted by Drabble *et al.* (2014), this research study incorporated explanatory research to investigate both the influence of HR practices on the survival of parastatals and the impact of these practices on their overall performance. Sharma (2019), Vaisromadi, Turunen, and Bondas (2013), along with McCombes (2020), introduced a diverse array of essentially interrelated activities, serving as a foundation for these shared exercises. The methods employed for collecting primary and secondary data are outlined to empirically test the hypotheses and address the research questions. An indication of the techniques used to collect primary and secondary data is given to test the hypothesis empirically and address the research questions (Onwuegbuzie, Leech and Collins 2012; Johnston 2014; Mohajan 2017; Roth *et al.* 2017; Newman and Gough 2019). In addition, triangulation was used to obtain comparable data using different research techniques (Pool *et al.* 2010; Heale and Forbes 2013; Esser and Vliegthart 2017; Celestino and Bucher-

Maluschke 2018; Leckner and Severson 2019). It is critical for researchers to use triangulation to dispense with intentional errors and test the unforeseen consistency and credibility of their methods. Dawson (2009) recommended that researchers endorse the cut-off points or the degree to which the research will be extended. Some of the main determinants of the scope and complexity of this research are the available time and the expenditure that can support it. In this research study, the measured time and financial plan for the research offered a reference and encouraged the researcher to determine how much the research should cover. In view of the time and budget limitations, the research study could only include three parastatals.

3.6.1. Collection of Primary Data

A structured interview guide that consists of inquiries to determine the variables and aspects of HR practices was used. As proposed by Alshuaibi, Mohd-Shamsudin and Subramaniam (2014); Kipkorir, Mwangi and Ole (2015); and Singh, Ramgulam and Rigsby (2018) company survival was employed to show the relationship between HR practices and the dependent variable. During meetings and interviews with senior HR professionals in the selected firms, additional data was obtained for the different sections of the selected organizations. This process concluded with a semi-organized survey containing 47 questions targeting a range of participants, including general employees, HR practices and managers.

3.6.2. Secondary Data

A large proportion of the relevant information was collected from desk reviews and electronic sources such as online databases like the Harvard Business Review, Oracle and diaries from the Emerald Library Database, the City Library in Harare, the Durban University of Technology, the British Council, and other authentic and official sources.

3.6.3. Sampling Design

The study population constitutes individuals participating in HRM processes. The sampling strategy has been described as that part of the research that indicates how cases will be selected for observation and could take a probability or non-probability approach (Martínez-Mesa 2016; Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016; Etikan and Bala 2017; Wiśniowski 2020). In

this research both approaches were used on different samples for reasons explained later in this research.

3.7. Research Population

The research population is the sum of elements from which a sample is drawn (Rubin and Babbie 2011; Sa'id and Madug 2015; Hammarberg Kirkman and de Lacey 2016; Yadava and Rai 2019; Kenton 2020). The target population can refer to a particular set of people or objects for which inquiries can be asked or monitored and made to generate appropriate data and structures (Banerjee and Chaudhury 2010; Omair 2014; Alvi 2016). In this qualitative research, inclusion and exclusion criteria specified who should be excluded from the study and who can participate. The population for this study were the employees of the targeted parastatals, as described in the introduction.

3.7.1. Sampling Framework

A sampling frame is defined as a collection of persons or items from which a representative sample of the population can be drawn (Zikmund *et al.* 2013; West 2016; Kirchherr and Charles 2018). In this research, the chosen sample was drawn from the three parastatals and situated within the scope of the parastatals in Zimbabwe's context. This contextual definition of the sampling frame also includes the reason for the sampling frame, which is to provide a method for the choice of individuals from the population to be interviewed in a study.

3.7.2. Methods of sampling

Sampling reflects the methods used by a researcher to arrange people or objects to be studied (Yilmaz 2013; Sutton and Austin 2015; Eyisi 2016). In applying this technique, the researcher had the choice to select specific individuals, objects and locations that had qualities that reflected the efficiency of the entire group, which included the participants who performed the analysis for this research. The fundamental influence of this sample was parastatals. In this regard, purposive sampling was used to identify the three parastatals, from which participants were selected on a simple random sampling basis for questionnaire

completion. This strategy was chosen for its convenience and gave access to an assemblage of non- probability sampling techniques, which later provided the basis for assessing population characteristics (Sharma 2017; Jager, Putnick and Bornstein 2017). Purposive sampling was also employed to choose the sample for interviews, mainly for the management category. This technique was useful and helpful to enhance the response from the busy category of the population.

3.7.3. Sample Size

Sarmah and Hazarika (2012) and Singh and Masuku (2013) emphasize the importance of determining sample size. A pilot study was conducted to assess the adequacy of the research objectives and survey setup for obtaining the necessary correct information from participants. Ten participants were included in the fields being investigated. According to Nunes (2010), Bryman (2012), Hazzi and Maldaon (2015) and Bell (2018), the pilot research is beneficial for developing the survey so that participants will have no trouble completing the questions and documenting their responses. An ideal sample of the research is one that meets the criteria of performance, representativeness, unfailing consistency and adaptability (Delice 2010; Zohrabi 2013; Goldstein *et al.* 2015; Gouranga and Bosco 2020). Thus, the sample should not be too useful but large enough to avoid the research bias, as a larger example would probably produce more accurate information (Baker 2012; Suresh and Chandrashekara 2015; Khawaja, Rushton and Keeling 2016; Morris, White and Crowther 2019).

According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), the sampling error is a comparison between the actual population and the estimated population (Sedgwick 2012; Kim and Kim 2014; Tyrer and Heyman 2016). The sample size for a population of 230 employees from the three parastatals within the margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ is 45 derived from the sample determination formula. In the three state-owned entities, the population of employees, the researcher needed to establish how large a sample was required to estimate a desired proportion with a margin of error of 5%.

The sample size (n) required from a worker population of 230 within a margin of error of 5% was therefore determined using the sample determination formula.

Where N is the three parastatals' population of 215. n is the sample size to be determined.

P is the margin of error of 5% or 0.5 in the probability distribution. Z is the confidence interval taken to be 95% or the standard 1.96.

3.7.4 Sample Size Determination

The major beneficiaries' target population will define the sample size confidence level; a 95% confidence level will be used, and a margin of error of 5% will be applied. The survey assumed a proportion or prevalence of 50%. Cochran's (1977) formula will be applied to determine the sample size. The sample is specified below:

$$n = (z^2 pq)/e^2$$

Where p is the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population, n is the sample size, z is the selected critical value of the desired confidence level, and $q = 1-p$ e^2 is the desired degree of precision (margin of error).

Hence, a sample size of 45 individuals from a population of 215 across the three parastatals would have sufficed for a 5% margin of error. However, 47 individuals were ultimately included in the sample due to the exceptionally high response rate.

3.8. Research Instrument and Interview Procedure

For this study, the research instrument included a questionnaire using coordinated open inquiries to promote associations between responses, as well as a simple knowledge analysis (Battacherjee 2012; Jones, Baxter and Khanduja 2013; Peersman 2014; Roberts *et al.* 2014; McGuirk 2016). During data collection, using the questionnaire or unstructured interviews the concept of the research and the aims the research intended to accomplish, were briefly elaborated on, as posited by Bolderston (2012), Edwards and Holland (2013), Austin (2014), and McCombes (2020). This instrument was preferred because it encouraged participants to respond directly and give feedback within a limited time frame. The participants willingly accepted their roles in the research, and the researcher repeatedly reassured them of the confidentiality of the gathered information. The researcher expressed

his appreciation for their time and patience in participating in the study, highlighting that they participated voluntarily with informed consent and without any promised incentives.

3.8.1. Interview Guide Design

The research interview was meticulously planned and carried out, through emphasizing rapport-building, developing open-ended questions, and guaranteeing moral behaviour. Choosing suitable participants, creating an adaptable interview guide, and establishing a welcoming space for sharing were important components in this process. The interview guide, which contained general data on the HR components that impact the efficiency and survival of organizations, HR practices and malpractices, provided a greater understanding of the factors that affect the survival of entities. The inquiries were not presented on the Likert scale, as defined in Zikmund *et al.* (2013), which is the ratio of opinions designed to provide participants with a choice between extremely positive and negative attitudes toward a certain topic, depending on how strongly and consciously they agree or disagree with the reasons provided.

3.9. Analysis and Review of Data

The data was gathered by purposive sampling, while the interviews were decrypted in the report structure. The thematic analysis, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis were used as data analysis strategy. In this case, and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, audio/voice clips were used for this research and manually decoded into text. This method yielded a combination of written and voice data responding to the same questionnaire. The knowledge analysis used both quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques, with bias towards the latter, in this study. Qualitative analysis dominated the research.

Methods of Qualitative Analysis

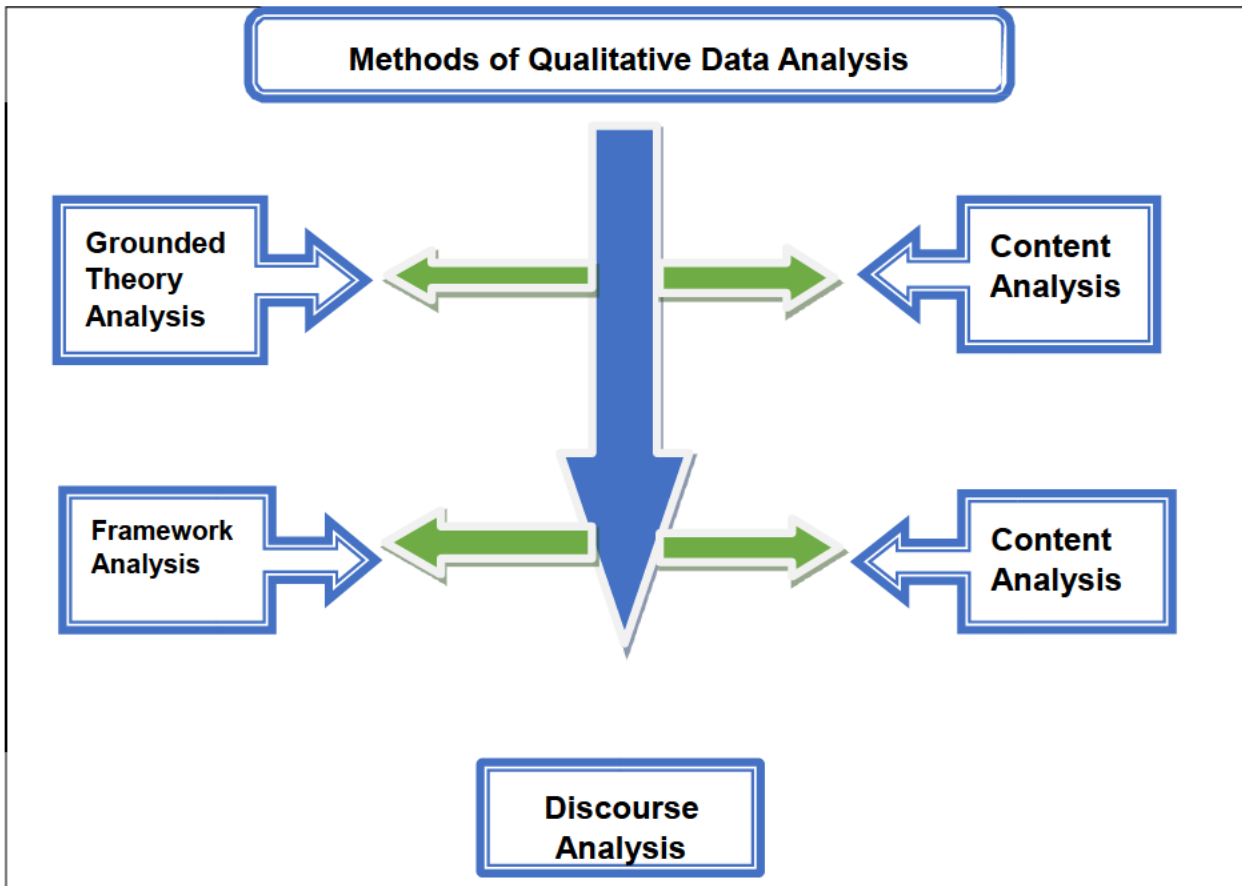


Figure 3. 3 Qualitative Data Analysis Diagram

Data was studied experimentally and physically using the Social Science Statistical Package (SPSS) for relational and reciprocal analysis, along with encoded qualitative responses to enable the use of objective research and comprehension instruments. The triangulation was done to address the questions of the research, the inspiration for the analysis, and the possible new rational disclosure of knowledge to allow new learning. When the details are not dissected, it is goalless. To validate the agreed conditions and purpose, the information inquiries were helpful. In this analysis of content research, data obtained from the interviews was further used to identify and sort to recognize regularly occurring trends. Material analysis is a systematic review and representation of communication media substance (Srivastava and Thomson 2009; Onwuegbuzie, Leech and Collins 2012; Gale *et al.* 2013). The display substance of correspondences can be accurately, objectively and quantitatively represented by content analysis, according to Myring (2014), Green *et al.* (2015), Bengtsson (2016) and Luo and Myring (2020).

Material analysis is therefore an evaluation technique that offers a clear, unbiased, and quantitative description of the large number of details to be gathered in surveys or interviews (Salih 2012; Himanen *et al.* 2019). Qualitative data was converted into quantitative knowledge and experimentally checked for content analysis. In addition, the data was triangulated to remove intentional mistakes and bias as well as to test the unwavering accuracy and validity of the outcome. It involved the use of various analysis methods to obtain similar data.

3.10. Ethical Concerns

To protect the rights and welfare of participants, The researcher gave top priority to a variety of ethical principles and considerations. These issues included potential harm, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and the researcher's personal prejudices. These ethical qualitative research entails resolving these issues to carry out investigations that were both participant-respecting and methodologically sound. In keeping with the study strategies of the Durban University of Technology, the researcher guaranteed that the research matched the prescribed courses and was restricted by the morals that direct science, as noted by Chowdury (2016). It also ensured that the participants willingly submitted their contributions without fear of coercion (Bryman 2012; Littwin 2012; Nijhawan *et al.* 2013; Largent and Lynch 2017) and that all communications and data exchanges had prior approval. To ensure objectivity, the analyst ensured that the anonymity and secrecy of participants were maintained (Saunders, Kitzinger and Kitzinger 2015; Krosnick *et al.* 2015; Rice *et al.* 2017; Surmiak 2018) with the impartiality of not uncovering the real names of participants and compromising their situation in the organizations they work for. In addition, the researcher asked the organizations responding to the questions if they would like the finished research report to be duplicated and indicated that a replication would be a good and useful instrument.

Participants were provided with transcripts containing the gathered information to facilitate the review and incorporation of significant changes prior to the final aggregation process.

3.11. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher communicated the framework he constructed for my research, which he can best describe as he sought to provide a sound theoretical footing for the choices he made and have justified the theoretical constructs. He also explained and described the data collection tools and the manner in which the data will be interpreted. The unique features of my research design are:

The chapter discussed the data collection the approach utilized to collect data from the three parastatals based in Harare, Zimbabwe that were chosen for this study. Models of research, research approaches and design were discussed in this chapter, revealing the culmination of a qualitative approach and analysis, though sampling was determined scientifically. The next chapter discusses the research conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4. Introduction

This chapter unpacks the findings of this research and includes corroborative evidence from the literature.

Three main research questions asked and presented below as:

Section A: Challenges facing Zimbabwean organizations?

Section B: The status of HRM practices in Zimbabwean organizations?

Section C: HR operating model for Zimbabwean organizations who face organizational distress.

Table 4. 1 Challenges facing Zimbabwean organizational VS status of HRM practices

Section A: What are the challenges facing Zimbabwean organizations	Section B: Status of HRM practices in Zimbabwean organizations
(A)Struggling/ Surviving/Thriving <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-3 Struggling Scale: 8 Responses.• 4-7 Surviving Scale: 21 Responses.• 8-10 Surviving Scale: 5 Responses	
(B) Factors affecting organization's current situation	HR practice currently being used in your organization

<p>1. Management style</p> <p>2. Economic hardship</p> <p>3. Leadership style</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary • Management Style • Communication • Employee Engagement • Training and Development • Employee Recognition • Recruitment and Selection • Employee healthy(wellness)
<p>(C) Factors with a direct negative impact on organizations</p> <p>4. Salary and incentives</p> <p>5. Foreign currency</p> <p>6. Funding</p>	<p>What are the essential HR factors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government support • Funding • Ordinance.
<p>(D) Barriers to growth</p>	<p>HR practices necessary but missing in the organization</p>

<p>Section A: What are the challenges facing Zimbabwean organizations</p>	<p>Section B: Status of HRM practices in Zimbabwean organizations</p>
<p>7. Demotivation</p> <p>8. Politics</p> <p>9. Brain drain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good management Style • Motivation • Employee engagement

Key findings	Key findings
<p>Key findings under question 1 indicate that in Zimbabwe, the myriad of challenges is devastating to organizational survival.</p>	<p>There was evidence that some HR practices are being used in Zimbabwean organizations some calling for improvements.</p>
<p>Most organizations are in distress and are currently facing significant insignificant number under the thriving scale.</p>	<p>Some practices are quite essential for organizational survival, but the gap between essential HR practices and HR practices in use led to exposing a gap under the guise of necessary HR</p>
<p>The factors highlighted here are impacting these organizations.</p>	<p>practices that are missing for organizations to survive.</p>
<p>The topical matters were management style and economic hardships.</p>	<p>These include good management style, motivation and employee engagement.</p>
<p>These were the results of both internal and external environments.</p>	<p>The findings relate to the fact that HR practices are not in full use in Zimbabwe to the point of sustaining organizational survival.</p>

4.1 Data presentation (interviewees)

This section focuses on the presentation of data in line with responses received for the questions asked to respondents.

Table 4. 2 Participation Checkpoint

Number of Respondents: 49				
Organization	Number of employees	Nature of Organization	Skills	Method
Organization 1	6	Regulatory	1 HR Director 5 Non-managerial Staff from various departments.	Semi-Structured interviews and focus group
Organization 2	22	Regulatory	1 CEO 2 Scientific managers 1 Legal and Corporate services manager 1 Chief Finance Officer 1 Legal Officer 16 non-managerial staff from various departments	Semi-Structured interviews
Number of Respondents: 49				
Organization	Number of employees	Nature of Organization	Skills	Method

Organization 3	21	Regulatory	1 HR Director 1 Technical Manager 19 non-managerial staff from Various departments	Semi- structured interviews
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4.2 Summary of the Analysis:

The analysis table is centered on issues raised by the participants in response to Research Questions 1 and 2. While some themes were presented twice in the data presentation section as shown above, they are not repeated. This decision was influenced by the recognition that, though there were findings on the ground, it appeared would appear tautological to include them in this analysis. Nevertheless, the sentiments are still captured.

4.3 Section A: Challenges facing Zimbabwean organizations.

4.3.1. Presentation of Interview and Focus Group Findings.

This section is a presentation of the themes from the interviews in relation to Section A, which relates to understanding the challenges that affect survival in Zimbabwean organizations. To facilitate this understanding, focus groups and interviews were run in three case organizations, with managerial employees only and then with non- managerial employees for insight on an expanded version of the research questions.

The focus group participants were asked to rate their company on a scale from 1 (a struggling company) to 10 (an excellent company/thriving organization). The query aimed to determine whether the organization under examination was thriving. (prosperous and growing; flourishing) or merely surviving. Under interview Question 1(b), respondents were asked: What factors they thought led the organization to be in the situation under the current status quo? This question was intended to extract what the respondents classify as the causative reasons that drove the organizations to the state they were in?

QUESTION 1.1

Interview Question 1(a)

Ranking your organization on a scale of 1-3 (struggling) 4-7 (surviving) or 10 (thriving).

	1–3 Struggling	4–7 Surviving	8–10 Thriving	Total Answers
Organization 1	3	15	2	20
Organization 2	4	4	3	11
Organization 3	1	2	0	3
Total	8	21	5	49

QUESTION 1.2

Interview Question 1(b): Factors thought to have led the organization to be in this situation

- Management style
- Economic Hardships
- Leadership Style

	Management style	Economic Hardships	Leadership Style	Total Answers
Organization 1	12	9	3	24
Organization 2	11	3	5	19
Organization 3	4	0	1	6
Total	27	12	9	49

QUESTION 2

Things that have negatively affected the organization

- Economic Hardships
- Management Style
- Salary and Incentives

- Foreign Currency
- Funding

	Economic Hardships	Management Style	Salary and incentives	Foreign Currency	Funding	Total Answers
Organization 1	7	4	6	3	2	22
Organization 2	5	7	5	2	2	21
Organization 3	1	2	0	0	0	6
Total	13	13	11	5	4	49

QUESTION 3

Barriers to growth encountered by organizations

- Demotivation
- Politics
- Brain Drain

	Demotivation	Politics	Brain Drain	Total Answers
Organization 1	14	3	4	22
Organization 2	12	3	6	21
Organization 3	1	3	0	6
Total	27	9	10	49

4.4. Data Analysis

Section A: What are the challenges facing Zimbabwean organizations

1. Management style
2. Economic hardship
3. Leadership style
4. Salary and incentives
5. Foreign currency

- 6. Funding
- 7. Demotivation
- 8. Politics
- 9. Brain drain

4.5 Section A: Thematic Analysis

Theme 1: Management style

The research showed that management is a weakness and requires improvement in all three SOEs. Management style, on the other hand, makes it easier to communicate with and deliver solutions for the individuals with whom you are working.

