



Research Paper

## Human Resource Management Activities and Performance of Fire Services in Abia and Anambra States', Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** Organizations are rated high base on their performance and it is the responsibility of the human resources management to coordinate the personnel to attain the stipulated objectives. Thus human resources managers are meant to attract, develop, motivate and retain human resources in order to increase organizational performance. This is expected in the fire services of Abia and Anambra States. Paradoxically, their performance is hardly felt in the area of their principal mandate of protecting lives and properties from unwanted fire. Consequently, the two largest markets in the south east, Aba and Onitsha, suffer from frequent fire outbreaks. This study examined the influence of human resources management activities on the performance of the fire services in the identified states. The study adopted survey research design. Census was adopted as the population which is the 96 personnel of Abia and Anambra states fire services. Questionnaire and interview guide were used as instruments for data collection. The response rate was 100%. Face-to-face interviews were purposively conducted on the fire service director, human resource manager, fire service commander, serving fire service personnel, retired fire service personnel, three market leaders and the public, in the two States. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was thematically analyzed. Findings revealed that Human Resource Management was a significant predictor of performance. The nature of recruitment with a p-value = 0.000 was significant at 0.05%. Also Human Resource Management activities with a p-value = 0.007 was significant at 0.05 level of significance. However, the influence of motivation on performance with a p-value = 0.677 was not significant at 0.05%. Motivation is only significant in combination with recruitment and management activities yielding a p-value = 0.000 which was significant at 0.05%. The study concluded that human resource management has positive influence on the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States; thus it should be given more attention. Hence, the study recommended enhanced nature of recruitment; avoiding favoritism; improving salaries and welfare packages of workers; upgrading infrastructures in the areas of road networks and building more fire service stations.

**Keywords:** Fire Service, Human Resource Management, Motivation, Performance, Security.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Protection of lives and properties is one of the important functions of the state and government must consider it as a necessity to execute this role effectively and efficiently. The reality in contemporary societies is that any environment that is conducive and safe has the capacity to attract foreign and local investors. To this end, the Nigerian fire service was established to reduce fire outbreaks and protect lives and properties of its citizenry. However, this agency of government cannot effectively achieve this noble task without the effort and cooperation of dedicated personnel.

This is one of the reasons human resources in recent times has been classified as the most important in the public sector and fire services inclusive. The critical roles it perform include the influence of other resources such as technology, finance and raw materials, and on the efficient and effective realization of service delivery. More so, this aspect of the organization is saddled with the responsibility to assist in the formulation of policies as well as realization of its implementation in order to attain set goals. On this note, the importance of human resources cannot be overemphasized. This is because all organizations are under an obligation to their stakeholders to perform. To achieve performance, Armstrong (2012) argued that they have to depend on the

quality, dedication, enthusiasm, expertise and skill of the people working in them at all levels. This point to the fact that human resources management activity of coordination is critical towards service delivery.

As important and indispensable as Human resource management is, and is employed in every organisation, including the Nigerian fire service; the fire service whose responsibility is to protect lives and properties from fire seems to be confronted with challenges. For instance, the protective responsibility of the fire service is not felt particularly in Abia and Anambra States. Attah (2018) noted that there was fire outbreak in Onitsha market in Anambra State and when the Okpoko Fire Service station was called upon for rescue operation they came with an empty water tank. The narrative is not different in Abia State either, as Ndu (2018) reported that there was fire outbreak at an oil pipeline in Osisioma Local Government Area of Abia State which resulted to the death of fifty (50) persons and many others sustained different degrees of injuries, the fire service however got there when the disaster was beyond control. These demonstrate the inefficiency of the fire service in Abia and Anambra States in handling fire outbreaks. Since management has so great a task towards performance by coordinating the human resources, Bhaskar (2009) averred that, if the efforts of every single individual are well coordinated, well-motivated and directed towards the realization of well-established objectives, by the human resource management, the result will necessarily be high performance.

This study therefore seeks to examine the nature of recruitment of personnel in Abia and Anambra States' fire services, identify the effect of motivation on fire service personnel in the two states, evaluate the influence of human resource management activities on the performance of the fire services; identify the challenges affecting the performance of the fire services and determine ways to enhance the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted survey research design. Census was adopted as the population which is the 96 personnel of Abia and Anambra states fire services (Abia-Preventive Unit 8, Operation Unit 31 and Administrative Unit 3. Anambra-Preventive Unit 19, Operation Unit 32 and Administrative Unit 3. Questionnaire and interview guide were used as instruments for data collection. The response rate was 100%. Face-to-face interviews were purposively conducted on the fire service director, human resource manager, fire service commander, serving fire service personnel, retired fire service personnel, three market leaders and the public, in the two States. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was thematically analyzed.

## **III. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

### **Human Resource Management (HRM)**

Human Resource management is composed of policies, practices and systems that influence employee behavior, attitude and performance (Wright & Boswell, 2012). It is this aspect of the organization in line with the management formulate rules and regulations as well as programmes that guides the conduct and behavior of personnel. However, this definition excludes the specific details of motivational functions human resources management ought to provide so that employee and can be encourage to give their best towards realizing organisational goals. Human Resource Management on the other hand, is the organizational function that deals with issues related to people such as compensation, hiring, performance management, organization development, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, communication, administration, and training (Delery & Doty, 2016). As much as this definition was able to list the various ways to motivate workers, the importance of communication, training and development, it neglected the vital role internal environment have and the need to provide a favourable working condition. According to Adekunle (2015), Human Resource Management is also a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing people and the workplace culture and environment. Effective HRM enables employees to contribute effectively and productively to the overall company direction and the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives

Furthermore, Human Resource Management is moving away from traditional personnel, administration, and transactional roles, which are increasingly outsourced. HRM is now expected to add value to the strategic utilization of employees and that employee programs impact the business in measurable ways. The new role of HRM involves strategic direction and HRM metrics and measurements to demonstrate (Dele, 2017). This is more reason Bola (2014) averred that it encompasses the traditional personnel functions of recruitment, selection, training, motivation, compensation, evaluation, discipline, and termination of employment. Each of those tasks demands particular skills. Increasingly, human resource management is being recognized for its strategic importance to organizations and jurisdictions, and is moving beyond its traditional position as a monitor of compliance

It must therefore be noted that, HRM practices such as, training and development, and performance appraisal, encourages the employees to work better in order to increase the organizational performance. An increasing body of work contains the argument that there exists a positive relationship between so called "high

performance work practices” and different measures of company performance (Fayose & Bola, 2014). To this end George & Mukherjee (2016). Maintained that corporate performance is considered as the final result that firms seek to achieve positively. Positive corporate performance can be created and sustained through the best exploit of human resources as an organizational intangible asset.

