

IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCE REFORMS, TRAINING, AND PERFORMANCE-BASED INCENTIVES TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY IN KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between human resource management (HRM) reforms and policy implementation effectiveness in the Nigerian Civil Service, with specific focus on Kaduna State public servants. Over the years, civil service reforms in Nigeria have emphasized capacity building, performance management, and incentive-based systems aimed at improving efficiency, accountability, and service delivery. However, challenges such as weak institutional capacity, inadequate training, limited motivation, and inconsistent implementation have continued to affect policy outcomes. Using a quantitative research design, the study collected data from selected ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in Kaduna State through structured questionnaires administered to public servants across different cadres. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data and test the relationship between HRM reform variables training and development, performance appraisal systems, and performance-based incentives and policy implementation effectiveness. The findings reveal that HRM reforms significantly influence policy implementation, particularly where continuous professional training and transparent performance evaluation systems are effectively applied. The study further shows that performance-based incentives positively motivate civil servants and enhance productivity, though implementation gaps and resource constraints limit optimal outcomes. The research concludes that sustainable HRM reforms are critical to strengthening administrative efficiency and improving governance outcomes in Kaduna State. It recommends institutionalizing merit-based promotion systems, expanding capacity-building programs, and ensuring consistent monitoring of reform implementation to enhance public sector performance.

Keywords: Human Resource Management Reforms, Policy Implementation, Civil Service Reform, Performance-Based Incentives, Public Service Efficiency, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is widely recognized as a critical factor in the effectiveness of public institutions, particularly in ensuring that policies are implemented efficiently. In the Nigerian civil service, decades of bureaucratic inefficiency, limited staff capacity, and inadequate motivation have hindered the effective translation of policy decisions into tangible public service outcomes. As a result, numerous governments have initiated human resource management reforms aimed at improving organizational performance, enhancing staff competence, and promoting accountability in the civil service.

HRM reforms in Nigeria typically include training and capacity-building programs, performance-based incentives, merit-based recruitment and promotion systems, and institutional restructuring. These reforms are intended to address structural inefficiencies and promote a more professional, motivated, and results-oriented civil service. In Kaduna State, efforts have been made to introduce these reforms at the sub-national level, particularly to enhance the efficiency of public servants responsible for policy implementation. Despite these initiatives, challenges persist, including inadequate training, poor monitoring of performance, and resistance to change, which continue to impede policy outcomes. Understanding the relationship between HRM reforms and policy implementation outcomes is therefore critical.

This study focuses on how training, performance-based incentives, and HR reforms influence the effectiveness of Kaduna State public servants in implementing government policies, using quantitative methods to generate statistically robust insights.

Policy formulation is often rigorous in Nigeria, but the effectiveness of implementation remains uneven, particularly at the state level. In Kaduna State, numerous policies in sectors such as health, education, and rural development have suffered delays, inefficiency, and poor outcomes. Many studies have suggested that this is due to human resource-related challenges, including lack of proper training, low motivation, and weak performance evaluation systems (Bekele, 2022, Mulat, 2013, Ferguson & Reio Jr, 2010).

While HRM reforms have been introduced to address these issues, there is limited empirical evidence on their impact on policy implementation, especially using quantitative data to measure effectiveness among public servants. Without a clear understanding of the effectiveness of these reforms, it is difficult for policymakers to design interventions that genuinely enhance efficiency and service delivery.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To assess the level of HRM reforms, including training and performance-based incentives, among Kaduna State public servants.
- ii. To evaluate the effectiveness of policy implementation by public servants in Kaduna State.
- iii. To determine the relationship between HRM reforms and the efficiency of policy implementation.
- iv. To identify challenges affecting the implementation of HRM reforms in Kaduna State.

Research Questions

- i. What is the current level of HRM reforms, including training and performance-based incentives, among Kaduna State public servants?
- ii. How effective is policy implementation among Kaduna State public servants?
- iii. What is the relationship between HRM reforms and policy implementation efficiency?
- iv. What challenges hinder the implementation of HRM reforms in Kaduna State?

