The Humans of Theatre: Strategies for Managing Human Resources in the Post-COVID19 Nigerian Theatre.

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ABSTRACT

The COVID19 pandemic had a significant impact on individuals, families, states, businesses and the world at large. As many businesses had to shut down to protect the health of those who run them, citizens were left at the mercy of governments. While this situation was easily managed in developed countries, citizens of developing countries like Nigeria had to battle other life-threatening issues even as the world fought the pandemic. Issues like the corruption of government officials who hoarded relief items for later political use, rise in armed robberies by the infamous 'one million boys' gang, and rise in police brutality, created certain reactions in Nigerians that consequently led to a mentality shift. This paper argues that Nigerians came out of the lockdowns more united, more aware of their human rights, and even significantly readier to fight for these rights. These Nigerians who have been provoked into being vigilantes for theirs and their neighbour's human rights also make up the humans of the Nigerian workforce and more importantly, the humans of the theatre. This paper submits that Nigerian organisations might see a rise in unionism in the coming years and only human resource departments that adopt strategic approach to its operation will be able to weather the storm that is coming. It recommends that theatre organisations create HR positions and ensure that the responsibilities of HR are carried out. The paper concludes that the economic viability of theatre organisations lie in their effective utilisation of the resources brought by the humans of theatre.

Key Words: Post-COVID19, Strategies, Nigerian Theatre, Human Resources.

INTRODUCTION

The aim and focus of this paper is to find out the strategies employed in the management of human resources in the Nigerian theatre. Human Resource Management, generally referred to as HRM, is the field of thought and corporate world concerned with the harnessing and organisation of human resources to improve organisational effectiveness. Gorenak & Pilko (2009) assert that human resource management practices are aimed at contributing to organisational performance by improving employee engagement and satisfaction, as well as shaping customer and stakeholder satisfaction. This paper is however concerned with the strategies for managing human resources and the field specially dedicated to that is the Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). From a basic perspective, SHRM is the management of human resources strategically. This is considered pivotal in the actualisation of a business' goal. Resources in the theatre can be divided into two based on the nature of their being. The divisions are: human and material resources. Material resources are the inanimate items used in the actualisation of a theatrical production, while human resources are the animate instruments used in theatre productions. Human resources in the theatre are the people who propel the production by functioning in different capacities. It has been

established that proper management of human resources in an organisation leads to better productive output by workers in the organisation and eventually becomes a source of competitive advantage for such organisations (Guest, 2011).

The term 'Human Resources' is used in this discourse not in terms of the general professional understanding of it, but to denote a wide range of human contributions to the theatre in different capacities, including but not limited to the areas of directing, acting, set design, stage management, lighting, singing, costume and makeup design, and dancing. These are the humans of the theatre, the people who contribute to the actualisation of theatre productions. To understand how these human resources are managed in the theatre, it is important to first understand the Nigerian theatre industry situation as its reality is quite different from what is obtainable in other parts of the world. Although it is true that African theatre has its roots in African ritual dramas and festivals just like European drama has its roots in ritual, the realities of both theatres are different (Emielu, 2010).

HR in the Theatre: A Conceptual Clarification.

Research on human resources in the theatre is a largely unexplored field. A 2021 Google scholar search on human resources in the theatre revealed less than ten articles and this search was done without putting restrictions on date, file type or title. There are more research materials on human resources in the medical operating theatre than on human resources in the arts theatre. This is particularly troubling because every role in the theatre involves the major use of human resources. While the set designer thinks of communicating with the audience through the use of set designs, the job of set designing involves working with a team. It involves the use of human resources. This is the same experience that that the property manager and the costume designer gets. The use of human resources is essential to the art of theatre. This is why the dearth of research on human resources in the theatre is concerning. A reason for this may be because of the interconnectedness of roles in the theatre and how roles flow into one another with fine ease. The implication of this is that the subject of human resources in the theatre could be discussed or researched on without necessarily tagging such research or discussions 'human resources'.

HR in the theatre is concerned with talent sourcing and management, communication (both internal and external), organisation, time management, policy-making , and culture-breeding. These roles, in many theatres, are often carried out by theatre personnel who are not designated as HR Officials. This is particularly obtainable in theatre organisations with

smaller workforce. The origin of Greek theatre also had the first performer, Thespis, engage in multiple role-playing as performer and director and manager. This is also similar to the origin of professional theatre in Nigeria, which featured Hubert Ogunde having to manage as well as perform (Danduara 2017 p, 3). This tendency for multiple role playing in the theatre, is perhaps why the nomenclature 'Human Resources' is rarely used by theatre practitioners and researchers in Nigeria as the roles and responsibilities of the HR manager are added to that of other personnel, especially the Director, the stage manager, and the theatre manager.

