Job Sharing and Organizational Performance of Telecommunication Companies in Rivers State, Nigeria

Isaac Minabere Edwin

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers, State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
This study examined the relationship between job sharing and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was 84 managers of four telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The sample size was 69 determined using the Taro Yamen’s sample size determination formula. The research instrument was validated through supervisor’s vetting and approval while the reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Crombach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. Data generated were analysed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The study findings revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between job sharing and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The study recommends that telecommunication companies should adopt flexible work practices that encourage job sharing as a form of flexibility, since it's important in increasing performance of an organization.

Keywords: Job Sharing, Organizational Performance, Timeliness, Profitability and Efficiency

INTRODUCTION
Organizational performance has been the most important issue for every organization be it profit or non-profit. It has been very important for managers to know which factors influence an organization’s performance in order to take appropriate steps to initiate them. Organizational performance is very common in literature; however, defining, and measuring performance has not been an easy task. For this reason, there isn’t a universally accepted definition of this concept. Generally, organizational performance is based upon the idea that an organization is the voluntary association of productive assets, including human, physical, and capital resources, for the purpose of achieving a shared purpose (Alchian & Demsetz, 1972).

Daft and Daft (2009) opine that, organisational performance is the organisation’s ability to attain its goals by using resources in an efficient and effective manner. Quite similar to Daft (2009), Ricardo and Wade, (2001) defined organisational performance as the ability of the organisation to achieve its goals and objectives. Knowing the determinants of organizational performance is important especially as it enables the identification of those factors that should be treated with an increased interest in order to improve the organization’s performance. One of such important determinant of organizational performance is job sharing. For many employees today both male and female lives are becoming more consumed with a host of family and other personal responsibilities and interests in addition to demands of the workplace (Grantol-Vallore & Donaldson, 2001). There is therefore a perceived imbalance between the demands of current lives and people’s abilities to adequately cope with them and this may lead to an experience of...
stress (World bank work Report, 2011). In a society filled with conflicting responsibilities and commitments, flexible work arrangement has become a predominant issue in the workplace. Three major factors contribute to the interest in and importance of serious consideration of flexible work arrangement: global competition, renewed interest in personal lives, family values and an aging workforce. Concerns have always been raised regarding policy and debates on flexible work arrangement from perspectives of the quality of working life when weighed against the broader family matters. However the challenge has been how employees would adopt good flexible work arrangement practices and the organizations to adopt policies to tackle conflicts that ensue from the interface of family or social pressures and work stress. Job sharing has been introduced in the recent past by organizations for greater employees work life balance. It has also become an important part of the benefit and compensation programmes which are commonly referred to as ‘family friendly (Kopelman, Prottas, Thompson & Jahn, 2006). Ronel (2006) defined it as dividing full time job into two parts so that two-part time employees are engaged and paid according to the work done. This makes work attractive to employees who are interested in working for fewer hours. Mattis (1990); Olmsted and Smith (1994) in Ronel (2006) define it as an arrangement of sharing one full-time position by two employees, with prorated benefits and salary. Chapin (1992) in Avery and Diane (2001) have enumerated the merits of job sharing which entails: helps in balancing work and home responsibilities; leads to high productivity and job satisfaction brought by high levels of enthusiasm; make workers experience less stress and burnout; giving workers ability to learn from one another. Grensing (2005) also reported that the use of job sharing leads to increased organization performance. One of the main barriers to job sharing may be management resistance. Managers may form a perception that job sharing will increases the workload of managers as a result of supervising two employees instead of one employee (Avery & Diane, 2001). Olmsted and Smith (1994) in Avery and Diane (2001) highlighted some of the benefits of job sharing especially to the employer which includes: help in smooth work flow schedules especially during peak hours; one worker can cover for an absent worker thus enabling work continuity; acts as a cost savings due to reduced overtime, reduced turnover and decreased absenteeism.

This study therefore examines the relationship between job sharing and organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. Furthermore, this study will also be guided by the following research questions:

i. What is the relationship between job sharing and profitability of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?
ii. What is the relationship between job sharing and timeliness of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?
iii. What is the relationship between sharing and efficiency of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?
LITERATURE REVIEW
Theoretical Foundation
Contract theory has been commonly used in probing relations in cost effective ways (Salanie, 1997). It has been used as a control device in organizational set up in teams (Barua, Lee & Whinston, 1995). The popular model within this theory is the Principal and Agent model. The Principal or manager ensures the Agent or worker puts the maximum effort in the job he is doing, but measuring the effort he exerts in the job becomes a challenge. Consequently, the principal has to device ways and means to align the principal interests and the interests of the Agent. The principal therefore devices incentives ways, control mechanism and selection methods (Holmstrom & Milgrom, 1991).