Responses show that a lack of professionalism in management styles has affected organizational survival in Zimbabwe due to a strong civil service mentality resulting in a too rigid and egocentric management. One of the respondents in SOE 2 highlighted a lack of business planning and a slow response to change in challenging times, as management problems. This is also supported by a respondent in SOE 3, who argued that poor planning was rampant within the organization, thus showing professionalism loopholes within the organization, and putting organizational survival at stake

The rapid pace of change around the globe has had an impact on organizational functioning and managers (Abatecola 2013; Jalagat 2016), and our investigation's findings confirm that Zimbabwean managers must be sympathetic, cooperative and responsive to their colleagues' difficulties. Carucci (2016) states that managers can no longer be effective if they are unaware of the need for adaptation and unable to make changes in their organizations and management approaches. Management practices and performance are primarily based on distinct styles that exist in different cultures (Alade 2020).

Ibekwe (2015) posits that Africans need to include their indigenous management styles in their organizations. Liberman (2014) explained that management styles vary by country, and as such, adaptive leadership and management should remain an executive's top concern. The outlook for businesses in Zimbabwe is bleak if management styles are not adapted for organizational survival. As a result, Oke (2014) posits that organizations perform poorly due to "leaders' incompetence or unwillingness to make a decision". Management styles in Zimbabwe are encroaching on the organizations' HR functions (Itika 2011; Chigumira *et al.*

2019); thus, organizational survival is at stake. Management is frequently interested in how actions may affect financial costs and benefits (Horwitz and Horwitz 2012; Smith 2015).

Management styles call for the realization of four important traits of a transformational leader, according to Oke (2014): namely ethical behavior, communicating visions and goals, enhancing performance through charismatic leadership, and leading by example. Therefore, management should create methods for capturing and distributing knowledge inside the organization, as suggested by Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016), Albert and Perouma (2017), Saiti and Stefou (2020), Marin-Garcia and Tomas (2016), Minbaeva (2013), Gonzalez and Martins (2017), Abubakar *et al.* (2019) and Zamir (2019). Management should note that HR practices are perceived as meaningful for achieving personal and organizational goals (Ehrnrooth and Bookman 2012; Michaelson *et al.* 2013; Berg 2015; Osbourne and Hamoud 2017), hence aiding organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Theme 2: Economic Hardships

Most businesses are failing to survive due to the difficult economic conditions in Zimbabwe. Most respondents noted that most businesses are struggling because most revenue streams are not performing up to expectations. In support of this, most respondents in this research agreed that economic growth is important. This corresponds with a statement from SOE 2, which indicated that the present economic situation in Zimbabwe is well-known, and one of the respondents stated that the current situation in Zimbabwe poses a direct threat to the organization's survival owing to financial sector instability, since most stakeholders that interact with their organization directly or indirectly charge in FX (US) dollars, but their income is in the local currency (ZWL-bond note). Organizational viability remains in peril due to excessive exchange rates. The main source of the threat is that many businesses are rejecting the bond note in their transactions. The economy is generally improving, according to a respondent from SOE 3.

Despite these beliefs from SOE 3, several respondents in SOE 1 stated that they are unable to obtain foreign currency and that the government should devote sufficient funding to provide them with the necessary foreign currency to avert economic challenges. Despite the economic environment, respondents from SOE 2 claim that projects are generally going

smoothly and progressing as expected. One of the respondents suggested that there should simply be a better distribution of cash and resources to allow these initiatives to run smoothly.

The Zimbabwean economy's poor performance continues to risk the survival and profitability of innumerable institutions, and economic activity has stalled (Mapuva 2017; Gudhlanga and Madongonda 2019; Smith 2020); hence, the conclusion that rising poverty among Zimbabwe's majority is one of the most serious threats to the country's long-term stability as well as the organization's life (Chitiyo, Vines and Vandome 2016; Kanyenze, Chitambara and Tyson 2017; Nhapi 2019). Economic hardships may result in late or non-payment of salaries, severe shortages of tools and equipment to use, and generally poor labor relations. To a greater extent, such organizations' resources depreciate in a ruinous manner, creating minimal or no chances for organizational survival. This causes employees to retaliate against ineffective management styles by stealing from the firm, fabricating leave, or moonlighting since they believe management is disregarding their predicament (Mwanza 2014; Ngwenya 2021; Peng *et al.* 2021).

Escalating inflation and challenges related to gasoline cause organizations to struggle to purchase materials, leading to a decline in attendance at other crucial meetings. Economic sufferings as an issue should be scrutinized by the HR function, which should discover various ways to minimize economic hardships, according to the general responses to Question 1 (b) (What reasons do you think have led the organization to be in this situation?) Economic hardships cannot be left out when looking at issues destabilizing organizational survival in Zimbabwe (Chingwaru and Jakata 2014; Sandada 2015; Rusvingo 2015; Tshuma, Karasa and Kaduwo 2016; Gudhlanga and Madongonda 2019).

Theme 3: Leadership Style

Since the vision for change is at the heart of effective leadership, the researcher felt it was critical to distinguish between management and leadership styles. While leaders prefer to anticipate and take advantage of possibilities, managers employ processes like budgeting, organizational structure and personnel to accomplish company goals (Kezar, and Holcombe 2017).

Respondents in SOE 1 indicated that the ministry's leadership has changed, with management sidelining HR functions and neglecting crucial recommendations. Some

comments demonstrate a deficiency in the training provided to managers in this organization regarding their responsibilities, which is evident in their treatment of staff, resembling an approach more akin to dealing with schoolchildren. However, one of the respondents claimed that the firm has effective leadership practices since employees are free to share their opinions. This agrees with the views of another interviewee, who stated that supportive legislation, responsive leadership and policy adherence were all present.

However, SOE 2's input showed a leadership problem within their company, blocking the organization's growth through fallouts and a lack of coordination. This is also in line with an SOE 3 respondent's input, who claims that their organization has had inadequate leadership. However, other respondents in SOE 2 disagreed, claiming that there is good leadership through workforce balance and the recruitment of great people, which improved the organization's performance.

The leadership style of SOE 1 demonstrates that it has a detrimental impact on performance, with supervisors being unconcerned about employees' well-being and the survival of employees. They are unapproachable and unfriendly and fail to listen to lower-level employees. Most of the managers in this firm lack commercial experience and effective leadership qualities. Also, outside influences are influencing leadership, undermining the organization's effectiveness by disregarding concerns that harm workers. As a result, HR is meek and fearful of management. This is also true in organization SOE 2, as they revealed that leadership is self-centered and more concerned with personal benefit than the organization's mission, with authoritative leadership demanding that they do not seek counsel.

Poor governance by leaders has also been noted as a major issue threatening the sustainability of Zimbabwean businesses. SOE 1 respondents stated that there has been poor corporate management governance. There is a perception of a lack of equal opportunity and a lack of succession planning. Feedback also indicates that there has been a lack of change, tyranny, communication and inadequate labor administration. However, one of the respondents claimed that their organization had effective collaborative governance. Management's lack of devotion is also evident in SOE 2. Poor governance has also been a source of worry for SOE 3, with answers indicating that their firm has a lack of cooperative management. One of the respondents also claimed that leadership within this organization

has deteriorated because no one is engaging in change management, and no one is advocating for succession planning.

Poor performance may be a result of the leadership methods used to run these parastatals (Chavhunduka, Nyemba and Bhebhe 2016), while transactional leadership must become the dominant style if organizations are to maintain high standards of performance and skill retention (Mwenje and Mwenje 2017; Gwenzi 2012; Mandiya, Machera and Karodia 2014; Gcaza, Garande and Echezona 2018). Marcin-Garcia and Tomas 2016) argue that decision-making should be decentralized (Panou 2016; Vantrappen and Wirtz 2017; O'Sullivan 2020). As a result, employees will have more autonomy in their work (Sarikwal and Gupta 2013; Barasa 2017; Tarawneh 2019), according to a point by Demortier *et al.* (2014), who are of the opinion that the purpose of opportunity-enhancing strategies is to encourage employee voice and delegate decision-making (Siletti 2015; Beltran-Martin and Bou-Llusar 2018; Boxall 2018).

One respondent stated that HR had helped the problem of leadership since they had demonstrated high levels of flexibility in all areas because they understood their employees (Chirwa *et al.* 2016; Mashange *et al.* 2019). Though the reporting structure is occasionally confusing, situational leadership in this firm provides excellent guidance, allowing employees to freely express their issues and opinions. Another respondent claimed that the company had both autocratic and democratic leadership styles, making it versatile. In addition, SOE 3 respondents demonstrated that their leadership style does not favor devolution. Many key components of social life can and should be organized by one or more individuals who provide direction and/or purpose to social action conducted by themselves and others, according to O'Reilly and Reed (2010). Individual leaders are promoted as radical change agents capable of defining organizational agendas and solutions, uniting divergent interests, attending to consumer and citizen needs and instilling enthusiasm and shared values in the organization (Ekman, Lindgren and Packendorff 2017). Leaderist discourse invests hope in the fictionalized ideal of an emancipated leader, a logical and all-powerful figure who can be trusted with the fortunes of complex organizations. Some managers do not lead, while others do so even when they are not in charge. Technical ability, expertise and competence are often the deciding elements in a manager's employment. On the other side, Hassan and Al Mamum (2017) and others believe that the most crucial leadership quality is the capacity to inspire and motivate others.

Theme 4: Salary and incentives

Salaries have been arriving from every mode, according to the respondents' inputs in SOE 1, as HR maintains monthly salary pay outs. Another respondent agreed, claiming that salaries have always been sent on time; one disputed this statement, claiming that there has been no pay raise since 2012; and another response demonstrated that compensation modifications have occurred in SOE 1 due to wage increases received in 2011. This was similarly true in SOE 2, with replies indicating that salary and employee appreciation kept the organization afloat. According to the responses, their company pays its employees on time. However, a different viewpoint within this organization claims that remuneration packages are insufficient. This organization's responses also suggest that remuneration should be examined on a regular basis to ensure alignment with economic trends, which are currently absent. However, one of the respondents in SOE 1 stated that organizations cannot afford to provide suitable compensation to workers due to economic troubles because they are still receiving monthly payments and no raises if the country is experiencing economic difficulties. Another respondent agreed, stating that the economic challenges due to soaring inflation and a sluggish economy have eroded employee salaries, leading to requests for boosting worker morale through incentives and lobbying for partial payment of salaries in US dollars.

According to the study, HR should enhance worker allowances because things are going well for management, who continue to receive financial incentives. HR may also develop ways to promote worker wellbeing. In SOE 2, results suggest that HR must work on change management to survive in Zimbabwe, as they must anticipate various future situations and devise survival tactics such as paying hardship allowances to employees. In addition, the organization's capacity to pay competitive salaries and retain talent has been constrained by the government's recommendation of a 70/30 ratio (70 % of total money spent on operations, 30 % on compensation).

Survivable operations, budgetary constraint measures, HR planning, compensation, and the need to review the conditions of employee services and offer performance-based remunerations are all mentioned by SOE 1. According to SOE 2, operations are progressing well, but salary difficulties, particularly the increment, are not being appropriately addressed. A competitive salary is essential for the survival of organizations, according to the research

findings, and it cannot be taken for granted. In Zimbabwe, salary difficulties are still critical to the survival of businesses (Bakan and Buyukbese 2013; Sibanda *et al.* 2014; Terera and Ngirande 2014; Manyaya *et al.* 2016; Muchichwa *et al.* 2016; Ismail and Razak 2016; Mabaso and Dlamini, *et al.* 2015; Salisu, Chinyio and Suresh 2015; Manyaya *et al.* 2016). This viewpoint is supported by Manyaya *et al.* (2016), Muchichwa *et al.* (2016), Uzhenyu *et al.* (2017) and Uzhenyu *et al.* (2017).

Theme 5: Foreign currency

The results in the above table demonstrated that the issue of foreign currency was negatively impacting organizational survival, albeit by a smaller percentage. According to Manda and Sibanda (2020), establishing a multi-currency system has a variety of implications and does not appear to be a panacea for economic resuscitation. This perspective supports the conclusions described above. Despite having easy access to foreign currency, Sibanda (2020) reported that productivity remained low and the cost of doing business in Zimbabwe was high, making exports prohibitively expensive, supporting the theory that foreign money had a detrimental impact on the survival of Zimbabwean organizations. As the US dollar enticed imports, Zimbabwe has become a marketplace' for foreign commodities. Manufacturing firms faced obstacles such as a shortage of credit lines and competition from "cheap imports", according to Chingwaru, Nyamwanza (2014) and Hugo (2016). Sibanda, Sibanda and Shava (2018) addressed the detrimental impact of foreign currency on organizational survival by claiming that poor export participation in Zimbabwe could be related to their inability to get funding from local and international capital markets (Chipangura and Kaseke 2012). This refers to organizations' inability to get formal long- and short-term loans to invest in non-current assets and obtain working capital to expand their operations (Oricchio *et al.* 2017; Ferrando and Mavrakis 2017).

According to Gukurume (2010), the introduction of foreign money aggravated individual disparities and caused tremendous misery for many people, as crime rates such as corruption and theft rose dramatically while only a few wealthy people benefited. Money burning was a method of exchanging foreign cash for local Zimbabwean dollars on the black market at rates that were substantially higher (depreciated) than the official interbank rates, a practice that stifled growth in terms of organizational survival to some extent.

Theme 6: Funding

Money was also mentioned by respondents as a factor that harmed the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe. This could be due to the economy's long-term problems, which include structural rigidities and a lack of domestic and international investments and long-term funding (Sandada 2015). The researcher opined that in such a scenario, organizations will be doomed due to a lack of funding, and they will eventually confront the painful task of shutting down due to challenges in launching new innovative movements. Demirkan (2018) backs this assertion, stating that businesses with a lot of cash are more likely to take advantage of new possibilities and spend more on innovation than those without a lot of cash. Thus, innovation is critical to a company's success and long-term viability, and it also calls for stable funding if organizations are to survive in Zimbabwe.

All the variables discussed above put the organization's survival, as well as the livelihoods of its employees, in jeopardy, resulting in a confusing scenario for employees and instability in day-to-day operations. Rusvingo (2015) expects that more businesses will close due to a continual decrease in average capacity utilization, the long-term impact of liquidity worries, poor domestic demand, and other factors. Sandada (2015) concurred with this statement, noting that structural rigidities, a lack of long-term funding, and insufficient local and foreign investments continue to plague the Zimbabwean economy.

Theme 7: Demotivation

The results of the question on barriers to growth confirmed that demotivation is a substantial impediment to growth in all of the organizations studied, but especially in SOES 1 and 2. According to Sandiford and Peters (2011), a demotivated employee may be motivated to daydream, sleep late, leave early for a sporting event, gossip, drink alcohol, or be nasty to co-workers or clients (essentially engaging in resistance and/or sabotage), which for organizational survival is a recipe for disaster (Evans 2020; Szabo 2020; Pathan, Ismail and Fatima 2021). Demotivation is strong in all three (3) SOEs under examination, indicating that these organizations are not meeting employees' needs and expectations. Employees in Organization 1 are demotivated since HR treats new employees as if they were hired when the company was founded; thus, they should enhance their grading system. HR has

exacerbated the matter to a lesser level by failing to keep staff engaged; for example, a worker who has been with the company for four years has not received a promotion, even though he is like someone who joined last month in the same grade. This is also true in Organization 2, where the results suggest that motivation is now inadequate because employees are still at the same grade level. Another respondent echoes this sentiment, stating that while the firm has performed admirably in other areas, its inability to establish systems has severely harmed employee confidence. Such characteristics, one could say, have a deleterious impact on organizational survival in Zimbabwe. This was also apparent in SOE 2, with feedback indicating that employees were angry and demotivated because of salary reductions and allowance withdrawals. Some contended that the HR staff had attempted to handle the issue to some extent.

According to Albalawi and Al-Hoorie (2021), motivation and demotivation are not totally simultaneous entities. As a result, factors that are important for motivation may not be important for demotivation, and vice versa. Demotivation should therefore be viewed as an enemy of organizational survival in Zimbabwe. It can be addressed through the process of revitalization, which involves overcoming a state of demotivation with the help of favorable internal or external circumstances (Albalawi and Al-Hoorie (2021). They stated further that it is prudent to note that when discussing demotivation, it becomes imperative to understand the mechanisms that lead to motivational decline and to evaluate the effectiveness of various coping strategies in preventing or reversing this trend. When organizations experience demotivation, immediate action should be taken to address employee concerns. The information gathered from employee feedback assists management in improving the working conditions for its staff and in identifying organizational demotivation issues to revive them and fulfil the company's goals (Jarour 2014; Nemashakwe and Shumba 2015; Bello-Pintando 2015; Chisango 2017). According to Tsvangirai and Chinyamurindi (2019), HRM motivation accounts for the reality that employees need the right motivation to exert discretionary effort. This component is usually connected to compensation plans, incentives, performance management strategies, internal progression and employment stability, according to Jiang *et al.* (2012b).

According to Parrey and Bhasin (2012), motivation in HRM considers the reality that workers require proper motivation to put in discretionary effort (Bedarkar and Pandita 2013; Bello-Pintando 2015; Silbert 2020). According to Jiang *et al.* (2012b), this component is frequently

linked to remuneration schemes, incentives, performance management techniques, internal advancement and job stability. Furthermore, personnel with low skill levels may get demotivated if they believe the task is too onerous (Clark and Saxberg 2019; Bos-Nehles *et al.* 2013; Dobre 2013). People become demotivated for a variety of reasons, including a lack of funds, the external environment, which is linked to the organization in some way, and many others, all of which should be investigated and addressed if organizations are to survive in Zimbabwe (Aghayeva and Slusarczyk 2019).

Theme 8: Politics

Politics has been a challenge that has harmed organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations. Poor policy development and execution have harmed organizational survival in Zimbabwe. Respondents in SOE 1 stated that the government's consistent application of laws and policies has resulted in only partial implementation of policies. The importance of setting the right priorities and investing in the initial fruits was also mentioned. This is consistent with SOE 2 responses, as one of the respondents mentioned the issue of mismatched priorities. However, despite SOE 1's inadequate policy design and implementation, feedback suggests that the HR function has improved in supporting the organization's business operations by eliminating some costs, reviewing the organization's assets, and making modifications to increase effectiveness. By eliminating complexity and increasing efficiency, the HR department has improved the situation. With a performance management system and software, HR has introduced new smart technologies. This is also true of SOE 3, as one of the respondents mentions that current management has management strategies in place.

SOE 2's responses reveal that political meddling, in which the minister tells HR what to do, has had a negative impact on companies. Another respondent agrees, arguing that the status of the organization is the result of instability, which, if it continues, could lead to further collapse (*There is an inability by the management to represent its workers, or rather, a lack of concern for the welfare of their employees*). This is also in line with an answer from SOE 3, in which a respondent argued that political influences had had an impact on Zimbabwean organizations. Political assumptions made by major political personalities have harmed the survival of this organization in carrying out its task. Question 2 (What elements do you think have revealed the existence of such a practice with a negative effect on the organization?).

Most aspects, such as salaries, management style and employee recognition were negative as far employees were concerned. Politics is a major factor threatening organizational survival in Zimbabwe was highlighted under question 8 (What impediments to growth, if any, do you believe your organization is facing?), that political interferences was affecting issues of recruitment matters .

Scrimgeour and Duppati (2014), Abdulraheem (2014), Qhobosheane (2018) and Liechti and Finger (2018) have voiced their concerns about the ongoing political intervention in the affairs of state-owned enterprises, accompanied by several governance challenges. According to Chimbari (2017), Zvitambo and Mhizha (2019) and Chigudu (2017), political influence in Zimbabwe is excessive (2020). Acts linked to governing a country or region, particularly the conflict between powerful parties (politics), were highlighted by research respondents as a barrier to organizational growth, implying that they are factors threatening the existence of organizations in Zimbabwe.

High levels of political interference in parastatals' business affairs, according to Chiguvi and Magwada (2016), contributed to the company's failure to manage financial commitments, pay employees on time, handle stakeholders' grievances, provide market transportation services, and secure its relationships with various stakeholders (Mpedzisi 2019; Akwei, Damoah, Amankwah-Amoah 2020; Arslan and Alqatan 2020). Zimbabwe's parastatals hire most of their members of management for political reasons, allowing them to operate without clear guidelines and lacking the necessary commercial skills and understanding (Zvitambo and Mhizha 2015; Hadebe *et al.* 2019). Political influence has caused office procedures and norms to be disregarded in Zimbabwean parastatals, according to Jonga (2012), Chiguvi and Magwada (2016) and Foya and Changunda (2019), and lack of transparency and accountability are prevalent features of corporate governance in such organizations.

