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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATION ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

Okafor, Joy Ndidiamaka¹, Onuzulike-Chukwuemeka Nkechi² & Nwankwo Catherine Nkechi³

^{1,2,3}Department of Business Administration,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: Okafor, Joy Ndidiamaka
Corresponding Author Email: ae.arachie@unizik.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the effect of employee job involvement and autonomy on performance in the organization by using selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State, Nigeria as the study area. The design of the study is descriptive survey. Quantitative approach was used and major statistical tools of analysis were summary statistics, correlation and multiple regression. All tests were conducted at 0.05 level of significance. Preliminary results showed that with F-Statistic of 15.005, the model was adjudged statistically significant, fit and valid for predictions. The regression coefficient 'R' with a value of 0.713 means that 71.3 percent relationship exists between dependent and independent variables. The coefficient of determination 'R²' with a value of 0.702 means that 70.2 percent variations in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables. The Durbin Watson Stat of 1.603 is an indication that the model does not contain serial autocorrelation. Major findings were that employee job involvement and autonomy have significant positive effect on employees' performance in the organization. The study concluded that both job involvement and job autonomy have significant positive influence on employees performance in the organization and managers should always endeavour to encourage them. It was equally recommended among others that management should always

think of how they can re-design jobs by incorporating the characteristics that promote job involvement in employees to facilitate the achievement of enhanced employee performance in the organization.

Keywords: Performance Management, Job Autonomy and Involvement, Employees' Performance, Manufacturing Firms.

INTRODUCTION

Performance management is a continuous approach which managers/supervisors use to guide the employees while performing their various tasks in the organization. The system is later used to evaluate the performance of employees, teams, departments and align the objectives and goals of an organization as a whole to individual goals of employees in the organization. It helps the management in an organization to find out if there are deviations in the performance of employees which affect the organization's mission, vision and goals. Among the many functions of performance management system are the identification of current and future competency gaps, its use in conflict resolution; identification of training needs and the mentoring of employees for optimal performance (Prasad and Vaidya, 2019).

Performance management system has gained remarkable importance in the field of human resource management, in recent times. Indeed, it has become a critical subject of discussion among scholars with many organizations making considerable adjustments in the way they deal with the issue of performance management. Employees are the imperative resource in any organization and as such, they are the target of performance management. Organizations will always evaluate performance outcomes of the workforce to find out if human resource is being underutilized (Babu and Suhasini, 2017). In a nutshell, performance management is targeted at ensuring that employees contribute maximally towards the achievement of goals and objectives of the organization (Ying, 2012).

Breakthroughs in science and technology have heightened the rate of competition in the global business environment and it has left businesses struggling for the available space and only organizations with committed, proactive, articulate, competent and satisfied employees can make the difference (Chughtai and Buckley, 2011). Organizations that employ and focus on maintaining and building an engaged workforce are likely to experience beneficial outcomes such as increased business unit performance, strong financial returns and positive corporate image (Duran, Extremera and Rey, 2010). It has equally been noted that job/work engagement is predictive of a variety of job related outcomes such as in-role performance, extra role performance and active learning (Bakher, Demerouti and Brumelhuie, 2012a). The general perception is that those who show high levels of job involvement are likely to put more effort into their jobs and therefore tend to display higher levels of in-role performance (Jackson, 2014).

In a related development, job/task autonomy just like task involvement/engagement, means that an employee is exercising authority, power and decision-making, within the control of his/her own (Lu, Brockner, Vardi and Weitz, 2017). It has been one of the factors that contribute to employees' enhanced performance. In fact, Saragih (2011) argues that job/task autonomy has positive effect on employees' and eventually firm's performance due to its increasing satisfaction, self-efficacy and mitigation of job stress. Other scholars have equally argued that

task autonomy contributes to increase in employee commitment and job satisfaction (Sisodia and Das, 2013). It is a motivating factor that leads to more employee job involvement or engagement.

