

Job Design and Employee Performance of Manufacturing Companies in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between job design and employee performance of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. A cross sectional survey design was used for this study. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study comprises of principal officers of manufacturing sector in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The population of the study was one hundred and ninety two principal officers selected from the 32 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The entire population was used as a census hence there was no sample. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between job design and employee performance of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The study thus recommends that management of manufacturing companies should ensure that the specifications of job within their workforce are design in order to reduced job dissatisfaction among employee.

Keywords: Job Design, Employee Performance, Creativity, Profitability

INTRODUCTION

Performance is a critical factor in organizational success. Performance can be described as organizing as well as managing the causal model components that bring about the appropriate achievement of stated aims within limitations precise to an organization and to the circumstances (Lebas, 1995). At the analysis organizational level an organization which is performing well is one that is achieving its goals successfully, that is to say, the one that is executing a suitable strategy effectively (Otley, 1999). The model of AMO (Appelbaum, 2003) maintains performance which is a function of employees' motivation, opportunity to play a part as well as capability. This signifies that an institution will profit most if it arranges the process of work in such a manner that employees who are non-managerial have the chance to contribute optional effort and this can be attained by providing in good

communication, by membership of employee in self-directed and/or off-line teams and by giving them independence in decision making.

Job design refers to the specification of the jobs methods, relationships and contents so as to satisfy organizational as well as technological requirements and the job holders' personal and social requirements (Armstrong, 2003). According to Ali and Aroosiya (2012) design of job is the functions of task arrangement, responsibilities and duties in to an institutional work unit. Armstrong (2003) states that design of job starts with task requirements analysis, that is what must be done, and after that it must take into consideration the following characteristics of motivation: responsibility, autonomy, self-control and finally discretion

Love and Edwards (2005) reports that design of job comprises of demands of perceived work control of job and social support which result to superior productivity. Professionals of human resources have revealed that there is a strong job design relationship on the motivation and productivity and employees' job satisfaction within an institution. Job design is a major component for performance of employee. Appropriate designing of roles as well as jobs is extremely vital in uplifting the employees' performance, which is tackled via the model of job characteristics, which describes more particularly on the job design of an individual; it as well identifies five major dimensions that include variety of skill, identity of task, significance of task, feedback and autonomy. Design of job has several techniques: job enlargement, job rotation, job simplification and job enrichment.

This study therefore examined the relationship between job design and employee performance in the manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Furthermore, this study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. To what extent does job design enhances creativity in the manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent does job design enhances profitability in the manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria?

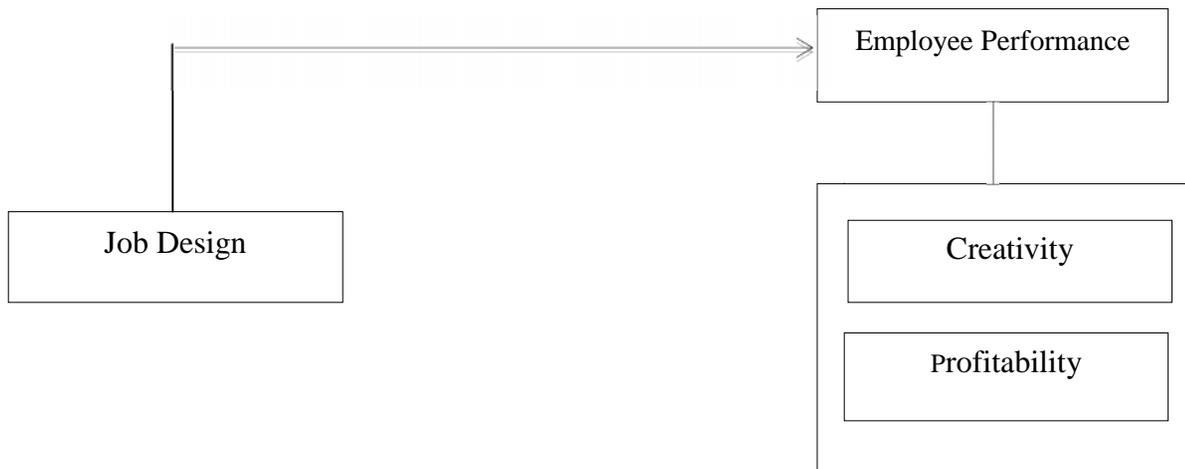


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework for the relationship job design and employee performance
Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory, otherwise known as process theory, explicates the reason for giving preference for one's behaviour over another. This theory was originally propounded by Victor Vroom of the Yale School of Management in 1964. Redmond (2010) observed that a person that expects desired consequence would be stimulated and encouraged to take a decision that will give rise to that outcome. An employee that has belief in his sets of goals would be galvanized and stimulated to achieve such goals since he believes those goal can lead to desired outcome which will enhance him good reward. The aspiration to fulfil a need is capable enough to make the work valuable.

