

Employee Dedication and Organizational Performance of Telecommunications Companies in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study examined the relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. A cross sectional survey design was adopted. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 437 employees of the telecommunication (GSM) firms in Port Harcourt. The sample size of 208 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant and relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The study recommends that telecommunication companies should promote activities and policies that will enhance employee dedication which will give them a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job.*

Keywords: *Employee Dedication, Organizational Performance, Telecommunication Companies*

INTRODUCTION

The success of any organization depends on the human resource. An organization may have equipments and resources but cannot succeed without people. All organizations are started and run by people regardless of the kind of activities undertaken. Human resource therefore is the most important resource an organization can have (Nzuve, 2010). Most of the problems in many organizations according to Mamoria and Gankar, (2003) are human and social rather than physical, technical or economical. Therefore human resource in an organization determines the success of that organization. People, according to Cole (2002) are the greatest single asset available to an enterprise. Unfortunately however people are the only asset that can actively work against the organizations goal. It is, therefore, only by collaborative efforts that people can find a

release for their latent energy and creativity in the service of the enterprise. This is possible through employee engagement which makes them more productive, fully absorbed and enthusiastic about their work. Dedication is an essential component of employee engagement work behavior that every organization wants to see displayed in its work place; it's about being inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in your job (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Dedication is an individual deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job (Song, Kolb, Lee & Kim, 2012). Further evidence points to the fact that there is a direct linkage between employee engagement behavior such as dedication and profitability (Czarnowsky, 2008).

Employee engagement is manifested in positive attitudes (for example job satisfaction, organizational commitment and identification with the organization) and behavior (low labour turn over and absence and high citizenship behavior) on the part of employees, and evidence of perceptions of trust, fairness and a positive exchange within a psychological contract where two way promises and commitment are fulfilled (Guest, 2009). Employee dedication has potential to significantly affect employee retention, productivity and loyalty .It is also a key link to customer satisfaction, company reputation and overall shareholder value. As a result, many organizations share the belief that in an evolving international free-agent talent market where knowledge is becoming an organizational commodity (Kroth, 2009). This study therefore examined the relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers state.

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

- i. What is the relationship between employee dedication and sales growth of telecommunication companies in Rivers State?
- ii. What is the relationship between employee dedication and survival of telecommunication companies in Rivers State?
- iii. What is the relationship between employee dedication and efficiency of telecommunication companies in Rivers State?

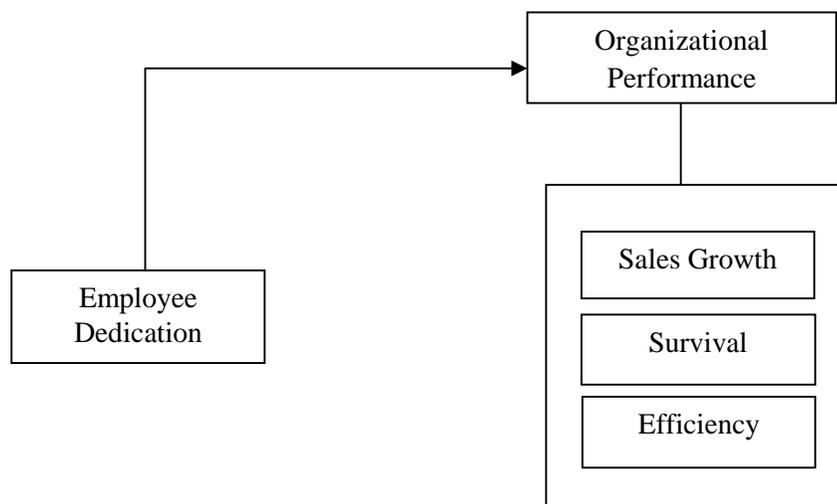


Fig.1: Conceptual framework for the relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Social Exchange Theory

Saks (2006) suggested that a strong theoretical rationale for employee engagement is provided by social exchange theory. The theory argues that obligations are generated through a series of interactions between parties who are in a state of reciprocal interdependence. According to the theory relationships evolve over time into trusting, royal and mutual commitments as long as parties abide by certain rules of exchange. It involves reciprocity or repayments rules such that the actions of one party lead to a response or actions by the other party (Armstrong, 2012). This is in consistent with the description of engagement by Robinson *et al.* (2004) as a reciprocal relationship of trust and respect between employer and employee. It requires an organization's executives and managers to communicate their expectations, clearly and extensively, with the employees, empower the employees at the appropriate levels of their competence, and create a working environment and corporate culture in which engagement will thrive. According to Balain and Sparrow (2009), social exchange theory best describes engagement because it sees feelings of loyalty, commitment, discretionary effort as all being forms of reciprocation by employees to a good employer.