### **Principles of Human Resource Management**

Business consultants note that modern human resource management is guided by several overriding principles. Perhaps the paramount principle is a simple recognition that human resources are the most important assets of an organization; a business cannot be successful without effectively managing this resource (Dugguh, 2007). Another important principle articulated by Armstrong (2012) is that business success is most likely to be achieved if the personnel policies and procedures of the enterprise are closely linked with, and make a major contribution to the achievement of corporate objectives and strategic plans. A third guiding principle holds that it is the responsibility of human resource management to find, secure, guide, and develop employees whose talents and desires are compatible with the operating needs and future goals of the company. Other HRM factors that shape corporate culture whether by encouraging integration and cooperation across the company, instituting quantitative performance measurements, or taking some other actions are also commonly cited as key components in business success (Armstrong, 2016). Human resource management is devoted to shaping an appropriate corporate culture, and introducing programs which reflect and support the core values of the enterprise and ensure its success (Bukola, 2013). Ability to establish a corporate culture and achieve the core values distinguishes such organization from others and project them above others.

### **Employee Performance**

Performance is an act, process or manner of performing or functioning; execution of a duty; any accomplishment which can be traced back to the behaviour of people in an organisation. That is, the manner in which an employee behave and execute the task assigned to him or her. The job related activities expected of a worker and how well those activities were executed describes the performance of an employee. Many business personnel directors assess the employee performance of each staff member on an annual or quarterly basis in order to help them identify suggested areas for improvement.

Consequently, every employee ought to add value to the organisational growth and in meeting assigned goals. In the absence of this, it is then worthless retaining such employee or better placed where he can improve and become asset to the shareholders and clientele. Every employee makes an individual contribution to the performance of the organisational unit and thus to the entire organisation. If the performance of an organisational unit or individual employee falls below expectation and yield no result, as a rule, this will lead to restructuring or redundancy, especially in a contemporary setting where many organisations are competing against each other, this automatically necessitates high level competitiveness and performance becomes the essential weapon to remain relevance in such environment. To retain and utilize personnel, it becomes imperative for the human resources management eliminate tendency of workplace deviant behavior that leads to violation of the organisational norms such as rumour spreading, theft, sabotage among others. On this note, the human resource manager must have a control mechanism that will facilitate performance metrics, employee performance review methods and ultimately produce results that will meet the desire of clientele and sustain the tempo the management sets for itself.

### **Performance Management**

Performance management is the process of creating a work environment or setting where people are enabled to perform to the best of their abilities. Performance management is a whole work system that begins when a job is defined as needed. It ends when an employee leaves the organization. Performance management makes every interaction opportunity with an employee into a learning occasion. Armstrong (2008) defines it as a process owned and driven by line management that is aimed at getting better results from the organisation, teams, and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed frame work of planned goals, standards and competence requirements.

### **Fire Service Sector in Nigeria**

The Federal Fire Service was established in 1901 by the British colonial regime as a unit within the Lagos Police Service Department to prevent and combat fire outbreaks in the Government Reserved Areas of Lagos Colony. This Unit was formed and incorporated alongside the then Lagos Police and was known as the Lagos Police Fire Brigade. The Police Fire Brigade was thus an apparatus of the British Colonial Government. Its leadership and administration rested squarely on the colonists. The Police Fire Brigade essentially developed along the line of protecting the colonial regime’s interests and infrastructure. The Lagos Police Fire Brigade became Federal Fire Service by an Act of Parliament in 1964 known as the Fire Service Act of 1964. All the

officers and men serving in the Lagos Police Fire Brigade were transferred to the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs as officers and men of the Federal Fire Service. The Federal Fire Service is therefore a paramilitary organisation, under the Supervision of the Minister of the Federal Ministry of Interior, with the Controller-General as its Head (Federal Fire service Portal).

Since the establishment of the Fire Service by the Act in 1964, it has not been reviewed. Fire Service today in Nigeria is still the only statutory organization established by law to undertake or render services as regards to fire and its related cases. Its main aims are to rescue people and properties from fire and other related dangers (Fire Service Act, 1964). By the act of the establishment of the fire service, there was to be federal fire service, State fire service, local government fire service and independent fire services. The personnel who help in fighting fire are rescuers extensively trained in firefighting, primarily to extinguish hazardous fires that threaten life, property and the environment as well as to rescue people and animals from dangerous situations.

### **Functions of Nigeria Fire Service**

Firefighters carry out a diverse range of tasks. Some of these are done on daily bases, while others are less frequent. According to (Athanasius, 2019), the functions of fire services include:

- i. The primary function of the fire service is the extinguishment, control and prevention of fire, the saving of and protection of life and property (Fire Service Act, 1964).
- ii. Nigeria Fire Service Promotes Fire Safety: The primary function of the Nigeria Fire Service was to focus on combating and fighting fires. The Nigeria Fire Service involved in the process of promoting fire safety within and across Nigeria.
- iii. Rescue Persons from Road Traffic Accidents: this is another function of the fire service. The Act of the Parliament that established the Nigeria Fire Service has empowered the Nigeria Fire Service to rescue persons, who may involve in road traffic accidents. Even though there are other agencies in the country, whose statutory duty have been to rescue persons involved in accident, giving them first aid and possibly convey them to the nearby health service center.
- iv. Deals with Other Specific Emergencies: The Nigeria Fire Service is saddled with the responsibility of dealing with any emergency, be it flood, terrorists attack or any specific emergency.
- v. Gives Authorities Powers to Prepare for Risks to Life and Risk to Environment: It gives the authorities powers for the purpose of making them properly prepared ahead of risks to life and risks to the environment. They can deploy their members to carry out some functions that they think may pose some risks to lives and the environment in whatever area they wish.
- vi. Nigeria Fire Service Does Other Things Not Specifically Spelled Out in the Act: The Nigeria Fire Service can involve in other activities with a view to serving a particular need of the people or community's needs and/or respond to some other risk the people may face. Going by the above, the Act has empowered the Nigeria Fire Service to make sure that, as fire and rescue agency, it can do other things that are not specifically spelt out by an Act that established it.