The study provides both academic and practical contributions:

Academic Significance: It adds quantitative evidence on the effect of HRM reforms on policy implementation, an area with limited empirical studies in the Nigerian context. **Policy Significance:** Findings will guide policymakers in Kaduna State and other sub-national governments on improving human resource reforms to enhance efficiency, accountability, and service delivery.

Practical Significance: It provides actionable insights for civil service managers, training institutions, and human resource departments to design programs that improve staff competence and motivation.

Likewise, difficulty accessing complete staff records and performance evaluations due to bureaucratic restrictions.

Possible response bias from public servants who may provide socially desirable answers.

Limited generalizability beyond Kaduna State, although findings may be indicative of broader trends in Nigerian sub-national governments.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management (HRM) Reforms

HRM reforms refer to deliberate changes in policies, practices, and organizational structures aimed at improving the efficiency, competence, and motivation of public servants. In the context of the Nigerian civil service.

Training and Capacity-Building Programs: Designed to improve technical skills, knowledge, and managerial competence of civil servants.

Performance-Based Incentives: Rewards, promotions, or recognition systems linked to measurable performance outcomes.

Merit-Based Recruitment and Promotion: Ensures that appointments are based on qualifications and competencies rather than political patronage.

Institutional Restructuring: Streamlining organizational processes and hierarchies to improve efficiency.

Studies indicate that HRM reforms aim to professionalize the civil service, enhance employee motivation, and reduce inefficiencies that hinder policy implementation (Akingbola, 2019; Uzonwanne, 2023).

Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is the process through which government decisions are translated into operational programs, projects, and services. Effective implementation requires competent personnel, adequate resources, clear procedures, and accountability mechanisms. (Yaro, 2023). In Nigeria, policy implementation has often been constrained by bureaucratic inefficiency, weak monitoring systems, and poorly trained staff (Olowu, 2023). Akinbo and Ogah (2025) argue, the connection between HRM reforms and policy outcomes lies in the premise that well-trained and motivated civil servants are more likely to execute policies efficiently, resulting in improved public service delivery.

Training and Capacity Building

Training is a core component of HRM reforms and involves systematic efforts to enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of civil servants. Studies show that continuous professional development improves decision-making, problem-solving, and adaptability, all of

which are critical for effective policy implementation (Albritton & Truscott, 2014). In Kaduna State, training programs have been introduced in various ministries, including health, education, and rural development, aiming to equip staff with technical skills and managerial capabilities to implement policies successfully.

Performance-Based Incentives

Performance-based incentives are designed to motivate employees by linking rewards to achievement of organizational goals. Such incentives may include promotions, bonuses, recognition awards, or career development opportunities. A research suggests that incentive systems improve employee productivity, reduce absenteeism, and foster commitment to organizational objectives (Robins & Lloyd, 1984). In the Nigerian civil service context, performance-based incentives remain underutilized, with limited monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure fairness and effectiveness. This study investigates the extent to which incentives influence policy implementation outcomes in Kaduna State.

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory (Becker, 2002). posits that investment in education, training, and skills development enhances employee productivity and organizational performance. Applied to the civil service, training and capacity-building programs improve the competencies of public servants, enabling them to implement policies efficiently and achieve intended outcomes.

Public Service Motivation (PSM) Theory

PSM Theory suggests that civil servants are motivated by intrinsic factors such as commitment to public interest, civic duty, and service to the community (Perry & Wise, 1990). Performance-based incentives align intrinsic motivation with organizational goals by rewarding effective policy execution, thereby improving implementation outcomes. Together, these theories provide a framework for examining how HRM reforms through training and incentives impact policy implementation efficiency.

Empirical Review

Nabaz N. A & Kofand A (2021)

Uruchi .C.I Cross .D & Nasamu .G (Ph.D) Examines the impact of selected human resource management practices on organizational performance of public universities in Abia State. The selected HRMP employed in this study are compensation and Recruitment and selection. A survey research design was adopted for the study. Data was collected through copies of structured questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using ordinary least square regression analysis. The result reveals that there is a significant impact of recruitment and selection and compensation on organizational performance in public universities in Abia state. Based on the findings, it is recommended that HR expertise with the help of line managers (HODs) should be made to carry out these activities so that people with the appropriate skills, attitudes and knowledge are hired. This will ensure professionalism and institutionalism in the activities of public universities. Furthermore, the management/government should endeavor to link pay to performance. This type of compensation structure is known to ensure fairness, eliminate conflicts and tension and propel employees to higher performance.