According to Khoshmano and Alavi (2020), the word autonomy is a Greek term derived from “autonomia” and “autonomos”, consisting of “auto” meaning self and “nomos” which also means rule, so combining the two, it refers to self-rule. “Self-rule” is practiced by someone or an entity that depends on his/her own laws and procedures to carry on actions and duties, he remarked. In the business context, job autonomy means substantial freedom, independence and discretion on assigned task. Nevertheless, from the terminology perspective, freedom, discretion and independence are different from each other (Breugh, 1999 in Khoshnaw and Alavi, 2020). However, different elements of job autonomy can be traced in organizations, including work methods, work schedule, work pace, work procedures, workplace conditions, work evaluation, working hours, type of work and amount of work, goals, priorities and work criteria (Onyemaechi, Chinyere and Emmanuel, 2018).

In essence, job involvement/engagement and job autonomy are some of the critical elements which if properly managed can be of immense benefit to the organization. Autonomy implies that the employee has been given free hand to function while involvement is the extent to which the employee is attached to duty role. Their outcomes depend largely on management which involves motivation. On this note, the study explores the effect of task involvement and autonomy on employees’ performance in the selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of performance management on employees’ performance in the organization by using selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State as the study area. But the specific objectives are to:

- (i) Determine the effect of job involvement on employees’ performance in the organization.
- (ii) Ascertain the effect of job autonomy on employee performance in the organization.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Performance Management

Performance management has been defined by many authors in different ways. To Wurim (2012), it is a system which consists of processes used to identify, encourage, measure, evaluate and reward, to improve employees’ performance in the organization. In the opinion of Armstrong and Baran (2009), it is a strategic and integrated approach for managing the performance of employees in the organization through the development of their capabilities, to enable them contribute significantly to the achievement of organizational goals. Therefore, since organizations exist to contribute to well-being of the society through the achievement of their mission and vision statements, it behooves on them to manage their employees toward the achievement of such goals.

Job Involvement

Task or job involvement has been defined as an individuals psychological identification or commitment to his/her job (Kanungo, 2008). It is the degree to which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in and concerned with one’s present job (Jackson, 2014). It has also

been defined as a positive feeling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by Vigor, dedication and absorption (Bakker, Tims and Darks, 2012b). As Jackson (2014) has observed, in this definition involvement/engagement represents three separate things. Its first dimension, vigor, means high levels of energy and stamina employees may exhibit on the job. The second dimension, dedication is characterized by individuals who are highly involved in their work and experience a sense of meaning, passion and challenge (Sweetman and Luthans, 2010). The third and final dimension of engagement, absorption, can be defined as a statement of being fully engrossed in one's job, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulty separating oneself from work. Conclusively, engaged workers are able to out perform those who are less engaged.

Job Autonomy

Ozkoc (2016) defines job autonomy as employees' level of authority and freedom to choose how they will perform their work in the organization. Ho and Nesbit (2014) refer to task autonomy as the extent to which a task allows employee discretion, freedom and independence in the performance of such tasks. In the opinion of Wu, Luksyle and Parker (2015), autonomy give individual employees the opportunity to regulate their feelings and behaviours to pursue goals based on their personal values. In a more comprehensive way, Saragih (2011) defines job autonomy as the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence and discretion to the individual in scheduling work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying out the work to benefit both the employee and the organization being worked for.

Employee Performance

Malkauthi and Ali (2016) have defined employee job performance as employee productivity which assesses the number of units of acceptable quality produced by an employee in a manufacturing environment, within a specific time period. To Setiawan and Hasibuan (2018), employee job performance is a result of work in quality and quantity that an employee achieves in carrying out tasks of the responsibility assign to him/her within a specified period of time. But Boakye (2015) sees employee job performance as the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed.

Employee Task Involvement and Employee Performance

The general perception is that people with high levels of task/job involvement are likely to put more effort into their jobs and therefore they tend to display higher levels of performance (Osborne and Hammound, 2017). As such, individuals who display high involvement in their jobs consider their work to be a very important part of their lives and whether or not they feel good about themselves is closely related to how they perform on their jobs. In other words, for highly involved employees, performing well on the job is important for their self-esteem (Chughtai, 2008). Chughtai and Buckley (2011) posit that work involvement can provide the organization with a competitive advantage which is the hallmark of all activities in the organization.

Purcell (2014) observes that disengaged employees that is, employees who are not involved in their work, those who have lowered productivity since the 2008 financial meltdown have affected the financial performance of many U.S. organizations. He notes further that longevity of an organization is affected by employee work engagement, which is a factor on the financial performance of the organization. Thus, employee job engagement leads to improved productivity and it has positive effect on organizational financial performance. Bowen (2016)

posits that employee work involvement would be more beneficial to the employee and the organization if it is effectively and efficiently managed through motivation.