Dedication

The term dedication has no one distinct definition accepted by scholars in the field. But then, dedication simply refers to the type of engagement in which the employee engaged due to the feeling that his services are retained in the organization, and there will be no need to think of looking for job elsewhere (Williams, Maha & Zaki, 2010). Also, dedication is characterized by a strong psychological involvement in one's work, combined with a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge (Mauno, Kinnunen & Ruokolainen, 2007; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonz. Iez-Rom & Bakker, 2002). The term dedication has no one distinct definition accepted by scholars in the field. But then, dedication simply refers to the type of engagement in which the employee engaged due to the feeling that his services are retained in the organization, and there will be no need to think of looking for job elsewhere (Williams, Maha & Zaki, 2010).

Dedication is ones' sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. Dedication is characterised by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Dedication is about being inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in your job (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Dedication is an individual's deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job (Song, Kolb, Lee & Kim, 2012).

Organizational Performance

Robinson, Perryman & Hayday (2004) defined performance as behavior and stated that it should be distinguished from the outcomes because they can be contaminated by systems factors. Performance refers to keeping up plans while aiming for the results. The increasing competitive pressures and unpredictable business environment is forcing organizations to continually look for ways to make employees achieve high performance. Performance helps an organization to get better results hence customer satisfaction and increased profits. The competitiveness of any organization is determined by the performance of the employees, who are responsible for delivering value to the customers, generate revenue and at the same keep costs down. Although performance evaluation is the heart of performance management (Cardy, 2004), the performance of an individual or an organization depends heavily on all organizational policies, practices and design features of an organization. This integrative perspective represents a configurational approach to strategic human resources management which argues that patterns of HR activities, as opposed to single activities, are necessary to achieve organizational objectives. Employee engagement is one of the key determinants fostering high levels of employee performance (Macey & Schneider, 2009).

Organizational performance can also be used to view how an enterprise is doing in terms of level of profit, market share and product quality in relation to other enterprises in the same industry. Consequently, it is a reflection of productivity of members of an enterprise measured in terms of revenue, profit, growth, development and expansion of the organization. All types of organization, whether small or big, public or private, for-profit or non-profit, struggle for survival. In order to survive, they need to be successful (effective and efficient). To assure their success, organizations must perform well. Ultimately, performance lies at the heart of any managerial process and organizational construct and is therefore considered as a critical concept in the strategic management field.

Organizational performance is what business executives and owners are usually frustrated about. This is so, because even though the employees of the company are hard-working and are busy doing their tasks, their companies are unable to achieve the planned results. However, for any business to be successful, functions must be defined and accomplished. It is important for an organization to develop strategies that are designed around the skills that would enhance the performance of the organization. On the other hand, organizational performance refers to ability of an enterprise to achieve such objectives as high profit, quality product, large market share, good financial results, and survival at pre-determined time using relevant strategy for action (Koontz & Donnell, 2003). Organizational performance can also be used to view how an enterprise is doing in terms of level of profit, market share and product quality in relation to other enterprises in the same industry. Consequently, it is a reflection of productivity of members of an enterprise measured in terms of revenue, profit, growth, development and expansion of the organization.

Measures of Organizational Performance

Sales Growth

Sales growth is of great value to most firms, it is a key dimension used to measure firm performance. Sales growth in business firms is of widespread interest in economics and business research, but the drivers of such growth remain a source of debate (Dobbs & Hamilton 2007; Bahadir, Bharadwaj & Parzen, 2009; Stam & Wennberg, 2009). Sales growth targets play a major role in the perceptions of top managers (Brush, Bromiley & Hendrickx, 2000). Sales growth to Amoako-Gyampah and Acquah (2008) is the increase in sales in money value. Sales growth is an important indicator of a firm's health and ability to sustain its business. Sales growth enables one to know the general health of the business; it aids in identifying if one is meeting ones target. With sales growth it will be evident to investors the business is successful. Factors that influence sales growth range from promotion to internal motivation and retaining of talented employees to implicit opportunities for investments in new technologies and equipment in the production process (Mohd, Mohd & Yasuo, 2013; Brush, *et al.*, 2000). They further said sales growth ought to be measured within the context of industry conditions and trends as well as local, regional and national economies.

