

Human Resource Development and Employee Resourcefulness of Hotels in the South-South of Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper empirically examined the relationship between human resource development (cognitive, capabilities and behavioural development) and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria. The population comprised 1108 employees from fourteen hotels out of which a sample of 294 workers was generated using the Taro Yamen sample size derivation formula, however only 261 questionnaire copies retrieved from the field were utilized for the study. The Spearman's rank order correlation was used to test the three null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that all dimensions of human resource development had significant but moderate impact on employee resourcefulness of hotels. In conclusion, it was stated that human resource development as expressed through the cognitive, capabilities and behavioural development of the workers drives their competence, confidence and skill level and through that contributes towards increased levels of employee resourcefulness and was recommended that training and development packages and content be aligned with the market needs and expectations of the business context in a way that allows for effective repositioning of the organizations human resource to tackle related gaps in human resource functionality and resourcefulness.

Keywords: *Human resource development, employee resourcefulness, cognitive, capabilities, behavioural.*

Introduction

The changes and growing competition within the Nigerian hospitality industry is such that anchors the organizations survival and success on the level of resourcefulness particularly that which is expressed at the individual level. Resourcefulness is a dynamic attribute of the employee. This is because resourcefulness suggests that workers have capacity for initiative and creativity in their roles and responsibilities (Basadur, 2004). The ability to act in a way that advances the quality of the organization implies not only a level of creativity but also indicates the workers sense of belongingness or commitment to the organization. Employee resourcefulness is as such required and preferred factor of the organization as it offers actions which could build and advance the competitiveness of the organization (Waal, 2007; Rod & Ashill, 2009).

King and Anderson (2002) observed that the major problem of most organizations especially hotels is their inadequacy in service offerings as a result of poor level of resourcefulness of employees in addressing customer expectations and hotel features, thus leading to loss of market. The poor expressions or manifestations of resourcefulness and the lack of initiative on the part of employees present a work environment which is highly regimented, rigid and low in the expression of innovation or change (Akpabio, 2007). This can be considered as unhealthy for competitiveness. Salami (2013) observed that why well recognized hotels in times back have continued to decline at an unprecedented rate is their inability to address challenges or drive the expression of resourcefulness within these organizations.

Armstrong (2001) identified the human resource development as a fundamental action geared towards moulding the behaviour, and attitude of workers towards their work. From his perspective, human resource development advances the required shift in workers disposition towards their work in ways that are captured in the depth of their creativity and confidence in their own capacities. Hence, Human resource development which advances the cognitive features of the workers, their capacity for functionality and their behaviour in terms of service offerings and attitudes towards customers, would go a long way in advancing and projecting the organization towards preferred outcomes (Jacobs, 2014; Mosoma, 2014). Unfortunately, there appears to be scarce interest in the link between

human resource development and resourcefulness as expressed by employees of hotels in Nigeria thus creating a gap in knowledge. This study addressed this gap through its investigation of the variables within the context of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

