



Job Enrichment and Employee Satisfaction of Rivers State-Owned Tertiary Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between job enrichment and employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The target population of this study encompasses all academic staff of the four (4) Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. These institutions are: Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Port Harcourt Polytechnic, Kenule Beeson Polytechnic, Bori and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic Rumuola. Leaning on the records sourced from this institution's Establishments Unit, the population of this study was 4,906. The sample size of 370 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. 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 generated were analyzed 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 findings of this study confirmed that there is a significant relationship between job enrichment and employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The study recommends that HR managers in tertiary institutions should take a proactive role in coming up with jobs that have task identity and to use the psychological approach to job designing so that when coming up with job descriptions, they consider the aspects in a given task that can motivate the workers.

Keywords: Job Enrichment, Skill Variety, Employee Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Employee satisfaction can be defined as an engagement in innovative behaviours, which includes behaviours related to the innovation process, i.e. idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization with the aim of producing innovations (Ramamoorthy, Flood, Slattery & Sardesai, 2005). Innovations which have to do with the implementation or adoption of novel ideas can in turn be categorized as either technological (changes in products, services, production processes) or administrative (changes in activities, social processes, structures), and as either radical or incremental, depending on the extent of their influence for existing products or processes. Employee satisfaction can thus be examined throughout the innovation process, from the initial idea generation to product development and eventually to product commercialization, or to the adoption of new processes or structures in the organization (Axtell, Holman, Unsworth, Wall, Waterson & Harrington 2000, Vincent, Decker & Mumford, 2002).

Employee satisfaction requires that the individual is able and willing to be innovative. With respect to abilities, such employee should possess above average general intellect, certain cognitive capabilities, general skills and task and context-specific knowledge. These are facilitators of innovativeness (Taggar 2002). Beyond knowledge and skills, innovativeness requires intrinsic motivation and a certain level of internal force that pushes the individual to persevere in the face of challenges inherent in the creative work (Shalley & Gilson 2004). Moreover, the internal force keeps the employee going even when the challenges are successfully overcome.

Every employee aspire or hope to maximize satisfaction from their jobs while giving their best to the organization and managers want the employees to deploy their skills and special abilities in performing their jobs in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. The job designed method is crucial to achieving employees' fulfillment. Magaji (2014) noted that managers for decades have been trying to device better means to ensure employees get fulfillment from their current jobs. Enriching an employee's job is one of the various means managers have device to ensure employees get the desired fulfillment and satisfaction from their jobs. The concept of job enrichment is now a vital tool for management of organizations in improving workers' motivation and organizational innovation. Jobs are enriched to motivate employees by adding to their responsibilities with a higher need for skill varieties in their jobs. According to Leach and Wall (2004), job enrichment is a design of job that increases the volume of employees' autonomy, control, skill varieties and responsibility which in turn helps to reduce rigidity, tediousness, lack of creativity/innovation and employees dissatisfaction. In the 1950s, Frederick Herzberg developed and viewed job enrichment as the vertical loading of a job (Davoudi, 2013). Therefore, the present study intends to close the observed gap in literature by examining the relationship between job enrichment and employee satisfaction of Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

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

- i. What is the relationship between skill variety and affective satisfaction of Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions?
- ii. What is the relationship between skill variety and cognitive satisfaction of Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions?

