

# HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS AND READINESS FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

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## Abstract

The current shift in the world of work, moving from a conventional to a digitalized workplace, has necessitated that professionals embrace and prepare for emerging work patterns. This study evaluates the readiness of human resource (HR) professionals for future work, given the emerging trends of the technologies of the fourth industrial revolution in Nigeria. This is particularly important because the HR professionals are responsible for the entire workforce in any organization and there are concerns that if HR is left out in the current transition to the fourth industrial revolution, many business segments will witness setbacks. The study leveraged on primary data and a survey of 218 HR professionals was conducted across organisations using survey monkey. Chi-square test of independence was used to ascertain the HR professionals' readiness, vis-a-vis their current grade level, supervisory responsibilities, and personal development plans. Findings revealed that most HR professionals are generally not ready for future work in Nigeria, as indicated by a p-value above 0.05. The result further shows that the higher the grade level, the less prepared they are for future work. This paper emphasized how human resource practitioners can prepare for the emerging shift in their world of work and policy recommendations were highlighted.

**Keywords:** Human Resource Professionals, Future of Work, Readiness, Grade Level, Supervisory responsibilities, Personal development.

DOI: 10.21303/2504-5571.2022.002486

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## 1. Introduction

In the wake of the 21st century, the high rate of technological advancement has birthed dynamic change in the workplace, shifting tasks between humans and machines [1, 2]. There is a growing realization that employee education and training are lagging in the momentous occupational transition the workplace is currently experiencing. Research across functional areas has highlighted the practical implications of technological advancement, suggesting that the industrial age is fast disappearing due to new technologies (i.e., Internet of things, Big data analytics, Artificial intelligence, Augmented reality, etc.). According to Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder, [3], the new technology has brought enormous challenges. It necessitates re-education of workers, especially in the aspect of training in using computer-aided technologies in the daily operation of organisations.

For continuity and competitiveness, it is required, that all businesses, operating in the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), become smart and technologically ready; thus, all functional segments in a corporate organisation need to be digitally transformed [4]. These include the human resources (HR) professionals whose primary responsibility is overseeing talents and developing the workforce to achieve business goals. Over the years, human resource professionals' responsibility is to manage all aspects of the employee life-cycle from onboarding to exit. These functions are vital to the growth of the business, especially in the current 4IR era, as no business can thrive with low

or obsolete technological capability. However, reviews indicated that HR departments in many organisations seem to be limited to operational roles because of ineffective processes, relying on inadequate or outdated technology [5]. The Internet of things and other technologies of the 4IR that are designed to connect the physical to the digital work environment to generate real-time data for the business is cutting-edge and ubiquitous. It requires the contributions of all, including HR professionals.

There are concerns that if HR is left out in the current transition to 4IR, many business segments will witness setbacks, including recruitment, talent management, and human capital development. Accordingly, this development portends high risks for government, business, and especially the human resource due to its consequential impact on job loss, emerging jobs that are technology-driven, and the preparedness (skills) of labor for the employment of the future [6, 7]. Balliester and Elsheikhi [8] reported that reskilling, upskilling, and redeployment of human capital could bring people and technology closer, empower the individual, and emphasize human skills and capabilities towards better management of the consequence of technology on future jobs.

The emergence of new technologies necessitates the accumulation of new knowledge. This condition affirmed that human resource practitioners' technical know-how and professionalism must change along with a new production method [9, 10]. The future of the job paradigm, driven by the 4IR, presents unique challenges and a set of skills, required by existing human resources to foster effective interaction of both the technological and human resource capabilities. Hence, the need for HR managers to prepare for the future of the job. The HR role has evolved over the years changing nomenclature from administration to personnel management and HR management to people management [11, 12]. Due to the pervasiveness of the technologies of 4IR, HR practitioners must advance with the emergence of new technological capabilities and production methods of the 4IR [5]. Studies have offered that technological advancement expectedly would increase the innovativeness and competencies of HR professionals and results in greater productivity [11, 13, 14].