The following are the roles and responsibilities of theatre HR personnel as obtained from job adverts by the National Theatres of Britain and Canada: Excellent communication skills, policy-making, staff evaluation and development, talent recognition and recruitment and retaining, maintenance of inclusion and diversity, time management skills, reliability and punctuality, thoroughness.

Oga (2007) describes theatre directing as the process of harmonising the contributions of various artistic collaborators in a theatre production. Mark (2017) describes the director as one who uses the human and material resources of the theatre to achieve the vision of a performance. Johnson (2003) asserts that directing involves the management of artistic personnel and creative devices to deliberately mould a perceived vision, into its most sublime form. These descriptions of the theatre director by Nigerian theatre scholars ascribe to the director even the roles of the HR official.

When the history of theatre is examined, it is noticed that until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, theatre directing was not well-defined or recognised. What was later said to be directing, was a bit of everything including stage managing, human resource management, orchestra leading, and directing itself. In Ancient Greece, the "Choregus", who was leader of Greek chorus directed plays while the same personnel organised songs and movements. Bell-Gam (2007) explains that the director in Ancient Greece theatre was referred to as "Didaskalos", which means teacher. The implication of this is that the director was always one with more knowledge or insight on the production and who was also saddled with the responsibility of grooming the actors into the roles they are given. Of the renaissance theatre, Tekena (2017) asserts that there were actor-managers who were senior members of acting troupes and they were giving the responsibility of managing the company, amongst other responsibilities. The most prominent name in modern directing, Duke Saxe- Meiningen

was also a painter and a stage designer and he eventually delved into directing and revolutionised the field.

Tekena (2017) and Musa (2002) opine on a quite unexplored type of performance management, the African Traditional Theatre. Tekena refers to them as the "Community Theatre Director" who are "leaders or controllers of traditional or cultural groups who perform the role of overseeing these groups, rehearsing and ensuring that rehearsals hold, and that performances are successful". Musa offers more explanation on this kind of directors by explaining that they are hardly even aware that they are directors. They sometimes get their position as leaders of this group of performers as a result of their lineage or occupation. In many Yoruba communities, drummers often came from the 'Ayan' family, a family that chose drumming as their trade, and some might say 'drumming chose them'. These leaders, who do not even identify as directors, managed both the human and material resources in the performance process.

It has been established that from the ancient Greek theatre tradition to the traditional African theatre tradition, human resources was always involved in the theatre. It is an inalienable part of the performance process. Even with performance types that use very few human characters like puppetry, this remains true. However, as obtainable with directing in the Traditional African Theatre, HR is sometimes not recognised as a field of its own in the theatre. This does not mean that its functions are not needed or met, they are just not carried out by people who specialise in the field of Human Resources. Consequently, its functions are not adequately met because the requirements for the role of Theatre HR officer and that of other personnel who are made to play the role of the HR like the Theatre Stage Director differ significantly. The assumption that a theatre director can serve effectively as a HR officer is therefore false.

Lindsey Morris, the HR Manager of Shakespeare Theatre Company, says in an interview with Mohlman (2019), that the job of the HR manager in the theatre includes advocacy for staff during budgeting or policy changes. Perhaps the most fundamental job of the theatre HR manager is creating a safe workplace for the staff by enforcing the good policies created.

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)

The literature review in the section above revealed that tasks that should be done by the human resources division are being done by other personnel and they are being done

inadequately. This work will now devise strategies for managing human resources by reviewing relevant human resource management (HRM) theory and literature which will help address the research questions.

The evolution of SHRM can be traced to Personnel Management. And personnel management did not become a thing until after the First World War, where was a huge mentality shift. More people became aware of their rights and more companies began to show company for the needs of their employees (Schuler & Jackson 1987). The belief in that period was that if the companies showed more concern for the well-being of their workers, they would be motivated to work harder and more efficiently and it could lead to an increase in the company's productivity and save the company from the agitations that come with unionism (Ferris et al. 1999). The job of the personnel manager began to take the shape of administrative and technical support and their responsibilities included recruitment and selection of employees, labour force planning, staff induction, job design and evaluation, training and development, performance management, and labour and employee relations (Beer et al. 1984; Ulrich 1997). Practices like job evaluation, job analysis, employees selection techniques, and training and development became more commonplace in companies with more resources (Becker & Huselid 2006). The rise of unionism was only delayed but at it remains a human right, it could not be denied, so it grew. As it grew stronger, labour power correspondingly grew stronger. The management of industrial relations then became a key function for personnel management departments (Becker & Huselid 2006).