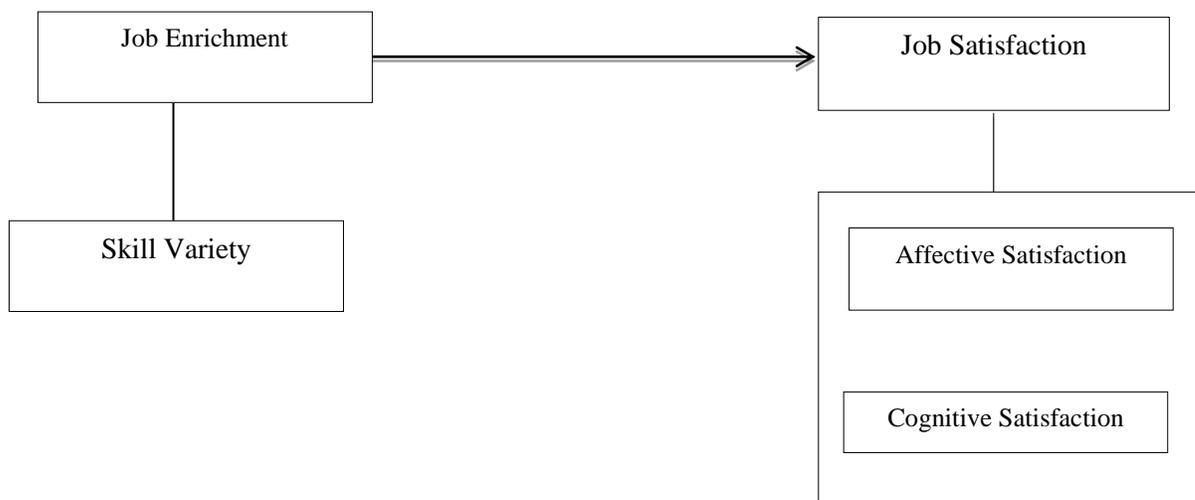


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the relationship job satisfaction and employee satisfaction

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2020

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM)

This study is based on the job characteristics theory developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976). An important view on factors affecting jobs and motivation is provided by Hackman and Oldham (1974) in the job characteristics model. Hackman and Oldham's framework distinguished five key components of a job that are useful in making jobs more satisfying for staff. Crucial elements of employments are specifically; skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. This study is based on this model which is the lead model. The JCM model is one of the primary endeavors to configure occupations or jobs with expanded motivational properties. The model proposed by Hackman and

Oldham (1975) portrays five center employment measurements prompting three basic mental states, bringing about business related results. The proximity of these five main occupation measurements drives workers to interact with three mental states. They see their work as significant, they feel responsible for the results of their job, and they achieve knowledge of outcomes.

Garg and Rastogi (2005) noted that, this theory was built on the previous knowledge and research from other theories such as Hierarchy of Need Theory, Expectancy Theory, and Frederick Herzberg Two-Factor Theory. According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), job enrichment is based on job characteristics that offer motivation, satisfaction, commitment, involvement and performance quality.

The theory assumed that the job itself should be designed to possess certain characteristics that create conditions for high work motivation, satisfaction, performance involvement and commitment. The theory identifies the tasks condition in which an employee is predicted to prosper in his work. Job characteristics theory provides management with the insight that employee effectiveness can be enhanced by enriching their jobs with high levels of key characteristics and ensuring that those employees with appropriate individual qualities are assigned to those jobs (Garg, 2006).

Skill Variety

This is the first core job dimension which involves the number of different types of skills that are used in performing a task. It focuses on the degree to which a task challenges the job holder to use different kind of skills, abilities and talents. It is believed that when only one skill is adopted in performing tasks repetitively, it tends to bring fatigue, stress and boredom which will in turn affect their morale and productivity at workplace. Derek and Laura (2000), argued that movement of employees from one job to another job within a particular organization and allowing them to adopt a variety of tasks in their work helps in avoiding repetitiveness, dullness and boredom. Several researchers added that the use of skill variety serves as a means of retaining and motivating workers for higher performance. Bratton (2007), also pointed that when a variety of skills are necessary to complete a task and those skills are perceived to be of value to the organization, employees find their work to be more meaningful.

Skill variety is the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities and involves the use of a number of various skills and talents of the workers. Jobs that are high in skill variety are seen by workers as more challenging because of the range of skills involved; relieve monotony that results from repetitive activity, and gives employees a greater sense of competence. According to Bratton (2007), when a variety of skills are essential to complete a task and those skills are perceived to be of value to the organization, employees find their jobs to be more meaningful. The idea behind providing skill variety in job design is that it will reduce boredom, thereby increasing job satisfaction and motivation. It has been proven that one-skill jobs that lead to repetition and monotony could bring about boredom, fatigue and stress that may negatively affect performance and productivity. According to Laura and Derek (2000), movement of employees from one job-task to another job within the organization and allowing them to adopt a variety of tasks in their work helps in mitigating the effect of repetitiveness and boredom.