Sanderson K.Y, Henrietta M.D & Andoh N (2024) Examine the effect of human resource management practices on employees' performance in the Ghana Army. The specific objectives of the study are to establish the effect of career development on employee performance in the Ghana Army, assess the effect of compensation on employee performance in the Ghana Army, examine the effect of performance appraisals on employee performance in the Ghana Army and investigate the effect of recruitment on employee performance in Ghana Army. The study used a quantitative approach to collect data from the respondents in the Ghana Army. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Primary data was collected utilizing a structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages and regression analysis was used to examine the effect of human resource management practices on employee performance. The study findings indicate that career development, compensation, performance appraisal, and recruitment have statistically significant positive effects on employee performance in the Ghana Army. Recruitment and selection have a statistically significant positive effect on employee performance in the Ghana Army. This study, therefore, recommends that the management of the Ghana Army should regularly review compensation and appraise employee to increase their performance.

Euis S & Dudi H.S (2021) Examine the effect of human resource management practices (high commitment HR practices) on the performance and innovative behavior of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) both directly and through mediating variables of affective commitment and public service motivation in the context of bureaucracy simplification and changing the ASN work system due to the Covid-19 pandemic at the National Agency of Drug and Food Control (BPOM). By analyzing questionnaire data from 219 ASN BPOM respondents through a structural equation model (SEM) using the full version LISREL 8.51 application, this study found a direct and positive effect of high commitment HR practices on employee performance, affective commitment, and public service motivation. This study also found a positive relationship of public service motivation on employees' affective commitment, performance, and innovative behavior. However, the results of this study did not find the relationship between high commitment HR practices and employees' innovativeness behavior and the relationship between affective commitment and employees' performance and innovative behavior. This study concluded that high commitment HR practices were associated with increased employee performance but did not affect increased innovativeness behavior. Public service motivation mediated a positive relationship between high commitment HR practices and employee performance and innovativeness behavior, while affective commitment did not mediate this relationship.

Andrew S (2024) Examine how training and development impact employee performance in selected manufacturing enterprises (MMEs). An unrestricted Probability sampling strategy was deployed with a mixed approach on a total of 155 respondents from various level positions collected through a self-administered questionnaire, and direct interviews were also conducted with respondents from selected manufacturing enterprises. The collected data was analyzed using statistical tools (SPSS version 21). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used as a measure of the strength and direction of the impact relationship. This study seeks to establish how the independence variables, i.e. training and development, impact employee performance. The results revealed that training and development were critical and had a strong, significant relationship with employee performance. The significant regression equation was found $p < .05$, with an $R^2 = .461$. The R^2 value of .461 indicates that 46.1% of the variation in employee performance is significantly explained by the model containing independent variables. Therefore, the study contributes to the development of training and development literature by providing a reasonable explanation of its effects on employee performance. Moreover, analysis

of unstandardized coefficients shows that the beta value of 0.700 was supported by stronger predictors affecting employee performance in manufacturing enterprises.