Considering the connection between effort and performance, managers should assign a task that is quite challenging to avoid dullness, frustration and minimal performance on the part of the workers. Managers should also be aware of divergent skills and abilities of the workers while it is equally necessary to assign tasks based on the capability and competencies of individual employee. This is because an employee who perceives he cannot accomplish the task assigned to him would be demotivated and the connection between employee performances would be fragile. It should also be perceived by the managers that employees differ in terms of self-esteem in accomplishing assigned task and high confidence of the employee is relevant and able come up with good performance that will bring about aspired outcome and reward for both the organization and the employee involved.

Job Design

Job design is a core function of the human resource management and it is related to the specification of contents, methods and relationship of jobs in order to satisfy technological and organizational requirements as well as the social and personal requirements of the job holder or the employee. Its principles are geared towards how the nature of a person's job affects their attitudes and behaviour at work, particularly relating to characteristics such as skill variety and autonomy. Job design research has sought to establish the mechanisms through which job characteristics affect employee outcomes such as performance and well-being. Employee erudition has been proposed as one such mechanism Parker and Wall (1999). The basic premise of job design mechanism is that job characteristics stimulate the process. This leads to the acquisition of knowledge about the job and its context, enabling the employee to perform more effectively and to cope better with demand. An additional benefit of the employee being able to cope better with demand is an improvement in well-being (Frese and Zapf 1994; Karasek and Theorell 1990). Consistent with this view, studies have found support for a job design mechanism in relation to task performance (Wall *et al.*, 1992).

All jobs are designed, whether consciously or otherwise. In this sense design is simply the process of deciding what goes in and what stays out. Design is, by its very nature, both enabling and excluding. Organisations may seek to divide tasks rationally between different groups of employees in ways that appear to maximise efficiency. Narrowly

designed jobs, for example where employees repeat a restricted number of tasks in relatively short cycles, assume high levels of product or service standardisation, high levels of predictability in the business environment and high levels of employee tolerance of boring work. Job design in manufacturing companies has yet to be established in relation to employee performance, the individual-level process by which new ideas are generated, promoted, and implemented within organizations (Kanter 1988; Rank et al 2004; Van de Ven *et al.* 1989). It is important to know that job design affects employee innovation via its influence because, if true, it demonstrates a route through which employee performance can be cultivated. Organizations might therefore be able to promote employee performance by combining effective job designs with interventions to enhance employee intellect.

Job design means the ways that decision-makers choose to organize work responsibilities, duties, activities, and tasks. Job Redesign thus involves changing work responsibilities, duties, activities, and tasks. Job design is the process of Work arrangement (or rearrangement) aimed at reducing or overcoming job dissatisfaction and employee alienation arising from repetitive and mechanistic tasks. Through job design, organizations try to raise productivity levels by offering non-monetary rewards such as greater satisfaction from a sense of personal achievement in meeting the increased challenge and responsibility of one's work. Job enlargement, job enrichment, job rotation, and job simplification are the various techniques used in a job design exercise Rank *et al.* (2004).

Although job analysis, as just described, is important for an understanding of existing jobs, organizations also must plan for new jobs and periodically consider whether they should revise existing jobs. When an organization is expanding, supervisors and human resource professionals must help plan for new or growing work units. When an organization is trying to improve quality or efficiency, a review of work units and processes may require a fresh look at how jobs are designed. These situations call for job design, the process of defining the way work will be performed and the tasks that a given job requires, or job redesign, a similar process that involves changing an existing job design Rank *et al.* (2004). To design jobs effectively, a person must thoroughly understand the job itself (through job analysis) and its place in the larger work unit's work flow process (through work flow analysis). Having a detailed knowledge of the tasks performed in the work unit and in the job, a manager then has many alternative ways to design a job.

The Classical theory which has a bearing on job design was expounded in early writings of Max Weber and Henri Fayol. For the classicist, any organization achieves efficiency through its division of labour. Managers identify the overall purpose of the organization. They then divide this overall purpose into jobs, each rationally related to the whole. Jobs are, in turn, grouped to create work groups, divisions, and departments. Finally, each group is assigned a supervisor, who is responsible for overseeing the work of subordinates and reporting the results to his or her own superior; therefore, in this process each group now has a designed task to work on as posited in the classical school by Max Webber and Co.