### **Fire Service Establishment and Activities in Abia and Anambra States**

Nigeria is made up of Thirty-Six (36) States. All the States in Nigeria are grouped according to regions into Six different geopolitical zones; North Central; North East; North West; South East; South South; South West (Olawale, 2018). There are Five States in the South East geopolitical zone: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. The activities of the fire service here shall be on the two States, Abia and Anambra.

#### **Abia State**

Abia State was carved out of the old Imo State on August 27, 1991. The fire service was established in Imo State when it was created in 1991. There were only two fire stations, one in Owerri and another in Umuahia local government, which is now the headquarters of the Abia State, where the headquarters of fire service is now (Olawale, 2018). The carved Abia State has five fire stations; three are functional while two are not functional. The three functional fire stations are: Umuahia (Head Quarters), Government House headquarters and Ariaria Market Station. The two stations that are not functional are: Mba Market station and Obane industrial Market. The three functional fire service stations are responsible for curbing fire in the 17 local government areas; however fire outbreak at Ariaria market is the major responsibility of the Ariaria market station. The total number of personnel of the fire service personnel in Abia State stands at 44.

The State has 17 Local Government Areas which include Aba-North, Aba-South, Arochukwu, Bende, Ikwuano, Isala-Ngwa North, Isala-Ngwa South, Isikwato, Umu-Nneochi, Obi Ngwa, Ohafia, Osisoma Ngwa, Ugwunagbo, Ukwa-East, Ukwa-West, Umuahia-North, Umuahia-South. The name of the State was coined from the first letters of the four groups of people in the area, Aba, Bende, Isuikwato, and Afikpo (ABIA). The biggest commercial market in Abia State is the Ariaria International market, is so large that it cuts across three local

governments namely, Aba North, Aba South, and Osisioma (Attah, 2018). The population of Abia State was projected by the National Population Commission of Nigeria to be 3,727,347 by 2016 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

#### **Anambra State**

Anambra State was created in 1976 from the then East Central State with capital at Enugu. A further State creation exercise on 27th August, 1991 divided Anambra into two States, Anambra and Enugu. The capital of present day Anambra State is Awka. The name Anambra comes from 'Oma Mbala', the native name of the Anambra River. There are twenty-one (21) local government areas in Anambra State. Anambra houses the largest market in West Africa, Onitsha international Market (Olawale, 2018). The population of Anambra State was projected by the National Population Commission of Nigeria to be 5,527,809 by 2016 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

There are Nine (9) fire stations in Anambra State (Ozaji, 2018); Agwu-Awka Station, Amawbia Station, Government House Station, Nnewi Station, Building Market Ogidi Station, Okpoko Station, Main Market Station, Ekwulobia Station and Nkpor Station. The Nine stations of the fire service are responsible for responding to all fire incidents in the 21 local government areas in Anambra State. However the Main Market (Onitsha Market) fire service station has the responsibility of responding to the fire outbreaks in the market (My Engineers, 2018).

### **IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Goal Setting Theory**

Goal-Setting theory was adopted to explain extensively the influence Human Resource Management has on Performance Abia and Anambra States' fire service. Professor Edwin Locke of the University of Maryland proposed this theory in 1968. He identified a link between goal-setting and employee performance. A goal in this context is the desired end an individual seeks to attain. Goal setting on the other hand involves the due process established so as to attain high level performance in line established goals.

The goal-setting theory suggests that the individual goals established by an employee play an important role in motivating him for superior performance. This is because the employees keep following their goals. If these goals are not achieved, they either improve their performance or modify the goals and make them more realistic. In case the performance improves, it will result in the achievement that the performance management system aims. Furthermore, Edwin Locke Stated that employees are motivated by clear goals and appropriate feedback. He said working toward a goal provided a major source of motivation to actually reach the goal, which, in turn, improved performance. This shows the impact the theory has had on professional and personal performance (Salaman, 2005). It simply holds that motivation and performance are higher when individuals have set specific goals, and when such goals are difficult but accepted, and when there is feedback on performance. However difficult goals must be agreed and their achievement reinforced by guidance and advice.

Furthermore, if individuals or teams find that their current performance is not achieving desired goals, they typically become motivated to increase effort or change their strategy (Locke & Latham, 2006). The decision to set a goal results from dissatisfaction with current performance levels. Setting a goal should include setting a structure that directs actions and behaviors which improve the unsatisfactory performance. Setting a goal will change a person's behavior in order to work towards achieving the set goal. Goal-setting theory predicts that people will channel effort toward accomplishing their goals, which will in turn affect performance.

Goal setting can be used in the fire service as a means to improve and sustain work performance. Since the theory is based on the assumption that behavior reflects an employee's conscious goals and intentions. Consequently, the expectation is that employee efforts and performance within an organisation will be influenced by the goals assigned to or selected by these employees. Successful Human resource managers may use the goal setting theory to clarify expectations, improve performance, and develop employees into stronger workers, which in turn will makes the company stronger (Fried & Slowik, 2004).