Job Autonomy and Employee Performance

When employees are given task autonomy, the independence in determining the scheduling of work, how to perform it, and the setting of performance goals can positively affect more behaviours. Deci and Ryan (2011) opine that task autonomy has been shown to promote high task performance. It helps to eliminate unnecessary activities in the course of performing the task, discover and utilize shortcuts and ultimately make the employee more efficient. It helps to reduce absenteeism and it has been related to levels of perceived competence and perceptions of control. A feeling of control which creates a sense of goal ownership and dedication which consequently increases the employee's commitment towards goal achievement (Joo, Jeung and Yoon, 2010). As has been mentioned in goal setting theory, having high goal commitment is important for goal attainment, especially if they are difficult goals because these goals take longer time to achieve and they are harder to reach. Equally, when a goal is perceived to be under a person's control, the goal is more likely to be accepted and therefore, more effort and persistence is expended towards reaching the goal thereby leading to higher rates of goal attainment and higher performance in the organization (Crane, 2012). It has been noted that lack of job autonomy increases absenteeism, turnover and other negative work attitudes which ultimately reduces performance (Maymon and Reizer, 2017; Johari, Yean and Zulkarnain, 2018). Therefore, employee job autonomy is necessary because it gives the employee discretion and independence which are the necessary ingredients that brings out the inner ability of the employee to achieve greater fit.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on goal-setting theory. Edwin A. Locke examined goal setting in the mid 1960s. He derived the idea of goal setting from Aristotle's form of final causality, according to Lathan (2002). Aristotle speculated that purpose can cause action; thus, on the basis of this, Locke began to research the impact of goals on individual activity of its time performance. He finally came up with a postulation that goal increases performance if one can define it as difficult to achieve and as specific and that easily attained goals tend to correlate with lower performance than more difficult goals. Therefore, goal setting is one feasible technique that can actually increase employees' performance in the organization. From the motivational perspective, goal setting is an action plan that influences the direction, amount of efforts as well as the persistence of a certain action. An employee's intention will affect not only the level of performance attained, but also the level of effort exerted and the engagement of certain behaviours to complete a task such as commitment and involvement. From the cognitive perspective goal setting influences the process by which individuals indirectly develop strategies to reach a goal (Bullor and Bell, 2009). The empirical work of Locke and his colleagues in the mid 1960s, consistently confirms the importance of goal setting to performance and that employee's performance is directly influenced by the conscious objective of a given task (Locke, 1968).

Empirical Review

Jackson (2014) conducted a study on work engagement and employee performance. The study adopted descriptive survey design and found from the analysis of data that work engagement directly impacted both in-role and extra-role performance. Thus, indicating that engaged

workers are more likely to perform well. Sarinah, Akbar and Prasadja (2018) carried out a study on the effect of work autonomy, self-efficacy and engagement on organizational commitment. The study made use of descriptive survey design and the result showed that job autonomy has positive direct effect on organizational commitment. And that self-efficacy equally has positive relation with organizational commitment.

In a related study, Suteerawut, Vanno and Khaikleng (2016) investigated the effect of job autonomy and positive psychological capital on job performance of banking employees by assessing the mediating role of intrinsic work motivation in Thailand. The study design was survey method. The result from data analysis showed that job autonomy, positive psychological capital and intrinsic work motivation significantly impacted job performance in the organization.

Chughtai (2008) investigated the impact of job involvement on in-role job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour. The study adopted descriptive survey design and found from the analysis of data that job involvement was positively correlated with both in-role job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour. In a related study, Akpan (2012) examined the effect of job involvement of university lecturers' performance. The study which utilized descriptive survey design as its method, found that job involvement was significantly related to the performance of university lecturers in South-South, Nigeria. The study concludes that performance management is a critical element in human resource management and as such, management should leverage it to achieve organizational set goals.