Unlike the classicist, the behaviouralist is much less interested in allocating specific tasks to specific jobs, making sure that the authority matches the position, and then trying to attain

higher efficiency through specialization of labour. Behaviouralists prefer simple organizational structure, decentralized decision-making and informal departmentalization. In an organic structure, subordinates feel free to discuss their performance problems with superiors and have a positive view of the organization. They participate in decision-making and communicate with those whose views are needed to solve immediate problems. These characteristics are in stark contrast to conditions in a traditional organization, where subordinates are guarded and negative about the organization, do not feel sufficient trust to communicate openly with those of higher status, and are not permitted to participate in decision-making. The concept of job design by Davis is seen as the specification of the contents, methods and relationships of jobs in order to satisfy technological and organizational requirements as well as the social and personal requirements of the job holder.

Job design is the system of planning or arranging a job, which is drawing an outline from which job contents are made. It is also an outgrowth of job analysis and concern with the design of jobs in order to improve organizational efficiency Van de Ven *et al.* (1989). There are many factors affecting job design. One of the most common factors is employee dissatisfaction with job that is repetitive, narrow, meaningless and routine. Another one is human relationship resulting as loss of pride in work insecurity etc. in recent years it has been observed with respect to move usual and seeming risky changes to job content which includes; job enrichment, job enlargement and job rotation. Job design as suggested by Taylor is one of the most important components of scientific management. In its basic format, it assures that jobs should be simplified standardized and specialized for each component of the required work. In general organizations operations aisled this basic job design format by breaking each job down into very small but workable units standardizing the necessary procedures for performing the units, and teaching and motivating workers to perform their job under conditions of high efficiency Wall *et al.* (1992). Therefore, the importance of designing jobs and systems of work in a manner that will satisfy both psychological and sociological needs of manufacturing sectors should be stressed.

Employee Performance

The performance of the employee is considered as what an employee does and what he doesn't do. Employee performance involves quality and quantity of output, presence at work, accommodative and helpful nature and timeliness of output employee is able to produce for organizational success. According to Yang (2008) in his study conducted on the performance of individual, the result shows that, the performance of the individuals cannot be verified. Similarly he asserts that organizations can use direct bonuses and rewards based on individual performance if individual employee performance is noticeable (Yang, 2008). Also, Bishop (1987) investigated employee performance and revealed that acknowledgment and recognition and reward of performance of employees direct the discrimination between employee productivity. Moral and productivity of employees is highly influenced by the effectiveness of performance of an organization and its reward management system (Yazıcı, 2008). To satisfy customers, firms or organizations do and put in much effort towards the satisfaction but do not pay attention on satisfying employees. But the fact is that customer would not be satisfied until and unless employees are

satisfied. Because, if employees are satisfied, they will do more work therefore ultimately customers will be satisfied (Ahmad, 2012).

Employee performance is actually influenced by motivation because if employees are motivated then they will do work with more effort and by which performance will ultimately improve (Azar and Shafighi, 2013). Employee motivation has a significant and positive relationship with employee performance. Intrinsic reward An interest in the task itself driven by individual internally rather than external forces and reliance on external rewards refers to intrinsic motivation. Organizations continuously need something to keep their workers working excluding salary alone or bonuses etc., but motivation is the very important factor to keep the workers engage and involve in their work so that their quality and quantity of work and productivity does not deteriorate (Williams, 2004). Intrinsic reward basically deals with the satisfaction of employee to his jobs emerging out of the pleasure of working that he experiences in a good organization that rewards him for his job.

Rewards are very meaningful to employees whether they are extrinsic or intrinsic. Intrinsic reward emerges in a person after the accomplishment of certain task or work (joy, satisfaction, pride etc.) which emanates from the rotation of employee tasks; while extrinsic motivation comes from outside sources or forces as salary, money or grades etc. (Scott and Bruce, 1994). A person who is intrinsically motivated will work with a math problem because it is enjoyable or he will find a solution to a problem because it is challenging and will give him a feeling of pleasure after solving it. In both the cases no external reward is important to the person such as payment or prize (Roberts, 1991 and Rothwell, 1992). It doesn't mean that extrinsic reward is not important to a person but it means that it is not only sufficient to keep the person motivated (Eisenberger and Cameron, 1996; Janssen, 2000; Mumford, 2000). In a study, it was found that rewards are essential to change the dissatisfaction of employees into satisfaction. It was concluded that when employees are satisfied then they will do task with more interest and will do work hard which will leads to good performance (Mehmod, 2013). A study was conducted in which it was found that employee' performance is directly influenced by intrinsic rewards. Because when intrinsic rewards are given to them they came to know about their performance and do more work hard to gain appreciation (Edirisooriyaa, 2014).