Simons & Chabris (1999) observed that when attention is focused too narrowly on a goal, an intentional bias can occur. It means that concentrating too much on a specific task or goal can cause you to miss a major aspect of your environment. On the hand, Latham (2004) argued that when two separate goals are set at the same time, exerting too much focus on one may make it difficult to achieve the other. Finally, Ordóñez (2009) averred that unethical behavior can result from motivating employees to meet specific and challenging goals.

### **V. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Analysis of Research Questions**

In order to provide answers to the stated research questions, descriptive statistics was used to analyze each of the research variables.

**Research Question One: What is the nature of recruitment of personnel in Abia and Anambra States' Fire services?**

**Table 1: Nature of Recruitment of Abia and Anambra States' Fire Service Personnel**

S/N	Question	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Recruitment and selection affects performance in the fire service in Abia/Anambra States.	73	15	0	2	0	4.77	0.562
2	There is favoritism in the recruitment of fire service personnel	60	27	1	1	1	4.60	0.684
3	The fire service in this State is well equipped	2	4	26	58	0	2.44	0.689
4	The number of firefighters is enough	2	1	35	52	0	2.48	0.640
5	The management is well organized and competent	3	10	56	19	2	2.92	0.738
6	The phone communication in the control room is recorded for onward training and assessment of performance	13	15	26	35	1	3.04	1.090
	<b>Total</b>	153	72	144	167	14	20.26	1.790

**Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2019)**

Questions 1 to 6 of the questionnaire were used to answer the research question one. From Table 1, 97.8% of the respondents agreed that recruitment and selection affects performance in the fire services of Abia and Anambra States. Also 96.7% of the respondents agreed that there is favouritism in the recruitment process of fire service personnel. While 93.3% of the respondents disagreed that fire service in the States are well equipped. Also 96.7% of the respondents disagreed that the number of firefighters is enough. Furthermore 83.3% disagreed that management is well organized and competent. In addition, 67.8% of the respondents disagreed that phone communication is recorded for onward training and assessment of performance. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that nature of recruitment of the fire service personnel in the two States affect the performance of the fire services.

The directors, human resource managers, commanders and retired fire service personnel interviewed also held a similar position that if recruitment is left completely in the hands of fire service experts, who would honestly do their job, then the right persons may be employed and enhance the performance. However, since the influence of who should be recruited comes from some government officials and sometimes do not even pass through the required training, the nature of recruitment would keep being a huge problem to the fire services.

**Research Question Two: Has motivation affected the effectiveness of Abia and Anambra States' fire service personnel?**

**Table 2: Motivation of Fire Service Personnel by Human Resource Management**

S/N	Question	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	Standard Deviation
7	The salaries of fire services personnel in Abia/Anambra are paid promptly.	20	64	4	0	2	4.11	0.678
8	Personnel are promoted when due	11	72	6	1	0	4.03	0.485
9	Personnel are promoted by merit	11	68	6	3	2	3.92	0.722
10	Firefighters are given attention when hurt in the course of doing their work	3	6	12	68	1	2.36	0.769

11	Firefighters are adequately trained	6	19	56	9	0	3.24	0.724
	<b>Total</b>	51	229	84	81	5	17.69	1.824

**Source: Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)**

Questions 7 to 11 were used to capture motivation. From Table 2, 93.3% of the respondents agreed that the salaries of fire service personnel are paid promptly. 92.2% of the respondents agreed that fire service personnel are promoted when due. Also, 87.8% of the respondents agreed that fire service personnel are promoted by merit. While 88.9% of the respondents disagreed that firefighters are given attention when hurt in the course of doing their work. In addition 72.2% of the respondents disagreed that firefighters are adequately trained. From the percentage analyzed fire service personnel are motivated with prompt payment of salaries, promotion of personnel by merit and when due. However, the personnel are not adequately trained nor given attention when hurt on duty.

Those interviewed in the fire service said their salaries are not owed; in fact they are paid promptly; though they decried the amount given to them and wished that government increased it. They however, said their sometimes poor performance is not as a result of absence of incentive but because the necessary apparatus are not there or sometimes insufficient. The retired fire service personnel however, complained about their gratuities and pensions monies owed them. They saw this as one of the factors that would contribute to the laissez-faire attitude of those firefighters in service; knowing that they would not even be taken care of when they retire. One of the retired personnel also observed that if he were to join the fire service again, he would not give in his best again, since he sustained injury on his shoulder during the course of doing his work but had to use his salary to take care of his medical bills. Lack of attention given to injured personnel on duty is one of the reasons some may not be performing as expected.

**Research Question Three: What influence does Human Resource Management activities have on the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States?**

**Table 3: Influence of Human Resource Management Activities on Performance**

S/N	Question	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	Standard Deviation
12	Human Resources Management has great influence on the performance of the fire services.	52	32	3	2	1	4.47	0.767
13	Human Resource management is prompt in responding to the needs of the firefighters	9	23	33	24	1	3.17	0.974
14	Human Resource management is responsible for the late response of firefighters to some incidents	13	52	18	4	3	3.76	0.878
15	All fires that fire services are notified about are controlled by them	4	11	35	40	0	2.77	0.835
16	Fire services respond promptly to fire calls	12	32	44	2	0	3.60	0.747
17	There is regular sensitization of the people on how to prevent fire	9	29	51	0	1	3.50	0.723
	<b>Total</b>	99	179	184	72	6	32.41	2.971

**Source: Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)**

From Table 3, 93.3% of the respondents agreed that human resource management has great influence on the performance of the fire services of Abia and Anambra States. 63.3% of the respondents disagreed that human resource management is prompt in responding to the needs of the firefighters. Also 72.2% of the respondents agreed that human resource management is responsible for the late response of firefighters to some incidents. 83.3% of the respondents disagreed that all fires that firefighters are notified about are controlled by them. Furthermore 49.9% agreed that fire service responds promptly to fire calls while 51.1% disagreed. In addition 43.3% of the respondents agreed that there regular sensitization of the people on fire and safety measures while 56.7% disagreed. Therefore, the sets of questions adequately captured the Human Resources Management activities.