Skill Variety, according to Hackman and Oldham (1975 cited in Robbins and Judge, 2011), is the instance where a job requires various tasks in order to carry out a complete piece of work and involves using various skills and abilities by the employee. Just as the job characteristics model indicates, the different skills that are required to complete a task often lead to desired performance by the intervening psychological state of experienced importance of a job. Garg and Rastogi (2005) indicated that skill variety involves the degree of utilization of different skills and abilities.

Jobs that are complicated have shown substantial but positive relatedness with job satisfaction, internal employee motivation and employee output (Spector, 2012; Jassen, 2001). Chandler (2007) stated that a wide range of skills are required for employees to grow and a vast range of skills is also necessary for the purpose of being flexible at In other studies, skill variety is considered as the number of various task elements that are necessary for the job fulfilment. Task Variety communicates clarity of knowledge (Pentland, 2003). According to the literature of careers, employees at the start of their careers make attempts to discover tasks from which they attain or achieve their goals (Feldman & Thomas, 2012).

Measures of Job Satisfaction

Affective Job Satisfaction

One of the increases or key indicators of employee job satisfaction is affective. The affective component of attitudes account for the feelings or emotions employees associate with their jobs or attitude object as well as the valence of those feelings (Bagozzi, 1978). Positive affective (PA) reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert.” (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988, p. 1063). It is sometimes described as enjoying life and feeling fully engaged (Weiss & Cropanzo, 1996). High PA individuals tend to be extroverted, outgoing, and energetic (Watson, Clark, MacIntyre & Hamaker, 1992; Yik & Russell, 2001). Not surprisingly, these individuals also display more social behavior (Watson et al., 1988) as PA has been linked to extroversion (Watson et al., 1992). Individuals high in PA also tend to be more satisfied with work and life in general as well as being sensitive to the frequency of rewards, suggesting they may orient towards the positive aspects of life (Watson et al., 1988).

Conversely, individuals high in negative affect (NA) are generally uncomfortable or otherwise orient towards life’s negative aspects (Watson & Clark, 1984). NA reflects the extent to which people experience “a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasant engagement” that may take the form of many emotional states, “including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness” (Watson et al., 1988, p. 1063). People high in NA report more physical complaints (Schaubroeck, Ganster, & Fox, 1992; Watson 1988a), as well as more stress (Brief et al., 1988; Schaubroeck, Ganster, & Fox, 1992; Watson 1988b). These findings indicate that “high NA individuals may view their lives as a series of stresses or hassles, regardless of what actually happens to them” (Watson, 1988b, p. 1028).

Cognitive Satisfaction

Cognitive is a major indicator or sub-variable of employee job satisfaction. While affective is an important part of job satisfaction, cognitions play a significant role as well. Cognitions are often characterized as the content of thoughts or beliefs about an attitude object or statement of fact in question, usually in comparison to a standard or expectation (Bagozzi, 1978; Campbell, 2000; Crites et al., 1994; Organ & Near, 1985; Weiss, 2002b; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). For example, if an employee expects a certain level of autonomy in the way he/she works and is being micromanaged, the discrepancy between expected and perceived autonomy may lead to thoughts of dissatisfaction. They may be thought of as the rational, calculating part of attitudes that rely on unemotional comparisons (Hulin & Judge, 2003).

Job Enrichment and Employee Satisfaction

Organizational Performance Studies revealed that when employees’ jobs are enriched, job dissatisfaction and lower commitment tends to appear. Rothwell and Kazanas (2004) discovered that the enhancement of organizational performance becomes vague the moment an employee feels displeased, disgruntled or discouraged about how things are done. Al-Nsour (2012) examined the indispensable role job enrichment played on organizational performance. Part of these roles are internal work motivation, greater commitment, employees retention, job satisfaction, distinctive and competitive advantage, improving work place opportunities which have significant and important effects on corporate success statistically.