The managers encounter problems because he is not sure of the quality and quantity of work performed at home. This arises because employees may engage in non-work activities while at home. On the other hand the employees have no supervisor while working at home. To solve this problem the manager selects those employees who could be trusted to telecommute and who work with minimal supervision. The manager also provides incentives to those workers telecommuting so as to put extra effort in their work.

Job Sharing
According to Bliss and Thornton (2010) job sharing enables two employees to carry out the tasks of full-time job by alternating. This was meant to provide solutions for those jobs which could not be divided into two part time. It enables organization to maintain jobs in their full-time capacity and still get the benefit of employees’ expertise (Gliss, 2000). According to Branine (2003) job sharing option allows two employees to alternate work responsibilities. Each employee works on half time basis, for instance, one employee reporting in the morning and the other in the afternoon. However, the employees need to have complementary skills (Kossek & Lee, 2005). Organizations practicing this form of flexibility have the advantage of sourcing employees’ skills and experience in one job; enables tapping of employees talents; learning from each other; reliefs employees while away; Job sharers are able to maintain their jobs on full time basis (Miller, 2007).

The greatest problem arises in getting a suitable partner. If the job sharers are not compatible the arrangement may not work. The issue of overhead costs also arises due to trainings, employee compensations, office machines and equipment. Managers may be uncomfortable with this arrangement since it increases their supervisory roles. Job sharing is not very common in some sectors. According to Miller (2007) in a survey of counsellor education forum only 11.1% and 15.8 % had ever participated in

Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the relationship between job sharing and organizational performance
Source: Author’s Desk Research, 2019
job sharing. Some of the reasons for its unpopularity is associated with cost; managers difficulty in supervision; difficulty in recruiting and maintaining accountability.

**Concept of Organizational Performance**

According to Zeb-Obipi (2014) corporate performance refers to the record of achievements made by an organization (a corporation) at, or over a given, time measurable through several indices. It is measured by the extent to which an organization achieves set objectives or executes its strategies; hence performance measures are sourced from both corporate objectives and strategies. There is, however, a controversy over how best to measure corporate performance. The existence of diverse concepts, measures and approaches to corporate performance is evident of this controversy.

The organizational performance construct is probably the most widely used dependent variable, in fact, it is the ultimate dependent variable of interest for any researchers concerned with just about any area of management yet it remains vague and loosely defined (Rodgers & Wright, 1998). Performance is so common in management research that its structure and definition are rarely explicitly justified; instead, its appropriateness, no matter what form is unquestionably assumed (March & Sutton, 1997). Performance is a recurrent theme in most branches of management, including strategic management, and it is of interest to both academic scholar and practicing managers. Where prescriptions for improving and managing organizational performance are widely available (Nash, 1983) the academic community has been preoccupied with discussion and debates about issues of terminology, level of analysis and conceptual bases for assessment of performance (Ford & Shellenberge, 1982).

Although firm performance plays a key role in strategic research, there is considerable debate on appropriateness of various approaches to the concept utilization and measurement of organization performance. The complexity of performance is perhaps the major factor contributing to the debate. Out of literature are three common approaches to organization performance measurement namely, the objective measures of performance that tend to be quantitative, the subjective measures that tend to be qualitative therefore judgemental are usually based on perception of respondent, and triangulation. Organizational performance refers to how well an organization achieves its market-oriented goals as well as its financial goals. Firm’s performance is measured in terms of trade performance. It is calculated on the basis of sales return, field, and return on investment, output, market share and the manufactured goods growth (Wang & Lo, 2003).