In the responses of the serving fire service personnel interviewed, they said that human resource management has great influence on the performance of the fire services, pointing out that they are responsible for ensuring that there is gas in their vehicles and cases of wounded workers are reported to them, if they took them seriously too they would be communicating to the rest of the personnel that efforts are being made for their

good. They indicated that it could have been better if they hand the opportunity of communicating such to the director himself, when matters related to their welfare came up; but their guidelines State that they take it first to the human resource manager in writing, who in turn would act or forward it to the director.

**Research Question Four: What are the challenges affecting the performance of fire services in Abia and Anambra States?**

**Table 4: Challenges Affecting the Performance of the Fire Service Personnel in Abia and Anambra States**

S/N	Question	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	Standard Deviation
18	Management is responsible for the poor performance of fire services in Abia/Anambra States	62	23	4	1	0	4.62	0.682
19	Inadequate man power	69	21	0	0	0	4.77	0.425
20	Inadequate equipment	59	28	2	0	1	4.60	0.650
21	Lack of care given to personnel	58	25	5	1	1	4.53	0.753
22	Absence of training	50	33	3	1	3	4.40	0.884
23	Low remuneration	54	29	6	1	0	4.51	0.674
	<b>Total</b>	352	159	20	4	5	27.43	3.0136

**Source: Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)**

From Table 4, 94.4% of the respondents agreed that management is responsible for the poor performance of fire services in Abia and Anambra States. Also 100% of the respondents agreed that inadequate manpower is a challenge to the performance of the fire services. While 96.7% of the respondents agreed that inadequate equipment is a challenge to the performance fire services. Also 92.2% of the respondents agreed that lack of care given to personnel when hurt is another challenge that affects their performance. Furthermore, 97.8% of the respondents agreed that absence of training of personnel contributes to the challenges of the fire services. In addition 92.2% of the respondents agreed that low remuneration is another challenge to their performance.

Those interviewed; Director of fire service, Human resource manager, Commander of fire service and serving fire service personnel, all said the man power is not enough. Amongst the military and paramilitary they noted that their number is the smallest even though they do the same job with the others; that of saving lives and properties. According to the internationally recommended standard is to be one fire man to the population of one thousand (1: 1,000). In Abia, however, it is one firefighter to the population of forty-seven thousand one hundred and ninety seven (1: 47,197), while Anambra it is one firefighter to the population of thirty five thousand, eight hundred and sixty three (1: 35,863), this is in agreement with what is Stated in Firefighters (2018). In this context, understaffing is a big challenge. The interviewees also lamented the absence of structures and the poor state of the available structures as challenges. According to the international recommended standard, it should be 50 firefighters to a station. The interviewees also said they hardly have their personnel go for trainings; which ought to have been regular, for better enhancement for services.

**Research Question Five: How can the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States be enhanced?**

**Recruitment of Credible Fire Service Personnel:** The result revealed that 93.3% respondents stated that this could enhance the performance of the fire services. The interviewees in the administrative departments said that if the recruitment of fire service personnel is left in the hands of fire service experts then credible candidates could be recruited and not based on favouritism that is the case. Some of those recruited did not attend the physical fitness examination, yet they get recruited because of the influence of some government functionaries who want them to be employed. In a related manner one of the fire service personnel noted that no matter the number of personnel that fire service would have, its performance may not improve if the recruitment is faulty. Accordingly, such recruited candidates end up being a burden on other colleagues because they could not effectively execute assigned duties. This often led to poor performance on the fire combat field.

**Employment of Adequate Man Power:** Findings indicated that 88.9% respondents complained that man power is not enough. This makes them to have overload of work hours. The administrative interviewees however maintained that Fire Service in Nigeria and in Abia and Anambra States in particular, has fewer Fire Stations and fewer personnel when compared with other military and paramilitary bodies. Comparatively it is evidently impossible for the service to cope with the challenges of combating all the market, industrial, residential, filling stations, petroleum tankers and car fires in the areas of coverage. Thus, if more fire service personnel are employed and more stations built, the performance of the fire services would be enhanced.

Furthermore, the market leaders in Aba market in Abia State, noted that the number of fire stations in the State are not enough; out of the three stations that seem to be functional, only two have power pump and mobility. Hence before the fire service get to where they were called, the fire would have caused the havoc already. These



market leaders have resolved not to waste time contacting the fire services, rather adopt internal means of fighting fire through self-help mechanisms. In the same vein, they complained about the strength of personnel of the fire service; that usually not more than three firefighters are seen at fire outbreaks because of lack of man power.

Three respondents in Anambra State said that the response of the fire service is usually poor. They noted that firefighters do not get to fire calls on time, and other occasions the fire service would not have enough facility or instrument to curb fire. As a result of their lateness to the venue of incident, market men have sponsored some of their colleagues to undergo some training to stand in for the fire service before their arrival. They also bought some fire curbing equipment and kept at some strategic places for the purpose of fighting fire.

**Prompt Payment and Increment of Salaries:** Salaries of fire service personnel are not owed; however, 86.7% respondents said if they are paid promptly their performance would be improved. This improvement in remuneration, they said would be enhanced because they would not need to get engaged in other things to raise money to take care of their dependents. 13.3% of the respondents pointed out that increment of their salaries would also boost their moral to work. The fire service director and human resource managers were of the same opinion with the other respondents that prompt payment of salaries and salary increment could enhance their performance. The serving fire service personnel however said there would be enhanced performance because the fire service personnel would be able to purchase for themselves some of the kits; fire boots, fire jackets and helmets, that should normally be given to them by the government, hence they would be able to go into fire without fear as is expected of them. Two of the retired fire service interviewees did not hold a completely different view but added that if salaries are increased, even after retirement fire service personnel should be able to take care of themselves from their pension and gratuity, if they could have access to it as expected.