Personnel management however came under heavy criticism when it was observed that its functions are mostly reactive, that it mostly tries to solve problems rather than prevent them. Other scholars believe that it has been locked into administrative role and so it lacks any significant strategic importance (Drucker 1968; Lundy 1994; Legge 2005). Devanna, Fombrun and Tichy (1984) suggested that due to the globalist nature of businesses of the modern age, the solution to personnel management problems would be to become long-term planners, goal oriented thinkers, and to provide visionary leadership and strategy to any company they operate in.

SHRM has evolved to be system of HRM based on strategic, visionary, integrated approach to HRM and the discovery that people are a source of competitive advantage (Guest 2011; Schuler & Jackson 2014; Ulrich 1997). It has become everything personnel management aspired to be. With SHRM, people are the source of organisation's competitive advantage.

SHRM then insists that the HRM functions are fully integrated into the organisational strategic objectives for optimal performance (Guest 2011). Opara (2016) further explains this by stating that SHRM seeks for solutions to business problems, rather than as individual HRM practices operating in in isolation. This means there is a shift from HRM's goal of getting the individuals to operate efficiently, to SHRM's goal of getting the entire organisation to be efficiently managed.

Research on HRM over the last two decades has revealed that managing employees strategically is a potent way of achieving organisational competitive advantage (Becker & Huselid 2006; Combs et al. 2006; Guest 2011; Kehoe & Wright 2013; Schuler & Jackson 2014). This view is espoused in the fine details by the Resource-Based View (RBV). RBV agrees that organisations achieve competitive advantage by managing employees strategically. It assumes that differences in the physical, organizational and human resources among firms cause a fundamental heterogeneity in their productive potential (Armstrong 2004).

According to Adeyeye (2009, p. 495) "the resource-based view supports various organization characteristics associated with greater organizational complexity and resource richness." Adeyeye uses firm size as the basis of his own research and that choice is validated by many pre-2009 researches also suggesting a size effect in the use of HRM practices. It was established that there is a relationship between size and HRM practises. In theatres, personnel play multiple roles at the beginning stage when company is still small, they then begin to encourage specialisation as the company grows bigger. Empirical evidence abound that formal HRM practices entail developmental costs (Adeyeye et al., 2007). These developmental costs are mostly unaffordable for smaller companies. As the company grows bigger, there are more resources available to them and there is also need for better and focused management, this then result in greater demand for specialists in recruitment, policy-making, performance appraisal, and the HR itself.

The concept of Strategic Human Resource Management is applied differently across different locations around the world. Researchers on SHRM in the United States mostly adopt an implicitly managerialist approach, thereby placing their focus on how HR can benefit shareholders. Their loyalty appear to lie with the board, the company and not the staff and humans or the organisation, the 'H' in HR. In Europe, a different perspective on SHRM is seen. Researchers here try to stress on the importance of creating a balance between the major

stakeholder's interests, and this includes the shareholders, the employees, the employees' unions, the government, etc. What is however agreed across board is that SHRM is used to improve organisational performance.

The Covid-19-Induced Nigerian Reality

Extensive Lockdowns: the lockdowns lasted for six months. Reduced revenue meant many companies had to downsize. This then made employees realise or remember that they were dispensable to their employers.

Increase in Unemployment: The general layoffs led to increase in unemployment. In many nations around the world, the effects of lockdowns were eased through the distribution of relief funds to companies in need to prevent the laying off of workers, death of the businesses, and ultimately save the nation's economy.

Corruption: This strategy of saving the economy by distributing relief funds to persons and companies was also adopted by the Nigerian government, however due to the prevalence of corruption in the nation, it did not work. The selection process of companies to receive the relief funds was smeared by corruption. Relief materials popularly termed 'palliatives' were acquired by the government in collaboration with private donors and friendly wealthy nations. These items were to be distributed by the Nigerian Government to citizens who needed them direly. However, politicians who made up the Nigerian government hoarded a good number of these palliatives and rebranded them to be distributed during political events to advance their political careers.