Theme 9: Brain Drain

Staffing shortages are evident in SOE 1's responses. Due to a staffing shortage, management meetings to communicate essential ideas are not held in this organization. Its ability to survive as a regulatory body is significant, although it has been hampered by high personnel turnover. Employees have left the agency in search of greener pastures. 'My organization's performance is extraordinary, thus its existence,' says one response, 'yet it

has its own flaws.' It is a micro-organization that exists amid rigid cultures that do not always allow employees to exercise initiative. This caused employees to focus on repetitive tasks that became tedious, resulting in significant staff turnover, absenteeism and low morale. Employee/staff turnover is high, according to SOE 2, indicating that this organization has insufficient staff. Staff turnover, particularly among key staff, has been a major factor limiting organizational growth. With such replies, one could claim that sustaining an organization in Zimbabwe is tough. This assertion is backed by the results of Question 2, Question 3 and, subsequently, Question 4. If organizations in Zimbabwe are to be supported to the point of survival, more action from HR is required. As a result, the issue of brain drain is still relevant to Zimbabwe's organizational existence. When considering organizational survival, it has been noticed and agreed that brain drain is a cause for concern in various countries and sectors (Panzaru and Reisz 2012; Shumba and Mawere 2012; Chibango 2013; Ngoma and Ismail 2013; Kattel and Sapkota 2018; Dzinamarira and Musuka 2021; Gonzalez-Gomez-del-Mino, Vega-Munoz and Espinosa-Cristia 2021).

4.6 Section B

Section B presents the conclusions for Question 2 of this thesis, which is to investigate the situation of HR practice in Zimbabwean firms. The question's main purpose was to learn about these firms' present HR policies. For research Question 2, the study was expanded to extract the respondents definition of necessary HR practices that are lacking in the organizations under examination as asked in interview question 6 (Which HR practices are necessary but absent in your organization?).

B1. The HR practices that are currently used in Zim organizations,

B2. HR practices are seen as essential to the success of Zimbabwe's organizations.

B3. HR practices are necessary but are missing in Zimbabwe's organizations.

B1: HR practices that are currently used in Zimbabwean organizations

1. Salary
2. Management style
3. Communication

4. Employee engagement
5. Training and development
6. Employee recognition
7. Recruitment and selection
8. Employee healthy(wellness).

Table 4. 3 Practices that are currently used in Zimbabwean organizations

	Salary	Managem	tion	Employee s	ment	and	ment		Employee healthy	Total
Organization 1	4	7	2	2	1	1	5	0	22	
Organization 2	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	1	21	
Organization 3	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	
Total	7	13	5	7	3	3	7	1	49	

Theme 1: Salary

The respondents' findings revealed that organizations 1 and 2 use salary as a practice, when it comes to reviewing current HR practices in the firms under consideration while organization 3 does not. Since the table indicates that the practice is not prioritized among all other practices, the acknowledgement of this practice in companies 1 and 2 implies its existence, rather than indicating that such salaries are adequate. Furthermore, Organization 3 remained silent about this behavior, either because they considered their salary to be a pittance or because they were frightened of retaliation from their bosses if they spoke up. According to Masiyenyama (2019), Section 65(1) of the Zimbabwean Constitution, which is supported by the Labour Relations Act, Chapter 28:01, Section 20, declares that "Every person has the right to fair and safe work practices and standards, as well as to be given a fair and suitable remuneration." The main problem is that the same regulation only

protects an employee's right to a fair salary in Zimbabwe, not a living wage, because the Constitution does not define what constitutes a fair and reasonable compensation. Poor employees have been left at the mercy of companies that, given the current high unemployment rate and economic disaster, have gained handsomely from labor exploitation due to a lack of specificity in the regulations. "If you pick the proper people and give them the opportunity to stretch their wings—and put money and rewards as a carrier behind it—you practically don't have to manage them" says Jack Welch. Thus, if Zimbabwe's organization is to survive, Jack Welch's advice is not far from the truth. This necessitates the payment of suitable salaries to employees, which are not only fair but also a living wage defined by the current gross domestic product.

This must be the case because money is a major determinant of an employee's level of job satisfaction. Compensation is an effective tool in management's arsenal for fostering organizational performance and can positively influence employee behavior and productivity (Teng, Bustamam and Abdullah 2014). Compensation, on the other hand, impacts employee attraction and retention to meet business goals (Ngirande and Terera 2014).

According to Ossai-Igwe Lucky, Minai and Rahman (2013), around 75% of employees worldwide choose to keep their employment over other variables on their preference list. Watson suggests that job security is as important as employees' compensation and healthcare (KPMG 2010). Employee remuneration, according to Suri (2016), is a significant component of company competitiveness. Suri (2016) continued, "money is a critical instrument for addressing one's requirements" and "workers usually interpret income as an indication of management's interest in them." Employees are more likely to be satisfied when they perceive their pay as fair and when it is based on job requirements, individual skill levels, and community pay standards. Authors Bozeman and Gaughan (2011) claim that job satisfaction is predicted by the perception of being paid what one is worth. According to Ndlovu *et al.* (2015), a comprehensive strategy is needed to address the root causes of firms failing to pay salaries and wages, as well as the implications of non-payment on employees and their families.

Theme 2: Management Style

The research respondents previously described management style as negative, as seen in Table 4.3 above. Again, management style became the focus of this inquiry, and it received

the most responses as an HR practice in use. According to Chikove and Shiri (2021), managers in Zimbabwe should use inspirational leadership approaches and involve employees in decision-making to improve the organization's efficiency and effectiveness and raise follower devotion. Chikove and Shiri (2021) went on to say that a company's labor force is its lifeblood; thus, management should, among other things, adopt the correct leadership style to entice and retain personnel.

To promote organizational survival in Zimbabwe, management should implement a variety of incentive elements and tactics in their organizations. Coulter and Robbins (2012). Business executives in Zimbabwe should investigate the reasons for skill competition to learn what motivates people to stay loyal, perform well and put in concerted effort, according to Ibrahim and Hazriyanto (2019).

All in all, because most organizations are battling to stay afloat, managers should use both intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics to recruit and retain talented employees, according to Murisa and Helliker (2020). Some researchers believe that non-financial outcomes, such as managerial quality, play a role in organizational survival (Mazaheri *et al.* 2011; Akparep, Jengre and Mogre 2011; De Waal and Frijns 2011; Sadia and Aman 2018; De Waal and Frijn 2019). Sulich, Sooducho-Pelc and Ferasso 2021). Some academics believe that the most common challenge affecting organizational performance in business and other institutions is a lack of leadership in most areas, while others disagree (Cockrill 2017; Faizan 2017). Managers in leadership roles must focus on the growth of employees' value systems, motivational levels and moralities in combination with the development of their abilities to promote organizational survival in Zimbabwe (Uchenwamgbe 2013).

Theme 3: Communication

SOE 1's responses indicate that this organization has a communication problem. This is also true in SOE 2, where senior management and the entire organization are plagued by a lack of effective communication and mistrust. The failure of an organization to grow has also been linked to improper communication routes. There is a lot of finger-pointing and values are in the negative in various ways. Although some may claim that communication is essential for a company's sustainability, this is not the case with these two companies. This is also true with SOE 3 feedback, which indicates a lack of communication and consultation, which has a negative impact on the survival of organizations.

SOE 2's responses show that HR lacks a suitable platform to carry out its responsibilities, since grievances are raised but no action is taken. HR always favours management; thus, resolutions are not always equitable. This corresponds with criticism from SOE1, where one of the respondents claimed that HR had failed to provide solutions to employees' grievances. They do not appear to care about the wellbeing of the employees in this organization, instead they side with management members all the time. These findings were supported by the responses to Question 1(b) as well as the topic of communication as HR practice in Question 2. (What factors do you think have had a negative impact on the organization?). The same tendency was seen in Question 3 (What elements have enabled the organization's success?), which was about enablers of success. When examining HR procedures in all three organizations, communication emerged as a key factor in answering Question 4. (Talk about the HR procedures that are currently in use at your company.) The responses to Question 5 (Which HR practices are vital to the success of your organization?) as well as question 6 (Which HR practices are missing in your organization?) further demonstrated the importance of communication. Communication was also mentioned in question 7 (What more could the HR function do to promote the organization's survival?) and question 8 (what hurdles to growth, if any, do you think your organization is encountering?). Although one may argue that the comments received have a negative impact on the organization's existence in Zimbabwe, a response from one of the interviewees also demonstrates that HR treats everyone with respect and avoids poor communication.

Communication is defined as a collaborative process in which people utilize verbal and nonverbal signs and symbols in a specific setting to generate, maintain and manage meanings (Poole and Conrad 2012). According to Thakore (2013), Bercovitch (2014), Omisore and Abioudan (2014) and Farlow (2014), organizational conflicts are unavoidable, and HR must plan for how to address grievances among employees as well as between them and the employees. According to the research, poor communication has also impeded the survival of Zimbabwean communities. Employees, on the other hand, remain silent when they are concerned about their ability to find new work (Sibanda *et al.* 2014). According to Nyamwanza (2014), the importance of effective communication in an organization in terms of strategy planning, implementation and monitoring cannot be understated. Communication is defined as a collaborative process in which people utilize verbal and nonverbal signs and symbols in a specific setting to generate, maintain and manage meanings (Poole and

Conrad 2012). Most communications nowadays are conducted by the use of computers, phones, the internet, intercoms, telex, telefaxes, radiograms, the Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) and other tools of a similar nature. Under interview Question 4, the communication practice received an average of three points in this study. This is a notable score, particularly when considering organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Communication must be possible not only within the organization but also with external parties and even the world at large, as the global economy grows more global. To be an effective international communicator, you must first understand who you are attempting to communicate with. What do they do for a living? Is it conceivable that something can harm others but not us? Understanding proper communication skills and being cognizant of others' cultures are required to be a great communicator.

The findings of the study revealed that communication is critical for organizational survival. This exemplifies the belief that communication should be a two-way street, with both the employer and the employee having the opportunity to be heard and have their concerns addressed. The process of producing, communicating and understanding ideas, facts, viewpoints and attitudes about work performance, organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and goal achievement in organizations is what Markovic and Salamzadeh (2018) define as communication. Mismanagement and subpar business outcomes might result from a bad communication infrastructure. According to Markaki, Damianios and Chadjipantelis (2013), communication is the process of creating, disseminating and comprehending ideas, facts, opinions and attitudes, and it is meaningless unless it is delivered to the individual who is expected to receive it or who requires it (Markaki, Damianios and Chadjipantelis 2013). According to various experts, effective speaking requires remembering two things: first, respecting everyone's own opinions and points of view. The second concept is that every discussion must come to an end. Business and management communication has since developed into a crucial and strategic partner in assisting organizations in achieving their goals (Nikitina 2011; Richmond, McCroskey and Powell 2013; Markaki, Damianios, Chadjipantelis 2013; Nuamah-Gyambrah, Offei-Otu and Agyeiwaa 2016). Respondents to this study defined the need to communicate management decisions and policies to those who will implement them in order to fulfill policy objectives in Zimbabwe. Therefore, management decisions and policies must be effectively communicated to those who will

implement them, as defined by respondents to this study, to fulfill policy objectives in Zimbabwe.

Theme 4: Employee engagement

As mentioned in the previous section, respondents concluded that management choices and policies must be effectively communicated to the people who will implement them in order to achieve policy objectives in Zimbabwe. To achieve this effective internal and external communication is essential. Organizational leaders must strive hard to engage employees in order to achieve this, according to Osborne and Hammoud (2017) and Biriowu and Augustina (2020) who share the same belief as Kortmann *et al.* (2014), Musgrove, Ellinger, and Ellinger (2014) and Gelhard, et al. (2019).

According to Hill and Birkinshaw (2012), for business executives who want to maintain the long-term health of their firms, it is essential to comprehend how to strike a balance between employee relations, innovation and short-term profit maximization. Employee engagement impacts both an organization's financial performance and longevity (Bersin 2014). Engaging employees and gaining their critical insights is crucial for improving the poor performance of human resources in Zimbabwean organizations and benefiting the firm. Today's senior managers and human resource professionals are very interested in employee engagement, and it has become one of their top issues, according to Bakker *et al.* (2012). As suggested by Alarcon, Lyons and Tartaglia (2010); Namrita and Yoginder (2017); managers in Zimbabwean organizations should be aware that utilizing culture as a technique for promoting employee engagement is one option for improving organizational survival. Culture is a way of life that influences how people think, feel, act and behave in organizations, and consequently aids employee engagement (Budriene and Diskiene 2020).

Employee engagement has a positive effect on organizational performance and is frequently a key competitive advantage, according to numerous researchers, including Soni (2013), Truss *et al.* (2013), Peter *et al.* (2014), Guest (2014), Demerouti (2010), and Soni (2013). Employee engagement has been a focus of attention for roughly two decades, according to an empirical study (Albercht *et al.* 2015). This revelation will benefit many firms, their executives, managers, and shareholders, as it will help them recognize that employee

engagement is a human resources practice that must be implemented if Zimbabwe's development is to be measured in terms of corporate survival. The findings of the respondents support the broad consensus on employee engagement and organizational survival, and they are a must-have if organizational survival is to be achieved.

Theme 5: Training and development

Respondents from organizations 1 and 2 spoke about training and development, whereas from organization 3 no one said anything. Though not universally agreed upon, training and development were seen as key human resource practices for the organization's long-term success. According to Nadarajah (2012), Walters and Rodriguez (2019) and Chinda (2020), training and development policies and programs are critical components in the process of developing talent, ensuring that individuals acquire and strengthen the skills and competencies they require, resulting in positive outcomes. Simultaneously, training and development activities are crucial for developing managers and gaining the interest and commitment of exceptional employees by allowing them to rise in their current jobs and to higher-level ones (Ulrich, Younger and Brockbank 2013; Jehanzeb and Bashir 2013). According to Subramaniam *et al.* (2011), training and development can help organizations improve their performance in a variety of ways. According to AL-Qudah *et al.* (2014), there is a high association between training and organizational performance; hence, companies that want to improve employee performance should invest in training and productivity should invest in training and retraining (Larsen 2017; Kiruja and Mukuru 2018; Saed and Asgher 2012; Sung and Choi 2014; Larsen 2017). This means that personnel who have received proper training and equipment can advocate for the organization's cause and assist it in achieving its strategic objectives. It is imperative to adopt and execute this viewpoint for the organization to thrive in Zimbabwe.

Theme 6: Employee recognition

This HR practice received positive feedback from participants in Organizations 1 and 2, but not from Organization 3, as happened with training and development. The fact that the practice was observed in the organizations under investigation is proof enough of its importance to the existence of those organizations in Zimbabwe. Human resource strategies such as employee empowerment and appreciation, according to Hussain *et al.* (2019), are intimately linked to the overall success of the firm. Employers must look after their employees

and value their labor for them to perform well in their jobs. The findings of the study support the idea that proper use of employee appreciation in Zimbabwean organizations can significantly improve organizational survival. Employee talent, knowledge and abilities can all be improved to help them work better. Employers commend their staff for enhancing their self- confidence and recognized employees in the workplace are motivated to produce excellent achievements. Organizational commitment reflects the organization's sense of oneness and shared values. Employee recognition will almost certainly contribute to job success, and as a result, organizations will have a significant positive association with employee productivity (Rahim and Daud 2013). According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2010), a healthy wage structure should support personal growth and development while also deterring talented individuals from leaving the organization. Employees will put forth their best effort if they believe or trust that their efforts will be rewarded by the organization (Nadia, Syed and Humera 2011). According to Kyeremeh and Amoatema (2016), effective employee recognition occurs in firms with a strong supportive culture, a grasp of the psychology of recognizing people for their hard work and the application of employee recognition principles. Thus, organizations in Zimbabwe, should strive to adopt those recognition principles to ensure organizational survival.

Recognition is defined by Stigter and Cooper (2016) as a favorable response and assessment of a person's contribution conveyed on a regular or ad hoc basis, formally or informally, individually or collectively, privately or publicly and monetarily or non- monetarily. As a result, the management of these organizations should find a way to honor their personnel while avoiding excuses, as employee recognition choices differ. According to Nyakundi *et al.* (2012), employee recognition develops a sense of ownership and belonging, raises morale, fosters loyalty and increases employee retention rates by allowing individuals to know and understand that their efforts are acknowledged.

Theme 7: Recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection were recognized by all the organizations under Question 1(b) (What causes do you think have led the organization to be in this situation?) as observed in the overall responses supplied by participants in this survey. It suggests that participants in Zimbabwean organizations were not particularly concerned with recruitment and selection as a critical HR activity for organizational survival. Despite its importance, the practice was not given more attention. In response to Question 2, (What issues do you believe have

harmed the organization?). Every organization uses recruitment and selection. Even though recruitment and selection are extensively utilized, a significant number of employees do not perceive them as crucial to organizational survival when responding to Question 5 (Which HR procedures are critical to your organization's success?). Question 4 and table unveiled that, in the examined organizations, the most prevalent pertinent HR practices were management style, and the recruitment and selection process. Question 5 This could imply that, as previously demonstrated, management style may jeopardize organizational survival and have an overbearing influence on recruitment and selection, which fills vacancies left by employees who resign due to poor management style in their organizations, or, worse, to replace those fired by management.

According to the research findings in relation to the subject at hand, recruitment and selection are the most regularly employed HR practices. According to Kanagavalli, Seethalakshmi and SowDamini (2019), a review of the literature revealed that enterprises use cutting-edge technology such as online portals, outsourcing, job fairs, campus interviews and mobile recruitment applications to carry out the recruiting and selection processes in a systematic manner (Ofori 2011; Saifalislam, Osman and AlQudah 2014; Sreen and Vijaya 2016; Jibrin-Bida *et al.* 2017). Maharjan *et al.* (2019) stated that the embodiment of this practice is the ideal applicant for an organization, and in addition to cutting-edge technologies, taking the expatriate factor into account would result in a more effective recruitment approach (Maharjan 2018; Kanagavalli, Seethalakshmi and SowDamini 2019). In Zimbabwe, the use of cutting-edge technology in recruitment and selection was exceedingly common, especially considering COVID-19's new normal environment. HRM must select individuals who are not only technically skilled but also socially skilled, according to Maharjan (2018) because the organization cannot expect productivity from employees who are unable to socialize. (Balasubramanian 2014; Kinsey 2019). This has an impact on the company's productivity. Maharjan (2018). Miranda and Fernando (2020) discovered a significant link between employee performance and recruitment and selection based on a well-defined meritocratic and unbiased method built through managerial expert opinions, including standardised tests to analyze potential candidates' exact requisite attitude, abilities and knowledge.

According to Ofori (2011), the importance of the recruitment and selection processes is seen as an entry point for skills, knowledge and competence in the company used to measure

success, performance and business sustainability (Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma 2015). Recruitment and selection refer to any operation or action carried out by an organization with the primary purpose of identifying and persuading new workers to join their organization (Jibrin-Bida *et al.* 2017; Hotho *et al.* 2018; Andrees, Nasri and Swiniarski 2015; Jibrin-Bida *et al.* 2018). Recruitment and selection are concerned with attracting and selecting persons who fit the organization's profile, (Schimansky 2014). These factors remain vital HR practices that may influence organizational survival the world over (Asiedu-Appiah, Aduse-Poku and Abeeku- Bamfo 2013; Ndudzo 2015; Mapetere *et al.* 2018; Tensay and Singh 2020). This is supported by responses from SOE 1, where one of the respondents argued that recruitment and selection are the most relevant. Feedback from this organization showed that there have been adequate financial resources to enhance the acquisition of staff. However, not much was gathered pertaining to this practice in organizations SOE 2 and SOE 3, therefore it was difficult to generalize the results on survival of firms of Zimbabwe.

Theme 8: Employee Wellness

The responses from the respondents were concerning in terms of employee health, as Organizations 1 and 3 did not pay attention to this HR practice and did not react at all. The organization only responded to this aspect with one response. Respondents may have been primarily interested in incentives and features linked to incentives, or the data may have been collected before COVID-19 unleashed its full fury. According to Gubler, Larkin and Pierce (2018), an organization's internal policies on wellness programs and safety standards influence employee productivity and organizational performance. As a result, because productivity hours associated with a sick employee are lost, employee health continues to be a deciding element in organizational sustainability. To emphasize how employee health matters in organizational survival, Chenoweth (2011) emphasized that there is another indication of lost productivity to examine in addition to the substantial evidence demonstrating that certain risk factors and chronic diseases are responsible for large absenteeism. This feature is known as presenteeism, and many health executives are paying more attention to it. Presenteeism includes behaviors such as feigning illness to avoid work tasks and slacking off at work. Simply put, presenteeism occurs when an employee is at work but unable to perform full-time duties due to illness or another medical condition.

Burnout is another health risk that can jeopardize a company's ability to survive in Zimbabwe. According to Brown and Quick (2013), burnout (a component of employee wellbeing) is a

prevalent problem in mature market economies and recent economic downturns have exacerbated the problem. During economic downturns, elements have emerged that make burnout in companies more prevalent, a point that Zimbabwe's decision-makers should consider if they want to foster and see organizational survival in their own institutions. According to Shirom (2011), burnout is a prevalent problem in modern market economies, necessitating preventive intervention and public policy initiatives. Burnout is one of several workplace chronic psychosocial diseases and it is linked to other psychosocial disorders such as anxiety and depression (Tetrick and Quick 2011). This is an important element to remember if Zimbabwe's organizations are to survive.

