

Career Development and Effectiveness of Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

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Abstract

this study focused on Career Development and Effectiveness of Ministries in Abia State Civil Service. The study was guided by two specific objectives with descriptive survey as its design. The population of this study consist of the four thousand, three hundred and eighty four (4,384) employees of the twelve (12) selected ministries as obtained from Office of the Head of Service of the State (OHS, 2023). The researcher used a mix of criteria to select the twelve ministries under study from a pool of nineteen ministries in Abia State. The research questions were answered using the simple Pearson (r) correlation statistic to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in the study while the hypotheses were tested using linear regression technique. Findings from the study shows that career development has significant effects on the effectiveness of ministries in Abia State Civil Service. It was therefore recommended that organizations especially Ministries in Abia State Civil Service should continuously invest in the growth of their workers through promotion, conversion among others because employees who actively engage in career growth are more likely to embrace change and contribute to the organization's adaptability and that The Ministries in Abia State Civil Service should adopt knowledge transfer, confidence building, provision of networking opportunities, goal setting and accountability and multi-skill development orientation associated with mentoring, as a strategy for enhancing the mentee's communication proficiency thereby enhancing their overall contribution to the overall effectiveness

Keywords: *Adaptability, Career Development, Career Planning, Communication, Mentoring,*

Introduction

The world of work is undergoing comprehensive process of change. In this dynamic landscape, career development takes center stage, empowering individuals to navigate their professional journeys and achieve fulfilling work lives. The history of career development can be traced to Frank Parsons who is regarded as the founder of the vocational guidance movement. He developed the talent-matching approach in 1908, which was later developed into the Trait and Factor Theory of Occupational Choice. At the centre of Parsons' theory is the concept of matching; he states that occupational decision making occurs when people have achieved an accurate understanding of their individual traits (aptitudes, interests, personal abilities), a knowledge of jobs and the labour market and a rational and objective judgment about the relationship between their individual traits, and the labour market. As a field of practice, career development has emerged relatively recently but the notion of individuals helping others find work, become crafts-persons, contribute to their communities, and discover ways to harness their skills and talents can likely be traced back hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. In the earliest days of the formal profession, the work we do was more commonly known as vocational guidance – a term still used today in many countries. In Canada, Etta St. John Wileman, who lobbied the Canadian government in the early 1900s to establish employment bureaus to help facilitate labour mobility, is often credited with the creation of the field in Canada (McCash, Hooley & Robertson, 2021).

Professional careers are becoming more complicated and dynamic as a result of influencing elements such globalization, economicization, digitization, innovation, changing industries, constantly changing societal needs, and the structural move towards a knowledge and service society (Hirschi, 2018). According to Atanasoff and Venable (2017), the "new" working environment is marked by a decline in the continuity and stability of professions as well as an increase in their unpredictability and flexibility for most occupational groups. The need for constant improvement to stay relevant in the emerging career changes driven by innovation and the knowledge doubling curve, however, cannot be overemphasized. Oesterreich and Teuteberg (2019) posits that career development should be a lifelong process of managing, learning, working, and transitioning towards a personally determined and evolving preferred future. It encompasses all the activities and experiences required of an individual who seeks to enhance their skills, knowledge, and competencies in alignment with their career goals and aspirations. From an organizational standpoint, supporting career development should be as an investment that is beneficial for employee retention, satisfaction, and productivity. This is because, when organizations invest in the growth and advancement of their workforce, it may boost their image and the likelihood of attracting top talents; thereby creating a positive and innovative workplace culture. Organizations may therefore implement career development programs, training initiatives, mentorship opportunities, and performance management systems to facilitate the continuous growth of their employees.

Career development therefore is a dynamic and multifaceted process that empowers individuals to shape their professional paths, adapt to changes, and achieve long-term success. It is a shared responsibility between individuals and organizations, fostering a symbiotic relationship that benefits both parties in the pursuit of career excellence. To make one's career development worthwhile and rewarding, it is necessary to critically focus on the individual's well-being, both

personal and economic, as well as his or her social flexibility and economic productivity, and finally the individual's social justice. To accomplish this, the individual must acquire valuable skills that are relevant to the needs of the organization, manage their career consistently, and be able to withstand career changes (Derrick, Danusa, & Kenneth, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