Unity: When citizens discovered the hoarding of these direly needed items, they banded together and attacked the warehouses where politicians stored them. Nigerians also witnessed a high rate of robberies during the lockdowns. After few successful robberies, Nigerians in urban areas who tend to be individualistic had to band together in unison to keep watch at night and defend themselves against robbery attacks. After the lockdowns came an increase in government's powers. They could create laws that imposed months of curfew and create laws like the mask mandates and vaccine passports. This also meant an increase in powers of law enforcement. On the streets of Nigeria, soldiers were beating citizens for not remaining indoors during curfew hours. Police were arresting and sometimes even beating citizens for not wearing masks. In the months succeeding the lockdown, Police brutality increased astronomically and ultimately led to the EndSARS anti

police brutality protests of October 2020. Before the lockdowns, Nigerians were believed to politically apathetic and largely divided along ethnic and religious lines. After the lockdowns Nigerians appeared more politically active and united. Protests were organised seamlessly across the nation and they were inclusive of people of diverse religious and ethnic background. Nigerians came out of the lockdowns united and with a different understanding of human rights and political participation.

Technology: The lockdowns drew Nigeria's attention to the remote work system. Before the lockdown, it was largely unpopular in Nigeria because of poor internet network and a generally reluctance to change. However, with the lockdown and the consequent restriction of movement, Nigerians had to try the remote work system and explore technology that facilitated it.

Globalisation: With the wide scale adoption of technology during the lockdown, Nigerians were exposed to jobs that were previously out of their reach. While the remote work system was only just became increasing popular in Nigeria during the lockdown, it exposed Nigerians to technology that made the world smaller. Nigerian companies now have competition from foreign firms for Nigerian talents. These talents now have more options on the internet.

Strategies for Managing Human Resources in the Post-Covid19 Nigerian Theatre: Some Case Studies

This section of the paper moves beyond the general principles of HR and attempts to create a framework that fits into the Nigerian theatre by analysing two case studies of productions that were held after lockdowns were lifted in Nigeria, the Post-COVID19 theatre.

Case Study One: Stage Alive and Emmilyskilz's Production of Ayo Adams' Akinola ati Arike.

Ayo Adams' Akinola ati Arike is a Yoruba adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. For the production, theatre talents who had understood and could speak Yoruba on an above average level were needed. Due to the alienation of Nigerians from their cultural roots in post-colonial Nigeria, the director of the Akinola ati Arike confesses that it was difficult to get talents who could speak Yoruba to the degree at which it was demanded. From the interviews with the director and the major talents in the production, it is observed that even the talents that were eventually recruited for the production did not possess the level of

command of language required for the production. They were however improved upon during the production process.

The manager of Stage Alive and Emmylyskilz Production says, in an interview with the present researcher, that the company considers the health and well-being of talents working with them as their collective responsibility. This is probably why despite resuming operations reasonably after the covid19 restrictions were lifted, they have not being caught by general mood of agitations and protests. The manager of the company attributes this to their being comprised of majorly youths who understand the needs and strengths and weaknesses of one another. Beyond just being youths who can relate to one another, the manager of Stage Alive says that they organise exercises geared towards listening to what everyone has to say and the management looks into how they can help improve. His final comment was that the collective interest is what sustains the group and motivates everyone to grow.

Case Study Two: Malete Masks' Production of Isiaka Aliagan's *Oba Mama*.

This production was done in April 2021 but rehearsals started since February. The fears associated with the pandemic were still on people's minds and the health concerns were still relevant and valid. The manager had to ensure that rehearsals were only done in places with enough space that could allow people maintain social distancing during reading rehearsals. Mask mandate was imposed on talents working on the production. Although the director and manager of the production was once an active member of the community for which he play was staged, he had been away for more than four years and so much had changed in a short while. The production had to do an open audition and everyone who worked on the production were completely unknown to one another until the production commenced.

Talents participated in the production on a part-time basis. They were mostly students, so rehearsals took place for two hours only and thrice in a week until the production drew close. A clear line of communication was created between the management and the talents. Also, after some rehearsals, provisions were made for recreation. Although it was optional, many people stayed back to have fun. These were moments of bonding where dissatisfactions were revealed and swift actions were taken to ease them up. Consequently, despite the general mood of agitations around the country, there were no protests.