The World Health Organization (WHO), according to Moss (2019), has officially recognized "burnout" and the burden of control has shifted from the individual to the organization. Organizational leaders should be aware of various things, including their responsibilities for executing a burnout plan. According to recent WHO research, depression and anxiety affect 615 million individuals globally, costing the global workforce \$1 trillion in lost productivity each year. Organizations should view burnout as a serious threat to their survival. Unfair treatment at work is also a source of concern for employee health, and Zimbabwean businesses are not an exception. Employees who believe they are being treated unfairly at work are two or three times more likely to experience burnout, according to Cassar (2019). Unfair workplace treatment can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including coworker bias, favoritism and abuse, as well as inconsistently implemented compensation and corporate standards. The psychological link that binds employees to their jobs is destroyed when they lose faith in their bosses, co-workers, or senior leadership. Employees who are treated decently and respected build strong bonds more quickly and are more tenacious.

"When does high-performance monitoring become abusive supervision?" asked Ashkanasy, Bennett and Martinko (2016). In a bid to exercise caution, as more companies adopt high-performance work techniques, supervisors are under increasing pressure to do whatever it takes to boost staff productivity (HPWP). Contributors from all over the world share their thoughts on how and when ostensibly beneficial working practices cross the line of abuse. According to Campbell and Quick (2017), the situation is complicated in terms of balancing organizational survival with employee health because stress is linked to seven of the ten leading causes of death in affluent countries, but successful stress adaptation can allow individuals to thrive.

According to Bennett (2016), rising interest in workplace well-being may suggest a paradigm shift in how society views and addresses worker health, a point that Zimbabwean executives should keep in mind if they want to support the country's organizational survival.

B2: HR practices that are seen to be essential to the success of Zimbabwean based organizations:

1. Government support
2. Training and development
3. Funding
4. Good communication
5. Ordinance (law)

Table 4. 4 Essential HR practices in Zimbabwe

	Good communication	Training and Development	Government support	Funding	Ordinance	Total Answers
Organization 1	1	1	0	2	2	22
Organization 2	1	2	5	1	0	21
Organization 3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	3	5	3	2	49

Respondents, notably those from Organization 3, struggled to answer this question. Good communication, training and development, government assistance, money and ordinances were discovered to be key issues.

Theme 1: Government Support

According to the findings of the study, respondents from organizations 1 and 3 said that their organizations did not have government support, (a claim backed up by Kunaka (2014) or that they simply chose to disregard such HR practices in their companies. State-owned enterprises in Zimbabwe frequently receive financial government assistance in the form of

grants as well as expert advice, information and services. Government support is emphasized as the most important aspect that has contributed to the organization's success in this Table 4.4 As a result, if these organizations are to increase their organizational longevity, they must abandon the sole-leader paradigm. Furthermore, if the organizations are to continue operating in Zimbabwe, government support must be expanded and distributed effectively.

According to Mazibuko, Smith and Tshuma (2018), most of these parastatals have one thing in common: they all receive government subsidies to offset the costs of their loss-making, non-specialized and misdirected managers, inefficiencies and incapacity to create long-term profitability. According to Chilunjika and Mutizwa (2019), Zimbabwe's parastatals have been underperforming, posing a financial strain on the central government. They devolved into havens of inefficiency and ineffectiveness, vehicles for derailing intended plans and resulting in unrealized ones. An issue that arose from the gradual deterioration of existing public infrastructure because of the more than decade-long economic crisis, Chigumira and Dube (2011). Madhekeni (2012) believes that the government's support for the IRBM program in Zimbabwe is commendable, but that it has remained a source of contention over issues of applicability, benefits and drawbacks, particularly in a context where the government's efforts are thwarted by institutional, organizational and systematic flaws. Regardless of these assumptions, Madhekeni (2012) asserts that the RBM system, when correctly applied, can improve government performance. While the RBM program has gained universal acceptability, change management measures are still needed to help officials realize and respect that the administration is now putting the program into action in order to manage for results and improve public service delivery. Even if the new concept of RBM has been brought to the attention of many, it appears that most employees still believe it is "someone else's business". Employees must be managed to perform as expected, according to Chikwariro, Bussin and De Braine (2021), to achieve the desired outcomes (Armstrong 2014, Aguinis 2019, Mwangi and Njuguna 2019). This showed that the introduction of the IRBM program by the Government of Zimbabwe is in the right direction. The fact that the Government of Zimbabwe is providing financial support through capital expenditure to struggling organizations is a welcome development, which dents the notion that the same government is failing to support its ailing organizations.

Theme 2: Training and development

Training and development were mentioned as factors in the organization's survival in the Table 4.4 above. Only Organization 3 respondents could not name training and development as an HR technique that helped the organization operate better. Bhanugopan, Aladdwan and Fish (2013), Hussain and Rehman (2013), Okuwa, Nwuche and Anyanwu (2016) and Babapour, Gholipour and Mehralian (2018) are among the authors who define training as the process of imparting information, skills and abilities to employees so that they can acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities required for a certain profession. According to SOE 1 data, staff training and development is offered. Staff training is determined by their years of experience and service. According to the comments, there has also been training to develop the organization by embracing contemporary concepts. SOE 2 responses indicate that the organization also provides employee development to equip potential leaders for supervisory posts in specific departments. However, there was no information regarding this HR practice in SOE 3. For a company to survive in Zimbabwe, it must invest in staff training and development.

Training gaps should be identified and filled to meet the organization's strategic aim. Larsen (2017) emphasized this point, adding that companies must invest in employee training and retraining if they wish to improve their workforce's performance and productivity. This illustrates that personnel who are well-trained and equipped may help the company advance its agenda and achieve its strategic goals. Organizations and their management must deal with these changes in order to survive, grow and have effective operations, according to Chinda (2020), which demands training and development if such success is yet to be realized (Hameed and Waheed 2011; Sung and Choi 2014; Grobler, Grobler, Mathafena 2019). Because it helps to develop employee passion, commitment and effectiveness while also enhancing profitability and decreasing operating costs, training is considered a useful tool and an investment in the firm. Calvo (2011) suggests that failing to fund training programs has a detrimental impact on an organization's future growth potential (Kiruja and Mukuru 2018). These conclusions are supported by the literature (Bos-Nehles *et al.* 2013; Schimansky 2014; Jehanzeb and Bashir 2013; Vinesh 2014; Glaveski 2019). The possibility of acquiring new skills is increased by training and development programs, recognizing

challenges and discovering new chances. According to Jagero and Nyauchi (2014), Ndudzo (2015) and Mpofo (2016), training and development are significant HR practices in Zimbabwean businesses.

Theme 3: Funding

The government did certainly play a key role in promoting organizational survival in Zimbabwe, according to the findings of the research under the above question. Maunganidze (2013) believes that the Treasury underfunds organizations frequently, a point that supports the conclusion that government financial support is present but insufficient. According to Manyaya *et al.* (2016) as a crucial response to the issues that organizations in Zimbabwe face to secure their existence, the government should assess its policies and ensure that existing rules are implemented methodically and professionally. Non-payment of rates, a public sector investment program (PSIP) with insufficient funds and government failure to pay up local government debts, legislative impediments, bureaucracy, inadequacy of the local government system and weak management systems are just a few of the factors that threaten the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe. The disclosures of Manyaya *et al.* (2016) show that if the government wants to fully support organizations in Zimbabwe, it should pay their dues by paying for services delivered to them by parastatals and all public entities, rather than defaulting on paying what they owe to them.

According to Salama *et al.* (2014), in a difficult VUCADD context, the transition fund model, which UNICEF and partners employed in Zimbabwe, was able to produce major results in the areas of health, education, social assistance and water services, in collaboration with the inclusive government. The results of this investigation showed that Organization 2 clearly displayed government backing, which confirms Salama *et al.* (2014), who claimed that the government is playing a strategic role in assisting organizations in Zimbabwe to survive. Employee support, in whatever form, is crucial for organizational sustainability in Zimbabwe, as indicated by Mutambara and Hungwe (2011), Garwe (2014), Mapfumo (2016), Ncube (2017), Zanolvi (2017), Zamchiya *et al.* (2020), Price (2020) and Maunganidze, Bonnin and Ruggunan (2021). According to Zindiye, Chilya and Masocha (2012), Majukwa (2019) and Mbeve *et al.* (2021), government backing remains a significant and extremely important factor for organizations to exist in Zimbabwe.

Theme 4: Good communication

In response to this question, studies revealed that communication is an HR practice that needs to be addressed if true support for organizational assistance is to be considered. This is due to Greenberg's (2011) definition of communication, which states that it is a process by which a person, group, or organization (sender) sends a particular type of information (message) to a different person, group, or organization (recipient). This definition describes the process that is necessary when individuals collaborate as a team within an organization. The word "communication" is derived from the Latin word "communis," which means "to share," according to Baym *et al.* (2016). As a result, it is critical to remember that sharing encourages people to engage and co-operate, making it a social activity within an organization that necessitates teamwork for survival. If there is no shared understanding due to the transmission of symbols, there is no communication (verbal or nonverbal). Strikes and lockouts are therefore less likely in Zimbabwe when employees can communicate effectively with one another. Management should be cognizant of the fact that inadequate communication can lead to the failure of corporate aims and goals. Workplace communication problems have caused waste and expensive errors. Lack of effective communication is one of the key reasons for misunderstandings and bad planning in many businesses. This is because managers rely on communication for information when making decisions that have an impact on the success of the firm. Not only when making judgments but also when explaining those decisions' outcomes and purposes to others, communication skills are crucial. Most managers are focused on meeting targets and they want the human resources department to help them communicate effectively. This puts significant strain on the free flow of information.

According to Winarso (2018), communication is one of the most crucial components of an organization's success, both in terms of enhancing performance and coping with environmental changes. Effective communication between persons and parties directly involved in and outside the organization can help organizations obtain essential knowledge. As a result, it has been proven that organizational communication is necessary for survival (Richmond, McCroskey and Powell 2013; Mukelabai, Musheke and Phiri 2021). Communication is critical to the success of any business. It is employed to tell a target audience about the company's mission and vision, policies and procedures, obligations and responsibilities, as well as a number of other operations. All employees and decision-makers

are connected through communication, which has been linked to interpersonal conflict in workplaces when done incorrectly.

It is worth noting that, regardless of distance or dispersion, communication among members of a membership-based organization can provide the socio-emotional benefits that the organization requires to thrive (Larosiliere and Leidner 2012). Bartels *et al.* (2010) created two communication climates to reflect the horizontal and vertical types of communication in an organization. The vertical communication climate, according to Bartels *et al.* (2010), is the impression of communication that occurs between organization members at different hierarchical rank levels in the organization. Vertical communication refers to information that aids in the definition of the organization as well as the duties and responsibilities of its subordinates, whereas the horizontal communication climate refers to how members of an organization with equal hierarchical standing perceive communication within the organization (Bartel and colleagues 2010). Effective handling of communication, including informal messaging in horizontal communication, fosters a sense of belonging and togetherness among members, thereby aiding organizations in Zimbabwe to survive. Research findings indicate that effective communication is an essential HR practice for enhancing organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Theme 5: Ordinance

The outcomes of this study also revealed that addressing laws in organizations is necessary for the realization of organizational survival in Zimbabwe. An ordinance is a law, or an authorized decree or order issued by a governing authority. According to the conclusions of the research, for an organization to survive in Zimbabwe, it must be aware of and governed by such ordinances to prevent wasting human capital, financial, social, and other resources on unneeded litigation that could be costly. All member governments have a responsibility to respect and advance in accordance with the (ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2018) and achieve fundamental international labor standards to provide accessible, fruitful and sustainable work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity throughout the world. As a result, businesses may encourage social and economic justice by embracing global labor standards.

The Labour Relations Act, Chapter 28:01, which balances HRM practices in organizations for the enhancement of such organizations and their human capital, mandates that organizations in Zimbabwe that are members of the International Labour Organization (ILO) adhere to the ILO's rules. Violations of the Labour Relations Act, Chapter 28:01, can undermine the relationship between employers and employees, as well as jeopardize organizational survival. Organizations under study should prioritize adherence to these rules to promote their own survival.

According to Jones (2013), systems in nature are full of success stories of organisms that changed and adapted to their environment. Organisms that remained connected to their environment thrived, while those that did not, failed to adapt and perished.

Change is the metamorphosis that leads to evolution in the environment. Kasuso and Madebwe (2021) posit that researchers generally think that not enough is being done in Zimbabwe to preserve individual labor rights, indicating a failure to follow human resource laws. Even though the Zimbabwean Constitution, as revised in 2013, includes a clause dedicated to the protection of fundamental human rights, the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe's ruling in the week preceding 17 July 2015, in the case of Nyamande and others versus Zuva Petroleum SC 43/15, resulted in almost 6 000 people losing their jobs.

According to the ruling, either party may end an employment contract after giving notice. Section 12B of the Labour Act, hereinafter referred to as the Act, which addresses terminations, does not include this entitlement. In Nyamande and Others v. Zuva Petroleum (Nyamande case SC 43/15), Zimbabwe's Supreme Court ruling left a lot to be desired in terms of HRM practices promoting organizational sustainability in Zimbabwe, claims Gwanyanya (2016). The Supreme Court not only left most employees at the mercy of their bosses, but it also terminated decades of worker protection provided by Zimbabwe's constitutional and labor framework. The Supreme Court judges disregarded the new constitution's revolutionary aspect, particularly provision 65(1), which states that "every person has the right to fair and safe labor practices." Section 65(1) states that "every person has the right to fair and reasonable treatment". The Court was unable to recognize the revolutionary nature of the new constitutional regime.

The iron law of oligarchy states that organizational democracy is a contradiction. Elite control is said to mold the long-term growth of all organizations in a conservative direction, including

the most ostensibly radical, even as it renders internal democracy untenable (Caverly 2015). According to D'Cruz (2019), the law is used to counter workplace bullying in Zimbabwe to maintain organizational sustainability. According to Ramsay *et al.* (2011), workplace bullying is unethical behavior that goes against core societal ideals and jeopardizes organizational existence, which is a source of worry for HRM practices in organizations. According to a work and organizational psychology study, workplace bullies induce physical, emotional and behavioral stress, as well as victimization and trauma (Nielsen *et al.* 2015). According to D'Cruz *et al.* (2014) and Lippel and Quinlan (2011), these organizational dynamics, also known as "pressure, disorganization and regulatory failure" (PDR) have been found to unleash abusive work cultures as organizations struggle to survive an unpredictable business climate. This trend exacerbates psychosocial risks, particularly psychological violence at work, which is increasingly recognized as a significant socio-political issue that is high on the ILO's agenda, with a convention apparently in progress, according to Lippel and Quinlan (2011). In terms of organizational survival in Zimbabwe, the provisions in Chapter 28:01 of the Labour Relations Act play a crucial role in preventing bullying and encouraging organizational survival, as emphasized by the ILO (2018). As a result, the findings of the ordinance research were accurate.

B3: HR practices necessary but missing in the organization

1. Good management style
2. Motivation
3. Good communication (from an organization where it was absent)
4. Employee engagement
5. Employee recognition

Table 4. 5 Missing HR practices

	Good Management style	Motivation	Communication	Employee engagement	Employee Recognition	Total answers
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Organization 1	9	2	3	4	4	22
Organization 2	9	3	2	3	4	21
Organization 3	4	2	0	0	0	6
	22	7	5	7	8	49

Theme 1: Good Management Style

As demonstrated under interview question 6, respondents evaluated good management style as an HR practice, which is missing from the operations of these firms. This remains a big and worrisome subject of concern in all three organizations, since Deep (2019); observed that poor management has led to businesses closing their doors permanently. Weak leadership and poor management practices result in high employee turnover as workers avoid working for such leaders. Additionally, costs associated with hiring and training new employees will skyrocket, endangering a business's ability to function. Therefore, the research findings in all the organizations studied have identified management style as an extremely important HR practice, particularly for organizational survival. This means that for an organization to survive, management style is a force to be reckoned with, and special attention should be paid to this HR practice. Chavhunduka, Nyemba and Bhebhe (2016) claim that a variety of variables, such as the situation at hand and the surroundings, affect leadership qualities. As a result, the leader's attitude and behavior influence leadership qualities; leaders should be conscious of this and adjust accordingly to maintain the organization's survival in Zimbabwe.

According to Mwenje and Mwenje (2017), managers in Zimbabwe are under pressure to prioritize client and employee satisfaction, as well as evaluate performance outcomes, in order to demonstrate their commitment to the organization's existence. The authors reiterate that supportive leadership is common in Zimbabwe and both supportive and participative leadership styles have a positive impact on organizational effectiveness.

Many scholars agree that transformational leadership is one of the best management techniques for ensuring organizational sustainability since it affects individuals and social

systems (Nanjundeswaras and Swamy 2014; Chen *et al.* 2018; Cherry 2020; Clark *et al.* 2020; Jaroliya and Gyanchandani 2021). It also causes significant and positive change in followers, with the goal of turning followers into leaders. Transformational leadership, according to Chikove and Shiri (2021), is characterized by qualities like idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. Managers in research firms are urged to embrace transformational leadership as an HR strategy to enhance management practices and boost organizational survival. As a result of inadequate leadership that exhibits a poor if not bad management style, staff turnover is significant. Furthermore, recruitment and training expenditures will rise dramatically, jeopardizing a company's capacity to continue operations.

Theme 2: Motivation

The organizations under investigation mentioned motivation as an important HR practice that was lacking. Respondents in this study cited motivation as an impetus for organizational survival in Zimbabwe. Motivation plays a vital role in all enterprises, whether private or public, and for an organization to achieve its goals, its employees must be driven to work toward them, as emphasized by Olughor and Oke (2014) and Otiende and Makokha (2020), supporting the above world view. Meresa (2020) also remarked that motivation is the fuel that propels people toward their goals and desires and that without it, people would be inactive, leading to a monotonous and pointless existence. Motivational variables strengthen employee loyalty to their organization, enabling organizational growth and development.

Employee retention is a concern among enterprises, according to Garca, Ramón and Herrera (2019), because it has financial implications and constitutes a threat to the organization's sustainability. Employee motivation has been demonstrated to affect retention rates, meaning that having motivated employees is directly linked to a lower turnover ratio. Motivation is critical for organizational longevity, according to Osbourne and Hammoud (2017). Motivation's Latin phrase, according to Garca, Ramón and Herrera (2019), means "to move," which is why motivational experts look at what motivates people to behave and why they act the way they do. People, unlike physical assets, have specific needs and behaviors that must be satisfied and managed if they are to contribute to organizational growth and development. Leaders and management of the organizations under study must understand this concept if HR practices are to support organizational survival. Employees are people who come to work with their own viewpoints, values and qualities and who, under

the right management, can significantly help enterprises. Maria Pomffyova (2018). Examining employee motivation should consider their work environment in the firm as well as incentives, rewards, leadership and other strategies. Thus, the driving force behind an organization's creative and productive acts is motivation. Because it enables people to accomplish goals, obtain a positive outlook, generate the power for change, increase their capacity and self-worth, take charge of their own growth and assist others, positive motivation theory and practice should increase productivity, quality and service (Hello and Sohail 2014; Kuranchie-Mens 2010; Armstrong (2016).

Motivated personnel can almost always be linked to any aspect of a company's performance, according to Osabiya (2015). This is especially crucial in today's tumultuous and frequently chaotic environment, where maximizing human potential is essential for business success. Consequently, motivation as a practice in human resources is a necessary catalyst for organizational survival and ought to be employed as a tool to boost organizational survival in the organizations under consideration.

Theme 3: Good communication

Communication is the act of delivering or exchanging information through voice, writing, or any other medium (Lunenborg 2010; Kapur 2020; King 2021). According to respondents in this survey, communication is a vital HR practice that is lacking in the organizations under investigation. This is troubling since poor communication may result in low morale. Employees who experience poor communication may feel deflated, which can result in misunderstandings, missed opportunities, conflict, the dissemination of false information and mistrust. Posetti, Kulakli, Chatterjee *et al.* (2018); Buarqoub (2019) and Vuuren, van Dyk and Mokoena (2021) are some of the authors who argue that there are numerous modes of communication that aid organizational survival and should be used to their full potential. Proactive, polite, inventive, original, creative, constructive, professional, progressive, enthusiastic, enabling, transparent and technology-friendly communication, according to Gupta and Reddy (2020), is effective for organizational sustainability. Genç (2017) asserts that communication is a two-way process in which the transmitter and receiver engage concurrently. Jensen and Geber (2020) state that communication transmits ideas, emotions, or feelings to the receiver via spoken or written communication between individuals or groups of individuals for specific purposes and that such objectivity normally supports

organizational survival, so it cannot be an exception in Zimbabwean organizations. This transfer is critical in business, especially in service industries like the ones under investigation because service providers engage with humans and rely on communication. It is defined as the process of transferring ideas, information and sentiments.