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of descriptive survey design to permit the collection of primary data which were analyzed and the results generalized for the entire population of interest. Survey method was adopted because it is the most appropriate means of gathering data to measure the effect of job autonomy and involvement on employees' performance in the organization. The study took place in Anambra State and it covered selected manufacturing firms in Onitsha and Nnewi industrial axis and environments in the state. Target population is the senior cadre employees from the randomly selected firms. The researcher identified 891 of this category of employees from the firms located at Onitsha and 903 from those located at Nnewi axis thus giving a study population of 1,794. A sample size of 327 was arrived at by applying Taro Yamani's Statistical formula. Furthermore, proportionate sampling technique was used to determine the way sample was allocated to each industrial axis. The researcher designed an item structured instrument in a Likert scale format of strongly agree (5), agree (4), disagree (3), strongly disagree (2) and undecided (1), and used it to collect the necessary data from the respondents. The instrument was tested for reliability through the method of test re-test. The test produced reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.80 for the two research questions, with average coefficient of 0.80, which means that the instrument is 80 percent reliable. The data were collected through direct questionnaire distribution approach and it gave the researcher the opportunity of assessing the extent that the respondents understood the questionnaire items. Out of the 327 copies of the instrument distributed, 293 were completed and returned thus showing a response rate of 89.6 percent and it was considered very adequate for the study. Concerning the method of analysis, quantitative method was used and major statistical tools were descriptive (mean, frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis). All tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1
Demographic Features of the Respondents

S/N	Demographic Feature	Response	Frequency	Percentage of Total
1.	Gender:	Male	197	67.2
		Female	98	32.8
		Total	293	100.0
2.	Age Bracket (in years):	28 – 37	31	10.6
		38 – 47	129	44.0
		48 – 57	95	32.4
		58 and above	38	13.0
		Total	293	100.0
3.	Educational Attainment:	OND/NCE	91	27.7
		HND/First Degree	163	55.6
		Higher degree	49	16.7
		Total	293	100.0
4.	Years in Service:	Less than 5	30	10.2
		5 – 10	67	22.9
		11 – 15	109	37.2
		16 and above	87	29.7
		Total	293	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1 shows that male respondents in the sample are 197 representing 67.2 percent of the entire sample. It shows also that age bracket 38 – 47 years have a total of 129 persons and it represents about 44 percent of the sample. In terms of educational attainment, 212 representing 72.3 percent of the respondent have first degree or its equivalent and above. Organizational tenure shows that about 70 percent of them have worked in their various organizations for upward of 5 years and above. The implication is that from the point of view of educational attainment and length of time in service, the respondent are capable of discussing all issues raised in the questionnaire.

Table 2
Correlation Analysis

Variables		Employee Performance	Job Involvement	Job Autonomy
Employee Performance	Pearson	1	.601**	.725**
	Correlation			
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.000
Job Involvement	N	293	293	293
	Pearson	.601**	1	.507**
	Correlation			
Job Autonomy	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	293	293	293
	Pearson	.725**	.507**	1
	Correlation			
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	293	293	293

** : Correlation is significant at 0.05 Level (2-tailed).

* : Correlation is Significant at 0.01 Level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The correlation matrix analysis presented in Table 2 shows that positive and strong relationship exist between dependent and independent variables as well as among the independent variables. It shows also that there is no presence of multicollinearity or orthogonal relationships in the model. Thus, it permits the multiple regression analysis.

Table 3

Results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the Model

Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Sig.
Regression	4	209.531	52.383	15.005	.000 ^a
Residual	45	157.104	3.491	-	
Total	49	366.635	-		

a. Predictor: (constant), Job involvement and job autonomy.

b. Dependent variable: Employee Performance

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The analysis presented in Table 3 shows that F-value is 15.005 and it is an indication that the model is statistically significant, valid and fit and as such, it can be used for any predictions.

Table 4

Summary of Regression Results

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	Durbin Stat.	Watson
I	0.713 ^a	0.702	0.509	0.43578	1.603	

a. Predictor: (constant), Job involvement and job autonomy

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Regression results presented in Table 4 shows that regression coefficient 'R' with value of 0.713 shows that 71.3 percent relationship exists between dependent and independent variables. It shows also that coefficient of determination of 'R²' with a value of 0.702 means that 70.2 percent variation in the dependent variable (employee performance) can be accounted for by the independent variables. The table shows also that the Durbin Watson Statistic of 1.603 is an indication that the model does not contain serial autocorrelation.