Feder (2001) argue that job enrichment is a systematic way of encouraging employees by creating for them the opportunity to utilize various number of skills and capabilities in carrying out tasks. Kotila (2001) opined that job enrichment spurs job satisfaction by increasing the level of accountability and engendering the sense of freedom, autonomy and opportunities so that employees can determine how tasks can be carried out and accomplished. According to Behson *et al.* (2000), job enrichment is essentially the procedures that assigns higher responsibility to employees by assembling, organizing and designing work for the workers who produces the products. This is usually applicable in manufacturing firm. Robins and Judge (2011) described job enrichment as a process of developing jobs vertically and increases different tasks in a job. Simply put, job enrichment creates an opportunity for workers to have greater control over their work. According to Armstrong (2010), feedback has become very important so as to allow workers to assess and examine the level of completion that is the end result of the assigned tasks. Saavedr and Kwun (2000), indicated that where job are enriched, employee satisfaction tend to be more enhanced resulting in the decline of labour turnover and absenteeism. However, Derek & Laura

(2000), suggests that job enrichment in organizational development has helped in eliminating demotivating factor by ensuring that employees have the privilege to make decisions as well as has control over their job roles in order to encourage healthier performance in the workplace.

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

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between skill variety and affective satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between skill variety and cognitive satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The target population of this study encompasses all academic staff of the four (4) Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. These institutions are: Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Port Harcourt Polytechnic, Kenule Beeson Polytechnic, Bori and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic Rumuola. Leaning on the records sourced from this institution's Establishments Unit, the population of this study was 4,906. The sample size of 370 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. 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 generated were analyzed 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

Bivariate Analysis

Table 1 Correlations for Skill Variety and Measures of Employee Job Satisfaction.

			Skill Variety	Affective Job Satisfaction	Cognitive Job Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Skill Variety	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.755**	.710**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	251	251	251
	Affective Job Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.755**	1.000	.856**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	251	251	251
	Normative Job Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.710**	.856**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	251	251	251

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

Source: SPSS output version 23.0

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between skill variety and affective satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship skill variety and affective satisfaction. The *rho* value 0.775 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents 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 skill variety and affective satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between skill variety and cognitive satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship skill variety and cognitive satisfaction. The ρ value 0.710 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents 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 skill variety and cognitive satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study using descriptive and inferential statistical methods investigated the relationship between job enrichment and employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The findings revealed that a significant relationship exists between job enrichment and employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. Using the spearman rank order correlation tool and at a 95% confidence interval. The findings of this study confirmed that Job enrichment has an effect on employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The hypotheses sought to examine the relationship between skill variety and employee satisfaction. Hence it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between skill variety and employee satisfaction. These hypotheses were tested using the spearman rank order correlation technique. The study findings reveal that there is strong positive relationship between skill variety and employee satisfaction of Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions The P-value (0.00) is less than the level of significance at (0.05).

This finding agrees with previous finding by Derek and Laura (2000) that the first core job dimension which involves the number of different types of skills that are used in performing a task. It focuses on the degree to which a task challenges the job holder to use different kind of skills, abilities and talents. It is believed that when only one skill is adopted in performing tasks repetitively, it tends to bring fatigue, stress and boredom which will in turn affect their morale and productivity at workplace. Movement of employees from one job to another job within a particular organization and allowing them to adopt a variety of tasks in their work helps in avoiding repetitiveness, dullness and boredom. Several researchers added that the use of skill variety serves as a means of retaining and motivating workers for higher performance. Bratton (2007), also pointed that when a variety of skills are necessary to complete a task and those skills are perceived to be of value to the organization, employees find their work to be more meaningful.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the research findings, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive linear correlation between job enrichment and employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. A workplace in which managers are more concern about workers innovativeness than commanding control and where leadership and decision making is spread across all levels and where individual goals are met tend to enrich the Job. This study therefore concludes that Job enrichment significantly influences employee satisfaction in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

The study thus recommends that tertiary institutions should ensure that job enrichment is considered in planning and evaluation of employees' jobs and performance respectively. Job rotation is some of the methods that can be adopted to ensure that all employees are part of the organizations entire goal. This can increase the variety of skills that every employee possesses which is a form of motivation.

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