It is important to remember that communication is about more than just data transformation; it is also about feelings, thoughts, wants and observations, all of which contribute to organizational sustainability. Allen, Siano *et al.* (2021) believe that a sustainable corporate strategy is impossible to attain without effective communication (Taljaard and DeBeer 2019; Apostol 2021). Thus, efficient communication in the organizational setup can increase organizational survival in Zimbabwe, as improvements in information and communication technology can boost innovation performance, brand awareness and safety hazards (Richmond 2013; McCroskey and Powel 2013; Lau 2020).

4: Employee engagement

Employee involvement, while critical for an organization's existence, was lacking in the organizations surveyed, according to respondents in this study. This has become a source of concern in the twenty-first century, which is why, according to Choo, Mat and AlOmari (2013), the management team must address the issue of employee engagement and may want to incorporate some stimulating messages in employee communications, such as giving staff performance comments and showing them appreciation. The third most significant determinant of employee engagement is reward and recognition. Reward and recognition are defined as the degree to which the company gives enough incentive and acknowledgment for the work that has been done in achieving organizational goals by Bedarkar and Pandita (2013); Osbourne and Hammound (2017) and Awan *et al.* (2020). Employee engagement, according to Falola *et al.* (2018), helps organizations gain a durable competitive edge during economic downturns and intense competition, especially in a turbulent and competitive business environment. Kazimoto (2016) views employee engagement has been viewed as a motivating component in achieving an organization's goals. A good working environment allows the employee to offer the finest so that the organization can fulfill its aims and purposes.

Ashley and Parumasur (2020) claim that aspects of employee engagement, such as ardor, absorption and dedication, are responsible for rising levels of engagement and commitment, which are critical for organizational survival and success. Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) asserted that there is a connection between employee engagement, customer happiness and productivity, profit and staff turnover, which leads to enhanced business success (Bhaskar and Mishra 2014; Parent and Lovelace 2015; Amah 2016; Hanaysha 2016; Victor and Hoole 2017).

According to the data above, respondents in this study are correct in their assessment of employee engagement as a critical HR practice that aids organizational sustainability in Zimbabwe. As a result, if the organizations under investigation wish to make progress in promoting organizational survival, they should leverage employee engagement.

5: Employee recognition

Respondents judged employee recognition as necessary, as evidenced by the findings, but the organizations under investigation lacked it. Nayak, Nayak and Jena (2020) and Aina and Atan (2020) noted that a lack of employee recognition results in demotivating employees in organizations; hence, this should be addressed if organizations are to survive in Zimbabwe. Amoatema and Kyeremeh (2016) and Hussain *et al.* (2019) pointed out that substantial basic research has demonstrated that, while financial rewards positively reinforce performance-enhancing behaviors and satisfy employees to some extent, for committed employees, recognition must be given to keep them motivated, appreciated and committed. According to Nyakundi *et al.* (2012) and Rahim and Duad (2013), the purpose of employee recognition is to let people know and understand that their work is valued and appreciated, to give people a sense of ownership and belonging, to boost morale, to foster loyalty and to increase employee retention rates in the company. Punke (2013) suggests that recognition programs should contain three sorts of acknowledgment: official, informal and on-the-job, and that they should strike a balance between performance-based and value-based activities.

Bradler (2013) discovered that delivering praise solely, but not exclusively, works best and can be a cost-effective method for raising average effort, especially when it is limited to a small number of exceptional achievers. Even though employee recognition is lacking in the organizations under consideration, this worldview supports the views of research

respondents, indicating that it is a critical HR practice that should be adopted and implemented in these Zimbabwean organizations to ensure organizational sustainability.

4.7 Other Factors affecting the survival of Zimbabwean based organizations

Several issues brought up were merely tabulated without undergoing thorough analysis and they were categorized under every question in the study. For ease of reference some factors are presented in computational tables. They were not discussed in detail, not because they are not vital, but rather because they registered marks which were too low and their trends in responses were quite minimal.. However, it is essential to mention them.

4.7.1. Corruption

According to the feedback from SOE 1, corruption and mismanagement are rampant in Zimbabwe, and this have made it difficult for the organization to achieve its set goals and objectives, a view that is also shared by Cain (2016) and Muzurura (2019). This has also been evidenced in SOE 2, whereby one of the respondents firmly agreed that over-expenditure of resources is a common practice within their organization. Overall, participants registered their responses under questions 1(b) and 2. The aspect was discussed under questions 4 and 5. Under question 8 (What barriers to growth, if any, do you think are being encountered by your organization?) Corruption recorded some notable highlights signifying that this aspect should be dealt with if there is a need to support organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Corruption is clearly one of the many unresolved problems in Zimbabwe that have seriously impeded and unbalanced economic development, as highlighted by Nyoni (2017). Along a similar vein, Moyo (2014) posits that corruption is seen as a serious impediment to the promotion of Zimbabwe's sustainable economic growth and socio-political development in development discourse. According to Bonga, Chiminya and Mudzingiri (2014), Moyo (2014) and Nyoni (2017), without a doubt, corruption is one of the many neglected concerns in Zimbabwe that has impeded and unbalanced economic progress. Nyoni (2017) also believes there is enough concrete evidence to demonstrate that corruption is not always detrimental to business. HR procedures at Zimbabwean firms are currently marred by corruption.

4.7.2. Employee welfare

Employee welfare has also been a prominent topic in HR practices in Zimbabwean organizations. SOE 1's responses revealed that the organization is attracting and retaining qualified staff, but member morale is dwindling owing to falling purchasing power. Two respondents from SOE 3 stated that their company provides lunch for employees as well as bus fares. Nevertheless, employees experience intimidation in the workplace, coupled with a noticeable absence of motivation. In light of this, it is suggested that a motivational approach, incorporating the introduction of performance bonuses, be adopted to encourage people to work more effectively. However, feedback at this business indicates that there is a growing distance between management and employees, as HR in this organization does not represent workers.

One of the respondents agrees, stating that this has resulted in low-level employees becoming demotivated since HR rejects all their requests. This has hampered their partnership because they do not get along, resulting in bad organizational outcomes. Another respondent echoes this sentiment, stating that poor workplace participation has hampered communication between employees and HR. Other feedback indicates that the HR function has been and continues to be disconnected from the people, with a lack of interest in the people as most people are driven by self-interest. One of the interviewees stated that there has been a lack of interaction with employees, implying that there is a need for involvement and facilitation of engagement between staff and management. Furthermore, many experts are leaving the organization, accompanied by a high worker turnover and low pay. This is also in line with one of the respondents' comments in SOE 2, who mentions that personnel turnover has been high in recent years, impacting the organization. Another respondent in this firm concurred that low employee morale has been a problem and responsible for the high staff turnover.

Furthermore, replies in SOE 1 suggest that the organization is understaffed, pushing current employees to take on additional responsibilities, primarily because of the country's general economic and political instability as well as external interference. However, one of the feedback items indicates that the organization's day-to-day operations are well managed and organized. Employees work well together and have

a strong sense of leadership, but HR needs to motivate and improve participation. SOE 2 responses indicate that collaboration is both possible and necessary. The responses in this second organization showed that there is a lack of a platform for people to showcase their talent, as well as low motivation, necessitating the need for incentives to motivate employees to improve their working conditions. Steps should be taken to enhance employee motivation and morale. According to SOE 2 responses, HR departments can use employee engagement activities to assess difficulties with worker motivation and retention. Employees may make suggestions that are relevant to their current work environment and economic circumstances. When addressing or dealing with organizational survival in Zimbabwe, Crush and Tevera (2010), Hungwe (2011), Sibanda, Muchena and Ncube (2014) and Moyo, Crafford and Emuze (2019) all agreed that employee welfare is more important.

4.7.3. Democracy

HR processes have also been exposed to rigidity in Zimbabwean firms. According to SOE 2's responses, the company has been falling since there is little room for strategic initiatives outside of what the government controls. As a result, developing survival plans as a private organization is challenging. The current economic climate necessitates proactive behavior, yet red tape stands in the way. Procrastination and bureaucratic procedures can cause delays in operations, according to SOE 2 responses. Another respondent agrees, claiming that the organization's poor performance is due to basic flaws such as inadequate business planning and management, and slow or non-responsiveness to change, as well as a lack of priorities.

The entire notion of democracy as an important HRM practice is based on Bal's (2017) worldview that the concept of dignity may be built based on democracy, which focuses on power redistribution and facilitates learning in organizations and systems (Coutinho 2016; Gomez and Gomez 2016; Dundon and Rafferty 2018; Timming and Summers 2018; Armstrong 2019; Opte 2019; SGUEO 2020).

The literature implies that several elements, such as (i) culture, (ii) economic systems, (iii) political systems, (iii) political frameworks and (iv) human capital, which is defined

as the skills, capabilities, or competencies of the workforce, influence HRM in global markets (Mzee 2012).

4.7.4. Teamwork

Organizational cooperation is essential because it helps organizations reach their goals and objectives faster. The lack of collaboration and unity of purpose revealed in SOE 2 responses puts organizations' survival at danger.

According to Chinyerere (2018), teamwork plays a crucial role serving as a precursor and medium for encouraging employee collaboration, workplace spirituality, citizenship behavior and corporate commitment. In Zimbabwe, the significance of teamwork is more vital to an organization's sustainability, according to Nyanga *et al.* (2013), Moyo (2019), Kabote, Mamimine and Muranda (2019) and Kwinje, Gukushu and Zengeni (2019).

CHAPTER FIVE: A FRAMEWORK FOR HR PRACTICES IN ZIMBABWEAN STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES

5. General Discussion and Review of Theory

The discussion is based on the literature review described in Chapter 2 as well as the findings obtained and discussed in Chapter Four.

5.1 Research Question 3

The goal was to develop an HR framework for Zimbabwe that would assist organizations in the country in their efforts to survive. As detailed in the research methodology, this subject was investigated using a systems thinking process known as soft systems methodology. This section is based on the findings of Questions 1 and 2 as well as the literature review.

Many HR models have been proposed by various researchers to explain organizational survival, including Itika (2011), Omalaja and Eruola (2011) and Sampaio *et al.* (2020). According to Patrick and Kumar (2012), Singh (2013), Rashid and Faaiza (2015) and Guest (2017), they are more likely to be robust when they mutually reinforce and support one another. According to a collection of thought processes, there is a need to explore and discuss HR structures and operating models as part of constructing the profession for the future. Baret *et al.* (2013), Wyman (2016) and Haak (2020) demonstrated what successful HR looks like by employing thirty (30) distinct HR models. Some models, according to Carim and Senne (2016), do not apply to all countries, necessitating the development of a model that can aid in the improvement of organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

5.2. Vital Stages of Systems Methodology

Because SSM is used to analyze and solve problems in difficult and confusing circumstances, the researcher used it to develop a new model suitable for improving organizational survival in Zimbabwe (Mehregan, Hosseinzadeh and Kazemi 2012; Maqsood, Bena *et al.* 2017; Kupfersberger *et al.* 2018; Auguststson, Churruca and Braithwaite 2019). The soft systems methodology is presented as a logical series of

seven steps in its idealized version (Checkland 1999, pp. 162–183) with the researcher following every step of the SSM with iteration and backtracking as critical components. This led the researcher to stage four, which is the development of a conceptual model appropriate for Zimbabwean organizations. SSM encourages investigators to examine businesses from a cultural standpoint. As a result, the key qualities of organizations are established by the component elements, which are human beings. As Maqsood, Finegan and Walker (2006) pointed out years ago, these "people-components" can attribute meaning to their circumstances and generate their own organizational purpose. As a result, SSM can spark debate and capture people's future dreams, according to Lambrechts (2016) and Abuabara (2018). The authors above point out that a soft systems approach allows people and socially formed groups to benefit from their knowledge and expertise, which they discovered while working with a focus group on a SSM workshop. Because human resource management is a multidisciplinary discipline, Grohs *et al.* (2018) argue that management processes must be integrated in terms of people's ability and knowledge. During the interview, the researcher identified accountable actors, key transformations and relevant information resources using SSM's rich pictures and root definitions.

5.2.1 Summary of the Soft System Methodology

Table 5. 1 Soft Systems summarised

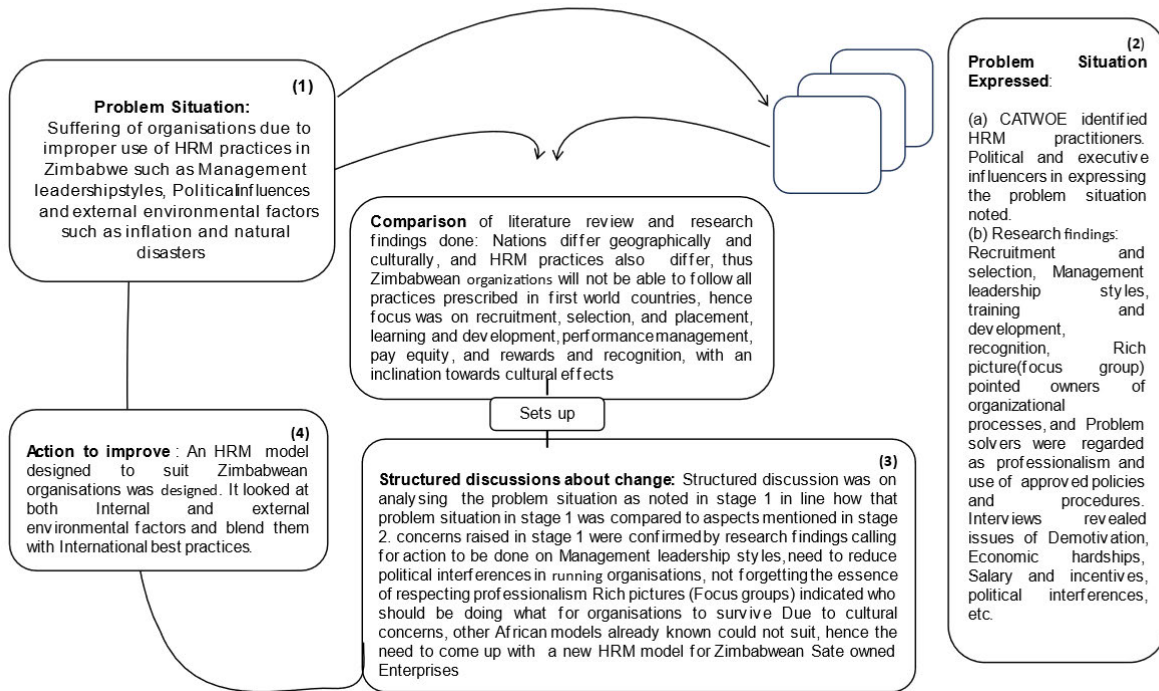
Stages of the SSM process explained.	Stage objectives	Comments
Stages 1 and 2 Stage 1 identified the problem situation, while Stage 2 communicated about the problem situation.	Checkland, P., Scholes, J., and Checkland, P. (1999). The situation was portrayed through trying to address the improper use of HRM practices: Research objective 1: To explore the status of HR	How was this applied in this research? This was done using interviews and focus group discussions.

Stages of the SSM process explained.	Stage objectives	Comments
<p>Stage 3 creates root definitions for emphasizing the ideal functions of a system for resolving it. Actors within the system were identified.</p> <p>Stage 4 For creating a model to represent the concept. Different HR challenges in literature and other business</p>	<p>Checkland, P., Scholes, J., and Checkland, P. (1999). practice in Zimbabwean organizations</p> <p>Research objective 2: To explore the system of challenges that affect organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations.</p> <p>The researcher analyzed system requirements resulting in assigning roles to key individuals with direct involvement in the support of organizational Survival in Zimbabwe, namely the Stakeholders in the form of Executive Management, HR Practitioners, CEOs and employees of the organizations under study.</p> <p>Produces conceptual models of the defined system.</p>	<p>How was this applied in this research?</p> <p>This was done using CATWOE from Checkland and Scholes (1999)</p> <p>Status of HR practice and challenges (as per literature review)</p>

Stages of the SSM process explained.	Stage objectives	Comments
<p>challenges obtained from theory</p> <p>Stage 5- Comparing conceptualizations to real-world models</p> <p>Comparing 1, 2 and 4</p>	<p>Checkland, P., Scholes, J., and Checkland, P. (1999).</p> <p>Comparing conceptual model with actual situation to generate debate with the stakeholders.</p>	<p>How was this applied in this research?</p> <p>Constructing a model (status of HR practice) and challenges.</p>
<p>Stage 6 - Evaluating possible improvements</p> <p>Talking to the GAPS within the system</p>	<p>Describe desirable and doable adjustments that might be made.</p>	
<p>7 - Creating an action plan</p> <p>Such action fills up the observed gaps and lessons learnt from the system.</p>	<p>Involves acting based on stage 6.</p>	

Summary of SSM Adopted from Walsh (2015)

5.1.2. Summary of SSM as executed in this Research shown below:



Basic Soft Systems Methodology (Adapted from Checkland and Poulter, 2023)

Figure 5. 1 Basic Soft Systems Methodology

5.2.3 SSM explained in detail

Stage 1: Problem situation

An investigation into the current state of HRM practices in Zimbabwean organizations aided in the identification of the research problem. Findings from the research confirmed that using HRM practices improperly, such as leadership styles, political influences, inflation and natural disasters, causes organizations to suffer in Zimbabwe. This country's political insecurity has made the economic environment less conducive, resulting in a dearth of foreign direct investment in the nation. Taxation and economic policies are some examples of political elements that have a direct influence on businesses. Issues inherent in the problem situation are explained below:

a) Natural disasters

It also becomes apparent to note that the effect of natural disasters on HRM practices are supported by the fact that Zimbabwe has been subjected to a variety of natural calamities, including droughts, the COVID-19 pandemic, floods and storms. The country experienced seven (7) drought periods, 22 disease outbreaks, 12 floods and five (5) storms, resulting in around 7000 deaths, more than 20 million people impacted, and \$950 million in total damage (World Bank 2020). This poses a significant challenge for HRM practices in Zimbabwe since HRM practitioners are responsible for working with people for the benefit of all people in the organizations. If these people are affected by various natural calamities, it renders the field of HRM directionless, problematic and insignificant to the strategic intent of any organization.

b) COVID-19 problem

The problem statement also indicated that the work environment is another aspect that received undesirable pressure from both external and internal challenges in HRM practices. People were accustomed to a typical workplace setting. However, the COVID-19 pandemic altered everything for the better, and we are now gradually acclimating to the new scenario in which most employees work from home (Butterick and Charlwood 2021). This new circumstance has presented its own set of issues for employees as well as HRM in terms of human resource management. This resulted in the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) responding to the impact of COVID-

19 on employees and the Zimbabwean economy by devising a labor market response to the pandemic and detailing mitigation measures. HRM practitioners should also pay attention to that. The new world order as prescribed by COVID-19 entails HRM practitioners ensuring that members of staff are capacitated to work from anywhere through the provision of communication gadgets, data and airtime so that members of staff can work from home as opposed to coming to work physically every day.

c) HRM technology

To curb unethical HRM practices emanating from leadership styles and political influences, there is a need to use HRM technology, such as digital HRM information systems, in Zimbabwean SOEs. This technology is utilized to record, analyze and manage HR-related data (Andry and Chakir 2020). External developments such as slow financial growth and the advent of smart competition that leverages modern technology have raised global organizations' interest in HRIS (Bilgic and Bradley 2020; Gumbie, Dhanpat and Joseph 2022; Cahyadi 2022). These systems offer excellent HR software solutions that to automate all aspects of HR processes. This leads to increased HR productivity and efficiency, as well as more efficient staff management. In addition, automating HRM systems, policies and procedures improves the fight against nepotism, corruption and preferential treatment through favoritism.

d) Brain Drain

The research confirmed that brain drain is somehow linked to the research problem of HRM practitioners improperly managing HRM practices and organizational closures (Torayi 2021; Chiboiwa 2021; Kanonge and Bussin 2022). In the scenario of the right people migrating from the country, there is a possibility of employing people through referrals, not because they are deemed the best as based on meritocracy. Though this practice is sometimes necessary, it will create its own problems later, hence derailing organizational survival to a certain extent.

e) Politics

As stated by Nyathi (2022), the intensity of organizational politics is higher in settings where resources are scarce, as this is fertile ground for power conflict. Nyathi (2022) further alludes to the fact that scarcity causes anxiety amongst employees, leading to power conflict and that such a work environment is likely to be full of challenge

stressors, antecedents for a positive contribution by organizational politics to organizational success. Muiruri (2023) pointed out that organizational politics has a wide range of effects on the affairs and conduct of employees in an organization and it is the pursuit of individual agendas and self-interest in an organization with little regard for the impact on the company's attempts to achieve its goals. It is an undeniable reality that companies have struggled with organizational politics over the years and continue to make every attempt to alleviate this issue so that corporate goals and objectives are not jeopardized. Hekkala, Stein and Sarker (2021) also pointed out that, as a result, both 'power to' (systemic power) and 'power over' (episodic power) can intensify project conflict, and rational conflict resolution for 'win-win' outcomes may not be in the stakeholders' best interests. As a result, political disagreements should be addressed publicly.

f) Absenteeism

Absenteeism is defined as an employee's deliberate or persistent absence from work. Absenteeism is typically characterized by intentional and unjustified absence from work. It goes beyond any absences related to things like occasional sickness, vacations and other personal time (Aldoghan and Elrayah 2021; de Reuver, van de Voorde, and Kilroy 2021 Folger 2021 Richards *et al.* 2022). While businesses anticipate that employees may miss a certain number of workdays each year, excessive absences can result in lower productivity and have a significant impact on company finances, morale and other aspects. It becomes a serious problem for HRM when employees begin to take excessive, unexplained absences and employers are frequently left understaffed. It increases the organizations' obligations by requiring them to incur additional labor expenditures to compensate for lost production owing to absent employees' missing work hours (Kocakulah, Bryan and Lynch 2018). From another viewpoint, absenteeism raises the strain on the existing workers, which can lead to job unhappiness and other problems. Employees, apart from seeing a few dollars less in their salary, tend to lose their worth as hardworking members of the firm. And if these individuals continue to take unexpected absences, they will almost certainly lose their employment. Therefore, HRM practitioners have the duty to examine absenteeism and its causes to prevent its spread within the organization. HR professionals in the organization should also inform employees about the

consequences of absenteeism. The result of such HRM alertness will boost the organizational survival of SOEs in Zimbabwe.

g) Inflation

Due to inflation, most organizations retrenched their staff members, with some closing down. The net effect of such actions made many economically active and skilled employees create their own companies as small to medium enterprises. This left many SOEs to remain with a pool of unskilled or semi-skilled employees to recruit from after the skilled people resigned due to being paid paltry salaries by SOEs in inflationary times (Mapetere *et al.* 2018; Kavila 2022). Sharp increases in inflation indicate that employees' cost of living is rising, yet fixed income or salary increases that are smaller than the inflation rate reduce their total purchasing power. This situation can lead to employee unrest at work, causing significant challenges for HRM practices and HRM practitioners. This is where HRM practitioners should come up with nonmonetary incentives to keep their members of staff motivated; this can be, for example, in the form of food hampers, housing loans, or bonded sponsored study leave, so that staff can be retained at work.

h) Organizations that closed shop in Zimbabwe.