Table 5

Regression Coefficients, t-value and Significance Level

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.178	.201	-	-.729	.438
Job Involvement	.406	.058	.676	8.401	.000
Job Autonomy	.512	.064	.705	3.617	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Test of Hypotheses

In this section of the analysis, the hypotheses set to guide the objectives of the study and strengthen the analysis are stated as follows:

1. H₀: Job involvement does not have significant positive effect on employees' performance in the organization.

2. H_0 : Job autonomy does not have significant positive effect on employees' performance in the organization.

Interpretation of Regression Results

To interpret the regression results presented in Table 5, we made use of standardized coefficients, t-value and the significance levels. As could be seen from Table 5, the coefficient of employee job involvement is 0.676 and it means that when the variable is increased by one additional unit, employee performance will increase by 67.6 percent when other factors in the model are held constant. Also, from the t-value of 8.401 and its corresponding significance level of 0.000, the coefficient is significant because 0.000 is less than $P \leq 0.05$. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative which suggests that job involvement have significant positive effect on employees' performance was accepted.

Similarly, coefficient of job autonomy represented by α_2 with the value of 0.705 in the model means that when the variable is increased by one unit, employee performance will increase by 70.5 percent if other variables in the model are held constant. The t-value of 3.617 and its corresponding significance level of 0.000 shows that the coefficient is significant and positive because 0.05 is greater than 0.000. Therefore we dismissed the claim of the null hypotheses and accepted the alternative which suggests that employee job autonomy have significant positive effect on employees' performance in the organization.

Table 6
Post Estimation Test

Model	Eigen Value	Condition Index		Variance Proportion	
		Constant	EJI	EJA	
1.	3.516	1.005	.00	.00	.00
2.	.058	6.537	.07	.08	.09
3.	.076	7.612	.08	.21	.25

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' Performance

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The post estimation test to determine whether there is presence of multicollinearity in the model or not presented in Table 6 shows absence of it both the values of condition index and Eigen values.

Discussion of Findings

The result of first test of hypothesis showed that employee job involvement have significant positive effect on performance. The result is consistent with that of Jackson (2014) when he found that employee work engagement has significant positive effect on employees' in-role and extra-role performance. Job involvement reinforces organizational commitment and it is a sign of employee job satisfaction because nobody will be so involved/engaged in a thing that he/she is not enjoying. Therefore, fostering high levels of job involvement through effective performance management is a viable option for managers so as to increase the competitive position of their organizations. The level of employee job involvement can be increased by re-designing jobs through the incorporation of job characteristics such as feedback, variety and task identity, autonomy, management can also make jobs more interesting, meaningful and challenging for job incumbents which in turn can lead to higher job involvement. By implication, organizations can reap the positive benefits of job involvement by providing the resources to employees at the level of the tasks.

The result of the second test of hypothesis showed that employee job autonomy have significant positive effect on employees performance in the organization. The result supports that of Sarinah, Akbar and Prasadja (2018) when they found from their study that job autonomy has direct positive effect on employee performance, self-efficacy, engagement and organizational commitment. Employee job autonomy connotes discretion, independence and no control from the superior as far as work is concerned. Some employees see this as an intrinsic reward while others are afraid due to lack of competence and confidence competent but employees see it as a recognition of their capabilities and they go on to perform creditably. Hence employee job autonomy and job satisfaction are significantly and positively related and job satisfaction is one of the necessary conditions for employees enhanced performance in the organization.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the effect of employee job involvement and autonomy on performance in the organization. The results showed that both employee job involvement and job autonomy have significant positive effect on employees' performance in the organization. It shows equally that when the manager increases employee job involvement or autonomy, the performance of the employee will increase in higher measures. Some employees are afraid of job autonomy due to lack of capacity and confidence. Nevertheless, job autonomy revealed from empirical analysis that it increases employees' productivity and output than otherwise. For highly involved employees, performing well in the job is important to them for self-esteem.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the analysis and the conclusion drawn from them, the following recommendations were made:

1. Employee job involvement promotes performance in the organization. Managers can increase employees' job involvement by re-designing jobs through the incorporation of job characteristics, such as autonomy, feedback, variety and task identity, management can make job more interesting, meaningful and challenging for job incumbents which in turn can lead to higher job involvement for enhanced performance.
2. Employee job autonomy enhances performance because it connotes self-rule, independence, discretion and lack of control from the superiors. Managers are advised to increase employees job autonomy because it leads to great accomplishment from the employee in the organization.

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