

The Role of Interpersonal Relationship on Job Performance among Employees of Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance among employees of Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The study employed a cross sectional survey method where 138 employees (98 = 71.0% males and 40 = 29.0% females) were drawn from Gboko Local Government Area through purposive sampling method. The age range was 18 and above years with the mean age of 3.00 (SD = 1.03). The reliability coefficient of the interpersonal relationship and job performance questionnaire used in the study was 0.74 Cronbach's alpha. The statistical analysis involved the use of Pearson's correlation technique and independent t-test. Findings from the hypotheses tested, indicated that there was a significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and job performance among employees of Gboko Local Government Area $r (df=136) = 3.28; p < .05$. There was a significant difference between male and female employees on the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance $t (136 df) = -1.905; p < .05$. These findings were discussed in line with factors that curtail for the relationship and differences in male and female employees on the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance. The study therefore recommended that Conscious efforts should be made to enhance social interaction among employees in the work setting such as acquisition of good and effective communication skills be adapted by employees in other to bring about good interpersonal relationship among employees to enhance job performance in the workplace.

Key words: *interpersonal relationship and job performance.*

Introduction:

Performance of members of any organization depends on the ability to effectively interact with their superiors, subordinates and co-workers within the organization and consumers, suppliers and general public outside (Obakpolo, 2015). Peretemode (1996) argued that job performance

is determined by the workers' level of participation in the day to day running of the organization. According to Okunola (1990) performance may be described as "an act of accomplishing or executing a given task". It could also be described as the ability to combine skillfully the right behaviour towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives (Olaniyan, 1999). Some factors have been found to be related to job performance among workers (Wheatley (2001, in Sias, (2008); Raymund 2014 and Li and Su 2014). Interpersonal relations, therefore is a very important issue involving any organization. Research has demonstrated that friendships at work can improve individual employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, job commitment, engagement and perceived organizational support (Cherniss, 1991; Ellingwood, 2001; Jehn and Shan, 1997; Morrision, 2009; Riordan and Griffeth, 1995; Robinson et al., 1993; Song and Olshfski, 2008; Zagenczyk et al., 2010). In addition, employee's negative work attitudes can be mitigated when peers act as confidantes to discuss bad and unpleasant work experiences (Anderson and Martin, 1995; Fine, 1986; Morrison, 2009; Odden and Sias, 1997; Sias and Jablin, 1995; Song and Olshfski, 2008). In today's corporate world, there is a need for work to be done as quick as possible, and for this purpose, working professionals need to have good relationship between each of other. Healthy professional relations can be maintained by effective workplace communication and team work. Interpersonal relationships gradually develop with good team participation with other members. On the other hand, these relationships may deteriorate when a person leaves the group and stops being in touch (Stephen, 2010).

Most organizations have people problems rather than business problems. People problems are due to faulty interpersonal relations, which hinder the attainment of organizational goal. Efforts should be made therefore to enhance the interpersonal skills of the people at work (Obakpolo, 2015).

Gender discrimination means that when faced with a choice between equally qualified women and men, employers prefer to hire men. On the one hand, if gender discrimination affects hiring decisions, one would expect that a higher hurdle is set for women than for men (Olson and Becker 1983; Jones and Makepeace 1996; Winter-Ebmer and Zweimuller 1997) and those women who are able to clear that hurdle would, on average, do a better job than their male counterparts. On the other hand, if affirmative action is an important factor in hiring decisions, then employers may set a lower hurdle for women in order to promote gender balance (Glazer 1975; Epstein 1992; Coate and Loury 1993); if affirmative-action-based hiring is prevalent, women would, on average, perform worse than men.

Clifton, Narasimhan and Yue (2009) examined the relationship between gender and job performance among brokerage firm equity analysts. Women's representation in analyst positions dropped from 16 percent in 1995 to 14 percent in 2005. The study found significant gender-based differences in performance on various dimensions. For example, women cover roughly 9 stocks, on average, as compared with 10 for men, and women's earnings estimates tend to be less accurate than men's estimates. But the study also found that women are significantly more likely than men to be designated as All-Stars, which indicates that they outperform men in other aspects of job performance.

Taylor & Francis (2016) observed that, one gender does not consistently receive better performance ratings than the other; it did however determine that women receive slightly higher ratings in some settings and males receive higher ratings in others. For example, women exceeded men in areas such as caring, building relationships and teamwork, while men

exceeded women in risk management, initiative, achievement orientation and self-confidence. Rachel Morrison (2007) on the other hand submitted that friendships at work were found to be significantly more strongly correlated with job satisfaction for men. In addition, women were significantly more likely than men to describe the benefits of workplace friendship in terms of social and emotional support, while men were more likely to focus on the benefits friends provided them in their career or in functional aspects of “getting the job done”.