**Provision of Infrastructure:** On the provision of infrastructure, 87.8% respondents indicated that improved infrastructures could enhance their performance; government ought to provide the necessary equipment to all fire stations. The human resource managers interviewed also elaborated that one of the most effective and available fire extinguishing agent is water, if boreholes are sunk at all stations so they could get water it will increase their performance. They revealed that if fire hydrants are installed along major residential and industrial places, factories, markets, private and public institutions, and are powered and charged with water from water cooperation it will enable fire service men to travel less in getting water to combat fire disasters. The fire service commanders noted that some of their stations do not have functional trucks and basic firefighting equipments, so even when they sound command bell, they wish from the onset that the fire was not an overwhelming kind. They concluded that the unavailability of these infrastructures today has made firefighting more stressful.

**Good Road Network and Controlled Traffic:** Findings revealed that 85.6% respondents were of the opinion that if road network and traffic problems are taken care of, then their performance could be enhanced. The key human resource managers with the commanders also collaborated during the course of their interview and maintained that bad roads, poor road network and traffic contributes to the late response of fire service to some fire calls. This is because the roads are bad, plying on them to places of fire calls is not as easy as is supposed to be, and also the linking roads where they could use as faster routes in times of emergency are not there. They also decried the traffic in some places which delay their arrival to some fire calls. Though one of the human resource managers attributed this problem of traffic to ignorance on the part of road users; their inability to adhere to the traffic rule of giving way to fire engines during emergencies. The delay caused by this situation enables the fire disaster to gain more grounds and damage more lives and properties before the arrival of the fire men.

**Security/Safety Attitude of the Public:** The results revealed that 81.1% respondents indicated that they get to fire calls when the fire had already caused a lot of damage. This is because the people affected would not have called fire services as soon as the fire starts, until when the fire has overwhelmed them. However, if the people call fire services immediately fire begins then fire services would get there on time and do their work. Human resource managers interviewed said that average Nigerians see preventive attitudes as cowardice; they allow disaster to happen before they would look for fire service contact numbers. The carelessness of people have been observed as the reason for some fire outbreaks; some people store fuel in their residential/business houses, light candles while absent or sleeping, keep combustible materials and sticks of half smoked cigarette anywhere, and refusal to get fire preventive knowledge nor procure and install fire extinguishers in their residence and business places.

One of the public respondents also blamed the attitude of the masses towards the presence of fire service. When the firefighters get to fire incidents, the people because of anxiety could also become obstacles to the fire fighters. He also said that fire services are sometimes not called on time to fire incidents. This is because most times the people feel they could handle the fire. It is when it overwhelms them that they call fire service.

**Sustained Training for Personnel:** Findings reveal that the regular training of fire service personnel would enhance their performance, 94.4% respondents indicated. The human resource managers agreed with this in

their interview too and even added that granting of overseas training to personnel on fire prevention and firefighting could enhance the performance of the fire service.

**Welfare Scheme for Fire Service Personnel:** Findings showed that 70.0% respondents indicated that welfare scheme for fire service personnel would boost their morale and would fearlessly tackle fire as they abate it; they would know that they will be taken care of if they sustain any injuries. The 2 retired fire service personnel also corroborated that the welfare scheme will make a firefighter have a feeling that anything that happens to them during the course of carrying out their duty, they would be cared for and even if they die in the process, their dependents would be taken care of by the scheme. The retired fire service personnel decried the fact that even having access to their pension money, which is theirs, has been difficult. One of the human resource managers interviewed said that that health insurance for the fire service personnel would help improve their performance, since they expose themselves to the danger of fire, smoke, accident and even death as they go for rescue missions.

**Provision of Incentives:** The findings revealed that 62.2% of the respondents indicated incentives as one of the things that could boost their morale to perform their duty. The active fire service personnel interviewed incentives however said, all they get year in year out is just their monthly salaries. If are introduced, fire service personnel would be motivated to do their work.

**Provision of Training Schools:** Findings reveal that 44.4% of the respondents agreed that training schools is another way of enhancing the performance of the fire service. The human resource managers interviewed also indicated that training could be done in those schools; it will be cheaper and easier. However they noted that government does not like funding training and that it why it takes a long time before some of the personnel go for training and development.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

This study made use of regression analysis to test the relationship between variables at 5% level of significance.

**Hypothesis One**

H<sub>0</sub>1: The nature of recruitment into Abia and Anambra States’ fire services does not have effect on the performance of the personnel

**Table 1.1 Coefficients of the Regression Analysis for the Influence of Recruitment on Performance**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta	t- Statistics	Prob.
(Constant)	38.668	2.252		17.167	.000
Nature of Recruitment	-.674	.132	-.478	-5.103	.000
R-Square			.228		
F-statistics			26.037		
Prob. (F-statistics)			0.000		

**Dependent Variable:** FS Performance

**Predictors:** (Constant), Recruitment

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)

Table 1.1 reveals a simple regression result on the effect of the nature of recruitment on the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States. A critical inspection of this result shows that nature of recruitment has a significant negative influence on the fire service performance (Beta =-.478, t= -5.103, p< .05). This invariably implies that a continuous use of this nature of recruitment will bring about a corresponding fall in the performance level of fire services, other things being equal. The t-statistics revealed that nature of recruitment is significant at 0.000, which implies that the parameter of measurement is individually significant. The R- Square of 0.228 reveals the explanatory power of nature of recruitment on the performance of fire services; the result shows that 22.8% variation on the performance of fire service is as a result of the nature of recruitment. The F-statistic reveals that the parameter of the general model is significant at 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significant. This means that the parameters are statistically significant in explaining the performance of fire services. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Hypothesis Two**

H<sub>0</sub>2: The motivation of fire service personnel of Abia and Anambra States fire service by Human Resource Management does not affect their performance

**Table 2.1 Coefficients of the Regression Analysis for the Motivation of the Fire Service Personnel on Performance**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta	t- Statistics	Prob.
(Constant)	28.272	2.406		11.749	.000

Motivation	-.062	.149	-.044	-.418	.677
R-Square		.002			
F-statistics		.174			
Prob. (F-statistics)		.677			

