
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION SUCCESS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The crux of this study was to investigate the relationship between employee development and information success of tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study identified time optimization and quality decision-making as measures of information success. The research tested 2 hypotheses based on a descriptive research design adopted. The population of the study comprise 5 tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The research selected sixteen administrative (non-academic) staff members from each of the institutions under study making. Thus a total of 80 sample elements were surveyed. Data was generated from respondents using structured questionnaire. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses with the aid of statistical packages for social science (SPSS) version 23.0. The results revealed positive and statistically significant relationships between employee development and the measures of information success (time optimization and quality decision-making). The study concludes that employee development has positive significant relationship with information success of tertiary institutions in Rivers State; and recommends that management of tertiary institutions should prioritize their employee development if they want improved information success in terms of time optimization and quality decision-making.

Keywords: Employee development, information success, quality decision-making, time optimization

INTRODUCTION

Advances in technology have ushered many innovations into our offices and businesses. The most remarkable of these innovations is the use of technology for process and content management. Administration is the "backbone of every successful organization." It is responsible for managing resources, implementing policies, and ensuring smooth running of the organization. Without good administration, an organization will have difficulty achieving its goals and objectives.

An administration however, requires competent employees that have the ability to collect, analyze and use information in decision-making (Akani, 2015) and effectively manage resources and operations. Based on the thinking that competent employees constitute strategic resources for firms, Nwulu and Ateke (2018) contends that success in today's highly competitive business-scape require firms to possess competent employees that proficiently perform tasks assigned to them.

Thus, firms must invest in programmes that improve the skills, knowledge, and abilities of their employees. Education, training, mentoring and coaching are competence development programmes firms invest in (Haralson, 2010), and which improve employees' skills and behaviours and orient them towards meeting the demands of changing business conditions.

Present day tertiary institutions are greeted with stagnation and redundancy in their administrative process and procedures. Salient amongst the stagnation issues is the dissemination of information within these institutions. Though there are information communication and technology (ICT) centers in these institutions, they are still stuck to the traditional modes of dispatching memos and notices. Management of these institutions invest heavily in the running of their ICT centers. However, they still incur high administrative costs and suffer wastages as a result of running traditional (paper-based) systems. This is in addition to issues of delayed information and misinformation, stemming from fatigue and stress of administrative officials responsible for dispatching memos and notices.

Information is no doubt the livewire of organizations, especially tertiary educational institutions. Tantua and James (2019) aver that no institution can function without giving keen attention to information and its management. Employee development is viewed as a cogent tool for information success of Tertiary institutions. Employee development suggests the chances for institutions to adopt the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, augmented reality, internet of things, enterprise content management, etc. in managing the flow and dissemination of information.

Prior research have shown that employee development can be used to solve various organizational problems. Ateke and Nwulu (2018) suggests that employee competence development informs resilience of firms. Nwulu and Ateke (2018) showed that employee competence development enhances responsiveness of organizations. Akani (2015) suggests that management succession planning facilitate corporate survival, while Asiegbu et al. (2011) aver that salesforce competence development improves marketing performance. This study joins the discourse by examining the link between employee development and information success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State. The study takes guidance from the null hypotheses formulated below:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between Employee development and Time optimization in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between employee development and quality decision-making in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

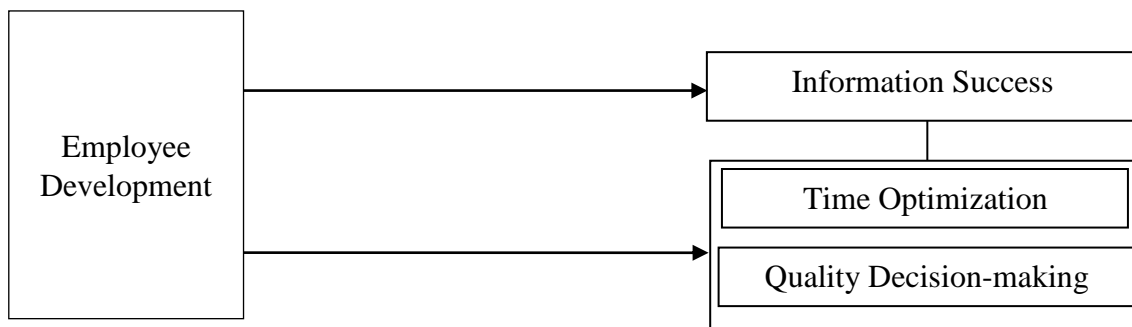


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework of employee development and information success of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