Survival

In the ever present turbulent and competitive business environment, survival is a major challenge. Firm survival is crucial during the period of business turbulence as maintaining a place in this competitive era is equally important for strategic managers (Olughor & Oke, 2014). As the main features of today's world is rapid changes, sharp shift in power, growing complexity, increasing competition and rapid advances in science and technology which threatens the survival of the firm (Enayati & Ghasebeh, 2012 cited in Nwankwere, 2017). When firm survival is threatened strategic managers ought to adopt appropriate strategies to face its ever-present changing environment. Firm survival clearly indicates whether a firm is capable of adapting to environmental turbulence, as an organization is able to survive in the long-term, it means it is successful in maintaining evolutionary fitness. Akanni (2015) sees firm survival as filling the position of a life blood of the organization. The issue of firm performance is very important for all firms, in the persistent highly competitive business environment companies can no longer survive without a strong strategic capability, it is pertinent for businesses to possess a certain level of strategic capability to enable them survive and thrive in a competitive business environment (Palona, 2010). Sustained performance ensures that a firm continues to fulfill its mission and survive into the competitive future (Farahmand, 2013). The food and beverages manufacturing firms that are domicile in the highly turbulent environment need to have the capability in all facets of competitive priorities (Singh, Oberoi & Ahuja, 2007).

Firm survival means that a business continue to be in existence and doing relatively well in the turbulent environment and are above-average in their performance in their industry. Firm survival can also be seen as the act of surviving especially under severe, adverse or unusual situations. Firm survival occurs in a firm that continues to meet their goals and objectives during tough times like recession and the like. During such periods

the firm is still able to attract business, pay staff and pull in enough profit (Bithro, 2010). Akanni (2015) sees corporate survival as the continued existence of a company especially in a difficult or dangerous condition.

Efficiency

Efficiency is a key growth driver because it enables managers to derive more output for a given input (Essien & Bello, 2016). Firm efficiency is generally understood as “a firm’s ability to transform inputs into outputs” (Pham, 2014:15; Fried, Lovell & Schmidt, 2008). Firm efficiency is often used interchangeably with productivity since the two terms describe the ability of a firm to transform its inputs into outputs (Dilling-Hansen, Madsen & Smith, 2003). Frijins, Margamti, and Psillaki (2012) cited in Nwankwere (2017) concluded that an efficiently operating firm is priced higher by investors than an inefficiently operating firm because an efficiently operating firm makes better use of its resources and is likely to have a lower default risk. For the purpose of this study technical efficiency was analysed towing the line of Pham’s (2014) adoption of technical efficiency in his study on firm efficiency and stock return.

Relationship between Employee Dedication and Organizational Performance

Armstrong (2009) found that achievement of any firm can be well determined with regards to how it makes efficient use of its possessions so as to attain preferred results. He also found that human beings unlike other resource related to the organization have different needs. This means for that reason that the administration of any firm has a duty of recognizing such requirements and pleasing them as well as increasing human resource management systems. Armstrong (2009) further found that if the firm wants to stay competitive, it is very important to repeatedly develop the performance of these workers. This can only be enhanced by making sure that workers are highly motivated and the greatest way to do so is by workers engagement. This will help the firms because it will not only boost labor cost per unit but also attract and retain quality of workforce at all levels. This is indeed the reason why there is the prospective advantage in researching the efficiency of the compensation systems on performance of workers in a firm (Armstrong, 2009).

Shaw (2005) found that there is a science to engagement. He further states that to be truly effective, companies need to balance their efforts according to their desired outcomes and focus their resources on improving engagement in areas that will provide the highest performance and returns. Organizations drive engagement by proactively leveraging three sources of influence for change employees, leaders, and organizational systems and strategies. These three drivers are concerned in building an enabling environment for employee engagement. Although engagement has multiple drivers, the ultimate ownership of engagement rests within the individual employee.