Prachi (2018) opined that interpersonal relationship refers to a strong association among individuals working together in the same organization. Employees working together ought to share a special bond for them to deliver their level best. It is essential for individuals to be honest with each other for a healthy interpersonal relationship and eventually positive ambience at the workplace. According to Wheatley (2001) in Sias, (2008) relationships are necessary for existing systems and are the hub of organizations. It is through relationships that organizations maintain stability (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Wheatley (2001) further suggests that ‘scholars should give attention to how a workplace organizes its relationships; not just its tasks, roles and hierarchies, but also, the form of relationships and capacities built to maintain and transform them’. Workplace relationships comprise those interpersonal relationships in which individuals are involved in the course of performing their jobs.

Quek, Wong, Divaharn, Liu, Peer and Williams, (2007) observed a positive relationship between interpersonal teacher behaviour and student’s attitudes toward subjects in Singapore. Similarly, Herderson and Fisher (2008) also discovered a positive relationship between several aspects of interpersonal behaviour and students’ attitude in a study on Australian vocational education.

Raymund (2014) focused on determining the interpersonal skills and administrative influence of school administrators of West Visayas State University–Janiuay Campus (WVSU-JC) and to determine the extent of teaching performance among college faculty. The findings revealed that the Interpersonal Skills of School Administrators of WVSU-JC are very clearly evident in their support to the faculty. The school administrator ability to allow teachers high degree of initiative and creativity in their work make them to be more dedicated is very clearly evident in their influence; when it comes to teaching performance students getting help from the teacher heads; the interpersonal skills, administrative influence, and teaching performance are interrelated and interconnected. The enhancement of one will also enhance the other two. Similarly Li and Su (2014) found that relation between colleagues has a positive influence on individual job performance, but the relation does a different direction of the impact in sub-domains of job performance from the sub-domains of coworker relation, and the influences are also different.

For any organizations to achieve her aims and objectives, the people that make up such organization must consist of people with similar aim, objective, goals and insights, who cooperatively join hands to achieve what an individual cannot achieve in isolation. If therefore, the people that make the place will not relate positively with one another then, the goals of the organization can hardly be achieved. There are organizations where there are no cordial relationships among staff members, and subordinates and superiors; for example, when strife, jealousy, hatred, bias, backbiting, witch-hunting, all of these and many more co-existing with the people, there is bound to be conflict which may not be healthy for the organization. Hence, for a healthy atmosphere in any organization, the people must understand their differences; there must be the “give and take” phenomenon which is the basis of a true and genuine

relationship. Therefore, this study was set to explore interpersonal relationship among employees of Gboko LGA as it relates to the quality of job performance of workers.

Purpose of the study

The study has the following as its objectives:

- i. To investigate the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance among employees of Gboko LGA.
- ii. To examine the influence interpersonal relationship on job performance among employees of Gboko LGA.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised:

- i. Does interpersonal relationship has influence on job performance among employees of Gboko LGA?
- ii. Is there gender differences in the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance among employees of Gboko LGA?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for confirmation or rejection

- i. There is no significant relationship between the role of interpersonal relationship and job performance among employees of Gboko LGA
- ii. There is no significant gender difference in the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance.

Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design. A total of one hundred and thirty eight participants within the age range of 18 and above years with a mean age of 3.00 and standard deviation (SD) of 1.032 from Gboko LGA participated in the study. Ninety-eight (98) representing 71.0% were males while forty (40) representing (29.0% were females. In respect to age, 58 (42.0%) participants felled within 33 and above years, 37 (26.8%) between 28-32 years, 28 (20.3%) between 23-27 years while only 15 (10.9%) of the participants were 18-22 years. Based on marital status 74 (53.6%) participants were married, 48 (34.8%) were single, while 16 (11.6%) participants were separated. With regards to education 25 (18.1%) participants were degree holders, 45 (32.6%) participants were HND holders, 43 (31.2%) participants were OND holders, while only 13 (9.4%) participants were SSCE holders.

Instrument

Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was made up of the three sections. Section 'A' of the questionnaire was made up of demographic variables. Section 'B' (A Nist and Diehl interpersonal relationship questionnaire). A Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .75 was reported. The scale was developed by Nist and Diehl (1990) with a total of sixteen (16) items and A Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .75 the last section of the questionnaire is performance scale which measured role performance was a seven (7) items scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.72 was reported for it.

