Chapter 25
Data-Driven Talent Management Practices for Eco-Innovation in State-Owned Enterprises

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of data-driven talent management practices on eco-innovation in state-owned enterprises. A literature review was conducted to examine the role of people data, HR metrics, and people analytics in enhancing talent management practices and eco-innovation in state-owned enterprises. Findings revealed that people data is essential for making talent decisions and developing effective talent retention strategies. Additionally, two key drivers of eco-innovations were identified and grouped into external and internal drivers. External drivers include environmental regulations, competition pressures, and customers' demands for eco-friendly products and services. Internal drivers are organizational capabilities, technological capabilities, and corporate social responsibility. Therefore, data-driven talent development interventions are necessary for advancing organizational and technological capabilities to boost eco-innovation performance in state-owned enterprises.

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INTRODUCTION

The qualitative nature of human resources (HR), as opposed to other management functions such as finance, operations, marketing, and sales, has led managers to make people-oriented decisions based on intuition, feelings, and instincts (Shrivastava, Nagdev & Rajesh, 2018). The HR function produces a vast amount of people data while undertaking regular activities, such as recruitment data, demographic data, talent development data, performance management data, employee survey data (employee engagement survey), training needs analysis (TNA) data, and exit interview data. HR departments recognise the importance of leveraging data effectively for effective decision-making but fail to do so. The non-application of people data in people-oriented decisions by the HR departments in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) can be attributed to a lack of knowledge, experience, or even the foresight to appreciate the enormous possibilities presented by HR analytics modelling (Edwards & Edwards, 2019).

The human resources functions in SOEs collect and analyse a vast amount of data, which could be channelled into making informed policy decisions in Namibia. This raises the question of whether SOEs use people data when making strategic decisions, particularly around talent management practices (talent attraction, development, and retention) to improve the creativity, eco-innovation, and sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) of SOEs. Economic sustainability can be referred to as business activities that support long-term returns on investment without compromising environmental and social sustainability (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Social sustainability is a process for creating sustainable successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work (Palich & Edmonds, 2013). Environmental sustainability is the ability to maintain an ecological balance in the natural environment and conserve natural resources to support the wellbeing of current and future generations (Duran et al., 2015). Therefore, there is a need for informed talent management practices to promote workforce creativity and support the long-term economic sustainability of SOEs without compromising environmental and social sustainability.

Talent management decisions to enhance workplace creativity and innovation are not only difficult to implement, but they may also be expensive if handled incorrectly. Making effective talent management decisions is challenging because decision-makers generally have little or inadequate data from which to reliably conclude which individual is best suited for any opportunity. When organisations invest in the wrong people or wrong programmes, they create teams that are doomed to fail, and their talent management efforts are ultimately eroded (Russell & Bennett, 2015). Investment in the wrong people will impact the economic sustainability of SOEs. Therefore, this chapter examines the influence of data-driven talent management practices on eco-innovation in SOEs.

The following sections of this chapter provide adequate background on data-driven business intelligence and the role of people data in talent management practices for eco-innovation to enhance sustainability of SOEs. The background is followed by a literature review on talent management approaches and practices, talent management challenges, people data as well as its influence on talent analytics and decisions. Subsequently,

BACKGROUND

Globalisation has ushered in a talent war, driving organisations to re-direct their attention from focusing on increasing productivity and differentiating their products and services to concentrating on their inimi-