This study is founded on Rational Choice Theory (RCT) (Becker, 1976) which holds that people make decisions based on analysis of cost-benefits, potential-benefits and costs of their actions. RCT has been applied to many areas including economics, health and crime (Scott, 2000). Rationality is the main focus of RCT. According to the theory, every person follows a path that benefits them. Everyone make decisions they believe are the best and most beneficial for them. RCT regarding the relationship between employee development and information success in tertiary institutions argue that people make decisions based on their personal preferences and choose options that provide the most benefits. Therefore, Institutional administrators with higher levels of intelligence will be more likely to influence the use of information success because they can identify risks and benefits.

Concept of Employee development

Employee development includes all activities aimed at improving employees' competencies to prepare them for greater responsibilities and challenges or enable them achieve set objectives of the firm (Asiegbu et al., 2011). Jacobs and Hawley (2010) view employee development as policies and programmes that give individuals the potential for a sustainable livelihood and assist organisations achieve exemplary goals that are consistent with the societal context.

Succession planning, talent management, workforce planning, manpower planning, replacement planning, career development, and knowledge transfer are some other terms associated with workforce continuity in management and human resource literature. Each term has a slightly different focus, but they all aim to ensure that organizations have the right people in the right positions at the right time (William, 2015). Employee development is critical for organisations that wish to build and retain high-quality staff.

Fisher (2006) states that employee development is a continuous process that enhance skills, knowledge and abilities of employees to meet changing job demands. Investing in staff development enable increased productivity, job satisfaction and employee retention. However, Prince (2003) opine that to gain and maintain competitiveness, organisations require productive talents. Organisations adopt different methods to develop their employees. These include training, mentoring, coaching, job rotation, career planning. Employee development is important to the growth of the firm and for the personal and professional growth of employees.

It is the key to achieving competitive advantage in today's rapidly changing business environment, and enable organizations adapt and innovate in response to new challenges and opportunities. It also enhance the productivity and employability of individuals. Herein, we contend that investing in employee development is an important strategy for organizations looking to develop new capabilities. By investing in employees, companies can create effective and efficient ways to develop new ideas and bring them to market.

Information success

Information is essential to tertiary institutions because it helps them streamline operations, reduce costs and increase revenue generation. The ability to analyze information, make informed decisions, and manage resources effectively is treasured among these organizations. They therefore search and try to retain individuals that possess the ability to analyze information and make informed decisions that results in organizational success. Success means different things to different people (Freeman & Beale, 1992). Success for an architect is in terms of aesthetic appearance; for an engineer, it is in terms of technical ability.

Within the context of this study, success is the ability to achieve set goals or perform according expectation. It is broad and include perceptions of multiple stakeholders (Wateridge, 1998), including customers, investors, and employees (Shenhar et al., 2001). Information success is viewed two perspectives (Shenhar et al., 2001; Shenhar et al., 1997). One perspective is that all business goals can be achieved even if information management does not meet schedule, budget, and quality. Another perspective is that although information management can be successful in terms of scope, quality, budget, etc., the information may not meet customers' expectations.

Westerveld (2003) explains that successful information management requires a focus on results (related to information success criteria) and organizational areas (related to success factors). Success factors are related to circumstances, facts and influences (Lim & Mohamed, 1999). Success criteria are structures for determining whether information is successful or not (Turner, 2014). Examples of success criteria include customer and information team satisfaction, cost, time and scope compliance (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2018). Success factors include experience as an information manager, ability to work in a team, and support from top management (Gunduz & Almuajebh, 2020).

Delone and McLean (2003) identifies six factors associated with information success: Quality of information, Quality of Service, Intended Use/Purpose, User satisfaction, and Net impact. However, this study identified time optimization and quality decision-making as measures of information success. The rationale for adopting time optimization and quality decision-making is that the study focuses on examining the link between employee development and information success. The study considers employee development as a prerequisite to efficiency in terms of cost mitigation and time optimization based on informed decision-making (Nwinyokpugi & Alikornwo, 2022).