Sometimes, to lift the spirit of performers before or during rehearsals, the production team often to had gyration sessions where everyone participated. Sometimes, these sessions made

use of songs being used in the production. It was often assumed that if performers can play with the songs, they may get to know them by heart eventually. It was discovered that while these strategies helped the production, the actors' voice and body it only helped them individually. While it helped some actors overcome shyness and break out of their shell, it did not help with interpersonal relationships. It did not help actors know their performing others. This was needed to help ensure teamwork and a common spirit of familiarity, cooperation and communalism among performers all through the production. To achieve this, some warm-up exercises which involved performers calling one another by their first name, sharing a smile with one another, and actually giving compliments to one another were introduced to the production. At other times, warm-up exercises which involved pairing up performers, blindfolding them and making them trust their fellow performers to lead them around the stage or the theatre even while blindfolded were adopted.

When the production was eventually done, talents contracts were up yet a Whatsapp group was created where talents constantly communicated among themselves along with members of the management. About 85% of people who participated in the production remain in the group till the date of writing this research. What should have been a one-off production is fast growing into a team.

Implications for the Nigerian Theatre

One of the major duties of the HR, which cannot be done by some other multitasking personnel is retaining of talents. While recruiting of talents in the theatre is sometimes done on a project-based basis and through audition, retaining of talents is one aspect that has to be done fairly and carefully. The company has to be careful not to invest in a talent that does not have what they need. It is therefore the HR job to identify competence in the theatre.

McCleland (1973) referred to competence as the relations between humans and work tasks. For McCleland, competence is the knowledge and the skills needed to perform a job or a task in an efficient way. Boyatzis (1982) sees competence as the features related to effective working performance. Le Boterf (2000) thinks it is not just enough to define competence as the presence of these knowledge and skills but as the "seamless integration" of them to achieve a task or goal. Schambach (1994) insists that competence is not self-sufficient in the actualisation of tasks or goals. For Schambach, competence is met with motivation, effort and supporting conditions to create good performance. The provision of these supporting

conditions to ensure the efficient operation of the humans of theatre is the job of the theatre HR.

In this research, competency will mean the ability to achieve business success even while working with a community comprised of other people. The lone wolf is incompetent in the theatre. The need to work with others cannot be overemphasised in the theatre. In the post-covid theatre, the ability to work with others and also achieve results with them is one major skill to look out for. As evidenced in casestudy 2, Teamwork culture can be planted in an organisation. It is a skill that can be learnt, especially in the theatre.

In an interview with Ado Sunday Theatre's manager, Tayo Isijola, he mentioned that his organisation at Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria experimented digital marketing by advertising their auditions online. It was said that they got ten times as many participants as they used to get with the traditional means of advertising. This contrasts with the experience of the Kwara State Arts Council Director who explained in an interview with the present researcher that some people are still averse to present-day technology like the internet. While the Ado Sunday Theatre, like Stage Alive, has a small team comprised of majorly young people who were born into the internet technology, the Kwara State Art Council has a large team of majorly experienced and older people.

Technology-Competence is a real thing and the post-Covid theatre HR must find a way to blend the talents with the needed skills and the needed competence in technology. Information shared over technological platforms are shared into the hands of the production company with trust. It is the HR's duty to ensure that employees' privacy is maintained. There may be need to train talents lacking technology-competence, it is important that Theatre HR embrace this challenge and not run from it.

Proper and consistent adoption of technology opens up theatre HR to virtual HR. Lewis (1998) describes the Virtual environment as one which leverages on information and communication technology to enable the tacit exchange of knowledge and provides new members with knowledge on organisational culture. In the theatre, the virtual environment is not so different, only that it is more interactive and participatory as theatre relies heavily on collaboration and teamwork. Due to the popularisation of the remote work culture and the introduction of the possibilities of the virtual world to the theatre, especially during the pandemic-provoked lockdowns, virtual work will become more common in Nigerian theatre. This may likely take the form of international collaborations or inter-regional collaborations

between regions enjoying peace and security and the ones unfortunately plagued by insecurity. Theatre HR must therefore prepare for this and actively strategise towards it. Bearing in mind that there is limited avenue for physical or face-to-face communication, theatre HR must develop strategies to motivate workers regardless. Theatre HR could use available information on employees to plan their schedule in a way that benefits both the company and the employee. Communication will therefore have to be positive, timely, and constant and the technology enabling it will also have to be in good shape in order to maintain high productivity in spite of the distance barrier.