In the recent past, the need to appreciate numbers and data analytics has come to the front burner. The 21st-century skills as uncovered by the World Economic Forum (WEF) equally apply to HR practitioners [1]. As envisaged, firms' complete transition to industry 4.0 will lead to a decline in the demand for employees in the intermediate skills category [15]. It has been established, that technology has a positive effect on the HR function of an organisation. Accordingly, there are opposing views regarding the impact of technological advancement on human resource function and management. Some study strands [16–18] believe that the fourth industrial revolution's technology positively impacts HR, particularly regarding productivity and skill development. Through these technologies, work is easier and faster than what is obtainable in the traditional manufacturing model [18, 19]. The modes and modalities of working are fast-changing, and organisations are changing or adapting to this trend. With the emergence of new technologies and digital innovations, problems have been solved easier and faster by connecting everyone quickly [20, 21]. According to a recent study, the HR function is witnessing a paradigm shift in dealing with issues, such as a diverse and multi-generational workforce, work-life balance, enhanced mobility, and digital job descriptions [5, 22]. This suggests that hyper-connect, diverse, and digitally savvy HR professionals are required to manage and drive the organisation's goal in the era of 4IR.

As a result of the above, many organisations have re-invented employer-employee engagement as businesses are already implementing artificial intelligence initiatives and innovation strategies [9]. With this development, it becomes imperative, that HR professionals become more responsive by shifting from the current traditional transactional work-related approach to digitally inclined professionals. While the conventional approach still prevails in many organisations, it is observed, that employees' roles and the nature of the task, assigned to an individual, play a significant role in influencing their knowledge and awareness about their future job. Furthermore, the level of responsibility set from the time of onboarding to the mid-career up to the managerial level may determine the perception of HR professionals and, in turn, influence their development plans. Specifically, this study argued that HR professionals' readiness and preparation for future jobs might be affected by their level of awareness, grade level, positions, and personal career plan. Therefore, this study explores how HR professionals are getting ready for the future of work and

what drives their preparedness. Based on the foregoing, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H1: There is no significant relationship between grade level and awareness of the future of work

H2: There is no significant relationship between grade level and supervisory responsibilities

H3: There is no significant relationship between grade level and personal development plan

The rest of this paper shall proceed as follows: an in-depth literature, theoretical and empirical review, the methodology for the study, presentation of results and discussion, conclusion and recommendation, and limitation of the study.

#### Literature Review

The future of jobs covers job-related areas, including job creation, destruction, quantity and quality of jobs, and the workforce's future composition [8, 23]. In the work of Goh et al. [24], readiness for the future of work means how members of an organisation view change and carefully prepare to realize this change. This change is characterized by concepts or perceptions, objectives, attitudes, and actions depending on the degree of change required and the ability of the company to achieve it [14]. For transformation, a positive attitude towards organisational change must be visualized by examining the organisation's and its environment. While the technologies of the fourth industrial revolution and innovations play a crucial role in shaping the future of jobs across organisations, a wide range of factors and forces need to be considered in understanding the future of the work paradigm [13, 25, 26]. In the debate, several common issues dominate the discussion regarding the future of work. Across the existing literature, there is limited evidence on the subject due to its emergent nature.

However, most commentators discussed it in the broadest sense as there are no contextual and country/region-specific economic circumstances that can serve as a model for a unique requirement for the future workforce. According to literature, the most prominent forces, driving the debate on the future of work, are demographics, technology, and globalization. A brief discussion on each of these forces follows:

#### *Change in Demographics and the Future of Work*

Civilization and generational shift in the global population is a major change factor, leading to a profound transformation in people's needs and demands for goods and services that are new, convenient, and also serve imaginary purposes. Again, change in expectations of the younger generation, diversity, and aging are among the most common demographic factors, affecting the global workforce [26, 27]. According to the literature, generational factors are an issue, impacting organisations, and it is expected to continue for many decades [15, 28, 29]. Some of the reasons for this change include the appearance of women, along with other racial and ethnic groups [30]; generational differences [31]; immigration [27, 32]; and global outsourcing of labor. Understanding these changing expectations is essential for attracting and retaining human capital, a critical component of competitive advantage [11, 18].

#### *Technological Change and the Future of Work*

Undoubtedly, the world is experiencing the weightiest and most thorough waves of technological change it has ever witnessed. This is noticeably in information technology, artificial intelligence, and robotics machines advancement, leading to the application of the automated system in industries and manufacturing centers - delivery of goods and services, championed by e-commerce [32]. Even though a change in technology leaves many mechanisms of the world of work uncertain, most especially from the point of view of the social dimension of work, it can bring about more-sincere collaborative work forms. Technological changes lead to the reallocation of labor, as it brings about a process of creative destruction. This may fail some firms and the disappearance of some goods and services, as technology ushered alternatives that are cheaper, more effective, or preferred by consumers for other reasons, including real-time delivery. According to Khallash and Kruse [17], these dynamics are regarded as a perpetual motion machine, in which firms shrink, and jobs are destroyed, but they also give way to new firms and jobs.