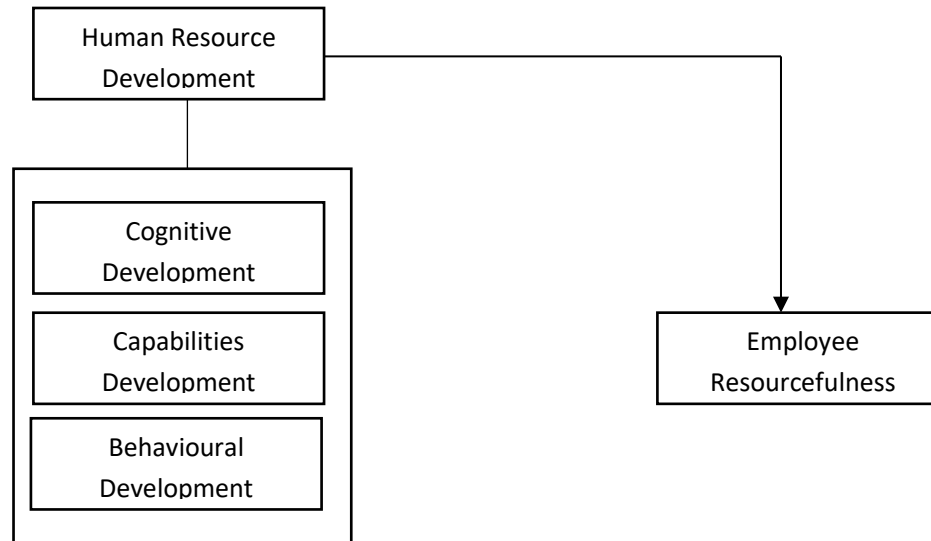


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between human resource development and employee resourcefulness.
Source: Researcher's desk (2020) with dimension sourced from Halpern (2002).

Purpose and Objectives

The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between human resource development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.
- ii. Determine the relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.
- iii. Ascertain the relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are put forward accordingly:

- i. What is the relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria?

Theoretical Foundation – The Resource-Based View Theory

Barney (cited in Makadok, 2001) posits that the resources which determine competitive advantage have to meet and drive the needs of the organization. Lee, Lee and Pennings (2001) argued that the resource-based view theory describes the organizations resources as key to its competitive advantage. However, by development, the theory identifies the need for resources to be inimitable, rare and unique in nature and that the resources of the organization, if adequately developed and invested in, can serve to strategically position the organization within its market, while the development should focus on enhancing the qualities, expertise, and capabilities of the employees in such a way that they can make meaningful and rare contributions towards the organization and such that their skills are not easily imitated or transferred.

Human Resource Development

There exists a wide and well documented content on human resource development. In the same vein, there also appears to be a congruence of these studies on the conceptualization of the variable as being concerned with the actions and functions geared towards improving the capacities and knowledgeability of the organizations employees (Sharma, 2004; Tran, 2015; Nickson, 2007). Another position on human resource development (Halpern, 2002; Haslinda, 2009) advances a view that emphasizes on the features of such development in the form of (a) cognitive development (b) capabilities development, and (c) behavioural development. These specify key areas and focus for development in the employees. These provide a basis for assessing the effectiveness of training programs and how well related designs actually contribute and advance development in the employees.

Cognitive Development

This describes the actions of the organization focused on driving and enhancing the knowledgeability and acquaintance of the organizations employees with its structures, processes and overall systems (Halpern, 2002). Generally, cognitive development refers to the actions of enhancing the workers awareness and understanding of their roles, relationships and the functioning of the organization in such a way that creates a heightened sense of consciousness of what is expected of them within the workplace.

Capabilities Development

One of the major focuses of human resource development is on the advancing of the capabilities of the employees. Improving on the capabilities of the employees implies strengthening their levels of functionalities through the advancing of their competencies and skills. Capabilities development enables workers to be more effective in their role disposition and thus is an important and integral aspect of human resource development (Harrison, 2000).

Behavioural Development

Behavioural development describes the actions and programs designed to facilitate desirable and preferred workers attitudes within the workplace. Halpern (2002) opined that the attitude of the employee is important to the health and wellbeing of the organisation and also for maintaining the customer base of the organization. This is particularly so as employees are often in the frontline of addressing customer requests and needs hence their attitudes and behaviour plays a significant role in sustaining good or healthy relationships between the organization and its customers.

Employee Resourcefulness

The resourcefulness of the employee is imperative to creating unique customer experiences that drive the success and growth of the organization. Employee resourcefulness describes the expression of creativity and inventiveness in the behaviour and actions of the employee in their roles and functions (Janssen, 2003). Resourcefulness is a pointer to the employees support for the organization and their level of initiative in the performance of their responsibilities. Janssen (2003) observed that resourcefulness is also a reflection of the workers attachment and sense of duty to the organization as it also suggests that they are willing to engage in behaviour that although necessary, is non-contractual and may not advance any form of reward. The expression of resourcefulness also suggests that the

workers identify with the organization and as such have a higher tendency to be altruistic and supportive of the goals and objectives of the organization (Jiang *et al.*, 2012).

