

# THE EFFECTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITES IN LARGE SCALE ENTERPRISES

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## ABSTRACT

The growth of every enterprise requires careful planning of its human resources. Such task is challenging but should be undertaken by competent personnel to ensure that operational objectives are achieved. This study seeks to assess the effects of human resource planning in the implementation of operational activities in large scale enterprises. Secondary data was retrieved from published materials in the subject matter and analysis was drawn from available facts which disclosed the assessment of skills and competences of existing work force and development of forecasts for the demand and supply of labour. Also, the relevance of recruitment, selection, training and rewarding employees to stimulate performance and the significance of human resource planning towards the effective implementation of operational activities was also established. This study will enable practising managers and human resource specialists in the planning and management of operational activities.

**KEY WORDS:** Human Resource Planning, Implementation, Operational Activities, Large Scale

Enterprises.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Human Resources Planning have been a function of management since the origins of the modern industrial organization. Economist Alfred Marshall observed in 1890 that the head of a business must assume himself that his managers, clerks and foremen, division of labour, specialization, organization of management into levels, work simplification, and application of standards for selecting employees and measuring their performance were all principles applied early in industrial management. They were also applied in large non-industrial organizations, including religious, governmental and military organizations. Planning for the staff for work is not a recent notion. During the first part of the century, the focus in manpower planning was upon the hourly production worker. The aim of improving efficiency through work engineering and early industrial psychology application was consistent with the need to improve productivity and introduce greater objectivity to personnel practices. During World War II and the past war years, HRM focus intensified on employee productivity and on the availability of the competent managerial personnel. These needs resulted from a civilian talent shortage in combination with an increasing demand for the goods and services. New technologies and a new awareness of, and interest in behavioural aspects of work also complicated the manpower planning task. The expanded demand for high potential personnel in the 1960s resulted from high technology programs and rapid corporate expansion and diversification. In response, human resources planning practices attempted to balance supply and demand, particularly for managerial, professional and technical personnel (Mahapatro 2010). Human resource practitioners and other contemporary observers of the management science have expressed a growing awareness ever since the 1990s that people represent a key asset in competitiveness. While Western nations have long placed enormous faith in the power of technology to enhance productivity, the fact is that the greatest competitive gains stem from the exercise of human creativity to identify new products and services, find new markets and applications for existing products and services, and make use of the possible gains to be realized from technology. Without the creative application of human knowledge and skill, enterprises would not be formed and would not thrive for long. Human beings thus represent intellectual capital to be managed, just like other forms of capital (Brown, 1998).

Human resource planning is an integral part of business planning. The strategic planning process defines projected changes in the types of activities carried out by the enterprise and the scale of those activities. It identifies the core competences the enterprise needs to achieve, its goals and also its skill and behavioural requirements. Enterprises need to know how many people and what sort of people they should have to meet present and future business requirements. This is the function of human resource planning, or workforce planning as it is sometimes called, especially in the public sector. However, it is not always the logical and systematic process conceived when the notion of 'manpower planning' became popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Human resource planning may be well established in the HRM vocabulary but it does not seem to be embedded as a key HR activity (Armstrong 2010). Human resource planning interprets plans in terms of people requirements, focusing on any problems that might have to be resolved in order to ensure that the people required will be available and will be capable of making the necessary contribution. But it may also influence the business strategy by drawing attention to ways in which people could be developed and deployed more effectively to further the achievement of business goals. As Quinn Mills (1983) wrote in his seminar Harvard Business Review article, 'Planning with people in mind', human resource planning is a decision-making process that combines three important activities: identifying and acquiring the right number of people with the proper skills, motivating them to achieve high performance, and creating interactive links between business objectives and people-planning activities (Quinn Mills 1983).

Implementation of operational activities such as manufacturing/production, distribution, marketing and selling requires a diligent workforce whose efforts should be effectively planned by the human resource department to ensure that enterprises' operational objectives are achieved. Large scale enterprises are clustered with several challenges in environment where they operate since rival firms are also striving for competitive advantage. This thrust for competitive advantage prompts the act of planning for the required number of human resource needed, their skills and competences in order to achieve the desires of such enterprises. The aspect of producing high quality product, distributing such product through effective supply chain management and ensuring that customers are aware about its existence and effort made to

reach them on time, is quite challenging but requires an effective human resource planning system which thrives towards addressing such challenge.