Technology reduces the need for repetitive tasks, so fewer workers are employed for manual tasks. In comparison, more employees will be hired to perform tasks and functions, related to creative and strategic thinking. As a result, jobs will become less routine, and roles will be redesigned

by combining technology with human skills and advanced expertise. Work settings will need to re-design workers-machine relationships and rethink how they capitalize on workers to maximize human-machine relationships' impact fully. Technological change has already eliminated some jobs and transformed others [9]. Some skills have become redundant, impacting employment and labor market skills; new technologies have also declined demand for some skills (i.e., routine office jobs).

Technology's development is exciting, with enormous improvements in how things are implemented, particularly for entrepreneurs and consumers. Still, they have also increased fears that artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D machines, automation, and other fourth industrial revolution technologies can make people useless, especially in manufacturing and production. Researchers are more concerned about how these changes in productivity will hinder and create jobs and will change technical requirements, work environments, industries, and working conditions. As innovation spurs new products and allows workers and businesses to produce more at the exact cost, wages rise, prices fall, and demand increases, creating more jobs but more work in the future. Building on this understanding, [8] claim that the fear of technology unemployment is just an exaggeration. Still, in recent years the job shocks and job loss rates from technology have reached a historical decline.

#### *Globalization and the Future of Work*

Technological changes in information and communication technology have brought steam engines and telegraph to social media and virtual reality, making the world smaller and more interconnected [28]. Globalization is defined as various dynamic elements that cross borders and lead to greater integration or interdependence of human society, which can be economic, social, political, or environmental. There are several ways, in which globalization may impact employment and the future of work. Globalization can positively impact the number of jobs in the economy by affecting critical macroeconomic variables, such as unemployment and population. The issue is more complex because the impact can be different at the micro and macro level in the economy, which may result in job losses or job gains for countries. It may also affect the job structures, such as how they are distributed across economic and operation activities.

Jobs, tied to specific aspects of economic activities, may no longer exist. In contrast, those linked to new activities are established and set up due to changing competition, specialization patterns, and technological change. In the same vein, job compositions (i.e., usually both skilled and unskilled jobs) are also being impacted by globalization. Specifically, in most advanced economies of the world, low-skilled employees have been more hit by deteriorating revenues and swelling unemployment due to competition from developing countries' workers and technological advancement. This is because the workforce in developing countries is becoming more skilled and engaged in a more complex service-oriented environment. The ongoing trend to liberalize international trade and foreign direct investment has benefited small, open-industrial countries, especially those that have developed systems to coordinate wages, education, and welfare, increase competitiveness and protect the workforce from volatility [33].

Globalization is changing how jobs are distributed and sourced, facilitated by more accessible communication and excellent connectivity. It is expected to spur higher digitization levels as individuals and institutions seek ways to simplify and reduce the cost of cross-border interactions and transactions. Most importantly, in the context of work organisation, globalization will accelerate the diffusion of new workplace practices and technologies, which will generally impact the workforce. Globalization and its elements (mainly new communication technologies) have enabled many workers to become independent. These workers (i. e., free agents, e-lancers, boundary-less careerists, etc.) enjoy a high level of flexibility that is not available to traditional organisation workers.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

We reached out to a population of 500 HR practitioners who cuts across various industries, ranging from manufacturing, services, banking etc., for the study. The demography and characteristics of the respondents are as contained in **Table 1**. The study participants were informed about

the purpose of the study and consented electronically to voluntarily participate in the survey exercise. The demography and characteristics of the respondents are as contained in **Table 1**.

This study data were obtained through a questionnaire survey, administered to respondents online and across all human resource professionals' groups on WhatsApp and Telegram to ensure that respondents' perceptions were well measured.