Human Resource Development and Employee Resourcefulness

Organizations which are constantly investing in the development and effectiveness of their human resource have a higher chance of surviving and sustaining their operations and functions. The human resource development enhances the workers level of competence in dealing with situations and occurrences which may or may not have been expected. This is as Vince (2014) argued that human resource development should aim at equipping the workers for the expected and unexpected. Human resource development as such should support and encourage employees to be resourceful and able to engage their minds and skills in ways that are unique, beyond just traditional processes and as such creative (Haslinda, 2009). However, there appears to be a dearth in empirical studies which have addressed the relationship between human resource development and employee resourcefulness particularly the impact of cognitive, capabilities and behavioural development on employee resourcefulness in Nigerian organizations, especially hotels. In view of this observation, the following null hypotheses are postulated.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study is the cross-sectional survey design. Cross-sectional survey as suggested by Sekeram (2003) and Saunders *et al.*, (2003) is a study which its data are gathered just once or at one time. The study population comprised 1108 workers from fourteen hotels in the South-South of Nigeria. States such as Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo, Rivers, Cross-Rivers, and Baylesa were covered in this study Workers captured in the study comprised of all noted and registered regular staff of the hotel comprising of all personnel, and cadre of the workforce, however casual staff are exempted from the population. Hotels captured in the study, are each selected on the basis of their classification. However the classification and index ratings are based on the Hotelstar European Union criteria (www.hotelstars.eu) which is also considered as the threshold adopted within most African countries including Nigeria.

The sample size for this study was determined using the Taro Yamen formula. From a total population of 1108, the study determined 294 as the sample size for this study. The questionnaire adopted comprised of two sections for generating data on the sample characteristics and for generating data on the manifest properties of the constructs of the study. A 5-point scaling system based on the Likert 5 – point type was adopted where values are assigned for ease and effectiveness of analysis. Thus 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The instrument adapted in the measurement of human resource development is adopted from Halpern (2002) and specifies three main dimensions – (a) cognitive development, (b) capabilities development, and (c) behavioural development. Each dimension is operationalized using a 4-item instrument all designed to reflect distinct properties and how they are possibly expressed within the context of the study. The instrument utilized in the operationalization of employee resourcefulness is adapted from Dogan and Sahin (2011).

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha for Survey Instrument

Variables	Scale	Cronbach alpha
Cognitive Development	4	0.871
Capabilities Development	4	0.896
Behavioural Development	4	0.889
Employee Resourcefulness	4	0.915

Source: SPSS Output

Cronbach alphas for the study reveal substantial alphas depicting adequate reliability of the instruments.

DATA PRESENTATION

Cognitive development the first dimension of human resource development has four indicators. The first indicator “Training and development content are designed to address workers understanding of their roles” shows that (8.8%) respondents strongly disagree, (10.7%) disagree, (80.1%) agree on this item, while (.4%) strongly agree. The second indicator “Training is structured to enhance workers awareness of their responsibilities” shows that (8.0%) strongly disagree, (20.7%) disagree, (70.5%) agree and (.8%) strongly agree on the evident of this item in the organisation. The third indicator “The focus of training programs is often targeted at driving employee knowledge of the technicalities of their roles” reveals that (6.9%) strongly disagree, (9.2%) disagree, (83.1%) agree while (.8%) strongly agree on this item. The fourth indicator “Actions of development are hinged on improving workers level of discernment” reveals that (14.9%) strongly disagree, (26.4%) disagree, (56.7%) agree and (1.9%) strongly agree on the prevalent of this item in the organisation.