Organizations hoping to drive engagement must tap into employees ‘passion, commitment, and identification with the organization. This is accomplished by having the right employees working in the right jobs, which is the first engagement driver. When we say the “right” employees we mean that individuals have the skills to do the job can

do and that their jobs tap into their personal motivators (Ingham, 2010). Organizations can ensure high job fit by effectively deploying employees' talents when making selection, placement, and promotion decisions. Research has repeatedly shown that when job fit is high; an employee performs better and is more likely to stay with the organization. In addition to having a motivational match, some employees are more likely than others to be inherently engaged in their work. This has implications for driving engagement levels because organizations can benefit from hiring employees with a greater tendency for engagement before they even begin to work (Hungler, 2007). Thomas (2004) states that management needs to demonstrably value employee feedback. Actual dialogue is essential; communicating openly, honestly and frequently will build employee engagement only if it goes both ways.

Thomas (2004) further suggests that leaders in an organization should build a sense of purpose with all employees. The organizational structure and reporting roles need to reinforce openness and dialogue with easy access to tools and forums where employees are listened to without fear of reprisal. Employees that step tentatively into this dialogue for the first time need to be rewarded with action by management, respect for their input as well as with follow-up in each and every moment. According to Kaplan & Norton (2008) things may not necessarily change because of every employee's suggestions but their comments need to be treated fairly and consistently throughout the organization. Several studies confirm that recognition and respect are more motivating than money.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study thus hypothesized that:

- Ho₁** There is no significant relationship between dedication and sales growth of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.
- Ho₂** There is no significant relationship between dedication and survival of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.
- Ho₃** There is no significant relationship between dedication and organizational efficiency of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional survey design was adopted. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 437 employees of the four General System of Mobile telecommunication (GSM) firms in Port Harcourt. The sample size of 208 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The test of hypothesis was based on the Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient to carry out the analysis. The level of significance 0.05 was adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in ($p > 0.05$) or rejecting the null hypothesis in ($p < 0.05$).

Table 1: Correlations for Telecommuting and Organizational Performance

		Dedication	Sales Growth	Survival	Efficiency	
Spearman’s rho	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.842**	.756**	.372**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	182	182	182	182
	Sales Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.842**	1.000	.871**	.592**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	182	182	182	182
	Survival	Correlation Coefficient	.756**	.871**	1.000	.563**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	182	182	182	182
	Efficiency	Correlation Coefficient	.372**	.592**	.563**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	182	182	182	182

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

Source: Research Data , 2019 (SPSS output, version 23.0)

Table 1: illustrates the test for the three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements.

Ho₁ There is no significant relationship between dedication and sales growth of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) shows that there is a significant and positive between dedication and sales growth. The *correlation coefficient 0.842* confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is significant at $p 0.000 < 0.01$. The correlation coefficient represents a very strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between dedication and sales growth of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between dedication and survival of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) shows that there is a significant and positive dedication and survival. The *correlation coefficient of 0.756* confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is significant at $p 0.000 < 0.01$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating also a

strong relationship between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between dedication and survival of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

Ho₃ There is no significant relationship between dedication and organizational efficiency of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) shows that there is a significant and positive dedication and organizational efficiency. The *correlation* coefficient of 0.372 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.01$. The correlation coefficient represents a low correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship dedication and organizational efficiency of telecommunication companies in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined the relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between employee dedication and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. This finding reinforces views by Armstrong (2009) who found that achievement of any firm can be well determined with regards to how it makes efficient use of its possessions so as to attain preferred results. He also found that human beings unlike other resource related to the organization have different needs. This means for that reason that the administration of any firm has a duty of recognizing such requirements and pleasing them as well as increasing human resource management systems

This current finding was also consistent with the arguments of Mauno, Kinnunen & Ruokolainen (2007), who sees dedication as characterized by a strong psychological involvement in one's work, combined with a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge". For Williams, Maha & Zaki, (2010), the term dedication has no one distinct definition accepted by scholars in the field. But then, dedication simply refers to the type of engagement in which the employee engaged due to the feeling that his services are retained in the organization, and there will be no need to think of looking for job elsewhere.

Rayton and Yalabik, (2014) posits that dedication is ones' sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. Dedication is characterised by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Dedication is about being inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in your job. Dedication is an individual's deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Employee dedication is an undeniable dominant source of competitive advantage at all levels. An organization's human resource is its best resource. Therefore, the maintenance of a workplace with a higher caliber of employees is the key to success and the way to set competitive advantage in the global scenario (Schwartz, 2011). Based on the findings, this study concludes that employee dedication significantly influences organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. As a result of the foregoing, the study recommends that telecommunication companies should promote activities and policies that will enhance employee dedication which will give them a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job.

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