### **1.1 Research Aim**

Large scale enterprises desire the achievement of operational, tactical and strategic objectives which makes them stand as unique institutions in a tough competitive environment. The grandeur of such objectives emanates from an effective and efficient human resource planning that addresses operational activities, which gradually move to tactical and subsequently to strategic. The purpose of this qualitative research is to assess the effects of human resource planning in the implementation of operational activities in large scale enterprises.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The research objectives are segmented components that determine to unravel the clustered elements in the aim in a systematic manner in order to critically assess and assemble relevant actualities and build up a structured review process. The research objectives are outline as follows;

- To define human resource management, human resource planning and explain the purpose, benefits and drawbacks of human resource planning.
- To describe the aspect of linking organisational strategy and human resource planning and discuss the steps involved in human resource planning process.
- To describe operational activities such as manufacturing/production, distribution, marketing and selling and their implementation process towards achieving operational objectives.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Achieving successful implementation of large scale enterprises' operational activities requires a pre human resource planning in order to make available, the necessary personnel and skills so as to effect such implementation. The notion of competitive advantage has created diligence in enterprises operations since the business environment is clustered with intense competitive dynamics. High quality employees whose knowledge capital is enriched with both tacit and explicit are a desire of large scale enterprises and a pride of successful organisations. Considering the relevance of this study in the business world, it is noteworthy to large scale enterprises and all business organisations since the implementation of their

operational activities cannot be accomplished without effective human resource planning which makes available competent personnel to undertake such tasks. The study is also important to management professionals, specifically human resource management practitioners as they are the technocrats in managing enterprises' workforce.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Human resource planning must have been applied in a general sense ever since people have collaborated in working groups. The idea itself is, therefore, certainly not new. The modern version of HR planning as we know it developed from studies carried out shortly after the last war by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relationships in subjects connected with labour wastage and turnover, and from operational research, which was initially concerned with the application of scientific and mathematical principles to solving the operational problems of military and industrial organizations. Inevitably, it was realized that the human resource component of these problems could not be ignored. Thus, in 1967 the Manpower Study Group emerged from the Operational Research Society to become the Manpower Society in 1970. At about the same time, in 1969, the Institute of Manpower Studies, now the Institute of Employment Studies was formed as a research unit. The importance of planning the material resources of an enterprise has never been in question, and much effort has been devoted to optimizing financial and capital resources. Paradoxically, the human resource, which is ultimately the most important and least predictable asset, has not attracted the same level of attention. Despite significant developments and recent changes of attitudes towards HR planning, it continues to arouse some scepticism, maybe because the sceptics believe that a process which ought to be largely common sense has become unnecessarily complicated, or that the many variable factors in an uncertain future make the returns on the investment of effort of very doubtful worth. (Tyson 2006).

**2.1.1 Definition of Human Resource Management:** Human resource management is the leadership and management of people within an organization using systems, methods, processes, and procedures that enable employees to achieve their own goals that in turn enhance the employee's positive contribution to the organization and its goals. Thus, human resource management is not an end in itself; it is a means of helping the organization to achieve its primary organizational objectives. If employee goals are ignored in

the system, then worker performance may decline, or employees may even leave the organization. The role of human resource management is therefore critical to the success indeed, even the very survival of the organization (Edvinsson, n.d.)

**2.1.2 Definition of Human Resource Planning:** Human resource planning is the process of analysing and identifying the need for and availability of human resources so that the organization can meet its objectives. The focus of HR planning is to ensure the organization has the right number of human resources, with the right capabilities, at the right times, and in the right places. In HR planning, an organization must consider the availability and allocation of people to jobs over long periods of time, not just for the next month or even the next year. Additionally, as part of the analyses, HR plans can include several approaches. Actions may include shifting employees to other jobs in the organization, laying off employees or otherwise cutting back the number of employees, retraining present employees, and/or increasing the number of employees in certain areas. Factors to consider include the current employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities and the expected vacancies resulting from retirements, promotions, transfers, and discharges. To do this, HR planning requires efforts by HR professionals working with executives and managers. The HR Best Practices box illustrates how several firms have made HR planning important (Mathis and Jackson, 2010).