Procedures for administration

Both instruments were individually administered to employees of Gboko LGA while they were in their various offices. Their consent was sought and the purpose of the study was explained to them, they were assured of the confidentiality of the information they provided. Only participants who agreed and were willing to participate in the study were given the questionnaire to fill in.

Method of Data analysis

Two different methods were used to analyze the data which include: correlation and t-test.

Results

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and job performance. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation and the result is presented.

Table 1: Pearson correlation showing the relationship between interpersonal relationship and job performance

Variable	N	df	r	p	remark
Interpersonal relationship					
	138	136	.328	0.5	sig
Job performance					

The result showed that there is a significant positive relationship between interpersonal relationship and performance ($r (df = 136) = .328, p < .05$). The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate accepted, thus implying that an individual's interpersonal relationship correlate positively with his or her performance in the workplace.

Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference between male and female on job performance.

Table 2: independent t-test showing difference between male and female on job performance

Variable	Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
	Male	98	22.295	2.338			
Performance					-1.905	136	.05
	Female	40	22.350	3.570			

The result showed that there is a significant difference between male and female on job performance ($t (136 df) = -1.905; < .05$). With this result, the hypothesis was. It was further observed that males scored ($M=22.295, SD = 2.338$) on job performance compared to females ($M = 22.350, SD = 3.570$). This finding showed that male and female differ on job performance.

Discussion

The first hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between the role of interpersonal relationship and job performance among employees of Gboko LGA. The result of this hypothesis showed a significant positive relationship between the role of interpersonal relationship and job performance. This implies that the employees' productivity is dependent of interpersonal relation. In other words interpersonal relation variable is very significant at 5% significance level and is an important variable to decide the work performance. The result is in congruent with previous findings by Quek, Wong, Divaharn, Liu, Peer and Williams, (2007) who in their study also found a positive relationship between interpersonal teacher behaviour and student's attitudes toward subjects in Singapore. This current finding is consistent with Herderson and Fisher (2008) who discovered a positive relationship between several aspects of interpersonal behaviour and students' attitude in a study on Australian vocational education. This result also support that of Raymund (2014) who established that interpersonal Skills of School Administrators of WVSU-JC are very clearly evident in their support to the faculty. The school administrator ability to allow teachers high degree of initiative and creativity in their work make them to be more dedicated is very clearly evident in their influence; when it comes to teaching performance students getting help from the teacher heads; the interpersonal skills, administrative influence, and teaching performance are interrelated and interconnected. The enhancement of one will also enhance the other two.

Regarding hypothesis two, the study hypothesized that there is no significant difference between male and female employees on job performance among employees of Gboko LGA. The result of the study showed that there is a significant difference between male and female on job performance. This finding is in line with previous findings by Clifton, Narasimhan and Yue (2009) who also found significant gender-based differences in performance on various dimensions. For example, women cover roughly 9 stocks, on average, as compared with 10 for men, and women's earnings estimates tend to be less accurate than men's estimates. But the study also found that women are significantly more likely than men to be designated as All-Stars, which indicates that they outperform men in other aspects of job performance. This result is consistent with previous findings (Olson and Becker 1983; Jones and Makepeace 1996; Winter-Ebmer and Zweimuller 1997); according to them "one would expect that a higher hurdle is set for women than for men and those women who are able to clear that hurdle would, on average, do a better job than their male counterparts. On the other hand, if affirmative action is an important factor in hiring decisions, then employers may set a lower hurdle for women in order to promote gender balance (Glazer 1975; Epstein 1992; Coate and Loury 1993); if affirmative-action-based hiring is prevalent, women would, on average, perform worse than men. This finding is in contrast with previous finding by Taylor & Francis (2016) who observed that one gender does not consistently receive better performance ratings than the other; it did however determine that women receive slightly higher ratings in some settings and males receive higher ratings in others. For example, women exceeded men in areas such as caring, building relationships and teamwork, while men exceeded women in risk management, initiative, achievement orientation and self-confidence

Conclusion:

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

There is a positive significant relationship between the roles of interpersonal relationship and job performance among employees of Gboko LGA

The study also concluded that there is a significant difference between male and female employees on job performance.

Recommendation:

Based on findings of the study it was therefore recommended that:

Conscious efforts should be made to enhance social interaction among employees in the work setting such as acquisition of good and effective communication skills be adapted by employees in other to bring about good interpersonal relationship among employees to enhance job performance in the workplace.

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