A minimum of 48 companies in Zimbabwe ceased operations due to a range of challenges, as indicated in the table presented in Chapter One (Murairwa 2016; Mutanda 2020; Munyavi 2015).

Stage 2: Expressing the problem situation.

Practitioners in some Zimbabwean organizations who improperly manage HRM practices pose a serious threat to organizational survival, particularly in state-owned enterprises. Findings from literature review confirmed that issues such as corruption, nepotism, brain drain, pay inequity and so on are frequently mentioned as difficult problems encountered when managing SOEs in Zimbabwe.

a) Politics and HRM practices

The identification of internal and external environmental challenges mentioned in the literature findings in Chapter 2, such as political interference, deviation from laid down policies and procedures and economic hardships strengthened the notion of an

existing problem situation in SOEs in Zimbabwe, as articulated by the actors (CATWOE). This study showed that HR political skills are vital in both reinforcing the impact of human resource management (HRM) and allowing HR to participate in strategic choices. Political skills are defined as the capacity to project confidence and professional diplomacy when interacting with individuals at all levels, both internally and internationally. In addition, political skills are the powers given to leaders by the formal governance system of organizations. As mentioned by Chen, Jiang and Wu (2021), political skill is a type of informal interpersonal behavioral skill that includes social agility and interpersonal influence, has a significant impact on an individual's work performance and has become an increasingly essential professional talent. In this research, HRM professionals in general should have this skill so that they have the desired agility in handling political figures such as executive personnel and appointed politicians who disregard approved policies and procedures.

b) Unjustified dismissals

Another finding from this research includes summary dismissals from employment, where employers unlawfully terminate employment contracts unilaterally, which violates HRM practices in accordance with the signed and agreed contracts. Such terminations are sometimes planned, as noted by Chimwamurombe and Watungwa (2022), in the form of constructive dismissals. The most typical example is contract termination without providing the stipulated notice time or justified reasons for terminating the contract. This creates unnecessary labor litigation as well as increasing unemployment statistics. HR professionals must be courageous and nimble enough to provide authorized rules and processes while also ensuring that there are no incidents of unfair dismissals in SOEs. This must be done in the best interests of the organizations, and the benefits of such activities must be presented to the powers that be. HR professionals must be courageous and nimble enough to give authorized rules and processes while also ensuring that there are no incidents of unfair dismissals in SOEs. This must be done in the best interests of the organizations and the benefits of such activities must be presented to the powers that be. Dismissal, aside from the cost implications, can cause leakage of vital information to competitors by departing staff as one of the consequences of labor turnover. It should be remembered that wrongful dismissal has a significant and negative relationship with organizational performance,

as always. As a result, HR experts should press the government to keep in mind that an employee does not necessarily need two years of service to file an unjust dismissal claim. It is still the responsibility of HR experts to guarantee that supervisors are appropriately trained in HRM processes and that the appropriate human practices are followed. HRM practitioners should ensure that the right person is assigned to conduct the chosen HRM procedure. Employees must be treated fairly and consistently. When following HR procedures, any feedback remarks or suggestions from employees must be taken into consideration.

C) Nepotism

There have been claims of nepotism in Zimbabwe, as noted in the research findings, where family members and protégés of people in power are rewarded with high-level government positions where they end up plundering vast sums of money. These claims have been attributed to the rise in mega-corruption and public-fund misappropriation in Zimbabwe. Otekunrin *et al.* (2022), argued that board members are selected for the wrong motives and hence lack the essential skills and knowledge to successfully guide the respective organizations toward attaining their goals. However, in Zimbabwe, the Labour Act forbids pay discrimination based on sex, race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, color, faith, gender, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS status, or any handicap in the determination or distribution of wages and salaries. A point that should always be reiterated by HRM practitioners in Zimbabwe.

d) Corruption

Corruption is a serious problem in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe received 24 points out of a possible 100 in Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index, placing it 157th out of 180 countries. Corruption in Zimbabwe is defined as the exploitation of public authority for personal gain. As Chigudu (2015) points out, most top public officials and politicians appear to have much too much power and authority, with no checks and balances in place. This is the power that ends up endorsing corrupt tendencies in SOEs. Thus, corruption raises the cost of doing business for businesses, distorting economic growth and development, and the cost is passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices or inferior-quality goods and services. Poor policies and poorly managed operations such as procurement are some of the causes that

contribute to corruption, poverty, income inequality, inadequate civil service compensation, unethical leadership, and poor governance. The bottom line is that immoral leadership encourages power abuse. In short, some internal findings included recruitment and selection done without meritocracy being considered, no support for training and development, no proper designs, unreliable compensation and reward management systems, and poor employee relations.

HRM policies and procedures that have been approved can assist firms in dealing with issues by offering clarity and structure. Employee expectations, organizational commitments, disciplinary processes and conduct standards are all outlined in these policies. HR frequently publishes written instructions in an employee handbook for workers to use as required. Outlining the organization's opportunities for career growth, fostering a healthy work environment, aligning organization policies with legal requirements, establishing the proper application of policies at all levels of the company, providing context for various organizational programs, communicating the company's mission, values and goals, and establishing a foundation for organizational accountability during the decision-making process are some specific functions of HR policies.

5.3. Emerging themes

(i) Challenges

These themes emerged as challenges for the organization's understudy and are listed below but have been explained in detail in Chapter 2.

Table 5. 3 Emerging challenges to HRM practices

Emerging Challenges to the use of proper HRM Practices

Management and leadership style	Economic Hardships.	Salary and Incentives.	Foreign Currency.
Funding.	Demotivation.	Politics.	Brain Drain.

(ii) HRM Practices in Use.

Research objective 1: To explore the status of HR practice in Zimbabwean organizations.

(a) Salary

Even though the salary issue was mentioned as a challenge above, participants indicated that they were paid by their employers. This indicates that the practice of paying employees was widespread, even though what is regarded as a salary is shockingly low, forcing many employees to wallow in abject poverty as a result of economic hardships and inflationary issues. This theme encourages management, guided by HRM practices, to seek out the best ways to motivate their employees, even if it means attempting to match benchmarked salaries from salary survey reports produced in Zimbabwe, in order to support organizational survival.

(b) Management and leadership Style

This theme was also present, but not in accordance with HRM best practices, because employees felt that management was dismissing their needs and desires. To improve organizational survival in Zimbabwe, organizations under study should be examined and their HRM practices strengthened to eradicate the negative characteristics observed by employees.

(c) Communication

General communication was found to be present in all of the organizations under consideration, but to a lesser extent than it supports organizational survival through HRM practices. Communication, while present, was regarded as poor by most participants in this study, causing a lot of discord among employees against their management.

(d) Employee Engagement

Employee engagement was identified as a disengagement factor, as supported by the Zimbabwean parliament (2017), which referred to a report by the Industrial Psychology Consultancy, noting that employee engagement among Zimbabwean parastatals in 2016 was at 40%, indicating that 60% of parastatal employees are not engaged in their work. With Zimbabwe's high labor turnover, HRM professionals must ensure that employers find strategies not only to keep their employees motivated and engaged but also to monitor how they work.

Other themes present in the organizations under study included training and development, employee recognition, recruitment and selection and employee health wellness; all with room for improvement to meet international best practices for supporting organizational survival in Zimbabwe through HRM practices.

5.4. Status of HR practice

Research objective 1:

To investigate the status of HR practices in Zimbabwean organizations, an attempt was made to look at HR practices that are prevalent in the organizations under study, in order to address the first objective stated in chapter one of this research: What HR practices are prevalent? The HR practices or variables referred to in this section are linked to the difficulties observed, with (challenges) negatively impacting (HR Practices). The current state of human resources practices prompted the researcher to examine various conceptual models and make recommendations based on such models. According to respondents' contributions, leadership and management were

found to be on the low side of HRM best practices. The HR practices and challenges are thus presented as follows.



Figure 5. 2 Showing HRM Challenges and practices highlighted in the study

5.5 Stage 3 Formulating Root Definitions

The researcher developed root definitions of relevant systems in HRM practices in the organizations under investigation, capturing a specific point of view that organizations must follow if they are to survive in Zimbabwe. These fundamental definitions aided in distilling the essence of the relevant HRM systems. Helping businesses with employee scheduling, attendance tracking, staffing and other needs. For example, four HRM systems, to name a few, focus on competencies and practices: (1) recruitment, selection and placement; (2) learning and development; (3) performance management; and (4) rewards and recognition. Later the CATWOE a popular mnemonic for recalling key components of the root concept, was later expanded into a broader model of intentional activity.

ROOT DEFINITION

System owned by the state-owned enterprises or parastatals, utilize understanding of the regulations, talents and expertise to create competitive functions that produce the best service deliveries (mandates given by the Zimbabwean Acts of Parliament) to Zimbabweans in general. Problems occur when clients and other stakeholders are disgruntled by losing expected service delivery; hence, such clients/stakeholders end up failing to comply with stipulated laws and pay gazetted licences resulting in parastatals failure to survive and closing, and then exposing the country and its citizens to certain risks that might be life-threatening or a degradation to future generations.

CATWOE

Customer: State-owned enterprises

Actors: Executive management, HR practitioners, CEOs and employees of the organizations under study.

Transformation: Knowledge, processes and technology being used by the organizations under study.

Weltanschauung (why bother?): To assess the feasibility of supporting organizational survival, the researcher looked for a good understanding of the HR practices in use—

assessing on whether they fit corporate objectives of the organizations under study—and environment and cultural aspects within such organizations for the purpose of coming up with a model that supports organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Owner: The researcher assessed the people who could stop the transformation process and noted that these are management, executives and board members of the organizations where participants came from.

Environment: stands for the internal and external environmental constraints in the organization present during its time of existence and executing corporate goals.

5.5.1 A step-by-step analysis of CATWOE in this study

i) C of the CATWOE

In this research C of the CATWOE stands for the customers or clients of the main shareholder (the government, which in this study is represented by the state-owned enterprises/parastatals that develop competitive functions that provide the most appropriate service delivery using information, laws, abilities and experience (mandates given by the Zimbabwean Acts of Parliament) to Zimbabweans in general. These customers are expected to be the source of revenue for the shareholder, which is the government. As shown by the rich picture above, this is not the case since these organizations are mainly struggling and are closing offices due to a lack of funding. The facts shown by the results indicate that revenue will only flow if the customers are happy and satisfied, but political interference and economic challenges make this expectation hard to achieve.

ii) A represents actors

In this study, the actors are the executive management, HR practitioners, CEOs, employees. These are the actors responsible for and are involved in the execution of the system or process improvements. According to the results, the organizations' decisions showed that they have impacts on these actors, for instance, lack of funding, political influence and economic challenges, as shown by the responses of the participants when responding to the interview guide. Some decisions coming from the government, politics, environment and economic situations in organizations under study remain serious stumbling blocks for the actors to assist and support organizational survival since they will be rendered powerless and useless in such instances, while the nation expects them to work and improve the deteriorating situations. The results showed that in most cases the actors react by opting to work in other companies that are not state-owned or even move away from the country and seek opportunities elsewhere, as shown by the rate of brain drain on the theme analyzing this aspect. To some extent, the actors ended up showing an increased rate of absenteeism from work, which is a bad sign for any organization seeking survival during economic hardships.

iii) T in CATWOE

The letter T in CATWOE stands for transformation and refers to any change brought about by the system or process. In this study, transformation refers to issues such as knowledge, processes and technology. As shown in the SSM workshop, which resulted in the construction of the rich picture, it was shown that there is an interaction between the organization and the international organization called the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) signifying that there is knowledge management and sharing between the two. Such knowledge has a vital impact on organizational staff, helping them to execute their duties with the expected expertise. To some extent, the results showed that the acquisition of this international knowledge resulted in trained staff migrating to other organizations in Africa and Europe seeking greener pastures. This migration turned the organization into a mere training ground, a situation that appears to be inevitable. As revealed in the interviews, the organization that was observed in the SSM workshop also revealed that some world-class equipment was even donated to the organization by IAEA, hence improving the organizational technology to the betterment of the stakeholders' expectations.

iv) W stands for Weltanschauung

In CATWOE, the letter W stands for Weltanschauung (Why bother?). This is where the big picture and the wider impact of the modified system or process are referred to as the worldview in this study. In trying to assess the feasibility of supporting organizational survival, there was a need for a good understanding of the HR practices in use and to see whether they fit the corporate objectives of the organizations under study, as well as environmental and cultural aspects within such organizations. Results showed that when looking at the bigger picture of organizational survival in Zimbabwe, gaps, better aspects and challenges exist, hence the need for a conceptual model that closes present gaps and then supports organizational survival in Zimbabwe. In this research, the researcher reinvented the standard causal model with additional variations to DeCenzo *et al.*'s (2016) original model to come up with a model suitable for organizations in Zimbabwe. The conceptual model was developed upon realizing the positive and negative impacts on organizations as determined by examining the systems or processes through the interviewing process. This can be regarded as the most important stage of CATWOE analysis since various stakeholders have diverse perspectives on the same issue.

v) O represents the owner

The owner, represented by the letter O in the CATWOE process, has the authority to implement decisions and operate the system. The owner makes the decision on the system's implementation. The owners could stop the transformation process, and in this study, the owners are members of management, the executive and the board of the organizations. Results showed that the owners are quite instrumental in creating strategic positions that are implemented in state-owned organizations in Zimbabwe. Some of such positions are popular with members of staff, while others result in disgruntlement, especially with low income and a lack of support.

vi) E represents the environmental constraints

E in CATWOE stands for the internal and external environmental constraints in the organization present during its existence and execution of corporate goals. Such that internal or external environmental constraints can potentially cause the system to cease functioning. The researcher focused on internal and external environmental factors while reinventing the conventional causal model to develop a conceptual framework tailored to the specific organizations in Zimbabwe that are being investigated. This was supported by the results from participants in the form of organizational and national laws, ethical issues in line with organizational cultures, financial constraints due to the economic meltdown and severe hyperinflation in Zimbabwe, resulting in a lack of adequate resources.

5.6. Stage 4: Building Conceptual Models of Human Activity Systems

This stage includes the conceptual model created to suit and improve the status quo of Zimbabwean organizations that are poorly managed due to poor HRM practices. The new model outlines the minimum of HRM system procedures necessary for achieving the desired transformation in Zimbabwean organizations. As critical variables in the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe, the model also considers the internal and external environments that contribute to the proper use of HRM practices within the organizations under study. This model demonstrates the importance of combining international HRM best practices, HRM strategy and current HRM practices in assisting Zimbabwean organizations. The created model showed major issues, as indicated from the external environmental side and likewise from the internal environmental side.

Political interference, corruption, brain drain and demotivation became topical in the study from the external environmental side, while management and leadership style, employee engagement, salary and training development were other issues raised from the internal environmental side. It has been noted that some issues that are vital participants' concerns, and not that they are irrelevant, did not appear on the model for capturing purposes.

The model, which includes both external and internal environmental issues while blending with international HRM best practices and cultural issues appropriate to the Zimbabwean scenario, is presented below as informed by the study results in order to

create an improved status on properly using HRM practices to support organizational survival.

The new HRM Model created for supporting Organisational survival in Zimbabwe.

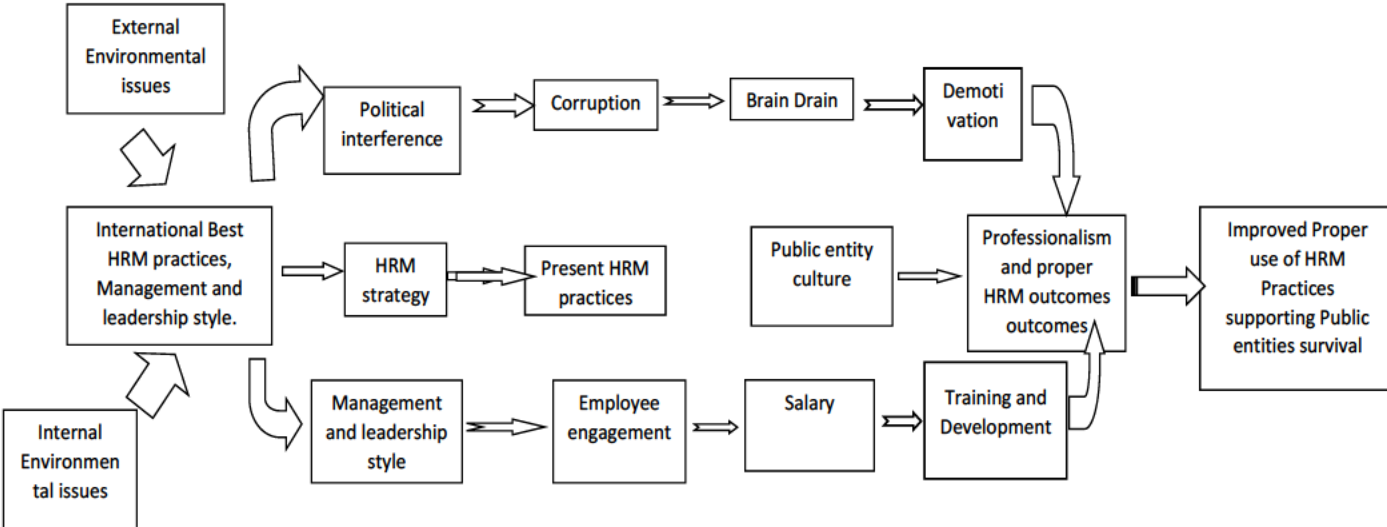


Figure 5. 3 The new HRM model created to supporting organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

5.6.1. HR process from the literature

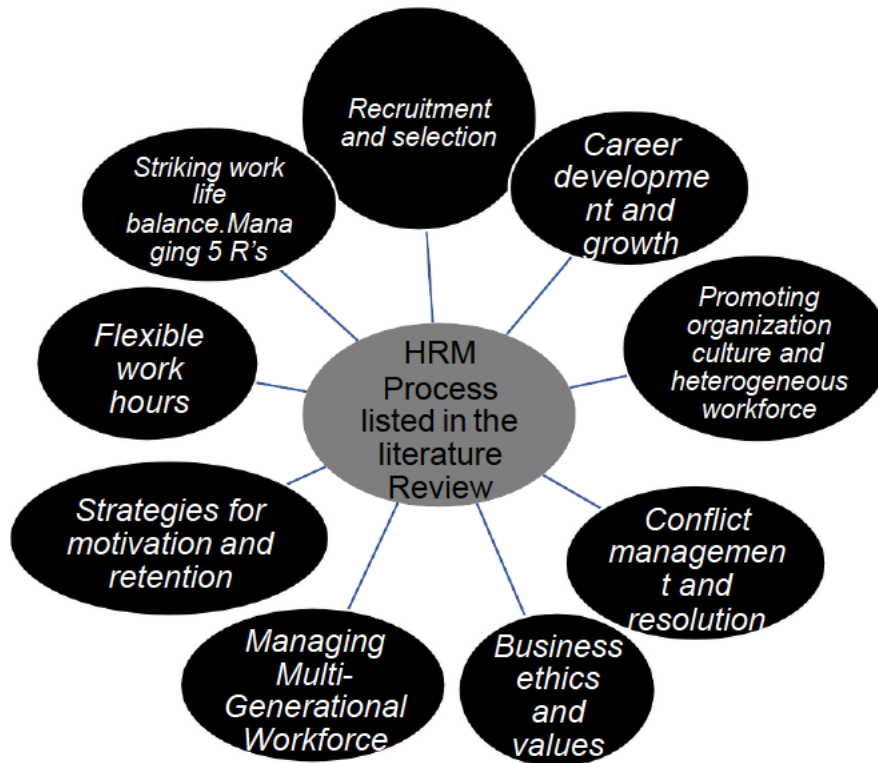


Figure 5. 4 The HRM process as highlighted from the literature review

5.6.2. Comparison of Challenges from the literature review versus Challenges from the research.

In an effort to produce a well-defined system based on the available literature review, a comparison between the HR challenges identified in the literature and those found by the present study. The findings are presented as follows:

Table 5. 3 Challenges from the Literature Review

Challenges from the Literature Review			
Corruption	Recruitment and selection	Promoting organizational culture and heterogenous workforce.	Career development and growth
No Democracy	Conflict management and resolution	Striking work life balance	Economic hardships
Political Interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business value and ethics. • Managing multi-generational workforce. • Brain drain 	Flexible work hours	Strategies for motivation and retention.