**2.1.3 Purpose of Human Resource Planning (HRP):** The main purpose of HRP is to support the organisation's objective of securing a competitive advantage. Donald Burr, the Founder of People Express, set out a long-term HRP at an early stage of his company's development to stay non-union, pay lower salaries, and have broad job categories and work within teams. This has led the organisation to compete successfully through lower people costs and has given a sustained competitive advantage (Ulrich, 1987).

There are four main general objectives in developing an HRP:

- **Continuity flow:** To get the right people in the right place at the right time with the necessary skills. This involves policies in respect of recruitment, succession planning and training.
- **Maintenance:** To retain the stability in the workforce through pay and benefits, and individual career planning.

- **Response to change:** To put into effect changes that comes about from major operational strategies. These can involve re-location, re-training or re-deployment.
- **Control:** To ensure that staffs move in the right direction through the establishment of standards, performance control systems and building long-term employee relationships.

The detail and direction of each of these will be fashioned by the organisation's overall strategic plan. If the strategic plan indicates a development of new products or services, then the continuity plan is crucial in ensuring that staffs are recruited, trained and motivated in time for the launch. If divestment of certain activities is decided, then a strategy and detailed plan needs to be in place to prepare for the change, be it through redundancy or transfer of undertakings. If the strategic plan focuses on increased productivity or improved workforce relationships, then the HRP needs to be in place to accomplish this objective (Stredwick, 2005).

**2.1.4 Hard and Soft Human Resource Planning:** A distinction can be made between 'hard' and 'soft' human resource planning. The former is based on quantitative analysis to ensure that the right number of the right sort of people is available when needed. The latter, as described by Marchington and Wilkinson (1996), 'is more explicitly focused on creating and shaping the culture of the organization so that there is a clear integration between corporate goals and employee values, beliefs and behaviours'. But as they point out, the soft version becomes virtually synonymous with the whole area of human resource management (Marchington and Wilkinson, 1996).

### **2.1.5 Benefits and Drawbacks of Human Resource Planning**

#### **2.1.6. Benefits**

HRP, in both its traditional and more contemporary forms, can be perceived to have a number of distinct advantages. Firstly, it is argued that planning can help to reduce uncertainty as long as plans are adaptable. Although unpredictable events do occur, the majority of organisational change does not happen overnight so the planning process can provide an element of control, even if it is relatively short term. Taylor (2002: 73–74) suggests that in the HR field there is potentially more scope for change and adaptation in six months than there is in relation to capital investment in new plant and machinery. Thus he argues that

many of the assumptions about the difficulties of planning generally are less relevant to HR (Taylor 2002). Other advantages relate to the contribution of planning to organisational performance. For example, the planning process can make a significant contribution to the integration of HR policies and practices with each other and with the business strategy, i.e. horizontal and vertical integration. Marchington and Wilkinson (2002: 280) suggest that HR plans can be developed to 'fit' with strategic goals or they can contribute to the development of the business strategy, but conclude that either way, HRP is perceived as a major facilitator of competitive advantage. Another way that HRP can contribute is by helping to build flexibility into the organisation, either through the use of more flexible forms of work or through identification of the skills and qualities required in employees. IRS (2002c) report that a number of organisations have predicted that jobs are likely to change radically over the next few years and so are using selection techniques to assess core values rather than job-specific skills.

### ***2.1.7 Drawbacks***

One of the key problems with planning relates to the difficulties of developing accurate forecasts in a turbulent environment but this does not reduce the need for it. Rothwell (1995: 178) suggests that 'the need for planning may be in inverse proportion to its feasibility', while Liff (2000: 96) argues that 'the more rapidly changing environment, makes the planning process more complex and less certain, but does not make it less important or significant'. Bramham (1988, 1989) states that the process is more important in a complex environment and uses a navigation metaphor to emphasise the point: This metaphor suggests that HRP can make a significant contribution to the achievement of strategic goals but does imply that the destination remains constant even if other factors change. It also suggests that the person responsible for planning has sufficient information on which to make accurate judgements. Sisson and Storey (2000) argue that the planning process is based on two, highly questionable assumptions: firstly, that the organisation has the necessary personnel information to engage in meaningful HR and succession planning; and secondly, that there are clear operational plans flowing from the business strategy. Furthermore, they suggest that business planning is incremental rather than linear and therefore 'the implication is that the would-be planner will never have the neat and tidy business plan that much of the

prescriptive literature takes for granted' (p. 55). Other key criticisms of the process relate particularly to the difficulties of forecasting accurately. Mintzberg (1994) highlights problems in predicting not only the changes to come but also the type of changes, i.e. whether they are likely to be repeated or are a one-off event. Incorrect forecasts can be expensive but accurate forecasts might provide only limited competitive advantage if other organisations also adopt them: Furthermore, Mintzberg (1994) argues that the reliability of forecasts diminishes as the time-scale of projections increases: two or three months may be 'reasonable' but three or four years is 'hazardous'. This is because predictions are frequently based on extrapolations from the past, adjusted by assumptions about the future so there is considerable room for error in both.