The questionnaire contains two parts: the respondent's characteristics like gender, HR functions, level, and knowledge of the future of work. A total of 218 responses were gathered back and analyzed. Following the study of Nud et al. [34], data were collected on (supervisory responsibilities, personal development plan, and readiness for future work), which are all binary independent variables. To analyze this correctly, the chi-square test of independence was used to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. And to further test the validity of the above-stated chi-square test, the Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency tests were also carried out for confirmation. Three (3) hypotheses are proposed for testing. The test is a measure that sums all the differences between the observed count and the expected outcome (i. e., counts of observations), each squared and divided by the expectation. The value would be compared to the chi-squared distribution to determine the goodness of fit. This is the total number of observed frequencies minus the estimated parameters for the degrees of freedom of the chi-squared distribution. The test statistic continues, approximately a chi-square distribution with  $(k-c)$  degrees of freedom where  $k$  is the number of non-empty cells and  $c$  is the number of estimated parameters [35].

### 3. Result

**Table 1** shows the sample description table with 218 responses, gathered after the online questionnaire administration. It reveals that more females with 59 % filled the survey, while the male percentage was 41 %. The most dominant human resources function is HR Generalist, with a total share of 62 %, followed by Learning and Development (L&D). No participant responded to the survey from organisation development and change management.

**Table 1**  
Respondent's Summary

Gender Summary		% Contribution
Female		59 %
Male		41 %
Grand Total		100 %
HR Function Summary		
Compensations & Benefits		5 %
Employee Relations		7 %
Generalist		63 %
Learning & Development		12 %
Organisation development, change management and effectiveness		0 %
Performance Management		5 %
Talent Acquisition		8 %
Grand Total		100 %

Source Authors Computation | Software SPSS

Hypothesis 1:

**Table 2** is the first contingency table for the Chi-Square Test of Independence. There seems to be a great difference between those who are aware of the future of work and those who are not. The table shows that more HR officers (4 vs. 3.1), mid-managers (12 vs. 11.3), and senior managers (8vs 7.8) are not aware of the future of work. Simultaneously, only more junior officers (26 vs. 25.4) and senior executives (10 vs. 8.8) have awareness about the future of work.



**Table 2**

There is no significant relationship between grade level and awareness of the future of work

Crosstab					
Chi-Square Test of Independence		Are you aware of the Future of Work?		Total	
		No	Yes		
What is your Grade Level?	HR officer	Count	4	21	25
		Expected Count	3.1	21.9	25.0
	Junior Manager	Count	3	26	29
		Expected Count	3.6	25.4	29.0
	Mid Manager	Count	12	79	91
		Expected Count	11.3	79.7	91.0
	Senior Manager	Count	8	55	63
		Expected Count	7.8	55.2	63.0
	Senior Executive (GM, Director, Vice President)	Count	0	10	10
		Expected Count	1.2	8.8	10.0
	Total	Count	27	191	218
		Expected Count	27.0	191.0	218.0

**Table 3** shows the chi-square test for hypothesis 1. From the test, the three chi-square tests (Pearson, Likelihood ratio, and Linear-by-Linear Association test) all gave their values to be (1.885, 3.099, and 0.483) with the asymptotic significance of (0.757, 0.541, and 0.487). Since the p-values (0.757, 0.541, 0.487) of the three chi-square tests are greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between grade, awareness, and the future of work. To further validate the chi-square results, it also shows the symmetric measure, with (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient tests), all having a p-value greater than 0.05. This further implies that we should fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between grade and awareness of the future of work.

**Table 3**

Test of Hypothesis

Chi-Square Tests			
Chi-Square Tests	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.885 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.757
Likelihood Ratio	3.099	4	0.541
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.483	1	0.487
N of Valid Cases	218		
Symmetric Measures			
Symmetric Measures	Symmetric Measures	Value	Approx. Sig.
	Phi	0.093	0.757
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	0.093	0.757
	Contingency Coefficient	0.093	0.757
N of Valid Cases	218		

Source Authors Computation | Software SPSS

Hypothesis 2:

**Table 4** is the second contingency table for the Chi-Square Test of Independence. We find that there seems to be a grade difference between those with supervisory responsibilities and those who do not. We find that more HR officers (13 vs. 4.1), junior officers (12 vs. 5.1) do not have any supervisory responsibilities, while starting from the mid manager (81 vs. 75.1), senior manager (60 vs. 52), and senior executive (10 vs. 8.3) all have supervisory responsibilities attached to their grades.