Gaps in Literature

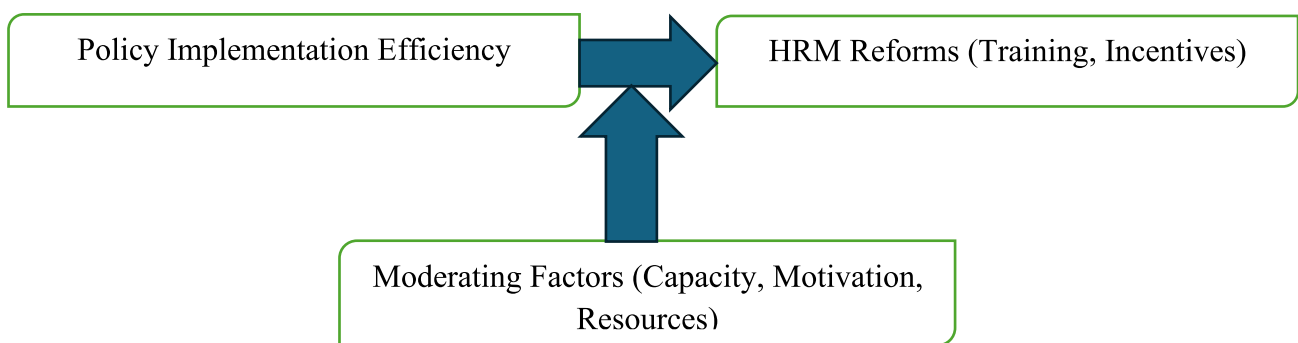
Most studies rely on qualitative assessments or anecdotal evidence, with limited quantitative measurement of HRM reforms and policy implementation efficiency (Ritz, 2011).

Few studies focus specifically on Kaduna State, leaving a gap in understanding how reforms affect civil servants' performance and policy outcomes at the state level.

This study addresses these gaps by using quantitative analysis to examine the relationship between HRM reforms (training and performance-based incentives) and policy implementation among Kaduna State public servants.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between **HRM reforms** and **policy implementation outcomes**.



3.1 Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach. Because it allows for the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to establish relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The cross-sectional approach involves collecting data at a single point in time from a sample representing the target population, which is efficient and cost-effective for examining current perceptions and experiences of public servants regarding HRM reforms and policy implementation.

The study employs a descriptive and correlational design. The descriptive aspect aims to summarize the characteristics of HRM reforms and policy implementation efficiency among Kaduna State public servants, while the correlational aspect seeks to determine the nature and strength of relationships between training, performance-based incentives, and policy implementation outcomes. This design aligns with similar studies on public sector performance and HRM reforms (Akingbola, 2019; Mutegi, 2021).

Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprises all public servants working in selected Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in Kaduna State, Nigeria. According to the Kaduna State Bureau of Statistics (2023), the total number of public servants across the state's

MDAs is approximately 12,450. This population includes administrative, technical, and support staff across various cadres and grade levels.

For this study, five key MDAs were purposively selected based on their direct involvement in policy formulation and implementation in critical sectors. These MDAs include:

- i. Ministry of Health
- ii. Ministry of Education
- iii. Ministry of Budget and Planning
- iv. Ministry of Rural and Community Development
- v. Civil Service Commission

The total number of public servants in these five selected MDAs is 3,856, which constitutes the accessible population for this study. This focus ensures that respondents are directly involved in policy implementation activities relevant to the research objectives.

Sample Size Determination

To determine an appropriate sample size that is representative of the accessible population, the study employed the Yamane (1967) formula for sample size.

Therefore, 362 is calculated as sample size. To account for potential non-response, incomplete questionnaires, or attrition, the sample size was increased by 10%, resulting in a final sample of 398 public servants. This adjustment ensures that an adequate number of valid responses are obtained for statistical analysis (Bartlett, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001).

Validation of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the study employed both content validity and face validity procedures.

Based on their feedback, modifications were made to the wording and structure of some items to enhance clarity and relevance. The experts also confirmed that the items adequately represented the theoretical domains of the study.

Face Validity

A pilot test was conducted with 30 public servants from the Ministry of Works and Housing (which was not part of the main study sample) to assess the face validity of the instrument. Pilot respondents were asked to comment on the clarity, length, and ease of completion of the questionnaire. Minor adjustments were made based on their feedback, particularly regarding the phrasing of some items to suit the local context.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the measurement instrument (Pallant, 2020). To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was computed using data from the pilot study. Cronbach's Alpha measures internal consistency, indicating the extent to which items in a scale measure the same construct.

The reliability analysis yielded the following results:

Table 3.1: Reliability Statistics

Section	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Training and Capacity-Building	8	0.87	Excellent

Performance-Based Incentives	8	0.84	Good
Policy Implementation Efficiency	10	0.89	Excellent
Overall Instrument	26	0.91	Excellent

All Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), indicating that the instrument has high internal consistency and is reliable for the main study.