**2.2 Linking Organisational Strategy to Human Resource Planning:** To ensure that appropriate personnel are available to meet the requirement set during the strategic planning process, human resource managers engage in employment planning. The purpose of this planning effort is to determine what HRM requirements exist for current and future supplies and demand for workers. For example, if a company has set as one of its goal to expand its production capabilities over the next five years, such action will require that skilled employees be available to handle the jobs. After this assessment, employment planning matches the supplies and demands for labour and support the people component (DeCenzo and Robbins 2010).

### **2.2.1 Steps involved in Human Resource Planning Process**

**2.2.2 Assessing Current Human Resources:** Assessing current human resources begins by developing a profile of the organisation's current employees. The internal analysis includes information about the workers and the skills they currently possess. In an era of sophisticated human resource information systems software (HRIS), it is not too difficult for most organisations to generate an effective and detail human resources inventory report. The input to this report would be derived from forms completed by employees and checked by supervisors. Such reports would include a complete list of all employees by name, education, training, prior employment, current position, performance rating, salary level, languages spoken, capabilities and specialised skills. For example, if internal translators were needed for supplies,

customers, or employee assistance, a contact list could be developed. From a planning viewpoint, this input is valuable in determining what skills are currently available in the organisation. This report also has value in other HRM activities, such as selecting individuals for training and development, promotion and transfer. The completed profile of the human resources inventory can also provide crucial information for identifying current or future threats to the organisation's ability to successfully meet its goals. The organisation can use the information from the inventory to identify specific variables that may have a particular relationship, for example, to training needs, productivity improvement or succession planning. An inventory might reveal poor customer service skills, a threat that can adversely affect the organisation's performance if it begins to permeate the entire organisation (DeCenzo and Robbins 2010).

**2.2.3 Scenario Planning:** Scenario planning is simply an assessment of the environmental changes that are likely to affect the organization so that a prediction can be made of the possible situations that may have to be dealt with in the future. The scenario may list a range of predictions so that different responses can be considered. The scenario is best based on systematic environmental scanning, possibly using the PEST approach (an assessment of the political, economic, social and technological factors that might affect the organization). The implications of these factors on the organization's labour markets and what can be done about any human resource issues can then be considered (Armstrong 2009).

**2.2.4 Determining the Demand for Human Resources:** The demand for employees can be calculated for an entire organization and/or for individual units in the organization. For example, a forecast might indicate that a firm needs 125 new employees next year, or that it needs 25 new people in sales and customer service, 45 in production, 20 in accounting and information systems, 2 in HR, and 33 in the warehouse. The unit breakdown obviously allows HR planners to better pinpoint the specific skills needed than does the aggregate method. Demand for human resources can be forecast by considering specific openings that are likely to occur. The openings (or demands) are created when new jobs are being created or current jobs are being reduced. Additionally, forecasts must consider when employees leave positions because of promotions, transfers, turnovers, and terminations. An analysis is used to develop decision rules (or "fill rates") for each job or level. For example, a decision rule for a financial institution

might state that 50% of branch supervisor openings will be filled through promotions from customer service tellers, 25% through promotions from personal bankers, and 25% from new hires. Forecasters must be aware of multiple effects throughout the organization, because as people are promoted from within, their previous positions become available. Continuing the example, forecasts for the need for customer service tellers and personal bankers would also have to be developed. The overall purpose of the forecast is to identify the needs for human resources by number and type for the forecasting period (Mathis ad Jackson, 2010).