Moreover, in order to achieve the goals of the organization efficiently and effectively, management of the organizations require training of its members. Training is very useful for the employees in various ways as: it keeps them up to date with the fast changing trends and environment of the dynamic globalized world; helps anxiety and frustration reduction caused from work overload or demand of work; helps improve skills to handle the work effectively etc(Chen and Lou, 2004). Employees who feel they are less competent for the task to fulfil will leave the field or if they stay their level of productivity will be suboptimal (Kanelopoulos and Akrivos, 2006). The larger is the gap between what an individual possesses and what he requires, the greater is the dissatisfaction with the job and the higher are the turnover rates. Even though there does not exist a direct connection in literature between job satisfaction and training yet Rowden (2002) and Rowden and Conine (2005), suggest that training can be an effective device to enhance satisfaction from

the job. Similarly Rowden and Conine (2005) claim that employees who get training will ultimately better satisfy the needs and demands of their customers. In line with them Tsai et al. (2007), stated that employees who show their commitment to training and learning possess an enhanced level of job satisfaction that positively affects their performance. Training practices directly or indirectly affect the motivation of employees and their commitment to the organizations (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Training is defined as the planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinants of individual job performance, (Chiaburu and Tekleab, 2005). A study showed that training is one of the most important aspects in human resource applications which directly influence the performance of employees. Training increases and updates the knowledge of employees which leads to increase in performance. Employee training is like an asset because if employees are competent then companies' performance will increase more and will provide long term benefits as compare to competitor (Ameeq-ul-Ameeq & Hanif, 2013).

Creativity

According to Farh, *et al.* (2010), the meaning of creativity makes the nature of creativity clear, but many scholars have attempted to clarify its nature. Creativity is the intellectual ability to make creation, invention and discoveries that brings novel relations, entities and unexpected solutions into existence. Creativity is the gifted ability of human beings in thinking, inference, problems solving and product development.

Creativity is to think or do something differently. It is a kind of fantasy in which new ideas are promoted and that new ideas are essential to the advancement of human society. Creativity is defined as the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others and entertaining ourselves as well as others. It can be said that creativity is the strength or capacity to inflict and create any new thing. Although newness is given special importance in creativity, yet a creative person can present old objects in new forms instead of inventing any new object (Gilson, 2008). Factors like originality, spontaneity, expansion, flexibility in work etc. are inherent in the creative production of a person. Creativity is inherent in each person. Creativity started with the evolution of human society. Creativity can be defined on a variety of levels: cognitively, intellectually, socially, economically, spiritually, and from the perspective of different disciplines within the arts, sciences, and humanities. All students can develop their creative capacities if they have access to rich learning opportunities in environments that nurture and support their creative development (Gilson, 2008). Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is characterised by the ability to perceive the world in new way to find hidden patterns to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing. If one has ideas, but does not act on them, then one is imaginative but not creative. Guilford, first of all on the basis of his scientific discoveries on creativity drew attention of all people. It is not necessary that more intelligent people are more creative and more creative people are more intelligent.

According to Jaussi and Dionne (2003), Creativity is very difficult to understand. Different types of thoughts were expressed to understand its different aspects. Many psychologists

agree with the fact that creativity has an important place in giving birth to new thoughts, turning old things into new and building relationship with irrelevant objects. Any action is to be creative if it has immediate solution to the kind of thinking which has always been innovative. Creativity is the essence of making pre-existing objects and elements as new one. Creative thinking is the process of understanding errors unreceived, and rare elements, making concepts in their relationship imagining notions and making tests, carrying results to other persons and making improvement by reviewing the concepts. Creativity is bold thinking. Bold thinking means the ability of thinking beyond the mainstream, receiving new experience and adding the present relationship with that of the future. Bold thinking or creativity is to work or think with new attitude by going beyond mutual thinking. It is the process of bringing something new in human being. Creativity requires passion and commitment. It brings to our awareness what was previously hidden and points to new life. The experience is one of heightened consciousness ecstasy Mueller, & Kamdar (2011).

Profitability

The term profit has distinct meaning for different people, such as businessmen, accountants, policymakers, workers and economists. Profit simply means a positive gain generated from business operations or investment after subtracting all expenses or costs. The concept profit in economics is seen in the accounting sense as an excess of revenue over cost is the sum of two components: normal profit and economic profit Fraering, and Minor, (2004). Normal profit is the profit that is necessary to just cover the opportunity costs of the owner-manager or of the firm's investors. In the absence of this profit, these parties would withdraw their time and funds from the firm and use them to better advantage elsewhere. In contrast, economic profit, sometimes called excess profit, is profit in excess of what is required to cover the opportunity costs. It is also seen as reward received by an entrepreneur by combining all the factors of production to serve the need of individuals in the economy faced with uncertainties. In a layman language, profit refers to an income that flow to investor. In accountancy, profit implies excess of revenue over all paid-out costs. Profit in economics is termed as a pure profit or economic profit or just profit.