Method of Data Collection

Data collection was conducted over a period of four weeks (March to April 2024) using the following procedures:

Obtaining Authorization: Formal letters of introduction were obtained from the Department of Public Administration, Kaduna State University, and presented to the permanent secretaries or heads of human resources in the selected MDAs to seek permission for data collection.

Training of Research Assistants: Four research assistants were recruited and trained on the objectives of the study, ethical considerations, and proper administration of questionnaires. The training ensured consistency in data collection procedures.

Questionnaire Administration: Questionnaires were administered to selected respondents through a combination of physical distribution and an online option (Google Forms) for those who preferred electronic completion. Physical questionnaires were distributed during working hours, with assurances that participation was voluntary and responses would remain confidential.

Follow-Up: To maximize the response rate, follow-up visits and reminders were conducted after one week and two weeks of initial distribution. Respondents who had not completed the questionnaires were encouraged to do so.

Collection of Completed Questionnaires: Completed questionnaires were collected in sealed envelopes to ensure confidentiality. Online responses were automatically captured in a secure database.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The analysis was conducted in three phases: descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and hypothesis testing.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the characteristics of the sample and respondents' perceptions of the study variables. The following statistical tools were employed:

Frequency and Percentage: Used to analyze demographic variables and response distribution (presented in tables).

Mean and Standard Deviation: Used to analyze responses to items on training, incentives, and policy implementation. The mean indicates the average perception, while the standard deviation shows the variability in responses.

Decision Rules for Hypothesis Testing

The null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using the following decision rules:

- i. If $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, reject the null hypothesis (significant relationship exists).

- ii. If $p\text{-value} \geq 0.05$, fail to reject the null hypothesis (no significant relationship).

4.1 Data Presentation, Analysis, And Interpretation

Response Rate

Out of 371 questionnaires distributed, 358 were returned, representing a 96.5% response rate, which is adequate for quantitative analysis and generalization to the population.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	212	59.2
Female	146	40.8
Age		
20–29	72	20.1
30–39	134	37.4
40–49	96	26.8
50+	56	15.7
Highest Qualification		
NCE/OND	68	19.0
HND/Bachelor's	198	55.3
Master's	76	21.2
PhD	16	4.5
Years of Service		
<5 years	60	16.8
5–10 years	114	31.8
11–20 years	132	36.9
21+ years	52	14.5

Interpretation:

The sample is reasonably balanced in terms of gender, age, education, and experience, ensuring diverse perspectives from civil servants across Kaduna State MDAs.

Table 4.2 Descriptive Analysis of HRM Reforms

Training and Capacity-Building

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Regular training programs are provided for staff to improve policy execution.	4.12	0.78	High

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Training aligns with my job responsibilities and enhances competence.	3.95	0.81	High
Training is adequate to meet policy implementation demands.	3.68	0.85	Moderate

Interpretation:

Respondents generally agreed that training programs are provided, though adequacy for all policy implementation needs is moderate, indicating room for improvement.

Table 4.3 Performance-Based Incentives

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Incentives (bonuses, recognition) are linked to performance outcomes.	3.45	0.92	Moderate
Performance evaluation is fair and transparent.	3.28	0.87	Moderate
Incentives motivate me to achieve policy targets.	3.56	0.83	Moderate

Interpretation:

While incentives exist, respondents rated them as only moderately effective in motivating staff, suggesting limited impact on policy execution.

Table 4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Policy Implementation Efficiency

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Policies are implemented within planned timelines.	3.62	0.79	Moderate
Policy objectives are effectively achieved.	3.48	0.85	Moderate
Service delivery meets citizens' expectations.	3.51	0.81	Moderate

Interpretation:

Overall, respondents perceive policy implementation efficiency as moderate. This may reflect challenges in translating HRM reforms into tangible outcomes.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationships between HRM reforms and policy implementation, **Pearson correlation** was conducted.