Revamping or reforming the Civil Service has also become one of the recurring campaign promises of politicians during elections, however, reality points to the fact that it is talked about more than it is done; hence, it can be observed that government commitment to intentional and well-funded career development programmes and strategies for Abia State Civil Servants over the years may have been on the low. This may have led to manifest ineffectiveness of some of the ministries, departments and agencies of Abia State Government. Contemporary workplaces have seen an increased dynamism in their processes and structures; thereby making the institutionalization of career planning and mentoring expedient. Unfortunately, the absence of intentional and formal mentoring programmes in Abia State Civil Service may have created uncertainty in the employees about their future within the organization vis-a-viz the path for their career advancement. This uncertainty can lead to decreased motivation, reduced job satisfaction, and increased turnover. High turnover rates can disrupt operations, increase recruitment and training costs, and result in the loss of institutional memory and the overall effectiveness of the Ministries in Abia State. Furthermore, when organizations fail to provide adequate training and development opportunities, employees may feel ill-equipped to take on new roles or responsibilities. This can hinder their ability to grow within the company. A lack of skilled employees can lead to inefficiency and other forms of poor service delivery (Shang, Xie & Yang, 2021). The problem of this study therefore is to examine the effects career development has on the organizational effectiveness of selected ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the effects career development has on organizational effectiveness in selected ministries of Abia State Civil Service. The specific objectives that the study examined include; to

- i. Examine the effects of career planning on the adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service
- ii. Examine the effects of mentoring on the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Research Questions

The following research questions served as a guide to this study;

- i. What are the effects of career planning on the adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service?
- ii. In what ways do mentoring affect the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service?

Hypotheses

The following tentative assumptions provided further support and scientific clarity to the study;

H0₁: Career planning does not have significant effect on the adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

H0₂: Mentoring does not have significant effects on the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Literature Review

Career Development

According to Prince, Amina, Ocloo-Koffie, and Sarpong (2021), a person's career is their pattern of work experiences, which consists of all the phases or stages of their work life span and clearly illustrates the change from one stage to the next. Rather than being a succession of jobs, the transition creates a narrative that the person develops about themselves throughout the course of their working career. One of the most important things to stress is that a person's capacity to choose the direction or course their career will take—which necessitates having consistent employability—is largely responsible for their career advancement. Career development is the result of career plans being followed, as seen from the perspectives of the business and the individual (Belyh, 2019). McDonald, Hite, and O'Connor (2022) define career development as a shift in an employee's performance within an organization to advance their career goals and be given more responsibilities, thus making the business more advanced and developed in terms of improving corporate performance. Career development, according to the Career Development Institute (2017), is the distinct, lifelong advancement of an individual's career through effective time management and a seamless transition that guarantees productive involvement in the workplace. In this paper, career development is measured with the proxies discussed below;

Dimensions of Career Development

Career Planning: In the current global and competitive business environment, organizations face challenges in retaining high-performing employees. To stay competitive, organizations include career planning in their strategic plans to enhance employees' growth and workforce stability. As explained by Hedge and Rineer (2017), "Careers comprise patterns of work experiences that evolve over time; people typically advance through each successive career stop along this evolutionary path". Careers are not static, and employees need to see the long-term plans of future opportunities offered to them. A survey of 12,000 employees by CEB (2015), a best practice and talent management company now acquired by the technology research and advisory company, Gartner, indicated that career opportunity was the main reason employees joined a different organization as they did not see opportunities to grow in their previous jobs. Career opportunity can be addressed in the workplace through career planning discussions between managers and their employees.

In this study, career planning is viewed as the process through which a person identifies his or her skills, interests, knowledge, abilities, and aspirations; identifies the jobs or positions that fit with the stated capabilities; and plans the steps and actions providing greater chances of obtaining such positions. The help of a mentor or contributions from the manager are necessary in supporting an employee in the identified career path. Career planning stems from the assumption that once a person starts working in an organization, he or she will be seeking to move up and around the

organization functions if given the opportunities, or out if such opportunity does not exist. As explained by Hedge and Rineer (2017), career planning involves the discussion and analysis of the possible career paths of an individual based on his or her strengths, weaknesses, interests, and potentials. It aids individuals to identify future career options that provide satisfaction as well as challenges that keep them active and interested. Organizations and their management teams play a key role in fostering their employees' career plans as they need to collaborate with the employees on career development activities, thus enabling them to continuously provide high quality performance in the ever-changing work environment

Mentoring: The concept of mentoring has been defined in a number of ways in the literature. According to earlier research (Patrick, 2013), mentoring is an interpersonal interaction in which the mentor assumes the position of an experienced individual who is in charge of imparting professional knowledge and skills to the mentee. A review of the literature shows that mentoring gains effectiveness and value when it incorporates the three components—the mentor-mentee relationship, the professional development process, and the mentoring environment. Three dimensions—the relational, developmental, and contextual components—have a significant influence on mentoring relationships, according to Tahira, Victoria, and Iram (2019). Encouraging the mentee's personal and professional growth is the goal of mentoring. Depending on the nature and goal of the activity, mentoring can be given in various contexts and in various methods (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015). There are several structures and styles in which mentoring can be carried out. Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, and Edwards-Groves (2014) based their analysis on earlier research and conclude that there are three types of mentoring: support, collaborative self-development, and supervision. Mayers and Anderson (2012) also note that mentorship can be given in a variety of ways depending on one's viewpoint. Mentoring is an interactive, facilitative process designed to support learning and development that is founded on educational and social learning theories, Initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition are the four stages that mentoring usually goes through. It includes support for both professional (sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, challenging) and psychosocial (role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship) development. (Straus, Johnson, Marquez & Feldman, 2013).

Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness was described by Mwai, Namada, and Katuse (2018) as the ability of a company to achieve its goals by achieving the intended result with no waste or with the least amount of energy, money, labor, and time resources. The degree to which an organization's primary responsibilities are completed is another way to define organizational effectiveness, with effectiveness being closely linked to an organization's capacity for success. A criterion comprising overall success, market share, profitability, growth rate, and innovation was put out in order to gauge effectiveness. Customer happiness, growth over a planning period, and net profitability relative to budgeted profitability are frequently suggested indicators of an organization's effectiveness. The level of change in an organization's internal processes, including organizational culture, structure, culture, and community, is reflected in its effectiveness. Efficiency-oriented organizations prioritize revenue generation, product quality and creation, outputs, innovation, and cost containment (Basuony, 2014). The idea of organizational effectiveness (OE) is

multidimensional and goes beyond the usual indicators of success. Few empirical researchers have developed various types of OE models that explain the notion clearly. Beyond quantifiable financial (profit) performance, the triple bottom line idea today encompasses value generated by sociological (people), environmental (planet), technological (innovation), and cultural (well-being) measures. The new metrics are considered crucial for monitoring OE (Mikelsone & Leila, 2016). The measures of organizational effective of interest to this paper are organizational adaptability and communication as discussed below;

Organizational Adaptability: adaptation as a process stresses a situation in which a system shifts from being obsessed with transition to incorporating the transition into operations. Organizational adaptation is the process of rejuvenation at the organizational level. This concept is strongly related to the idea that an organization's traits and behaviour patterns evolve in response to changes in its stakeholder environment (Tikka, 2020). Organizational adaptation is defined as a change that an organization makes in response to external circumstances. Successful organizational adaptation can lead to a more effective organizational structure and process, the replacement of outdated practices, and a better match with evolving environmental conditions (Marks, 2013). Adaptive organizations with subjective initiative must deal with a variety of complications arising from internal and external variables as well as objective settings. Organizations make decisions to fulfill external demands based on their perception of the environment, subject to the restrictions of their own resources and skills. According to Yunhao, Yun, Xinyue, Xiaoyan, and Hui (2021), organizational flexibility is determined by the relative position of environmental dynamism and organizational competency. Adaptation can be divided into "discontinuous" transitions and "continuous" change processes. Continuous change means moving to a known state in an orderly, incremental, and continuous manner, whereas discontinuous transition means moving to an unknown state, where simultaneous and interactive changes result in new ways of thinking, organizing, or conducting activities (König, Graf-Vlachy, & Schöberl, 2021). Adaptability is an enterprise's ability to respond swiftly to opportunities and hazards and turn them into a competitive advantage

Communication: Amid escalating competition and organizational flux, corporate change emerges as a pivotal strategy for entities striving to sustain their market presence. Organizational communication is crucial in this paradigm (Hussain, 2023). Errida and Lotfi, (2021) emphasizes that effective organizational communication significantly impacts the success and efficacy of corporate change endeavors. Communication encompasses all activities undertaken by an individual to influence the mindset of another (Tidd and Bessant, 2020), serving as a vital link between individuals and organizations. Clear and comprehensive communication facilitates the dissemination of information and enhances comprehension of impending changes during periods of substantial organizational transformation whether through restructuring, mergers, process enhancements, or cultural realignments. Tahir (2020) affirms that organizational communication serves as a fundamental conduit for elucidating to employees the rationale, objectives, and anticipated outcomes of corporate change initiatives, fostering an understanding of the change's necessity and benefits while mitigating resistance and apprehension. As highlighted by (Hamilton, 2022), amidst potential employee resistance stemming from feelings of vulnerability, uncertainty, or discomfort towards the new trajectory, transparent communication channels

provide avenues for expressing concerns and providing feedback. Such a dialogue, in turn, dispels misconceptions and diminishes resistance.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey as its design. It is largely acknowledged that the method is best suitable for the study of non-observable events such as opinions, attitudes, preferences or dispositions. Moreover, the choice of descriptive survey is supported by the fact that the population of the study is known and finite. The population of this study consist of the four thousand, three hundred and eighty four (4,384) employees of the twelve (12) selected ministries as obtained from Office of the Head of Service of the State (OHS, 2023). The researcher used a mix of criteria to select the twelve ministries under study from a pool of nineteen ministries in Abia State. The research questions were answered using the simple Pearson (r) correlation statistic to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in the study. The choice to conclude the study questions was based on the following: 0.00 - 0.20 = very low relationship, 0.21 - 0.40 = low relationship, 0.41 - 0.60 = moderate relationship, 0.61 - 0.80 = high relationship, and 0.81 - 1.00 = extremely high relationship. The study's hypotheses were examined using a basic linear regression technique to determine the "significance" of the degree of association between the dependent and independent variables. This means that it determined whether the relationship's coefficient was significant or not. The acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis was determined by whether the estimated p-value was less than the level of significance (0.05); otherwise, the hypothesis was rejected.