**Dependent Variable:** FS Performance

**Predictors:** (Constant), Motivation

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)

Table 2.1 reveals a simple regression result on the effect of the motivation on the performance of fire services in Abia and Anambra States. This result shows that motivation has a non-significant negative relationship with the fire service performance (Beta = -.044, t= -.418, p>.05). This invariably implies that motivation has no significant influence on the performance level of fire services. The t-statistics revealed that motivation is not significant at .677, which implies that the parameter of measurement is individually not significant. The R- Square of 0.002 reveals the explanatory power of motivation on the performance of fire services; the result shows that .2% variation on the performance of fire services is as a result of motivation. The F-statistic reveals that the parameter of the general model is not significant at 0.677 which is greater than 0.05 level of significant. This means that the parameters are statistically not significant in explaining the performance of fire services. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Hypothesis Three**

H<sub>03</sub>: The Human Resource Management activities do not have influence on the performance of fire service in Abia and Anambra States.

**Table 3.1 Coefficients of the Regression Analysis for the Human Resource Management Activities on Performance**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta	t- Statistics	Prob.
(Constant)	33.055	2.134		15.487	.000
HRM	-.312	.114	-.280	-2.739	.007
R-Square		.079			
F-statistics		7.505			
Prob. (F-statistics)		.007			

**Dependent Variable:** FS Performance

**Predictors:** (Constant), HRM Activities

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey (2019)

Table 3.1 reveals the effect of the HRM activities on the performance of fire services in Abia and Anambra States using simple regression analysis. This result shows that HRM has a significant negative relationship with the fire service performance (Beta =-.280, t= -2.739, p< .05). This infers that a continuous use of this HRM will bring about a consistent fall in the performance level of fire services, all things being equal. The t-statistics reveals that HRM is significant at 0.007, which implies that the parameter of measurement is individually significant. The R- Square of 0.079 reveals the explanatory power of HRM on the performance of fire services; the result shows that 7.9% variation on the performance of fire services is as a result of the Human Resource Management activities. The F-statistic reveals that the parameter of the general model is significant at 0.007 which is less than 0.05 level of significant. This means that the parameters are statistically significant in explaining the performance of fire services. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Hypothesis Four**

H<sub>04</sub>: The Human Resource Management activities, nature of recruitment and motivation have no significant effect on the performance of fire service in Abia and Anambra States.

**Table 4.1 Coefficients of the Regression Analysis for the Human Resource Management Activities, Nature of Recruitment and Motivation on Performance**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error		t- Statistics	Prob.
(Constant)	39.497	2.935		13.459	.000
HRM activities	-.248	.125	-.223	-1.986	.050
Recruitment	-.605	.136	-.429	-4.448	.000
Motivation	.163	.152	.116	1.070	.288
R-Square		.262			
Adjusted R-Square		.236			

F-statistics	10.188
Prob. (F-statistics)	.000

**Dependent Variable:** FS Performance

**Predictors:** (Constant), HRM Activities, Recruitment, Motivation.

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey (2019)

Table 4.1 reveals a multiple regression result of the effect of all the independent variables (HRM activities, nature of recruitment and Motivation) on the dependent variable (performance of fire services). The result shows that HRM activities (Beta =-.223, t= -1.986, p= .05) and nature of recruitment (Beta =-.429, t= -4.448, p<.05) have negative significant relationship with the performance of fire services, while motivation is not significant (Beta =.116, t= 1.070, p>.05). The t-statistics reveals that only HRM activities and nature of recruitment are significant, while motivation is not significant. The Adjusted R- Square of 0.236 reveals the explanatory power of all the independent variable on fire service performance, the result shows that 23.6% variation on fire service performance is explained by all the stated independent variables. The F-statistic reveals that the parameter of the general model is significant at 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significant. This means that the parameters are statistically significant in explaining the fire service performance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The Durbin-Watson value of 1.983 reveals that there is positive serial correlation since it is less than 2. By implication the result implies that all the independent variables have a very great influence on business partnership, all other things being equal.

## VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Nature of Recruitment of Personnel in Abia and Anambra States' Fire Services

The survey results revealed that 97.8% of the respondents agreed that recruitment and selection affect performance in the fire service. Findings revealed that 96.7% of the respondents agreed that the favouritism in the recruitment of personnel in the fire service affects performance.

According to the Directors, human resource managers, commanders and retired fire service personnel during the face-to-face interview session that was conducted said recruitment being influenced by some functionaries in the government and also it is not left in the hands of fire service experts to do it. Speaking further, the serving personnel in the fire service said it becomes very clear in the field of fire combat to know those who were recruited base on favouritism; that recruitment has influence on performance in the field. This is in line with Gamage (2014) position that there is a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection and the performance of an enterprise. Osemeke (2012) submitted that when the best people are selected for the job, productivity is increases. According to the commander of the fire service, healthy candidates are supposed to be taken since fire service is an action inclined service where sometimes personnel would be expected to jump out of the truck or even run. However, since the influence of who should be recruited comes from some government officials and sometimes do not even pass through the required training, the nature of recruitment would keep being a huge problem to the fire services. The human resource managers noted that the recruitment of quality employees is something that should never be compromised as they contribute to the output of an organisation. In the same vein Ezeali and Esiagu (2010) said Recruitment and selection in any organization is a serious business as the success of any organization or efficiency in service delivery depends on the quality of its workforce who was recruited into the organization through recruitment and selection exercises.

From the analyses above, a critical evaluation of the result shows that nature of recruitment has a significant influence on the fire service performance and the nature of recruitment in Abia and Anambra States. If however, this recruitment and selection methods are continued, there may be a corresponding fall in the performance level of fire services.

### The Effect of Motivation on Fire Service Personnel in Abia and Anambra States

Findings showed that 93.3% of the respondents agreed that the salaries of fire service personnel in Abia and Anambra States are paid promptly. While 92.2% agreed that the personnel are promoted promptly. Also 87.8% agreed that personnel are promoted by merit. Furthermore, 88.9% disagreed that fire fighters are given attention when hurt at the course of doing their work, while the other 72.2% disagreed that fire service personnel are adequately trained. This result shows that motivation has a no significant negative influence on the fire

service performance; however, it also shows that if the personnel are well motivated there could also be increase in performance all other things being equal.