**Measures of Organizational performance**

**Profitability**

Profitability refers to money that a firm can produce with the resources it has. The goal of most organization is profit maximization (Niresh & Velnampy, 2014). Profitability involves the capacity to make benefits from all the business operations of an organization, firm or company (Muya & Gathogo, 2016). Profit usually acts as the entrepreneur's reward for his/her investment. As a matter of fact, profit is the main motivator of an entrepreneur for doing business. Profit is also used as an index for performance measuring of a business (Ogbadu, 2009). Profit is the difference between revenue received from sales and total costs which includes material costs, labor and so on (Stierwald, 2010). Profitability portrays the efficiency of the management in converting the firm’s resources to profits (Muya & Gathogo, 2016). Thus, firms are likely to gain a lot of benefits related increased profitability (Niresh & Velnampy, 2014). One important precondition for any long-term survival and success of a firm is profitability. It is profitability that attracts investors and the business is likely to survive for a long period of time (Farah & Nina, 2016). Many firms strive to improve their profitability and they do spend countless hours on meetings trying to come up with a way of reducing operating costs as well as on how to increase their sales (Schreibfeder, 2006).

**Timeliness**

Timeliness according to Mayberry, Nicewander, Qin and Billard (2006), can be referred to as the ability to reduce waiting times and sometimes harmful delays to clients by employees in attending to their needs.
Timeliness refers to the delivery of value to customers at an appropriate time. This is distinguished from the notion of speed which typically refers to how fast an organization could be in producing and introducing valuable products to the market ahead of its competitors (Mayberry et al., 2006). This simply goes to mean that speeding up the work that is being done does not necessarily translate to responsiveness even though it can certainly yield greater output.

According to Kotler et al. (1999), promptness enables an organization to provide exceptional service that yields benefit to a firms’ target market as well as enhance the ability of service organizations to achieve differentiation. This implies that, firms should embrace the concept of being prompt in responding to the needs of its customers to help them create value to their customers and carve a niche towards increasing its market share and dominance. Promptness can be viewed as the impartiality of the organization in taking action towards attending to the needs of customers in an opportune manner. Kincade, et al. (1992), it is the speed and frequency of always being the first in responding to the needs of clients is very essential in enhancing customer satisfaction and re-purchase behaviours. Davidow (2003) argued that promptness is the swiftness of response by organization to the complaints and needs of customers. It had been observed that promptness is very crucial in the customer complaint management (SOCAP, 1994).

Davidow (2003) further highlighted that promptness has a significant relationship with customer’s satisfaction and service delivery especially in most service oriented, organization. Johnston and Fem (1999) cited in (Ekis & Arasli, 2007) observed that customers that usually visits organizations to lay complaints most often expects such organizations to resolve their problems instantaneously or swiftly. Scholars has advanced that prompt reaction to customers’ needs have a positive influence on customers satisfaction (Congniz, et al, 2007) cited in (Ekis & Arasli, 2007).

Efficiency

Ogboso and Amah (2016) opines that efficiency refers to the accomplishment of goals with minimum resources or waste. It includes measures such as time minimization, cost minimization, and waste minimization. Speed and time are important resources for any organization and must be seen to seek to maximize speed and minimize time. The way an organization does this indicates how efficient and productive they are. Speed and time were the essence of time and motion studies since the day of scientific management introduced by Taylor that led to management efficiency. They are sources of competitive advantage. The conception of time here is the duration taken to accomplish a task.

Relationship between Job Sharing and Organizational Performance

Research has indicated that there are benefits associated with flexible work schedules. According to Galinsky and Halpern (2005) work flexibility enables the workers to seek a new job or employer. Therefore labour turnover will be linked to the degree of flexibility the organization practices. Employees’ absenteeism reduces as a result of work scheduling (Kelly, Kalev, Kossek & Hammer, 2008). As a result of practicing these schedule flexibility the employee productivity improves. Research has shown that employees in organization using schedule flexibility tend to perform better (Combs, Hall & Ketchen, 2006). Studies by Gariety and Shaffer (2001) have indicated that flexible scheduling provides for increased income. This income is associated with more gains in production and the employers tend to share these gains with their employees (Shepard, Clifton & Kruse, 1996).