Table 4.5 Correlation Analysis

Variables	Policy Implementation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Training & Capacity Building	0.62**	0.000
Performance-Based Incentives	0.57**	0.000

Interpretation:

- Training and capacity building are positively and significantly correlated with policy implementation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$).
- Performance-based incentives also show a positive and significant correlation ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$).
- This indicates that HRM reforms are associated with improved policy execution among Kaduna State public servants.

Regression Analysis

A **multiple regression** was performed to assess the predictive effect of HRM reforms on policy implementation.

Table 4.6 Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Training & Capacity Building	0.42	0.06	0.44	7.00	0.000
Performance-Based Incentives	0.31	0.07	0.33	4.43	0.000

Model Summary:

$R^2 = 0.53$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.52$

$F(2, 355) = 198.3$, $p < 0.001$

Interpretation:

- HRM reforms explain **52%** of the variance in policy implementation efficiency.
- Both training and performance-based incentives significantly predict policy implementation outcomes.
- Training has a slightly stronger effect than incentives, emphasizing the importance of capacity-building programs.

Discussion of Findings

Training and Capacity-Building: Training significantly improves civil servants' ability to implement policies effectively, supporting Human Capital Theory which posits that investment in employee skills enhances organizational performance.

Performance-Based Incentives: Incentives positively influence policy implementation, aligning with Public Service Motivation Theory, where motivation drives efficiency. However,

the moderate descriptive ratings suggest that current incentive schemes may not be fully effective.

Overall Policy Implementation Efficiency: Policy execution is moderate, indicating that HRM reforms alone may not fully address implementation challenges; structural, institutional, and resource constraints likely play a role.

Implications: The findings highlight the importance of systematic training programs and effective performance management systems as tools for improving public sector efficiency and service delivery in Kaduna State.

The study examined the impact of human resource management reforms specifically training programs and performance-based incentives—on the efficiency of policy implementation in Kaduna State. Despite reforms aimed at improving staff competence, motivation, and accountability, implementation challenges persist, affecting service delivery across the state.

5.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that human resource management reforms are critical determinants of policy implementation efficiency in Kaduna State. Specifically: Training and capacity-building programs enhance civil servants' ability to execute policies effectively. Performance-based incentives positively influence motivation and policy execution, although their impact is moderate due to inconsistent implementation. Policy implementation outcomes remain moderate, suggesting that HRM reforms alone are insufficient; structural, institutional, and resource factors must also be addressed.

The findings reinforce Human Capital Theory, highlighting the importance of skill development, and Public Service Motivation Theory, emphasizing motivation and incentives in driving efficient public service delivery.

Recommendations

Strengthen Training and Capacity-Building: Expand training programs to cover all relevant skills required for policy implementation. Tailor training modules to the specific needs of departments and policy areas. Establish continuous professional development programs with periodic evaluation of effectiveness.

Enhance Performance-Based Incentives: Implement transparent and consistent reward systems linked to measurable performance outcomes. Include non-monetary incentives such as recognition awards, career development opportunities, and promotions. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of incentive schemes regularly.

Address Institutional Constraints: Streamline bureaucratic processes to reduce delays in policy implementation. Ensure adequate allocation of resources to support HRM reforms and policy execution. Strengthen coordination among ministries, departments, and agencies to avoid duplication and inefficiency.

Foster a Culture of Accountability and Motivation: Promote a results-oriented performance culture within Kaduna State civil service. Encourage employee engagement and participation in decision-making related to HRM policies. Integrate performance management systems with policy implementation monitoring.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes to knowledge in several ways:

- i. Provides quantitative evidence on the relationship between HRM reforms and policy implementation in Nigerian sub-national governments.
- ii. Highlights the relative importance of training and performance-based incentives in enhancing civil service efficiency.
- iii. Offers policy-relevant recommendations that can guide reforms in Kaduna State and other Nigerian states aiming to improve public sector effectiveness.

Suggestions for Further Research

- i. Conduct a comparative study across multiple Nigerian states to assess variations in HRM reforms and policy implementation outcomes.
- ii. Explore sector-specific HRM reforms, such as in health, education, or rural development, to evaluate targeted impact.
- iii. Include qualitative methods to understand employee perceptions, challenges, and motivations in greater depth.

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