

An Exploration of the Uganda Police Force Human Resource Strategy

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses HR strategy and addresses the following questions: What are they? What are their primary forms adopted by Uganda Police? What are the primary areas HR strategy has been developed in Uganda Police? What are the prerequisites for a successful HR strategy? What steps has Uganda Police Force taken to develop HR plans? How HR strategies have been implemented by Uganda Police?

Keywords: HR Human Resource, HRM Human Resource Management, UPF Uganda Police Force

INTRODUCTION

HR Strategy In police units, strategic HRM is a mentality that leads to strategic actions and reactions, such as general or specific HR strategies or strategic behavior on the part of HR administrators at Uganda Police (UPF).

In the case of Uganda Police, an HR strategy is a plan or roadmap for addressing UPF's major issues through its staff. It outlines measures to harness talent to support hiring, integrating staff, achievement, UPF atmosphere and other objectives (Thomas, 1990). The HR strategy's purpose is to integrate the staff skills and ambitions with the objectives and objectives of UPF with a view of designing a clear set of metrics, strategies, and KPIs to achieve those goals.

The goal of HR strategies is to articulate what Uganda Police Force intends to do with its policies and procedures regarding HRM in the short and long term, keeping in mind Fombrun et al. (1984) dictum that organizations and leaders must perform well in today in order to thrive in the years to come. In this case, HR strategies seek to address both organization and human demands inside Uganda Police Force. HR strategies may establish intents and create a feeling of purpose and direction, but they are not just long-term plans. Gratton (2000) stated, 'There is no great plan, only excellent execution' implying that the strategy adopted must be unique to UPF.

There is nothing known as an ideal strategy, since studies on HR strategy by Armstrong and Long (1994) as well as Armstrong and Baron (2002) identified several variants. Others go into considerably greater detail. However, two sorts of HR strategies may be identified: General strategy and Specific strategy as will be discussed later.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A phenomenological study was used by the current study to understand the views of the administrators about the issues in HR strategy at UPF. The study investigation used the purposive random sampling to select the documents to be reviewed and hence a document review checklist was adopted as the main tool of data collection where analysis followed the interpretation of narratives from the organization's top

administrators.

RESULTS

General HR strategy at Uganda Police

The study adopted a thematic analysis technique where phrases in verbatim were used to describe what the researcher was interested in finding in description-focused coding strategy and results presented in the table above. The following table presents the data analyzed using the theme-driven analysis in NVIVO 11 on data from a purposively selected sample of police officers.

Research Question	Theme	Description of theme	Cases (No. of Participants)	Counts (No. of Empirical Indicators)	Evidence
What are the SHRM policies emphasized by Uganda Police	Hard Vs Soft SHRM	This theme presents a description of the hard SHRM at Uganda police in codes such as Hiring, training and development, Appraisal as well as compensation. The theme also presents respondents views on relationship building, communication, leadership, organizational culture, employee commitment through welfare and career advancement as well as diversity management.	16	34	“...training for the UPF is adequate...we acknowledge hierarchy and respect in teams’ communications and operations...we are trained to work in teams for effective community policing and the same is upheld for all new comers...” Interview with Cpt.1

		The theme also provides respondents' views about the unlivable state of the various hard and soft skills because of a number of issues such as budget constraints and a number of other variables related with ethnicity.			
	Intangibles	This theme is comprised of a number of aspects revealed in the code shared mindset, talent, learning, accountability, collaboration and quality of leadership. Though positive, the theme also presents the real situation about intangibles at UPF as documented by the police officers interviewed	6	10	"...the special officers are accorded specialized training, sometimes given more responsibilities based on their talent and the leadership skills portrayed during their training..." Interview with Cpt.3
	Hiring and retaining	This theme embraced a number of codes which included change management,	14	22	"...UPF does a standard recruitment exercise where the physical and mental aspects

		<p>knowledge management, understanding workers’ needs and career advancement as well as innovativeness</p>			<p>are fully examined before recruitment and very few, say less than 0.5% actually want to leave the force...health reasons are the reasons ...” Interview with Cpt.1</p> <p>“...UPF also provides room for career advancement but not all do it because it is tax payers’ money and everything is a step by step process where accountability is mandatory ...” Interview with Cpt.5</p>
	<p>Cooperation through voice</p>	<p>The theme incorporates a number of sub themes or codes such as the role of workers’ unions, officer involvement in decision making, information disclosure at work station level as well as autonomy</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>“...civil servants unions dictate some things that the government through MIA cannot control...yet, occasionally, the officers are called upon to give their voice ...” Interview with DCTH</p>

	Engagement	The engagement theme was comprised of a number of codes including care, connect, coach, contribute and congratulate	2	5	“...UPF works within the confines of the laws on staff protection in the Employment Act and the force treats all officers as humans not machines...” Interview with AMUF
What challenges are faced by UPF’s strategic HRM	Cost	The theme contains codes such as budgetary limitations, priorities of the government at UPF, resistance from politicians and the highest level of institutionalized corruption before funds have been released	3	7	“...UPF serves all Ugandans but the politicians in the parliament have a number of priorities like their cars, medical bills and take home packages...they seldom care about the means to get there... they want to get to heaven without dying by allocating meager funds to our operations ” Interview with Capt. 4
	Lack of understanding	This theme contains aspects such as the lack of training on SHRM and all its components with specific reference to the	13	18	“...UPF has a number of people who just do not want to know and always put up all sorts of excuses about

		Uganda police. The theme highlights intentional and unintentional factors of understanding for the same			running UPF Human resources in a professional way...” Interview with AMUF
	Inflexibility	This theme is composed of two codes i.e. those in administration do not want to change existing HR strategies and are not willing to adopt changes to organizational structures especially with SHRM	3	7	“...Change may be resisted at a particular point...” Interview with Capt. 2
	Legal and administrative challenges	This includes the fact that some laws are inhibitive for effective adoption of SHRM	2	3	“...we work under the law and some of them may prove prohibitive...” Interview with Capt. 2

High performance management

The goal of high-performance working and management is to influence Uganda Police Force’s effectiveness like growth, efficiency, quality, and customer service standards. Following this HR sub strategy, UPF follows strict hiring and selection protocols as set by law consistent with a number of comprehensive and pertinent training programs, development initiatives, incentive pay plans, and performance management procedures.