The enterprise component of normal profit is the profit that a business owner considers necessary to make running the business worth his or her while, i.e., it is comparable to the next-best amount the entrepreneur could earn doing another job. Particularly, if enterprise is not included as a factor of production, it can also be viewed as a return to capital for investors including the entrepreneur, equivalent to the return the capital owner could have expected (in a safe investment), plus compensation for risk. Normal profit varies both within and across industries; it is commensurate with the riskiness associated with each type of investment, as per the risk-return spectrum.

According to Newton, (1983), Profit is a financial benefit that is realized when the amount of revenue gained from a business activity exceeds the expenses, costs, and taxes needed to sustain the activity. Any profit that is gained goes to the business's owners, who may or may not decide to spend it on the business.

Profit is the money a business makes after accounting for all expenses. Regardless of whether the business is a couple of kids running a lemonade stand or a publicly traded multinational company, consistently earning profit is every company's goal Newton, (1983). As a result, most of business performance is based on profitability in its various forms. Some analysts are interested in top-line profitability, whereas others are interested in profitability before expenses, such as taxes and interest, and still others are only concerned with profitability after all expenses have been paid. There are three major types of profit that analysts analysed: (a), Gross Profit, (b) Operating Profit, and (c) Net Profit. Each type gives the analyst more information about a company's performance, especially when compared against other time periods and industry competitors. All three levels of profitability can be found on the income statement.

From the foregoing point of view, the study hereby hypothesized thus:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between job design and creativity in the manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between job design and profitability in the manufacturing sector in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional survey design was used for this study. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study comprises of principal officers of manufacturing sector in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The population of the study was one hundred and ninety two principal officers selected from the 32 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The entire population was used as a census hence there was no sample. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 21.0 version to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable. Correlation coefficient can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while the value of +1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. A value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypotheses one to nine, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting our alternate hypotheses: all the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and therefore our alternate hypotheses rejected; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient r value, we reject our alternate hypotheses. Our confidence interval was set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix for job design and employee performance

		Job Design	Creativity	Profitability
Job Design	Pearson Correlation	1	.882**	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	174	174	174
Creativity	Pearson Correlation	.882**	1	.923**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	174	174	174
Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.964**	.923**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	174	174	174

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output

The table 4.13 correlation of hypothesis one and two; the hypothesis one shows a significant correlation at $r = .882^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_0:1$), and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between job design and creativity.

The hypothesis two shows a significant correlation at $r = .964^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_0:2$), and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between job design and profitability.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first and second hypothesis shows that there is a strong positive relationship between job design and each of the measures of employee performance in the sample of selected manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This finding support the study conducted by Morgeson *et al.* (2013), when they stated that, Since then, there has been a growing volume of research exploring how to bring these elements together so that jobs can be designed both to maximise the engagement and satisfaction of individual workers on the one hand, and maximise the productivity and performance of organizations on the other. There is now considerable evidence that individuals' experience of their day-to-day work directly affects their engagement levels, and also their personal effectiveness. Job

design means the ways that decision-makers choose to organize work responsibilities, duties, activities, and tasks. Job Redesign thus involves changing work responsibilities, duties, activities, and tasks. Job design is the process of Work arrangement (or rearrangement) aimed at reducing or overcoming job dissatisfaction and employee alienation arising from repetitive and mechanistic tasks. Through job design, organizations try to raise productivity levels by offering non-monetary rewards such as greater satisfaction from a sense of personal achievement in meeting the increased challenge and responsibility of one's work. Job enlargement, job enrichment, job rotation, and job simplification are the various techniques used in a job design exercise Rank *et al* (2004).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Job design is one of the critical techniques that managers use in applying the organizational resources as human in their disposal to multitask in order to carry out the goal and mission of the organization for its success. It is an avenue that workers in other department use to learn new skills in other to function in such department should in case such an employee in that department workout of the organization. Therefore, it is imperative for managers of the organization to within interval conduct job rotation among employees to create feminization of the needed skills that such an employee needs in order to be successful in that units/departments.

The study thus recommends that management of manufacturing companies should ensure that the specifications of job within their workforce are design in order to reduced job dissatisfaction among employee.

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