Table 5. 4 Challenges found by the present Study

Challenges from the Research Study		
Corruption	Pay equity	Fake qualifications
Workforce diversity	Inflation	Brain drain
Talent retention benefits	Performance appraisal system	Political interference

Corruption, political interference and brain drain were highlighted on both fronts in the tables above, comparing organizational and human resource challenges from the literature review to organizational and human resource challenges from the research. Addressing these serious issues is crucial to reducing the use of improper HRM practices and supporting organizational survival in Zimbabwe. The literature review addressed a broader range of issues in the HRM community, whereas the issues discovered through the research study were minor because the research focused on improper HRM practices that impede the support of organizational survival in state-owned enterprises and how the situation can be improved. Furthermore, the issues raised in the study were highlighted based on their relevance to the organizations under study, as determined by their culture, belief systems and geographical location.

Best international HRM practices encourage management to use readily available strategies in organizations to positively resolve the problems raised, implying the need to include cultural issues and external and internal factors inherent in Zimbabwean organizations to boost organizational survival in Zimbabwe with commitment and dedication, as well as support from the "tone at the top."

5.6.3. Overall Challenges

Table 5. 5 Challenges from Literature review

Challenges From the Literature Review		
Leadership and management style	Salaries and incentives	Communication

Table 5. 6 HRM Challenges

HRM Challenges		
Qualification based recruitment and selection	Poor employee engagement	Poor performance management strategies
Managing retention staff	Poor employee health	

The literature review identified human resource challenges, which were primarily exposed during the research process. The challenges from the literature review were based on global expectations, which means that they are challenges that are commonly expected to affect the operation of organizations from an HRM standpoint.

It is critical to recognize that the issues and challenges identified in the research had a direct impact on the employees working in the organization under study. These participants had expectations that must be met in order for them to fully focus and work on their duties for the betterment and survival of the organizations from which they work. All of the challenges

observed revolve around the desire to improve the lives of employees, whether on a financial, social, economic, or educational level. All of this necessitates the intervention of HRM practices to alleviate employee concerns, which, if satisfied, will also alleviate organizational problems, allowing them to survive. The observations made above thus support the need to develop a model that supports the existence of such organizations, based on the sensitivity of Zimbabwe's culture and belief systems. Thus, HR professionals must address employee concerns by considering both internal and external factors affecting the organizations. HR professionals must therefore lead such improvements and transformations for organizations to survive.

5.7 Stage 5: Comparing the model with the real world

The HRM model developed for Zimbabwe's state-owned enterprises was created to shed light on how such organizations can best survive in harsh economic conditions combined with political interference, corruption, nepotism and so on. As much as there is a desire for Zimbabwe's HRM practices to meet internationally recognized standards, both internal and external factors in Zimbabwe were discovered to be influencing how HRM practices should be properly managed to support organizational survival. The bottom line is that nations differ geographically and culturally; thus, HRM practices will differ, which is why Zimbabwean organizations will not be able to follow all practices prescribed in first-world countries, but effort was made through this model to ensure that the main HRM systems, such as recruitment, selection and placement, learning and development, performance management, pay equity and rewards and recognition, to name a few, are present. Other factors, such as flexitime, serious and consistent remote work arrangements, compensation in line with market surveys and hiring professionalism were identified as unrealistic aspirations to some extent due to manipulation from corrupt activities, political interferences and connections, brain drain and so on.

5.8 Stage 6: defining changes that are desirable and feasible.

The research study identified areas of HRM practices that are desired and feasible in Zimbabwe to support organizational survival. It was noted that, while there is a management leadership style in Zimbabwean HRM practices, such a style should follow international best practices in managing people, removing dictatorial tendencies and turning a blind eye to bad HRM practices. Issues of democracy, better salaries and incentives in line with salary survey reports are lowhanging fruit to deliver in many Zimbabwean organizations, as long as a genuine commitment to treating employees humanely is at stake and budgets allow. Since the

Zimbabwean dollar has lost value, many state-owned enterprises in Zimbabwe charge their services in USD in order to obtain foreign currency. Many employees cry out louder that they need the majority of their pay in US dollars to deal with economic hardships, but most organizations always point to Corporate Governance Unit directives that prohibit this.

Zimbabwe's currency is made up of bond notes and RTGS (real-time gross settlement). The US dollar, however, is essentially the dominant currency because the country's economy is pegged on US dollars. Paying the majority of employees in US dollars is both desirable and feasible because most people have US dollars in their bank accounts.

Stage 6.1: Gaps found from the present study

To some extent, some Zimbabwean organizations conduct recruitment and selection while ignoring the essence of meritocracy and international HRM best practices. As a result, people are hired through nepotism and political connections, making the issue of qualifications irrelevant in the recruitment and selection process. According to research, countries that use meritocracy in hiring staff have higher economic growth and lower corruption, indicating that meritocracy, rather than democracy, is the golden ticket to growth (Wooldridge 2021; Ragauskas and Valekait 2020). This is where the researcher discovered the larger knowledge gap that this research addresses, thus dealing with the "so what" and "now what" aspects of the research findings. Since there is a prohibition on using meritocracy in the recruitment and selection or hiring of staff by other organizations in Zimbabwe, corruption becomes rife and rampant, resulting in the use of improper HRM practices and the closure of businesses. As a result, the presence of corruption scares away investment, crushing hope for organizations to operate or function continuously because a 1% increase in the level of corruption reduces the growth rate by about 0.72%, according to Spyromitros and Panagiotidis (2022). This is the area in which HRM practice should call for, advocate for, and lobby for proper and professional methods of recruitment based on meritocracy in Zimbabwe.

HRM practitioners should religiously follow meritocracy-based hiring as a serious practice. Failure to observe recruitment based on meritocracy is the cancerous result of corruption. This is supported by the fact that Matanda-Moyo, the Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), expressed frustration over the government's lack of determination to combat rampant corruption in Zimbabwe, despite startling revelations that the country loses up to US\$1.8 billion annually due to corruption. According to Transparency International Zimbabwe

(TIZ) studies (2016), corruption is a threat to foreign investment because it adds costs to business operations.

Developing countries must attract foreign direct investment, and because corruption has distorted the economic and financial environment in Zimbabwe, the country is losing investment. Corruption is a significant contributor to Zimbabwe's current low economic growth, inefficiency in public service delivery and massive inequalities in resource distribution. It appears that organizations in Zimbabwe are focusing more on corruption without realizing that their failure to use HRM practices based on meritocracy has severely hampered their survival. If meritocracy, an HRM practice, is not dealt with holistically under best practice corruption will be a monumental task to combat. Once meritocracy has taken root in institutions, economic reforms are simple to implement. Given decades of economic decline and corruption, most organizations in Zimbabwe require a cleaning process focused on recruitment and selection if they are to survive, aided by HRM practices. This ensures that organizations begin to hire the best person available for each job (van der Wal 2021). Eliminating nepotism and political influence is crucial for organizations to survive because these practices are against good practice, according to van der Wal (2021).

Advertising, according to Dubois, Griffith and O'Connell (2018), tilts demand curves and another gap in this study was prohibitive advertising costs, which prevented organizations from hiring the right people for the right jobs at the right times. Other organizations thus chose to hire through social media platforms to avoid the high costs associated with advertising, a move that was unavoidable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kluemper *et al.* (2012), Lam (2016), Henderson (2019), Brown and Vaughn (2011), Chauhan *et al.* (2013) and Jeske and Shultz (2014) all attribute this to low-cost hiring (2016). While social media screening appears to have appealing benefits for employers, some researchers have expressed concern that it may lead to or facilitate unethical hiring practices. Johnson and Black (2012). Given the large number of active users on platforms such as Facebook or LinkedIn, the practice of conducting applicant screening online has the potential to have a significant impact on both applicants and employers, as well as on HR decisions such as recruitment training, promotion and termination

(Brown and Vaughn 2011). Candidates may be rejected if recruiters discover inappropriate information about them on social media (Roberts and Clark 2010). This includes photos that are provocative or inappropriate, demonstrate poor communication skills, depict images of inebriation or drug use, provide false information about an applicant's qualifications, or make disparaging remarks about previous employers or co-workers. Brown and Vaughn (2011) and Tews *et al.* (2020) discovered that strong opinions expressed on social media and self-absorption are negatively viewed, whereas simple language, spelling and grammar can influence an employer's perception of an applicant's intelligence, competence and employability (Scott *et al.* 2014; Becton *et al.* 2019).

Thus, organizations must balance the benefits of cost-effective information gathering and avoiding negligent hiring lawsuits with the risk of being held accountable for privacy violations and employing an untrustworthy recruitment process that could lead to discrimination and negative consequences (Shultz and Jeske 2016). It was also noted that the conflict management and resolution process was inadequate, as was the management of relations between management and the general staff. In fact, if handled properly, conflict can be beneficial. Conflict can stimulate creative problem-solving, critical thinking and the generation of new ideas. Conflict management is a critical competency that leaders must possess for the success of the team, group, unit, or employees they lead, according to Malla *et al.* (2019), Low *et al.* (2019), Veenema, Burkle and Dallas (2019), and Bernburg, Groneberg and Mache (2019). With such emphasis from the aforementioned scholars, poor conflict management and resolution processes represent a significant gap that requires serious consideration for the sake of organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

Management was criticized for failing to practice good business ethics and values by knowingly ignoring expected policies and procedures, failing to demonstrate commitment to combating corruption and failing to conduct skills audits to flush out fake qualifications. In the twenty-first century, ethics, the concept of ethical behavior and ethical value systems have taken on new significance and are neither a luxury nor an option (Sulmasy 2013). As a result, since Chu (2016) and Grigoropoulos (2019) stated that ethics is one of the tenets of long-term economic growth, the issue of ethics cannot be overlooked. The potential for ethical leaders and employees to positively influence sustainable choices and actions is very high. As a result, everyone in the workplace is expected to act ethically. Another gap revealed was that management was lagging in terms of encouraging workplace diversity and inclusion, managing multi-generational

workforces, promoting organizational culture, and managing heterogeneous workforces, according to Wambui *et al.* (2013), Taylor (2015) and Kuptsch (2016). Taylor (2015) suggests that effective organizational leadership is critical for maximizing the benefits of workplace diversity while mitigating the risks, but much remains to be discovered about which leader's behaviour promotes the competitive advantages of diversity in Zimbabwe since this gap was discovered.

It was also revealed that there was no proper commitment from management to develop better strategies for motivation, retention, employee engagement and, to some extent, address employee health issues, which Honig (2022) disparages because the author stated that people management is critical to improving the performance of government agencies. So, if management in the organizations under study wants to support organizational survival in Zimbabwe, they must change their ways of dealing with employees. HRM practitioners should be aware that the COVID-19 pandemic forced people to work from home, causing employees to cry out for flexible working hours in order to strike a work-life balance, but with both negative and positive consequences for them. Employees working from home are more likely to experience restless nights and insomnia in the COVID-19 pandemic era, according to Gupta (2020) an important point to consider when supporting organizational survival in Zimbabwe. Previous research has supported the link between lockdown and negative psychological effects such as increased stress, according to Sundarasan *et al.* (2020).

Job flexibility in work arrangements prompted by COVID-19 may lessen work-to-home conflicts (conflicts resulting from work-related issues interfering with personal conflicts), reducing the stress that comes with neglecting one's family. However, a negative gap arises when examining the impact of COVID-19 on assessment and appraisal systems, particularly within the leader-subordinate dynamic. Kniffin *et al.* (2020) suggest a potential shift toward results-focused assessments, a strategy that prior research indicates is generally more effective. This shift is complicated by the inability to directly monitor subordinates in the way that traditional office settings allow, an observation that is not currently used during performance appraisal by the organizations under study in this research. Working remotely, however, may reduce subordinates' opportunities to receive leadership feedback over longer periods of time in times of using HRM practices to support organizational survival, and prior research indicates that a lack of learning opportunities is linked to lower organizational commitment and a higher risk of turnover (Vandenberghe *et al.* 2019).

Some employees were laid off, leaving a significant gap in the workforce because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous research has shown that when businesses reduce their overall staffing levels, survivors tend to experience higher levels of stress and lower levels of organizational commitment, according to the scenario, Kniffin *et al.* (2020).

Overall, staff reductions have roughly the same negative effects on organizational performance as comparable voluntary turnover, according to meta-analytic data (Park and Shaw 2013).

Recent research has also shown that during general economic downturns, "zero-sum" thinking tends to increase, which has the unintended consequence of making people more likely to mistake others for competitors even when they are not, according to Sirola and Pitesa (2017). In addition to the gaps created by the COVID-19 pandemic, another gap is presenteeism, as opposed to absenteeism. Presenteeism, or working while sick, is likely to rise among those who continue to work in the aftermath of COVID-19, according to Johns (2010). Recent studies in Poland (Mikos *et al.* 2020) and Australia (Imai *et al.* 2020) discovered that approximately 20% of people with the flu did not take sick leave during the COVID-19 pandemic era. A meta-analysis of the correlates of presenteeism distinguishes two types of employees who report to work while ill: (1) those who are compelled to attend due to high workload demands, insufficient staffing and required overtime.

Performance appraisal was more of a ritualistic tendency through the Integrated Results Based Management (IRBM) to fill the expectations of the government's needs to use the integrated results-based management systems, even though there was no adequate government support for such performance, so performance management was done as a duty rather than to measure reality on the ground. Dixon (2021) argues that because employees are only evaluated based on the outcome, such appraisal methods are designed to provide them with operational flexibility. Employees are subjected to a demanding and complex performance monitoring process that has been described as "onerous" and "intimidating". The onerous IRBM requirements occasionally impacted service delivery. Dixon's (2021) observations should be noted and addressed if HRM practices in Zimbabwe are to support organizational survival.

Furthermore, there was no pay equity among organizations that were part of the same government and sometimes reported to the same ministry. Pay inequality remains a widespread issue in the workplace, and according to Bachman and Krems (2020), if not handled

professionally, it can cost an organization a fortune in court settlements. If HRM practices are to support organizational survival in Zimbabwe, pay equity should be legally corrected, as proposed by Strah, Rupp and Morris (2022) by eliminating the concept of (brown envelopes) that are slipped through doors after normal pay has been processed for all employees.

5.9 Stage 7: Recommendations to improve the problem situation

All powers that be must address the issues of improperly managed HRM practices in Zimbabwe holistically, with passion and commitment. Recruitment and selection should be based on meritocracy because failure to do so has resulted in problems such as administrative inefficiency, a social atmosphere of tension, dishonesty within public institutions and a significant presence of corruption in Zimbabwe, according to Musvota and Mukonza (2021). Machiavellian practices exist in contravention of agency theory, resulting in high board turnover, ineffective boards, an ineffective board mix, poorly qualified directors and political appointments, people not hired through professional processes, and political interference (Muswere and Dube 2021; Mathe 2020).

If HRM practices are to genuinely support organizational survival in Zimbabwe, hiring based on meritocracy can be boosted by anti-bias training for managers, having a variety of stakeholders assess curricula vitae and removing personal information from curricula vitae. Corruption in recruitment and selection should be addressed rather than simply talking about it with no action on the ground; catch and release should be avoided, and perpetrators should serve their sentences in prison as a deterrent measure to others planning to engage in corrupt activities. Furthermore, prohibitive advertising costs should be addressed by adequately funding recruitment processes. Corruption should be eradicated through funding and awareness-raising workshops. Skills audits should be performed during the hiring process to eliminate fake qualifications. Furthermore, management should be found wanting in terms of encouraging workplace diversity and inclusion, managing a multigenerational workforce, promoting organizational culture and managing a diverse workforce.

Politicians should avoid mixing politics and corporate governance, as well as abusing the powers granted to them by the offices they represent. Politicians should receive the same level of respect in their field of practice as HRM practitioners. Thus, politicians should refrain from victimizing HRM practitioners by issuing partisan hiring directives and fostering nepotism.

Furthermore, HRM practitioners should stand firm where possible and request written directives to halt the rot of nepotism and favoritism. Human resource managers must always conduct reference checks to weed out potential candidates with fabricated credentials when recruiting and selecting new employees. This helps to avoid the embarrassment of discovering that someone was using fake qualifications after being promoted many times in the same organization, as in the cases of Mr Charlton Chihuri at ZIMRA and Ms Florence Chibumbu at ZIMCHE, who were both found using fake qualifications while working for state-owned enterprises.

Management should handle the conflict management and resolution process with empathy for the employees involved to improve relations between management and the general staff. Management should exert effort and zeal in upholding good business ethics and values by adhering to policies and procedures. Proper management commitment to developing better strategies for motivation and retention, employee engagement and addressing employee health issues should be the norm when running organizations in Zimbabwe.

Flexible working hours should be implemented to help employees strike a work-life balance and employees should be allowed to work online and do most of their duties virtually, aided by automation processes to improve risk management. Performance evaluation should be realistic and backed up by adequate budgetary support from the government. Furthermore, pay should be equal for employees of the same grade working in organizations that are part of the same government and sometimes report to the same ministry.

Stage 7 (i). Observed action to improve the situation

It was noted that all state-owned enterprises have board of directors who are guided by the Corporate Governance Act, Chapter 10:31, which prescribes actions to follow in managing these organizations. These prescribed actions indicate ways to deal with issues like corruption and abuse of office, barring political interference in the running of SOEs' affairs. In addition, all the organizations had work councils specifically designed to deal with conflicts between management and members of staff, including conflicts among employees themselves. Human resources personnel in radiation protection human spelt out that they do verification exercises on qualifications obtained from former institutions of learning to weed out fake qualifications during the employment process. A professional move in reducing risks of employing qualified people for the job.

5.10. Chapter Summary

Finally, this chapter examined the responses obtained from the three firms in accordance with the research objectives, which were to investigate the state of HR practices in Zimbabwean organizations, investigate the array of challenges influencing organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations and to develop an HR framework for Zimbabwe that supports organizational resilience in the country. To comprehensively analyze these objectives and answer the research questions, various themes were formulated from responses obtained from the three firms.

CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6. Introduction

The study sought to determine the impact of human resource practices on organizational survival of Zimbabwean SOEs. The study objectives were used as a guideline to achieve the study goal.

6.1. Overview

In determining the impact of human resource practices on organization survival in Zimbabwe, a literature review on the impact of human resource practices provided an organizational foundation for the attainment of the study's objectives. Information from the literature review, as well as results gleaned from the research participants, helped in knowing the status of HRM practices in organizations in Zimbabwe. This information also assisted in picking out the challenges faced by these organizations. The bottom-line confirmed Jawaad's (2019) world view that HRM could influence employee organizational behavior. This strengthens the notion that HRM practices have a positive impact on organizational performance, which leads to organizational commitment. In trying to understand how HRM practices may assist organizational survival in Zimbabwe, Monks *et al.* (2013) argued that these practices have been explained as philosophies that recognize and characterize values as well as the treatment of the workforce in a certain human resource management system (Jaskiene 2015; Eneh and Awara 2016; O'riordan 2017; Rasool *et al.* 2019). This means that Zimbabwean values should be recognized and mixed positively with HRM practices when dealing with the Zimbabwean employees if the aspect of supporting organizational survival is to be registered. Zimbabwean management and the boards of directors should always remember that human resource practices are there to recognize wider human resource management activities to guarantee the tangible execution of human resource management policies, as posited by Osibanjo and Adeniji (2012), Bhagher (2016) and Etukudo (2019). This all supports the view that if effort is given to respecting, caring and listening to the needs of employees, there is potential to improve the gloomy status quo in Zimbabwean organizations for the betterment of employees and the organizations. According to Guest (2011), there is no definite set of human resource practices within a high-performance work system (Fu *et al.* 2015), which is why a best practice approach argues for a one-size-fits-all bundle of practices. This has been noticed in the responses given

by the participants since the answers varied depending on the participant's workplace (Fu *et al.* 2015; Xian, Atkinson, and Meng-Lewis 2017; Dundon 2018; El-Farr and Hosseingholizadeh 2019). Though this bundle approach is contested, there is a need to use HR bundles in Zimbabwean organizations in order to improve the situation of the organizations if HRM practices are to support organizational survival in Zimbabwe.