Capabilities development which is the second dimension of human resource development also has four indicators, the first item “Development features are patterned in line with addressing the deficiencies of the organization’s workers” reveals that (10.3%) strongly disagree on this item, (13.8%) disagree, (75.5%) agree, while (.4%) strongly agree. The second item on capabilities development “Development content is tailored to match the work needs of the workers” shows that (11.9%) strongly disagree, (14.2%) disagree, (72.8%) agree, and (1.1%) strongly agree on the evident of this item. The third indicator “Development design is linked to building the capacities and expertise of the worker” in this item (4.6%) strongly disagree, (13.8%) disagree, (81.2%) agree which demonstrates that the development design is linked to the capacities and expertise of the worker, while (.4%) strongly agree on the item. The fourth indicator “Development content is geared towards to improving the skills and knowledge of the workers” in this item (28%) strongly disagree, (25.3%) disagree, (45.2%) agree, (1.5%) strongly agree on this item.

While behavioural development the third dimension of human resource development has four indicators; on the first item “The development of workers is channelled towards building workers relationships” shows that (10%) strongly disagree, (17.2%) disagree, (72.8%) agree on this item. The second item “The development of workers is designed to address workers conflict issues within the organization” the respondents that strongly disagree are (9.2%), (21.1%) disagree, (.8%) undecided, while (68.2%) agree on this item. The third indicator “The development content is concerned with fostering healthier interactions between workers and clients” on this item the respondents that strongly disagree are (5.7%), (14.2%) disagree, (79.3%) agree, (.8%) strongly agree on this item. The fourth indicator “Development programs are well aligned with addressing workers attitudes within the organization” (22.2%) strongly disagree, (27.6%) disagree, (49%) agree, while (1.1%) strongly agree on this item.

Employee resourcefulness has four indicators, on the first item “I enjoy my job and responsibilities” (13.8%) strongly disagree, (37.5%) disagree, (48.3%) agree, while (.4%) strongly agree on this item. The second indicator “I am driven about ways of improving my tasks” the respondents that strongly disagree on this item are (12.3%), (41.8%) disagree, (44.4%) agree, while (1.5%) strongly agree. The third indicator “I feel a strong sense of responsibility for improving the features of my work” on this item, (6.9%) strongly disagree, (26.1%) disagree, (65.5%) agree, while (1.5%) strongly agree. The fourth indicator “I am interested in advancing new ways of efficiently carrying out my roles” shows that (23.4%) strongly disagree on this item, (18.8%) disagree, (55.9%) agree, while (1.9%) strongly agree.

RESULTS

The outcome of the field work showed that out of 294 questionnaire copies distributed to the target organizations, only 270 were successfully retrieved. Out of 270 copies of questionnaire only 261 copies were considered as adequate and admissible and thus subsequently coded into the Statistical Package for the Social

Sciences (SPSS) version 24. This section details the result on the distribution and test for hypotheses – thus comprising of two sections – (a) the descriptive analysis, and (b) test for hypotheses.