**2.2.5 Predicting the Future Supply of Human Resources:** Knowing your staffing needs satisfies only half the staffing equation. Next, you have to estimate the likely supply of both inside and outside candidates. Most firms start with the inside candidates. The main task here is determining which current employees might be qualified for the projected openings. For this you need to know current employees skills sets and their current qualifications. Sometimes it's obvious how you have to proceed. When Google's founders wanted a replacement for CEO Eric Schmidt, they chose one of their own. Sometimes who to choose is not so obvious. Here, managers turn to qualifications (or skills) inventories. These contain data on employees' performance records, educational background, and promotability. Whether manual or computerized, these help managers determine which employees are available for promotion or transfer (Dessler 2013). There is a huge amount of information available to assist in the forecasting external supplies of labour. State and local economic and workforce development agencies typically can provide data on the labour supply availability. The department of labour has data available for virtually any location and publishes annual forecasts of labour supply by occupation, and the Bureau of Labour Statistics provides a wide variety of labour force information that is available online. In addition, various professional organizations regularly analyse labour availability within their respective professions. The availability of external candidates is affected by: Economic conditions, unemployment rates, college and high school graduation rates in the relevant labour market, net migration in or out of the area, relative skill levels of potential candidates in the labour market, competition for labour in the labour market, changes in the skill requirements of the organization's potential job openings (Mahapatro 2010).

**2.2.6 Matching Labour Demand and Supply:** The objective of employment planning is to bring together the forecasts of future demand for workers and the supply of human resources, both current and future. The result of this effort is to pinpoint shortages both in number and in kind, to highlight areas where overstaffing may exist (now or in the near future), and to keep abreast of the opportunities existing in the labour market to hire qualified employees, either to satisfy current needs or to stockpile potential candidates for the future. Special attention must be paid to determining shortages. Should an organisation find that the demand for human resources could possibly increase in the future, it must be prepared to hire or contract with additional staff or transfer people within the organisation, or both, to balance the numbers, skills, mix, and quality of its human resources. An often overlooked action, but one that may be necessary because of inadequate availability of human resources, is to change the organisation's objectives. Just as inadequate financial resources can restrict the growth and opportunities available to an organisation, the shortages of right types of employees can also act as such a constraint, even leading to changing the organisation's objectives. When dealing with employment planning, another outcome is also likely; the existence of an oversupply. An organisation may have too many employees or employees with the wrong skills. When this happens, HRM must undertake the difficult task of laying off workers. Lay-offs might occur as a result of financial difficulty, mergers, plant closing, offshoring, changes in technology that replace workers or organisational restructuring. It is estimated that over 50 percent of employees have experienced layoff due to downsizing or restructuring at some point in their careers. The decision of who to dismiss is a difficult one. The decision may be based on seniority, job performance, or the position within the organisation. If a union is present, there will usually be an agreement to make the decision based on seniority with the most recent hires being laid off first (DeCenzo and Robbins 2010).

### **2.2.7 Developing HR Staffing and Action Plans**

**2.2.8 Recruiting:** Once the required number and kind of human resources are determined, the management has to find the places where required human resources are or will be available and also find the means of attracting them towards the organization before selecting suitable candidates for jobs. All this process is generally known as recruitment. Some people use the term 'recruitment' for employment.

Recruitment is only one of the steps in the entire employment process. Some others use the term recruitment for selection. These two terms are not one and the same either. Technically speaking, the function of recruitment precedes the selection function and it includes only finding, developing the sources of prospective employees and attracting them to apply for jobs in an organization, whereas selection is the process of finding out the most suitable candidate to the job out of the candidates attracted. Formal definition of recruitment would give clear cut idea about the function of recruitment. Recruitment is defined as, “a process to discover the sources of manpower to meet the requirements of the staffing schedule and to employ effective measures for attracting that manpower in adequate numbers to facilitate effective selection of an efficient workforce (Mahapatro 2010).

**2.2.9 Selecting:** The crucial importance of selecting people who can meet the requirements prescribed in the job description and person specification hardly needs to be stressed. It is equally evident that mistakes in selection can have very serious consequences for corporate effectiveness. Such mistakes may adversely affect colleagues, subordinates and clients. Employee incompetence may lead to costly mistakes, loss and waste of valuable resources, accidents, avoidable expenditure on training, etc. Employee selectors face an inevitable dilemma. They have to carry out a vitally important task, but one that is at the same time fraught with problems to which there are either no answers or no easy answers. The abiding problem is the dependence on subjective human judgement. In choosing methods of employee selection the selectors need to find methods which are practicable enough to be used in the short duration and restricted environment of the selection process and which provide the closest possible correlation between the predictor and the criteria for effective performance of the job. There are fundamental requirements by which the effectiveness of all selection methods have to be judged. These requirements are known as reliability and validity (Tyson 2006).