This is supported by the notion that it has been argued that human resource bundles are groups of consistent human resource practices aimed at achieving productivity and survival in organizations rather than each human resource practice itself (Boxall 2014; Villajos, Tordera and Peiro 2019). As such, the study highlighted that bundles of human resource activities are believed to have a more robust support system for attaining competitive advantage (Narang 2014; Boon *et al.* 2017; Delery and Roumpi 2017; Armstrong and Brown 2019). These practices have been supported by the Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD) (an integrated approach) model of human resources that was proposed. These practices within this model included HR expertise, business acumen, technology efficacy and workplace proficiency, themes that boost organizational survival in Zimbabwe if properly managed and used.

6.2. Study Findings

This study revealed the status of human resource practices through the responses provided with regards to **research objective** 1. Research from the three organizations gave a detailed view of organizations in Zimbabwe. Responses given in SOE 1 showed that an autocratic management system exists whereby policies are developed without consulting shop floor workers; thus, workers lack a sense of belonging as the top-down approach ignores their views. Respondents in SOE 2 also argued that HR functions have been overridden by top management and even organizational shareholders have shot down leadership. This is supported by Horwitz and Horwitz (2012), who argued that management is often interested in the effect of interventions in terms of monetary costs and benefits (Edmunds *et al.* 2018; Stouten, Rousseau and De Cremer 2018).

In terms of recruitment and selection, the study revealed that recruitment and selection are the most relevant in SOE 1. Recruitment and selection deals with attracting and choosing individuals who conform to the profile of the organization (Larson and Hewitt 2012; Schimansky 2014; Russell 2016; Rodríguez-Sánchez, Montero-Navarro and Gallego-Losada 2019). Feedback on this organization showed that there have been adequate financial resources to

enhance the acquisition of staff. However, not much was gathered pertaining to this practice in SOE 2 and SOE 3, therefore, it was difficult to generalize the results on the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe. Overall recruitment and selection are done in some Zimbabwean organizations, ignoring the essence of meritocracy and international HRM best practices. Results showed that some people were employed through nepotism and political connections, disregarding aspects like qualifications, experience and skill. According to research, countries that use meritocracy in hiring staff have higher economic growth and lower corruption, since meritocracy, not democracy, is the golden ticket to growth (Ragauskas and Valeškaitė 2020; Wooldridge 2021).

In addition, leadership styles have also helped in explaining organizational survival in Zimbabwe. The study reveals that the leadership style in SOE 1 showed that it has compromised performance. Feedback showed that managers do not care about the welfare of staff or how they survive as they are unapproachable and are unfriendly as well. On a similar note, responses to SOE 2 also showed that leadership is egocentric and more interested in personal gain as opposed to the mandate of the organization. In addition, authoritative leadership in this organization tends to dictate as opposed to seeking advice from professionals within their duties. One of the respondents also argued that leadership within this organization has deteriorated citing a lack of emphasis on succession planning and the absence of staff involvement in change management. Furthermore, responses from SOE 3 also showed that the leadership style is not supporting devolution.

Research findings in SOE 1 also showed that staff training and remuneration is based on their experience and years of service as well as staff development. The responses also showed that there has been training to improve the organization by adopting current trends. In addition, responses from SOE 2 also indicate that there is employee development to prepare aspiring leaders for supervisory roles in some departments. However, SOE 3 did not provide information pertaining to this HR practice. Despite the limited available information, it is evident HR practices implemented by management are also striving towards ensuring organizational survival. The research also noted issues to do with conflict management and resolution. The study showed that conflicts are inevitable, as shown by the responses from these three organizations. Responses from SOE 2 highlight that HR lacks an adequate platform to exercise its role, as grievances are raised but no action is taken.

Bello-Pintando (2015) is of the view that motivation in HRM takes into account the fact that workers need the appropriate motivation to put in discretionary effort. Responses from SOE 3 showed that this has worsened, as it is not meeting employees' needs. Employees are demotivated as HR treats new workers as though they were there from the inception of the organization; hence, they should improve their grading system. Similarly, in SOE 1, the results showed that motivation is currently lacking as employees remain in the same grade. This pattern is mirrored in SOE 2 as feedback showed that employees felt stagnated with their salary cuts and the withdrawal of their allowances. Many employees felt disgruntled and demotivated, although some argued that the HR department has also strived to manage the situation to some extent.

Remuneration and compensation are other key human resource practices. According to the respondents' feedback in SOE 1, salaries have been coming from every mode, as HR is maintaining salary pay outs each month. However, one disagreed as he argued that they had been no pay increase since 2012. Conversely, another response highlighted salary adjustments in SOE 1 with increments in 2011. This trend has also been noted in SOE 2, where the responses suggest that remuneration and employee recognition play pivotal roles in maintaining organizational cohesion. The respondents argue that their organization pays its employees on time; however, it is a bit behind on employee recognition programs. Views in SOE 1 also showed that there is a need for survivable operations, budgetary constraint measures, HR planning and compensation. There is a need to review the condition of services for employees and offer performance-based remuneration.

Research Objective 2 clearly reveals several factors that have challenged organizational survival in Zimbabwe. The findings showed that political interference has been a challenge that has affected organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations. Political inferences by big political figures in executing organizational mandates have negatively affected the survival of all three organizations. In addition to this, economic instability has also had a negative effect on organizations' survival in Zimbabwe. The research also showed that there have been fluctuations in the prices of commodities, no increases in salaries, high inflation levels and budgetary constraints. Furthermore, the study reveals a prevailing harsh economic environment and hardships, including changing leadership are compromising organizational survival.

Poor governance has also been highlighted as a major challenge that affects survival of Zimbabwean organizations. There is a perceived lack of equal opportunities and no clear succession planning. Feedback also showed there has been a lack of change in leadership, dictatorship, communication and the administration of labor in all three organizations studied. However, one of the respondents argued that there has been good co-operative governance within their organization. Responses also showed a lack of commitment by management in SOE 2. Poor governance has also been a cause for concern in SOE 3, as responses highlighted that a lack of co-operative management was evident within their organization. However, some respondents argued that workers are allowed to express their views, indicating good leadership practices within the organizations.

Poor policy formulation and implementation have also affected organizational survival in Zimbabwe. Feedback from respondents in SOE 1 argued that the same implementation of laws by the government and their policies has led to the partial implementation of laid-down policies. The aspect of wrong priorities and a lack of investment in the first fruits were also noted. This concurs with responses in SOE 2 as one of the respondents points out the aspect of misplaced priorities. Bello-Pintando (2015) is of the view that motivation in HRM considers the fact that workers need the appropriate motivation to put in discretionary effort. Responses from the three organizations showed that demotivated staff within these organizations affected the survival of the Zimbabwean organizations. Results showed that poor communication also hindered the survival of Zimbabwean organizations. These three organizations lack proper communication channels, so most decisions do not involve shop floor workers. One may argue that the sidelining of their input has also affected the organization's growth.

Teamwork is very important for organizations because it speeds up the attainment of organizational goals and objectives (Tohidi 2011; Zoltan and Vancea 2015; Haas and Mortensen 2016). SOE 2 responses showed a lack of teamwork and a lack of unity of purpose, thus threatening the survival of organizations. In addition, staff turnover has been the major contributor to organizational growth, especially among critical employees. With such responses, one may argue that organizational survival in Zimbabwe is difficult to achieve, as noted earlier by various authors (Sibanda *et al.* 2014; Chitiyo, Vines and Vandome 2016; Manyaya and Bhebhe 2016; Sithole, Sithole and Chirimuta 2018). Lack of technical assistance has also strained organizational survival in Zimbabwe. Lack of technical assistance in SOE 1 and SOE

3 is also evidenced through the feedback given by one of the respondents' notes that there is a lack of key support and technical assistance within their organization.

In relation to **research objective 3**, the study clearly showed that Gelter's (2012) and Carim and Senne's (2016) view that some models do not suit some countries are sometimes true, hence the need to introduce a model that can help improve organizational survival in Zimbabwe. In this study, the HR framework showing an integrated approach (CIPD) was proposed as the ideal model for the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe. The model was thus modified to suit Zimbabwean organizations. The modified HR model will help to improve survival in Zimbabwean organizations. The framework designed is an integrated approach that emphasizes HR's expertise, business acumen, technology efficacy and workplace proficiency. The study showed that HR expertise involves HR practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, employee relations, compensation and benefits. In addition, business acumen had to do with business analysis, finance basics, industry context, business drivers and operation basics. HR management systems, data analysis and interpretation, social media and job search sites were also embedded in the technology efficacy and adaptability concept. Furthermore, the study showed that all these works in an external environment (economic, political and social).

6.4. Limitations of the study

Politics has been a challenge that has affected organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations. Political inferences by big political figures in executing organizations' mandates have negatively affected all three organizations' survival. The economic situation has also affected the income generated by the organization, and as such, funding other activities is a challenge. The research also showed that there have been fluctuations in prices for commodities as well as no increase in salaries, high inflation levels, and budgetary constraints. Poor governance has also been highlighted as a major challenge that affects organizational survival in Zimbabwean organizations. There is a perceived lack of equal opportunities and no clear succession planning. Poor leadership, poor policy formulation, and poor implementation have been another constraint. There is a lack of professionalism due to strong civil service and, thus, too rigid and self-centered management. Demotivated staff have also been a cause for concern within these organizations, as they do not in turn perform well, thus hindering the

organization's growth and development. Poor communication, a lack of teamwork, brain drain, staff turnover, a lack of technical assistance, and a lack of political will have also affected the survival of organizations in Zimbabwe. In addition to these constraints, Monks *et al.* (2013) posit that HR philosophy has not occupied a dominant focus in previous HRM studies and suggest that there is a need for more research that examines its role as a contextual variable.

6.5. Recommendations

6.5.1. Policy Recommendations

Organizations need clear policies and human resources initiatives that clearly stipulate the way human resource practices are to be executed. In addition to this, legislators must draft legislative frameworks that support models of human resource practices to facilitate the smooth flow of their implementation. In addition, laid-down policies should also be fully implemented in organizations because partial implementation of these policies stunts their growth.

6.5.2. Academic Recommendations

Monks *et al.* (2013) suggest that to make genuine theoretical progress, researchers must go beyond the list of practices and seek to identify the processes and mediating variables that a set of practices is supposed to influence. One may argue that there is a need for stronger empirical evidence on human resource management practices and a robust theoretical base on how these HRM practices can be executed within an organization.

6.5.3. Implementation Recommendations

In most organizations in Zimbabwe, there is a need for the recognition of workers for their survival. Recognizing workers motivates them to consistently contribute towards the organizational goals and objectives. There is a need to fully implement the laid-down policies. As always, there is a need for teamwork, which can be enhanced through capacity building, training, and the development of employees. In addition, there is also a need for good cooperative governance as well as professional recruitment and selection of qualified staff. Good leadership, planning, and consultation of shop floor workers is also needed for the motivation of employees. Commitment on the part of management and HR is required to achieve the organization's goals and objectives, and they should renew the environment to

identify areas that need improvement. Training staff if they identify a gap is essential, as staff development gives an organization a competitive edge over its competitors. It also increases employer brand by investing in people. HRM practices should try to motivate employees through an increase in salaries and employee engagement.

6.5.4. Areas for further studies

The literature showed a huge gap in the models of human resource practices that best suit developing nations such as Zimbabwe. There is a need for more study of models that fit the organizational structures of Zimbabwe. In addition, most theoretical frameworks that have been proposed so far best suit the first-world nations; as such, more research and study are needed to determine which theoretical framework best suits Zimbabwean organizations. There is also a need for more literature to delineate the way HR practices can be implemented in organizations so as to guarantee their survival.

Contribution of the study

This thesis describes factors that may be important to optimize human resource management practices in state-owned enterprises, with a focus on core HR practices within these businesses. To increase organizational productivity and survival, these state-owned enterprises have made significant investments in human resources practices through policies and other automated systems like payroll and enterprise resource planning systems, as well as in the continued professional development of human resources practitioners. However, a substantial amount of empirical research consistently demonstrates that employing HRM practices has benefited organizations for many decades, reflecting the current state of affairs. A systematic review of the literature on the connection between HRM practices and organizational survival in Zimbabwe did not determine the significance of HRM practices in full or in part. This thesis has bridged the identified gap in the body of knowledge.

6.3. Conclusion

This thesis argued conclusively that human resource management practices are vital to the development, conception and renewal of Zimbabwean SOEs. Human resource practitioners should complement or replace linear thinking about business operations with non-linear

approaches. Part of the strategies that may be included to improve organizational survival includes the need for organizational management to focus on tangible and intangible assets that remain vital for the survival of SOEs. In describing how human resource management practices can influence organizational survival, the present study argues that the main aspects dealt with by human resource analysts include the staff turnover and retention rate, staff evaluation, determining remunerations and packages, enhancing capacity building and training and development initiatives. In addition, human resource practices and decision-making can all be summed up in a model for many to quickly appreciate how human resource management evolved from the traditional approach to the modern approach, a view which should be looked upon by those targeting to understand how the influence of HRM practices can help organizational survival across the globe. In the present study, these practices were bundled together in the CIPD framework (an integrated approach) within the context of Zimbabwean SOEs.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Proof of Editing

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The pen is mightier than the sword

To whom it may concern

I edited the dissertation titled:

management practices on Zimbabwe State -Owned Enterprises survival by **Brian Mutangandebvu**, student number: 21650011, submitted in fulfilment of requirements of the Ph.D. Management Sciences specializing in Leadership and Complexity at the Durban University of Technology.

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Gatekeepers' Permission Letter

13 November 2018

Radiation Protection Authority of Zimbabwe
No 1 McCaw Drive
Avondale
Harare

Dear Chief Executive Officer

My Name is Brian Mutangandebvu, currently conducting a research project for a PhD in management sciences in Leadership and Complexity at Durban University of Technology. My Research Topic is titled **Exploring the influence of Human Resources and leadership practices on organisations' survival: A systems perspective.**

After my approval by Durban University of Technology, as shown on the attached letter this study will incorporate interviews in exploring the influence of Human Resources and leadership practices on organisation survival: A systems perspective.

I'm writing to ask your permission to be allowed to distribute my interview questions at the time I will be discussing the laid down questions with willing participants with in your organisation. Less time will be used for this process, and the study can be done at an opportune and desirable time deemed to be convenient and on a date arranged. Since it is ethical for the study to be done with participants' informed consent, participants will be asked team if they want to take part.

All responses and results from the study will be kept strictly and confidentially and the results will be revealed to all participants on completion.

Yours Sincerely

Brian Mutangandebvu

CEO - Radiation Protection Authority of Zimbabwe

Approved / ~~Not Approved~~

Date 13/11/2018

Signature..





Student No. 21650011



Gatekeepers' Permission Letter

13 November 2018

Postal and Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe
1008 Performance Close
Mount Pleasant Business Park
Harare

Dear Director General

My Name is Brian Mutangandebvu, currently conducting a research project for a PhD in management sciences in Leadership and Complexity at Durban University of Technology. My Research Topic is titled **Exploring the influence of Human Resources and leadership practices on organisations' survival: A systems perspective.**

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Yours Sincerely

Brian Mutangandebvu (0774 538412 / 0712 733702)

DG - Postal and Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe

Approved / Not Approved

Date 15/11/18



Gatekeepers' Permission Letter

13 November 2018

Environmental Management Agency
685/6 Lorraine/ Faber Drive
Bluffhill
Harare

Dear Director General

My Name is Brian Mutangandebvu, currently conducting a research project for a PhD in management sciences in Leadership and Complexity at Durban University of Technology. My Research Topic is titled **Exploring the influence of Human Resources and leadership practices on organisations' survival: A systems perspective.**

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All responses and results from the study will be kept strictly and confidentially and the results will be revealed to all participants on completion.

Yours Sincerely

Brian Mutangandebvu



DG - Environmental Management Agency

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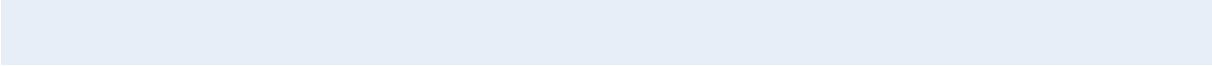
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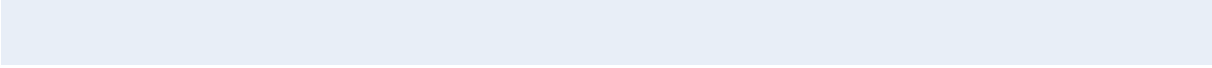
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Dear Mr B Mutangandebvu

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY: LEADERSHIP AND COMPEXITY

TITLE: Exploring the influence of Human Resources practices on organisations' survival: A Systems perspective

Please be advised that the Faculty Research Ethics Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: Ethical Level 2

Approval has been granted for a period of two years, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

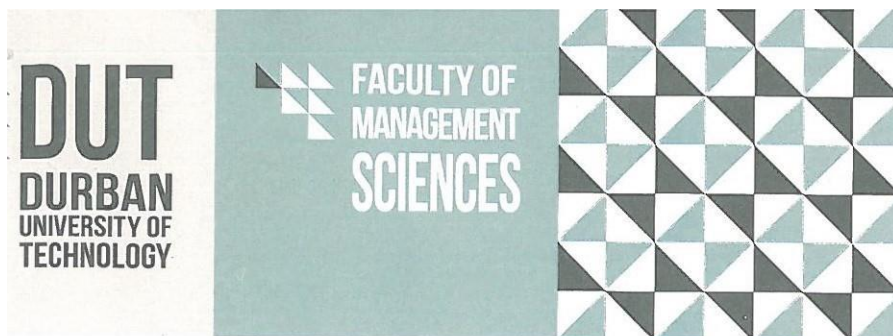
Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's.

Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely

Prof JP Govender
Chairperson: FREC

Research Approval Letter by FREC



22 June 2018

Reference: Proposal Approval: Mr. B Mutangandebvu

Student number: 21650011

Dear Mr. B Mutangandebvu

PhD: Management Sciences (Leadership and Complexity)

This serves to confirm the approval of your research proposal by the Faculty Research Committee, at its meeting on 21 June 2018, as follows:

1. Research proposal and provisional dissertation title:

Exploring the influence of Human Resources practices on organisations' survival: A Systems perspective

Supervisor: Dr P Daya

Co-supervisor: N/A

Please note that any proposed changes in the thesis/dissertation title require the approval of your supervisor/s, the Faculty Research Committee, as well as ratification thereof by the Higher Degrees Committee.

May we remind you that in terms of Rule G25(2)(b), if you fail to obtain the Masters/Doctors degree within the maximum time period allowed after first registering for the qualification, Senate may refuse to renew your registration or may impose any conditions it deems fit. You may apply to the Faculty Research Committee for an extension.

Please note that you are required to convert your registration from the informal to the formal course and re-register each year.

Please note that the following must be adhered to:

Registration:

1. Ensure formal registration has taken place
2. Ensure that application for conferment of status has been made in the event of your undergraduate qualification being different to this application
3. Ensure that your supervisor has submitted your proposal to the Faculty Research Officer (FRO) for IREC clearance (institutional research ethics committee). This is in the case of Ethics level 2 IREC and level 3 IREC (in the case of a study dealing with vulnerable populations). See guideline attached.

Dissertation submission for examination:

1. Ensure that you submit the intention to submit form (PG 5), signed by the HOD and Supervisor
2. Ensure that the signed checklist is submitted with the PG 5
3. Once your dissertation is submitted to the supervisor for examination purposes, communication from here on will only be with you supervisor and not with the faculty.
4. Your supervisor MUST nominate the examiners three months prior to submission of the dissertation/thesis for examination.
5. On submission for examination, please note that three ring bound signed copies must be submitted to your supervisor along with the completed and signed PG 7 form, FMS Checklist and Turn it in report.
6. Feedback will be provided to your supervisor regarding the examination result after the result is ratified by the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC).
7. In the event of a resubmission the reports will be submitted to the supervisor who will communicate with you for revision. Once revision has taken place your supervisor will submit to the FRO for resubmission to the examiners.
8. In the case where there is a discrepancy in examiners results, an Arbiter will be nominated via the HOD and supervisor and tabled at FRC and ratified at HDC. On completion of this process, the Arbiters report will be tabled at FRC and ratified at HDC.
9. Results of the Arbitration process will be communicated to your supervisor Graduation requirements:


1. Ensure that you submit a completed signed PGIO form
2. one hard bound dissertation/thesis with a pdf version on CD

3. response to post graduate examination form

4. completion of study form (IREC form)

Should you experience any problems relating to your research, your supervisor must be informed of the matter as soon as possible. If the difficulties persist, you should then approach your Head of Department and thereafter the Faculty Research Coordinator.

Please refer to the 2017 General Rule Book and the Postgraduate Students' Guide 2017 concerning the rules relating to postgraduate studies, which include inter alia acceptable minimum and maximum timeframes, submission of thesis/dissertations, etc. Please do not hesitate to contact this office for any assistance. We wish you success in your studies. Kind regards,


FRC Chairperson: Faculty of Management Sciences

Cc Supervisor: Dr P Daya