From the first case study, it is observed that small scale theatre can profit from using talents from the founders' network. And if they cannot offer the skills needed directly, they can recommend one from their own network. This means that a person knows ten people and those ten people also ten other people, that means this person has access to 100 people on different scales. In recruiting, this is a fine strategy as it helps the recruiter interview people based on their tested skills and not just a one-page document containing grades and written experiences that can easily be manipulated. This implies that while the bigger companies may have the advantage over small scale companies in training and development, from a resource-based perspective, smaller companies have an advantage over bigger companies in recruiting if this advantage is well-exploited.

This advantage or personal network is also applicable to other aspects of theatre management. In a production by the company used as case study, a cast and crew team of just over thirty people were able to pull an audience of over 850 people to watch them over two days. Although they used different forms of marketing, including digital and traditional marketing, they mostly used their personal networks and pulled such a heavy crowd.

The two case studies cited above demonstrate that theatre can escape the general mood of dissatisfaction and agitation in Nigeria if management is properly done. Despite the need to create sound artistic expression and good financial ground, the humans of the theatre are its engine room, if they are poorly maintained nothing can work. The researcher once experienced a production where the artistic output and the production date were the most important priority for the management. The welfare of talents working with them was not properly considered, the contracts were well-drafted everyone knew the pay would come after the show as agreed. However the management team communicated with their talents poorly and no concern for the needs of the talents. Despite agreeing to only get paid after the

completion of the show, the workers could not keep up with the management's seeming disregard for them. Rehearsals started later than agreed, talents were repeatedly met with condescension and in the end, the talents protested by refusing to rehearse until a new arrangement is made with regards to the treatment of the humans of the theatre. The management were stuck between caving in to the talents' demands or getting new sets of talents for the production. The demands were however very reasonable and the production date was already set. The likeliest way for the production to go on was for the management and the workers to come to an agreement. In the end, what should have been company policy given freely to the workers had to commanded by the workers. While this happened before the lockdowns, the post-Covid climate offers even direr consequences for the disregard for human rights or the appearance of it. This paper therefore recommends the following strategies for the management of human resources in this period:

Establish HR Capabilities: Gauge the capability of the talents within the organisation. Identify the areas in need of strengthening. For smaller companies, consider improving available talents. However, bear in mind that the competition for these talents has increased and you run the risk of losing them after improving them. It is however better to have improved talents that can do what needs to be done than to have loyal but incapable hands that no one else wants in the company. HR could also develop packages that make the company edge out competition and make these developed talents less likely to leave. Consultations with legal professionals to draft out contracts to help retain developed talents may also be necessary. With big theatre companies, they could just directly go after developed talents and make them offers that keep them around.

Build an HR Unit or Department. It has been established that most theatre companies in Nigeria do not have a section of their company dedicated to HR. This new venture can be done on a small scale by researching on what HR functions are, what they should be doing, and creating this role. On a larger scale, this can be done by employing HR professionals with background in the theatre.

Creative self-destruction of HR: In the Post-Covid 19 world, failure could be fatal. Companies that fail to adapt could lose out completely. Competitors are on prowl in search for talents and the borders that previously protected companies in third world countries from this fierce and perhaps unfair competition have been erased by the persistent penetration of the internet. Post-Covid 19 HR units & departments must engage in creative self-destruction.

HR teams should constantly dissect their strategies and check for weaknesses and areas in need of improvement. This needs not be required by management or provoked by problems arising but by a desire to be better as that has become the way to stay ahead of the competition. Professionally, this is done through HR analytics

Conclusion

The humans of theatre have always been the core of theatre. Even theatrical forms that do not have humans on stage like puppetry make use of humans in other essential roles. Humans are theatre's most indispensable part. This is why this work has examined the situation of humans in post-COVID19 Nigeria and proposed strategies for the management of human resources in this period. Despite their inestimable importance to theatre, the humans of theatre are resources to the theatre, and like all resources, they need to be deployed properly, strategically. This is the main argument of the paper. These resources have gone through a tough period in the history of the world and a defining period in the history of Nigeria, the COVID19 pandemic which provoked the lockdown. The paper argues that there was a mentality-shift among the humans of Nigeria out of who are the humans of the Nigerian theatre, during this lockdown. One of these shifts is the huge inclusion of and reliance on internet technology more than ever before, especially in relation to the Nigerian theatre. This paper concludes that theatres in Nigeria that refuse to move with the time may not completely die off, as it has been admitted in the paper that there are people who are averse to change and new technology. These theatres may however be stuck with employees without the enthusiasm or ability to learn anything new. Incorporating these strategies and any other that is subsequently found through further research will only make the Nigerian theatre more productive and economically viable.

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