According to the two retired fire service personnel interviewed said if welfare schemes are introduced the firefighters will be motivated because they will have a feeling that anything that happens to them during the course of carrying out their duty, they would be cared for and even if they die in the process, their dependents would be taken care of by the scheme. The retired fire service personnel decried the fact that having access to their pension money, which is theirs, has been difficult. The one out of the human resource managers interviewed said that that health insurance for the fire service personnel would motivate them, hence enhance their performance, since they expose themselves to the danger of fire, smoke, accident and even death as they go for rescue missions. From the questionnaire respondents and the interviewees, it is indicative that if fire service personnel are given attention when they are hurt they would be better motivated to perform.

Based on the findings, it can be said that provision of sufficient facilities, motivation of employees are the ways of enhancing the performance of fire service personnel. Just as Motivation is the most important matter for every organization public or a private sector. All organizations encounter the matter of motivation whether they are in the public or private sector (AbdiMohamud & Hussein, 2017). Therefore, for the success of any organization motivation plays an important role.

### **The influence of Human Resource Management Activities on the Performance of the Fire Services in Abia and Anambra States**

Results of the survey revealed that 93.3% of respondents agreed that human resource management has influence on the performance of the fire service in Abia and Anambra States. While 63.3% of the respondents are of the opinion that human resource management does not respond promptly to the needs of the fire service personnel. Also, 72.2% of the respondents held the view that human resource management is responsible for the late responses of firefighters to some of the fire outbreaks. Also, 83.3% of the respondents held that not all fire calls are controlled by fire service. Furthermore, 49.9% of the respondents were of the view that fire service does not respond promptly to fire calls but 51.1% of the respondents acclaimed that fire service responds promptly to fire calls. While 42.2% held that sensitization of the people on fire prevention is not regular, 56.7% responded said that sensitization is regular. From the set of responses to questions that measure the performance of the fire services it shows that the Human Resources Management influences the performance of the fire services.

In addition, the responses of the serving fire service personnel interviewed, they said that human resource management has great influence on the performance of the fire services, and are never to be taken lightly at all. This is in line with Egbe (2011) who posited that an organisation that is willing to stay relevant and perform should take human resource management seriously. The serving fire service personnel pointing out that human resource management is so important that they handle the welfare of the personnel; they are responsible for ensuring that there is gas in their vehicles. They however, indicated that it could have been better if they had the opportunity of communicating some of their welfare challenges to the director directly but their guidelines States that they take it first to the human resource manager in writing, who in turn would act or forward it to the director.

### **Challenges Affecting the Performance of the Fire Services in Abia and Anambra States**

The result of the survey revealed that over 90% of the respondents agreed to the challenges affecting the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States. This shows the set of questions in the questionnaire adequately measured the challenges faced by fire service personnel.

In addition, those interviewed; Director of fire service, Human resource manager, Commander of fire service and serving fire service personnel, all said that man power is not enough. Amongst the military and paramilitary they noted that their number is the smallest even though they do the same job with the others; that of saving lives and properties. According to the internationally recommended standard is to be one fire man to the population of one thousand (1: 1,000). In Abia, however, it is one firefighter to the population of forty-seven thousand one hundred and ninety seven (1: 47,197), while Anambra it is one firefighter to the population of thirty five thousand, eight hundred and sixty three (1: 35,863), this is in agreement with what is Stated in Firefighters (2018). Hence they saw obvious understaffing as a challenge. They also lamented the absence of structures and the poor State of the available structures; for according to the internally recommended standard, it should be 50 firefighters to a station. The interviewees also said they hardly have their personnel go for trainings; which ought to have been regular, for better enhancement for their services.

### **Ways to Enhance the Performance of the Fire Services in Abia and Anambra States**

Finally research question five sought to find out how the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States could be enhanced. The findings revealed that, if there is recruitment of credible fire service

personnel, employment of adequate man power, prompt payment of salaries and increment of salaries, provision of infrastructure, good road network and controlled traffic, security and safety attitude of the public, sustained training for personnel, welfare scheme for fire service personnel, provision of incentives, and provision of training schools, are put in place and taken care of then the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States will be enhanced.

## **VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Concluding Remarks**

This study has helped to reveal the influence that human resource management has on performance in an organization, particularly in the fire services of Abia and Anambra States. Human resource management has positive influence on the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States, especially, on the recruitment and motivation. However, proper coordination of human resource management activities has a capacity to improve the performance of the personnel to meet the organisational goals. Regrettably, human resource management activities in the states examined are constrained by some challenges impeding their performance which include, lack of adequate man power, poor infrastructure, absence of incentives, absence of welfare schemes and lack of sensitization of the public on safety measures. Finally, the ways to address the challenges facing the fire services so as to enhance their performance were determined in the study.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations arising from the study include the following:

1. The study recommends that in order to enhance and sustain the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States, recruitment should be left completely in the hands of fire service experts who should recruit only credible personnel; and there should be adequate man power to reduce work load.
2. The study recommends that to motivate the fire service personnel salaries should be increased and paid promptly; there should be sustained regular training courses for personnel; welfare scheme for fire service personnel that will take care of cover shift allowances, uniform allowance and health insurance; and incentives to personnel could also be introduced.
3. The study recommends that human resource management should be given adequate attention since it has great influence on the resources in the organisation through its role of coordinating the other resources to realize the organisational goals and objectives.
4. The study recommends that challenges such as, lack of man power, poor salary and lack of infrastructure, militating against the performance of the fire services should be guarded against.
5. The study recommends that to improve the performance of the fire services in Abia and Anambra States, recruitment of adequate and credible man power; increment of salaries and prompt payment; provision of quality infrastructure; sensitization of the public on safety practices and traffic rules are key.

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