Time Optimization

Time optimization is recognized as an important component of work efficiency (Downs, 2008). It is a way of developing and using processes and tools for maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity (Downs, 2008); and involves mastery of skills like goal-setting, planning and decision-making that promote efficiency (Brogan, 2010). According to Thompson et al. (2010), accurate and timely information about daily operations is essential if managers are to gauge how well strategy execution is proceeding.

Time is an essential irrecoverable, limited and dynamic resource (Downs, 2008). It is irrecoverable because every minute spent is gone forever, limited because only 24 hours exist in a day and dynamic because it is never static (Claessens et al., 2009). According to North (2004) time management is the organization of tasks or events by estimating how much time a task will take to be completed, when it must be completed, and then adjusting events that would interfere with its completion at the appropriate time.

Effective time management is key to high efficiency because it affects employee performance and helps them manage stress, conflict, and pressure more effectively (Nord (2004). Companies strive to minimize time spent on a task. Time is a source of competitive advantage (Bateman & Snell, 1999). Companies respond to market needs by rapidly introducing new products, respond to customers' requests and deliver orders (Bateman & Snell, 1999). There are three possible metrics for time optimization: design-to-market time, product delivery time, and order completion time. These indicators are based on the concept of time as the period spent completing a task (Zeb-Obipi, 2015).

Quality Decision-Making

The term "decision-making" conjures the image of choice among alternative courses of action in a way appropriate to the demand of the situation. The ability of decision makers to choose the best option that is capable of achieving set objectives or solving problems demand structured decision guidelines. These guidelines put together are referred to as decision-making strategies (Obi & Agwu, 2017). Donelan et al. (2015) identified data quality, time of decision making, and awareness of the decision as factors affecting quality of decision making.

Hastie and Dawes (2010) states that a good decision should be measured not by the outcome of the decision, but by how reasonable the decision is. Rationality here means the use of available means in certain situations to achieve a decision-making goal (Abazeed, 2019). Elbanna et al. (2014), suggests that trust, collaboration, track record, failure and quick decision making also affect decision making. Dietrich (2012) stated that factors affecting decision making are experience, personal differences, cognitive uncertainty, self-actualization beliefs and commitment. In addition, Van Riel et al. (2016) and Negulescu and Doval (2014) states that good information is an important factor affecting good decision-making.

METHODOLOGY

This study followed a descriptive approach. The study through census sampling, investigated 5 tertiary institutions in Rivers State. 80 administrative staff (senior and junior) of information and communication technology centres of 5 tertiary institutions in Rivers State comprised the test units. 80 copies of structured close ended 4-point Likert scale questionnaire served as the research instrument.

The reliability of instrument was ascertained using the test-re-test method. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha test at 0.7.

At the primary level of data analysis, this study adopted descriptive statistical tool such as mean, standard deviation, frequency counts, simple percentages, bar charts and histograms to present the data generated; while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was employed at the secondary level of analysis, to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. All the statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

Table 1: Correlation between Employee Development and Time Optimization

		Employee Development	Time Optimization
Employee Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.794**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	76	76
Time Optimization	Pearson Correlation	.794**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	76	76

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

Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient of 0.794** between employee development and time optimization. This indicates strong positive correlation between employee development and time optimization. The probability value (0.000) produced by test is less than the critical value (0.05), implying that the correlation between the variables is statistically significant. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between employee development and time optimization of tertiary institutions.

Table 2: Correlation between Employee Development and Quality Decision-Making

		Employee Development	Quality Decision-Making
Employee Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.934**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	76	76
Quality Decision-Making	Pearson Correlation	.934**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	76	76

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

Table 1 displays a correlation coefficient of 0.934** between employee development and quality decision-making. This high correlation coefficient indicate a very strong positive correlation between employee development and quality decision-making. The probability value (0.000) is less than the critical value (0.05). This shows that there is a significant relationship exists between employee development and quality decision-making. Based on this, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Employee development and quality decision-making in tertiary institutions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In lieu of the findings of this study and to the extent of its consistency with results of extant studies, we conclude that employee development has significant relationship with information success of tertiary institutions in Rivers State. We therefore recommend that management of tertiary institutions should prioritize their employee development as it is seen to be a key determinant in information success.

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