**2.3.0 Training:** Training refers to a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees 'learning of job related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviors that are critical for successful job performance. The goal of training is for employees to master the knowledge, skill, and behaviors emphasized in training programs and to apply them to their day-to-day activities. For a

company to gain a competitive advantage, its training has to involve more than just basic skill development. That is, to use training to gain a competitive advantage, a company should view training broadly as a way to create intellectual capital. Intellectual capital includes basic skills (skills needed to perform one's job), advanced skills (such as how to use technology to share information with other employees), an understanding of the customer or manufacturing system, and self-motivated creativity. Companies are experiencing great change due to new technologies, rapid development of knowledge, globalization of business, and development of e-commerce. Also, companies have to take steps to attract, retain, and motivate their work forces. Training is not a luxury; it is a necessity if companies are to participate in the global and electronic marketplaces by offering high-quality products and services! Training prepares employees to use new technologies, function in new work systems such as virtual teams, and communicate and cooperate with peers or customers who may be from different cultural backgrounds (Noe 2010).

**2.3.1 Rewarding:** The term 'reward management' was first used in 1988 by Armstrong and Murlis to denote the development of a new field or collective set of activities to emerge within the arena of HRM. The new term recognised that static techniques, principally concerned with salary administration, were fast giving way to a more dynamic approach emphasising the use of pay (and other rewards) in a flexible and innovative way with the aim of improving individual, team and organisational performance. The activity 'reward management', has been described as encompassing not only the development, maintenance, communication, and evaluation of reward processes, but also concerned with the development of appropriate organisational cultures, underpinning core values and increasing the commitment and motivation of employees (Armstrong and Murlis, 1998). Today's competitive conditions make it more difficult for employers to acquire and retain experienced and productive talent. The growing awareness that finding, motivating, developing, and keeping employees is a key component of business success has raised expectations for human resource (HR) departments. Today, the HR function is being scrutinized more closely, with expectations that it will make a contribution to the business—just like finance, accounting, marketing, and sales. The reward programs that have been the traditional domain of

HR (e.g., pay, benefits, training) represent a significant and growing investment for an organization. In general, these programs have been managed discretely rather than as part of an overall strategy (Chingos, 2002).

**2.3.2 Retention Strategies in Reducing Voluntary Turnover:** In any case, given the variety of things prompting employees to leave voluntarily, what can one do to manage voluntary turnover? There is no silver bullet. The manager should understand that retaining employees is a talent management issue, and that the best retention strategies are therefore multifunctional. For example, employees who aren't interested in their jobs, sense that they're not suited for their jobs, or who feel undercompensated are more likely to leave. Employers can only address such issues by instituting effective and comprehensive talent management (recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, and compensation) practices. Put another way, turnovers (both voluntary and involuntary) often start with poor selection decisions, compounded by inadequate training, insensitive appraisals, and inequitable pay. Therefore trying to formulate a "retention strategy" without considering all of one's HR practices is generally futile. Effectively conducted exit interviews provide useful insights into potential turnover problem areas. Many employers routinely administer attitude surveys to monitor employees' feelings about matters such as supervision and pay. Open door policies and anonymous "hotlines" help management identify and remedy morale problems before they get out of hand. Sometimes, analysing the situation leads to simple solutions. For example, Walmart discovered it could significantly reduce voluntary turnover by providing aggressively realistic previews about the job's demands and work hours. Then, having identified potential problems, the employer can take steps to boost employee retention (Dessler 2013).

### **2.3.3 Implementation of Operational Activities (Manufacturing/Production, Distribution, Marketing and Selling) towards Achieving Operational Objectives**

**2.3.4 Manufacturing/Production:** The traditional view of manufacturing management began in the 18th century when Adam Smith recognized the economic benefits of specialization of labour. He recommended breaking jobs down into subtasks and reassigning workers to specialized tasks in which they become highly skilled and efficient. In the early 20th century, Fredrick W. Taylor implemented