Descriptive Analysis

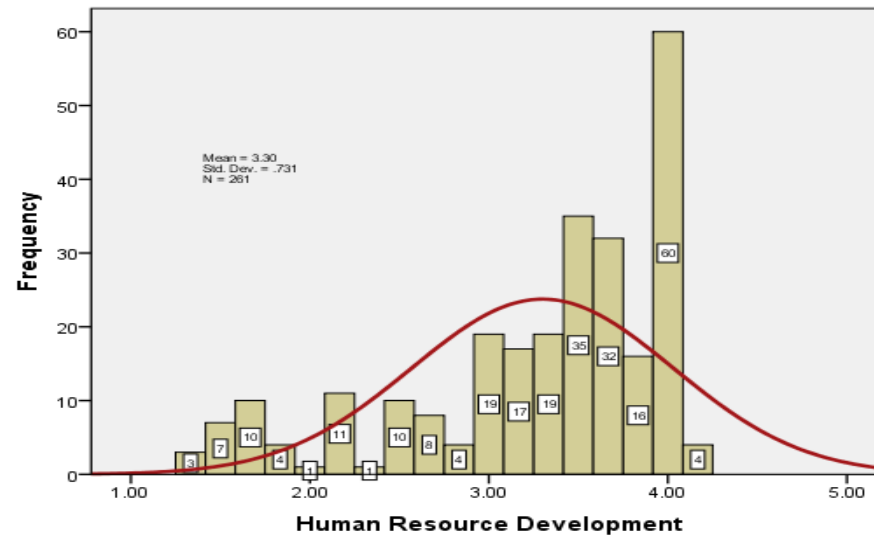


Figure 2: Histogram distribution for human resource development

The summary distribution for human resource development is illustrated on figure 2 – detailing the summary mean at $(x) = 3.30$ and standard deviation (SD) = 0.73050. The distribution demonstrates an overall level of appreciation and recognition of the variable as a fundamental feature or attribute of hotels examined in the study.

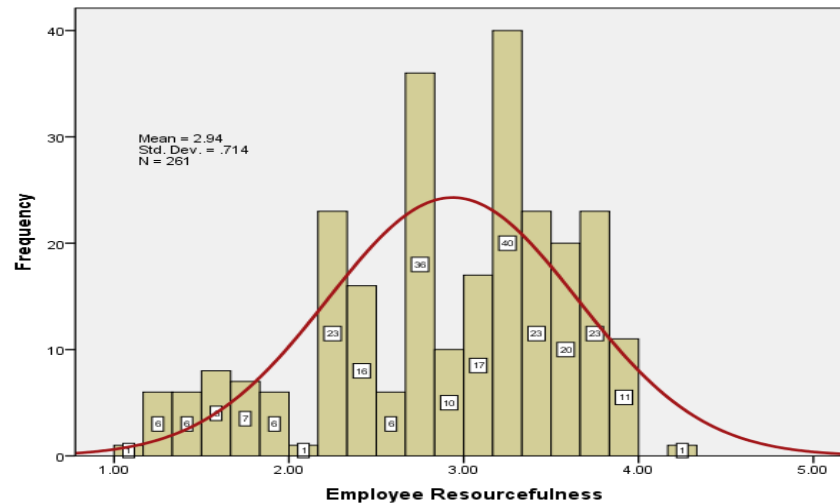


Figure 3: Histogram distribution for employee resourcefulness

The summary distribution for employee resourcefulness as depicted on figure 3 supports the position of employee resourcefulness as an evident feature characterizing the hotels examined in this study. The investigation shows that at a mean distribution of $x = 2.94$ and a standard deviation of $SD = 0.714$, workers within the organization can be described as being resourceful.

Test for Hypotheses

Table 2: Relationship between Cognitive Development and Employee Resourcefulness

		CogDev	Resource
Spearman's rho	CogDev	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.488**
		N	.000
Resource		Correlation Coefficient	.488**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000
			N
			261

Source: SPSS Output

Dancy and Reidy (2007) scale adopted as the benchmark for assessing the power of the relationship. The test for research question 1 on the relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness reveals a moderate positive relationship at $\rho = .488^{**}$.

However in testing the hypothesis, the decision rule of $P_v \leq 0.05$ was adopted as the basis for the rejection of the null hypotheses and the Dancy & Reidy (2007) scale for the strength of the relationship. The test for the relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness reveals the relationship between both variables to be significant and at the same time positive. The evidence shows a $\rho = 0.488$ and $P_v = 0.00$; which based on the adopted ρ

interpretation threshold can be described as a moderate relationship. Based on the evidence presented, the null hypothesis was rejected. The study there stated an alternate hypothesis based on the result.