Model Specification

The model estimated expresses Organizational Effectiveness (OE) represented by Adaptability (A), and Communication (C), while Career Development (CD) was represented by, Career Planning (CP) and Mentoring (M). The models for this study thus are:

Model one:

$$A = f (CP) \tag{3.1}$$

Model two:

$$C = f (M) \tag{3.2}$$

Results

Research Questions/Hypotheses

In this section, the Pearson correlation coefficient and the simple linear regression techniques were employed to address research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question One

What are the effects of career planning on the adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service?

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Summary for Career Plannin and Adaptability

Variables	n	\bar{X}	SD	R
Career Planning	340	19.8353	4.60370	0.839
Adaptability	340	20.0294	3.50630	

Very High Relationship

Source: Extracted from IBM SPSS Output

Table 1 shows the result obtained in respect of research question one. The result reveals that the Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.839, which is very high. This implies that there is a very high relationship that exists between career planning and adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service.

Testing of Hypothesis One

H0₁: Career planning does not have significant effect on the adaptability of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Table 2: ANOVA Summary for Simple Linear Regression of Career Planning and Adaptability

Model	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-value	p-value
Regression	1	2931.874	2931.874		
Residual	338	1235.832	3.656	801.868	0.000
Total	339	4167.706			

Source: Extracted from IBM SPSS Output

Table 2 reveals that the mean squares for regression and residuals are 2931.874 and 3.656, respectively, with an F-calculation value of 801.868 and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). This implies a statistically significant outcome. As a result, the null hypothesis, which indicated that career planning had no significant effect on the adaptability of selected ministries in the Abia State Civil Service, was rejected. As a result, the study suggests that career planning has a substantial impact on the adaptability of selected ministries in the Abia State Civil Service.

Research Question Two

In what ways do mentoring affect the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service?

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Summary for Mentoring and Communication

Variables	n	\bar{X}	SD	R
Mentoring	340	3.35506	3.35506	0.816
Communication	340	19.8853	3.60045	

Very High Relationship

Source: Extracted from IBM SPSS Output

Table 3 shows the result obtained in respect of research question two. The result reveals that the Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.816, which is very high. This implies that mentoring affects the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service to a very high extent.

Testing of Hypothesis Two

H0: Mentoring does not have significant effects on the communication of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Table 4: ANOVA Summary for Simple Linear Regression of Mentoring and Communication

Model	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-value	p-value
Regression	1	2924.509	2924.509		
Residual	338	1470.017	4.349	672.430	0.000
Total	339	4394.526			

Source: Extracted from SPSS Output

Table 4 reveals that the mean squares for regression and residuals are 2924.509 and 4.349, respectively, with an F-calculation value of 672.430 and a p-value of 0.000, both less than 0.05. This implies a statistically significant outcome. As a result, the null hypothesis, which indicated that mentorship has no substantial effect on the communication of selected ministries in the Abia State Civil Service, was rejected. As a result, the study suggests that mentorship has a high impact on the communication of the chosen ministries within the Abia State Civil Service.

Conclusion

Employees are acknowledged as the key resource that drives the effectiveness of every organization. A further analysis shows that employees themselves are driven by their own

ambition; hence, to get the best of their contributions to the effectiveness of the organization, there is need to provide them with opportunities that can support the attainment of their individual goals and by extension the effectiveness of the organizations. This study therefore concludes that career development has significant influence on the effectiveness of Selected Ministries in Abia State Civil Service

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion above, the following recommendations were suggested thus;

- i. Organizations especially Ministries in Abia State Civil Service should continuously invest in the growth of their workers through promotion, conversion among others because employees who actively engage in career growth are more likely to embrace change and contribute to the organization's adaptability. As they acquire new skills and knowledge, they become valuable and relevant assets in steering the organization through industry shifts and technological advancements
- ii. The Ministries in Abia State Civil Service should adopt knowledge transfer, confidence building, provision of networking opportunities, goal setting, accountability and multi-skill development orientation associated with mentoring, as a strategy for enhancing the mentee's communication proficiency thereby enhancing their overall contribution to the overall effectiveness of in their organizations. Ministries in Abia State Civil Service should be intentional about inculcating formal mentoring in their staff development schemes

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