**Table 4**

There is no significant relationship between grade level and supervisory responsibilities

		Crosstab			
Chi-Square Test of Independence between Grade Level and Supervisory Responsibilities			Do you have Supervisory Responsibilities?		Total
			No	Yes	
What is your Grade Level?	HR officer	Count	13	12	25
		Expected Count	4.4	20.6	25.0
	Junior Manager	Count	12	17	29
		Expected Count	5.1	23.9	29.0
	Mid Manager	Count	10	81	91
		Expected Count	15.9	75.1	91.0
	Senior Manager	Count	3	60	63
		Expected Count	11.0	52.0	63.0
	Senior Executive (GM, Director, Vice President)	Count	0	10	10
		Expected Count	1.7	8.3	10.0
	Total	Count	38	180	218
		Expected Count	38.0	180.0	218.0

**Table 5** shows the chi-square test for hypothesis 2. From the test, the three chi-square tests (Pearson, Likelihood ratio, and Linear-by-Linear Association test) all gave their values to be (44.074, 40.619, and 38.000) with the asymptotic significance of (0.000, 0.000, and 0.000). Since the p-values (0.00, 0.000, and 0.000) of the three chi-square tests are less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude there is a significant relationship between grade level and supervisory responsibilities. To further validate the chi-square results, it also shows the symmetric measure, with (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient tests), all having a p-value less than 0.05. This further indicates that the null hypothesis should be rejected and that the higher a professional increases in grade, the more supervisory responsibilities that will be attached to the person's task.

**Table 5**

Test of Hypothesis

Chi-Square Tests			
Test of Hypothesis	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	44.074 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	40.619	4	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	38.000	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	218		
Symmetric Measures			
Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.450	0.000
	Cramer's V	0.450	0.000
	Contingency Coefficient	0.410	0.000
N of Valid Cases	218	218	

Source Authors Computation | Software SPSS

Hypothesis 3:

**Table 6** is the third contingency table for the Chi-Square Test of Independence. There seems to be a grade difference between those with a personal development plan and those who do not. We found that more HR officers (3 vs. 2.2), mid-managers (7.9 vs. 7), and senior managers (7 vs. 5.5)

do not have a personal development plan. At the same time, only more junior officers (29 vs. 26.5) have personal development plans for their grades.

**Table 6**

There is no significant relationship between grade level and personal development plan

Chi-Square Test of Independence		Crosstab			
		Do you have a Personal Development Plan for the year 2020 upward?		Total	
What is your Grade Level?	HR officer	Count	No	Yes	
		Expected Count	2.2	22.8	25.0
	Junior Manager	Count	0	29	29
		Expected Count	2.5	26.5	29.0
	Mid Manager	Count	8	83	91
		Expected Count	7.9	83.1	91.0
	Senior Manager	Count	7	56	63
		Expected Count	5.5	57.5	63.0
	Senior Executive (GM, Director, Vice President)	Count	1	9	10
		Expected Count	0.9	9.1	10.0
	Total	Count	19	199	218
		Expected Count	19.0	199.0	218.0

**Table 7** shows the chi-square test for hypothesis 3. From the test, the three chi-square tests (Pearson, Likelihood ratio, and Linear-by-Linear Association test) all gave their values to be (3.584, 6.037, and 0.379) with the asymptotic significance of (0.465, 0.196, and 0.538). Since the p-values (0.465, 0.196, 0.538) of the three chi-square tests are greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between grade and personal development. To further validate the results of the chi-squares, it also shows the symmetric measure, with (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient tests), all having a p-value less than 0.05. This implies that we should fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between grades and personal development. This means personal development is a personal decision irrespective of one's grade.

**Table 7**

Test of Hypothesis

Chi-Square Tests			
Test of Hypothesis	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.584 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.465
Likelihood Ratio	6.037	4	0.196
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.379	1	0.538
N of Valid Cases	218		
Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.128	0.465
	Cramer's V	0.128	0.465
	Contingency Coefficient	0.127	0.465
N of Valid Cases	218	218	