Smith's theories and crusaded for scientific management in the manufacturing sectors of his day. From then until about 1930, the traditional view prevailed, and many techniques we still use today were developed. Production management became the more widely accepted term from 1930s through the 1950s. As Frederick Taylor's work became more widely known, managers developed techniques that focused on economic efficiency in manufacturing. Workers were 'put under a microscope' and studied in great detail to eliminate wasteful efforts and achieve greater efficiency. At this same time, however, management also began discovering that workers have multiple needs, not just economic needs. Psychologists, sociologists, and other social scientists began to study people and human behaviour in the work environment. In addition, economists, mathematicians, and computer scientists contributed newer, more sophisticated analytical approaches. With the 1970's emerge two distinct changes in our views. The most obvious of these, reflected in the new name-operations management-was a shift in the service and manufacturing sectors of the economy. As the service sector became more prominent, the change from 'production' to 'operations' emphasized the broadening of our field to service organizations. The second, more subtle change was the beginning of an emphasis on synthesis, rather than just analysis, in management practices. These days, organizational goals are more focused to meet consumers' needs throughout the world (Roy 2005).

**2.3.5 Distribution:** Material distribution is a core supply chain function in most business operations. In the manufacturing industry, it is the movement of raw materials from the vendors' warehouses to factories, and of the finished goods from the factories to the distribution warehouses. In retail, such movements extend from vendors to the retailer's warehouses, and then to the stores. As a large retailer can have thousands of stores, supported by a large number of warehouses, the efficiency of the distribution of merchandise from warehouses to stores is very important and can have a substantial impact on profitability. Transportation management functions address these business needs to move goods and merchandise from one location to another, pay for such moves, buy the required shipping capacity, track the movements of material in transit, and manage the transportation assets if they were owned by the retailer (Sehgal 2009). A distributor is typically an organization that takes ownership of significant

inventories of products that they buy from producers and sell to consumers. In addition to product promotion and sales, other functions the distributor performs are inventory management, warehouse operations, and product transportation as well as customer support and post-sales service. A distributor can also be an organization that only brokers a product between the producer and the customer and never takes ownership of that product. This kind of distributor performs mainly the functions of product promotion and sales. In both cases, as the needs of customers evolve and the range of available products changes, the distributor is the agent that continually tracks customer needs and matches them with products available (Hugos 2003).

**2.2.6 Marketing:** Marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and exchanging products and services of value freely with others. Marketing management is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Coping with exchange processes calls for a considerable amount of work and skill. We see marketing management as the art and science of applying core marketing concepts to choose target markets and get, keep, and grow customers through creating, delivering, and communicating superior customer value (Kotler 2001). Marketing implementation is the process that turns marketing plans into action assignments and ensures they accomplish the plan's stated objectives. A brilliant strategic marketing plan counts for little if not implemented properly. Strategy addresses the what and why of marketing activities; implementation addresses the who, where, when, and how. They are closely related: One layer of strategy implies certain tactical implementation assignments at a lower level. For example, top management's strategic decision to "harvest" a product must be translated into specific actions and assignments. Companies today are striving to make their marketing operations more efficient and their return on marketing investment more measurable. Marketing costs can amount to as much as a quarter of a company's total operating budget. Marketers need better templates for marketing processes, better management of marketing assets, and better allocation of marketing resources (Kotler and Keller 2012).

**2.3.7 Selling and Sales Management:** Sales may be an expensive part of the marketing mix, but the sales

function is important for many other reasons than just cost. The field sales force is responsible for managing the personal relationship between the company and the customers. From an integrated marketing communication perspective, salespeople bring the dialogue to life. How they go about their job of selling the product must be consistent with the positioning strategy of the firm and with messages sent through other channels. Salespeople have further responsibilities, such as coordinating the firm's actions in order to satisfy customer requirements and gaining customer information (from their dialogue) and sharing that information so that appropriate product, marketing, and investment decisions can be made. In many cases, salespeople have the field responsibility of deciding which accounts to work with and which accounts to bypass. Other elements in the marketing communication mix do not have the same level of individual dialogue that enables the selling organization to adapt in the same manner as salespeople. Further, the sales force has the responsibility for determining specific account strategy, particularly with respect to how the relationship will be managed. Sales is also responsible for implementing the account strategy and ensuring customer satisfaction (Dwyer and Tanner Jr, 2002).