These strategies have been defined by Appelbaum et al. (2000) as a set of HR procedures that enhance motivation, skill development and engagement. In addition, Thompson and Heron (2005) allude to high performance management as those general strategies that invest in the talents and abilities of employees, design work in ways that promote staff participation in problem solving, and give incentives to drive workers to utilize their discretionary effort.

High commitment management

The unique quality of HRM in the Uganda Police Force is the variety of tactics used to enhance mutual commitment. The goal of high dedication management is to evoke a relationships based on a high degree of trust and conduct is largely self-regulated as opposed to being governed by external constraints and punitive measures (Pawar et al. 2022). The broad definition of high-commitment management is: a) a specific orientation of employers toward their workforce, predicated on an underlying belief that they are resources to be developed rather than expendable components of production; and the combined use of specific administrative procedures, such as job redesign, job flexibility, problem-solving groups, collaboration, and minimum status distinctions.

High-involvement management

High-involvement work practices are a particular collection of HR practices that concentrate on employee decision making, authority, availability of information, instruction, and rewards, as stated by Benson et al. (2006). Lawler (1986) used the phrase "high participation" to characterize management methods that prioritize commitment and engagement above the previous bureaucratic paradigm of control. The fundamental premise is that if Police Officers have the ability to direct and comprehend their job, they will become more involved with the UPF.

The High-involvement management strategy entails seeing staff members as partners in Uganda Police Force, with their interests recognized and a say on issues that affect them. It is all about interactions and engagement where the intention is to foster an environment where management and team members may communicate regularly to clarify expectations and exchange details about the goals, beliefs, and mission of the company. This creates a framework for managing and developing people to guarantee that the goals will be met as well as a shared knowledge of what has to be accomplished.

Specific HR strategy at Uganda Police

According to Wright & Ulrich (2017), Lengnick-Hall et al. (2013) and Holbeche (2019), particular HR strategies outline the organization's plans in areas like:

Human capital management:

With this strategy, UPF obtains, analyzes and reports on data that inform the direction of value-adding people management, strategic, investment and operational decisions. The challenge with this data is the fact that its quality is compromised because of the fact that the labor market is an imperfect one where the forces of demand and supply of the would-be police officers do not meet to form an equilibrium point.

Corporate social responsibility:

Under this HR strategy, UPF administrators are committed to managing the institution ethically in order to make a positive impact on society and the environment. The issue with this strategy is that ethics cannot be well interpreted and respected in times of CPEs where external forces are at play and this disrupts the efficiency of upholding the mandate of UPF.

Organization development:

In UPF's staff and welfare manual, this strategy comprises the planning and implementation of programs designed to enhance the effectiveness with which an organization functions and responds to change. The challenge with this HR strategy is that UPF may not have the required trained personnel to effectively plan for this as most of the staff are selected on 'technical know who' basis.

Engagement:

This HR strategy has been utilized by UPF during the development and implementation of policies designed to increase the level of employees' engagement with their work and the organization. The fact that these policies are not designed to cater for fairness and equity. The insufficiency of growth opportunities at Uganda Police Force exacerbates the issue further.

Knowledge management:

This HR strategy is adopted by Uganda police Force when creating, acquiring, capturing, sharing and using knowledge to enhance learning and performance of the staff members. The challenge with this is that unsupportive technology and resistance to change amongst the police force administrators.

Resourcing:

This involves strategies by UPF that are attracting and retaining high quality individuals. The challenge with this is the low pay compared to other sectors which means that Uganda Police Force finds it difficult to attract the best recruits, hence settling for those that have failed to make it in other more paying sectors of the economy.

Learning and development:

This involves providing an environment in which UPF staff are encouraged to learn and develop yet at UPF, this is constrained by the fairness issues as well as the insufficiency of funding for ensuring that a majority of the officers are satisfied with such policies.

Reward:

This involves defining what Uganda Police Force wants to do in the longer term to develop and implement reward policies, practices and processes that will further the achievement of its goals and meet the needs of its stakeholders. At UPF, this is riddled with issues of inequity and unfairness as brought forward by favoritism and nepotism yet only a handful of officers can come out to testify.

Employee relations:

This involves defining the intentions of the organization about what needs to be done and what needs to be changed in the ways in which the organization manages its relationships with employees and their trade unions. The recent Anti-Homosexuality Act has created a number of issues with the ability of Uganda Police force to manage diversity which could create divisions

Employee well-being:

This HR strategy entails meeting the needs of the officers for a healthy, safe and supportive work environment yet the budget constraints limit Uganda Police Force from achieving the goals set under this HR strategy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, it was revealed that there exist two main HR strategies at UPF i.e. General and Specific strategies. Whereas there existed issues with the general HR strategy, the specific HR strategy was riddled with a number of issues ranging from budget constraints, nepotism and favoritism, resistance to change and the unavailability and use of technology. Increasing budgetary allocation for this vote would improve the capacity of UPF to acquire the required technology, train the officers and also reward the best performers.

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