Source Authors Computation | Software SPSS



#### 4. Discussion

The paper offers human resource professionals and stakeholders the expected skills, required to function effectively in a future-based organisation. This study creates awareness and encourages HR professionals to transform themselves and be learners in readiness to become globally competent for thriving in the 4IR workplace. The global economy is constantly changing in professional and social aspects. This change is exemplified in employees' day-to-day work, and the entire organisational processes are also impacted. This can be identified from the point of view of how they find and reward talents. As a result, managers need to reexamine workforce planning constantly, emerging skills, and the impacts of artificial intelligence, among others. In the present business world, organisations are imbibing digital transformations that are digitally inclined, changing their products, services, and operational capabilities. Leading HR players are significant in adequately assisting their business units in preparing for the future of work. They are expected to drive critical roles and skills, needed for this venture. Managers will also likely leverage, evolving employment models like gig systems, remote working arrangements, and modified organisational processes to manage technology-driven workflows. Schultz [36] articulated that HR managers are expected to have the necessary skills and capabilities to make strategic contributions. As a result, innovation, analytics, metrics, and unique features, such as adaptability, flexibility, and agility, among others, are vital and significant. Leveraging human resource analytics to initiate an all-people-related decision is an essential future HR skill [37]. Human resources are expected to develop core business acumen instead of standardized human resource capabilities. Essential business drivers, for instance, economic growth, customer behaviour, competition, and global business trends, must be expressly comprehended to prepare a manager for the future of work [38, 39].

In consistency with McCarthney, Murphy, and Mccarthy [40], they found six unique skills essential for human resource analysts: communication and storytelling, data fluency, technical knowledge, consulting data fluency, and data analysis. With the dawn of new communication platforms and digital tools, the subject of the development of communicative competencies received a new round of interest from researchers [41]. Managers should facilitate an open dialogue and bring direct communication channels to the fore between all levels within an organisation to help keep leadership informed of employee concerns [42]. Similarly, Schultz [43] argued that the ability to be able to adapt is an essential human resource competency, needed for the future of work by professionals. Findings have shown that human resource metrics and analytics focus on the combination of data that are part of metrics [44]. To be competitive, managers must have the ability to meet the needs and future needs of line management in the workplace [36]. The process of automation and analytics must be well understood to drive effective human and machine collaboration. Presently, the disruption of HR using technology is far from over. On the contrary, there is hardly any HR function left that does not have an impressive range of software and tools, designed to automate and digitize its processes. As automation continues to reshape job roles and skill needs, HR and learning groups must create increasingly agile and effective reskilling strategies for workers.

**Limitation of Study.** A major constraint of this study is the inability to get a sample of 500 respondents from the questionnaire administered despite spreading the online across all targeted professional groups. Also, the study does not consider the level of preparation organisations equally have for the future of work and how they are positioned for it. We used a basic statistical tool Chi-Square for analysis.

**Future studies** should explore more rigorous statistical methods. Also, a qualitative approach, such as an in-depth interview with some respondents, might have provided more insights. Hence, further studies can explore the mixed method approach and help determine the level of preparation organisations have for future work concerning professional preparedness in the human resource field.

#### 5. Conclusion

This paper evaluates the human resource professionals' readiness for future work, given the fourth industrial revolution. From the empirical analysis, the study failed to reject the null hypotheses in the first and third propositions (hypothesis 1 and 3) because the p-values for the two were

above 0.05. From the foregoing, both personal development plan and awareness of future work are not dependent on grade. Hypothesis one was rejected; therefore, the study concluded a significant relationship between grade level and supervisory responsibilities. This implies that the higher a human resource professional moves or gets promoted in grades, the more the supervisory responsibilities that will be ascribed to such employees. In summary, learning is not dependent on grade; a junior level may decide to learn and improve on him/herself and his/her skills, while someone in the senior cadre might decide to do otherwise or equally decide to learn with the trend of things in the field. There are things every professional in the field decides to know or not based on preferences. With the emergence of full-blown digital technologies in the world currently, professionals in the human resource field must prepare themselves and prepare for this new direction of work for effectiveness.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to this paper, as well as the published research results, including the financial aspects of conducting the research, obtaining and using its results, as well as any non-financial personal relationships

### Acknowledgments

We will like to thank the following individuals for their support towards this research; Emmanuel Abegunde, Isaac Gbadamosi, Kayode Owolabi, and Dr Omolara Faboya.

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Received date 12.07.2022

Accepted date 21.09.2022

Published date 30.09.2022

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**How to cite:** Adeosun, O. T., Adegbite, W. M. (2022). Human resource professionals and readiness for the future of work. *EUREKA: Social and Humanities*, 5, 39–50. doi: <http://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2022.002486>