HA₁: There is a significant relationship between cognitive development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

Table 3: Relationship between Capabilities Development and Employee Resourcefulness

		CapDev	Resource	
Spearman's rho	CapDev	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	261	
	Resource	Correlation Coefficient	.440**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	261	261

Source: SPSS Output

The test for research question 2 on the relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness reveals a moderate positive relationship at rho=.440**.

Meanwhile on the test for the hypothesis 2, the evidence on the relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness shows that capabilities development has a significant and positive relationship with employee resourcefulness at a rho = 0.440 and Pv = 0.000. Results indicate that capabilities development contributes at a moderate extent to employee resourcefulness of hotels; hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis stated:

HA₂: There is a significant relationship between capabilities development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between Behavioural Development and Employee Resourcefulness

		BeDev	Resource	
Spearman's rho	BeDev	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	261	
	Resource	Correlation Coefficient	.477**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	261	261

Source: SPSS Output

The test for research question 3 on the relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness reveals a moderate positive relationship at rho=.477**.

Whereas the test on the hypothesis 3 on the relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness is revealed to be significant and positive where at a rho = 0.477 and Pv = 0.000, behavioural development is observed to contribute to employee resourcefulness. The evidence identifies behavioural development as a significant predictor of employee resourcefulness thus the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis stated:

HA₃: There is a significant relationship between behavioural development and employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

Drawing from the evidence on the test for the hypotheses and in line with the goal of addressing the research questions for this paper, the following findings are stated:

- i. Cognitive development contributes significantly and at a moderate extent to the employee resourcefulness hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.
- ii. Capabilities development contributes significantly and at a moderate extent to the employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.
- iii. Behavioural development contributes significantly and at a moderate extent to the employee resourcefulness of hotels in the South-South of Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The relationship between human resource development and employee resourcefulness is revealed to be significant where the evidence demonstrated that human resource development factors such as cognitive, capabilities and behavioural development significantly impact and enhance employee resourcefulness; hence a rejection of all related hypothetical statements. This is as human resources development concerned with the acquainting workers with their roles and enhancing their level of awareness, learning the skills needed for a particular job and also channelling their attitudes and behaviour in favourable and desirable ways towards the benefit of the organization, has a tendency for driving improved outcomes of inventiveness and creativity on the job. Human resource development is a process by which employees systematically acquire basic skills, knowledge and attitude for efficient performance of their duties. Human resources development program especially that geared towards advancing workers level of initiative and resourcefulness as noted by Riggs (2011) ensures and promotes employees capacity to adopt and express behaviour or attitudes that can be described as acceptable and desirable by the organization.

The imperatives of human resource development – as expressed through the cognitive, capabilities and behavioural perspective is more obvious given the growing complexity of the work environment, the rapid change in organization, the growing competition in the business context and advancement in technology. Human resource development helps to ensure that organization members take on new responsibilities and adapt to changing conditions. Supporting this view, Ibeku (2003) noted that workers who are developed and well trained have a higher tendency for confidence and self-efficacy in their jobs. According to him, the lack of confidence in oneself is a conditioning factor which may lead to poor resourcefulness and low performance outcomes owing to a poor level of self-esteem. According to him, human resource development increases the employee's belief that he knows what is expected of him regarding the job – thus facilitating confidence and a higher tendency for resourcefulness.

CONCLUSION

Human resource development as expressed through the cognitive, capabilities and behavioural development drives the competence, confidence and skill level of the organizations human resource and through that contributes towards increased levels of employee resourcefulness as expressed in the level of initiative, creativity and inventiveness in the organization.

RECOMMENDATION

In developing the cognitive, capabilities and behavioural features of the organizations human resource, it is recommended that training and development packages and content be aligned with the market needs and expectations of the business context. This suggests the need for organizations to engage actively in research and development (R&D) programs designed to capture integrate knowledge about the environment in a way that allows for effective repositioning of the organizations human resource to tackle related gaps in human resource functionality and resourcefulness.

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