Organizational performance is the outcome achieved in meeting internal and external goals of a firm (Lin et al, 2008). Performance has several outcomes including growth, survival, success and competitiveness. Better performing employees at work become more committed to their organizations and ultimately contribute to increased organizational performance as well as growth of the economy. Availability of flexible work practices have also been related to increased effective commitment and decreases turnover intentions among all employees not just users of the practices (Grover & Crooker, 1995). Organizations offering flexible work practices enjoy increased profit rates. Consequently, it helps employees improve relationships with family and friends. Employees will enjoy better physical and mental health by managing work life properly. The existent literature suggests that flexible work practices generally have a positive impact on individuals and organizational productivity Pfizer Canada reported a 30% productivity.
increase in its translation department when employees were provided with job sharing. Focusing on customer service specifically KPMG has reported that allowing employees to take emergency time off to attend to care responsibilities has been a driving force behind their retention and superlative services provision (Ioan, 2010). From the foregoing point of view, we hereby hypothesized thus:

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between job sharing and profitability of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between job sharing and timeliness of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**H03:** There is no significant relationship between job sharing and efficiency of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was 84 managers of four telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The sample size was 69 determined using the Taro Yamen’s sample size determination formula. The research instrument was validated through supervisor’s vetting and approval while the reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. Data collected from the field were analysed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

The Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 23.0 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 a perfect negative correlation while the value of +1.00 a perfect positive correlation, and value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypotheses one to six, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting our null hypotheses: all the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were rejected and therefore our alternate hypotheses accepted; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient r value, we reject our null 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.

**H01** There is no significant relationship between job sharing and profitability of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between job sharing and profitability. The rho value 0.693 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Job Sharing and Profitability of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

**H02** There is no significant relationship between job sharing and timeliness of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a positive significant relationship between Job Sharing and Timeliness. The rho value 0.693 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Job Sharing and Timeliness of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.
Table 1: Correlation Matrix for Job Sharing and Organizational Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job Sharing</th>
<th>Profitability</th>
<th>Timeliness</th>
<th>Efficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.762**</td>
<td>.693**</td>
<td>.544**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profitability</td>
<td>.762**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.819**</td>
<td>.784**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>.693**</td>
<td>.819**</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>59</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>.544**</td>
<td>.784**</td>
<td>.591**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Source: Research Data 2018 and SPSS output version 23.0

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

**H03** There is no significant relationship between Job Sharing and efficiency of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a positive significant relationship between Job Sharing and efficiency. The rho value 0.544 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a moderate correlation. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Job Sharing and efficiency of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that a significant relationship exists between job sharing and organizational performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. Using the Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation tool and at a 95% confidence interval. The findings of this study confirmed that job sharing has an effect on organizational performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. It implies that it is in the interest of owners and the entire employees of telecommunication firms, that adherence to the proper management of the relationship that exist between organization and employees goes a long way in ensuring the retention and attraction of more customers.

The finding is in line with the theoretical arguments of Holmstrom and Milgrom (1991) who stated that the popular model within this theory is the Principal and Agent model. The Principal ensures the agent puts the maximum effort in the job, but measuring the effort he exerts in the job becomes a challenge. Consequently, the principal has to devise ways and means to align the principal interests and the interests of the Agent. The principal therefore devices incentives ways, control mechanism and selections methods. The test of the hypotheses in table shows that there is a significant positive relationship between Job Sharing and organizational performance. The positive values of (0.763, 0.693 and 0.544) show the strength of the relationships between the variables. The P-value (0.00) is less than the level of significance at (0.05). Therefore, this suggests that a significant and positive relationship exists between job sharing
and profitability, Timeliness and Efficiency. Hence, the null hypotheses were hereby rejected. This finding confirms previous findings of Bliss and Thornton (2010) who argues that job sharing enables two employees to carry out the tasks of full-time job by alternating. Job sharing came into existence in mid 1960s. This was meant to provide solutions for those jobs which could not be divided into two part time jobs. Job sharing enables organization to maintain jobs in their full-time capacity and still get the benefit of employees’ expertise (Gliss, 2000). According to Branine (2003) job sharing option allows two employees to alternate work responsibilities. Each employee works on half time basis, for instance, one employee reporting in the morning and the other in the afternoon. However, the employees need to have complementary skills (Kossek & Lee, 2005). Organizations practicing this form of flexibility have the advantage of sourcing employees skills and experience in one job; enables tapping of employees talents; learning from each other; reliefs employees while away; Job sharers are able to maintain their jobs on full time basis (Miller, 2007).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that consideration of job sharing aspects that pertains to employees, can greatly influence organizational performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. This study therefore concludes that job sharing significantly influences organizational performance of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt. The study recommends that managers of telecommunication companies should adopt flexible work practices that encourage job sharing as a form of flexibility is important in increasing performance of an organization.

REFERENCES