Our critical examination of reviewed literature disclosed facts about the relevance of human resource planning, and stress the need for such venture before a project could be effectively implemented. Assembled information mentioned key issues that support human resource management practitioners in developing operational, tactical and strategic plans towards the implementation of enterprises activities. The facts gathered disclose inaccuracy in forecasting for the required personnel as the fissure in this study which we seek to discourse.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

Operational activities in large scale enterprises serve as a major contributor towards achieving enterprises' strategic objectives. The growing concern for modern business practitioners and managers of the various functional departments is that human resource planning has a vital role towards the process since the effective implementation of such operational activities is orchestrated by the availability of trained and developed human resources, whose services should be attracted and retained by the enterprises. As a result of the growing concern, this study is built on a qualitative approach which prompts the retrieval of secondary sources published on the subject matter in order to analyse facts extracted to address the

challenges faced in planning for the most precious resource of an enterprise. Analysis will be drawn from available relevant information extracted from marketing, human resource, production/operations management books in order to establish a meaningful conclusion.

#### **4.0 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Planning is a vital instrument and its significance starts from our personal activities to employment responsibilities. Successful achievement of enterprises operational objectives stem from effective human resource planning, since the implementation of enterprises activities cannot be actualised without the availability of trained and qualified personnel with the skills and competences required to accomplish such tasks. Managing the human resource planning process within the HR department is a critical issue which involves conscious thought in ensuring that the required personnel are available at the right time and in the right places, doing the right thing, which leads to the successful achievement of enterprises objectives. The HRP process is engulfed with the benefits of the availability of qualified personnel with the necessary talents (tacit and explicit) that enable an enterprise to achieve competitive advantage. The major drawback could be inaccurate forecasting which restrain an enterprise from securing the required talents and as a result; achieving effective implementation of operational activities could be a challenge.

Linking organisational strategy to human resource planning is a process that leads to successful implementation of enterprises activities. The action of the HRP proceeds from an existing strategy which gives a clear pathway towards the organisation's direction. The first step of the HRP process requires a careful assessment of the existing workforce, that is, an examination of the current skills and competences available in the organisation. It continues with scenario planning which states the political, economic, social and technological implications on HRP in the business environment. HRP further consider the demand for human resource and the supply of human resources internally and externally. Finally HRP deals with matching labour demand and supply and ensures that supply of labour do not exceed the demand because if it does, it will cause over staffing which will have a negative impact on firms operations. Also, the supply of labour should not be less than the required number of personnel for enterprises activities. The HR staffing plan which involves recruiting, selecting, training and rewarding personnel is also a key issue in the HRP process and HR practitioners must ensure that retention

mechanisms are developed and maintained to prevent turnover.

Implementing operational activities necessitates highly trained and qualified personnel to handle such task. Manufacturing operations are successful as a result of competent personnel involved in the various production processes to ensure that quantity and quality standards are met. Distributing such products encompasses several channels (air, land, sea and rail transportation) and such processes should be manned by diligent workforce to ensure effective and efficient delivery. The marketing aspect of the product reveals its availability and persuades customers through intensive advertising campaign to develop interests in buying. Selling actualise the operation by taking the product to the customer's doorstep (for doorstep selling and some easily conveyed products). Sales force must ensure that their actions are consistent with the organisation's strategy and with the message portrayed about the product in advertising campaign. The aforementioned operational activities can be effectively implemented with the availability of skills and competences required to accomplish such tasks, a process that is addressed by human resource planning.

## 5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Large scale enterprises realises growth through effective implementation of operational activities, which are managed by diligent personnel made available by human resource planning process. The retrieved secondary data from published books on human resource management and other management disciplines reveals the significance of the subject matter and describes human resource planning as a key component in every enterprise and that its action necessitates growth. Elements in the reviewed literature states that human resource planning cannot be undertaken without the consideration of an assessment of the internal skills and competences in an enterprise and also the development of forecasts for the demand and supply of labour. Evidences also reveals that the availability of trained and qualified personnel can be fetched through recruitment and selection which further requires training and a satisfactory compensation to stimulate performance, retain high quality employees and prevent labour turnover. Operational activities such as manufacturing, distribution, marketing and selling can be successfully implemented as a result of proper human resource planning and also inaccurate forecasting which was initially identified as a fissure in this study has been addressed since accurate forecasting for the demand and supply of

personnel indicates successful implementation of firms' operational activities. In essence, HRP has a positive effect in the implementation of operational activities in large scale enterprises, since it makes available, the required personnel with skills and competences to accomplish organisational objectives. This study emanates from a qualitative research perspective but further study could be undertaken with the subject matter using empirical approach to address specific issues in human resource planning.

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