

A Theoretical Review of Managerial Strategies on Workers' Performance

Abang George Ndifon¹, Bernard Samuel Eventus², Nkamare Stephen Ekpo³, Tabi Meyengue³, Atimba Oboko I.⁴
& Loveth Okpunor⁵

¹ Department of Business Administration, University of Cross River State, Nigeria

² Department of Business Management, University of Calabar, Nigeria

³ Department of Banking and Finance, University of Calabar, Nigeria

⁴ Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurship, Ebonyi State University, Nigeria

⁵ Department of Banking and Finance, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria

Correspondence: Nkamare Stephen Ekpo, Department of Banking and Finance, University of Calabar, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study examined managerial strategies and workers' performance in selected local government councils in Cross River State. Most of the time, the goals set by the administration of most government parastatals are unrealistic, and therefore the employee is constantly put under pressure to achieve these ambitious goals. The cost of replacing workers can be high, the problems associated with finding and retraining new employees can be considerable, and the specific workplace acquired skills and knowledge people walk away with can take years to replace. Based on the research study, communication skills, staff training, decision making, financial incentives, and survival strategy affect workers' performance in the selected local government councils in Cross River State. The study recommended among others that government should allow workers communicate effectively if workers' productivity must increase.

Keywords: managerial strategies, communication skills, staff training, decision making, financial incentives, survival strategy, workers' productivity

1. Introduction

Management is confronted with the task of having to diagnose the various needs of the workers so as to transform them into organizational needs. Invariably, if personal observation is used critically on workers on-the-job, several differences in performance may be established. Some workers may perform excellently well while others may perform marginally using their output as a basis for evaluation. This means that any noticeable difference(s) in output may reveal to several factors that sometimes interfere with workers job performance. Managerial strategies are techniques for controlling and directing a business to achieve a set of predetermined goals. They include strategies for goal setting, leadership and operational outcome.

According to Salawal, Hassan and Adefeso (2013), the primary responsibility of management is that of the provision and implementation of adequate and proper managerial strategies for the workers for improved productivity. It is also believed that every action by the manager, be it positive or negative, systematically spurs up a subsequent and commensurate reaction from the workers. However, in order to have an encouraging response, managers are expected to emphasize on managerial strategies capable of propelling the workers to put in their outmost best towards the achievement of organizational goals.

Maslow (1964) opined that, within every human being there exist a hierarchy of needs that must be satisfied.

Workers are precious resource and so the manager's role is to provide a conducive managerial strategy to accommodate them such as workers' participation in decision-making, financial incentives, effective communication skills and staff training programmes among others. The primary aim of establishing government parastatals is to meet up with some of the needs of man and to maximize their profits. Workers desire to justify their hard work with commensurate reward. In Nigeria, most of the parastatals are private, and some public utilities meant to render services to humanity. Irrespective of the type, these parastatals are bound to create incentives for the workers which may serve as boosters to raise the workers morale for enhanced productivity. Ensuring that employees are satisfied and feel appreciated is important to boosting their productivity and creating a healthy, thriving corporate culture. In the modern age there is demand for more productivity and higher level of efficiency from employees. This requires a holistic approach in employee management to ensure employees are engaged and aligned to a clearly articulated organizational strategy.

Organizational performance cannot be created by a single force or through a single strategy alone. Management team can boost employee morale and productivity by introducing strategies that will motivate employees. To build organizational excellence, and effectiveness, it is essential that employee productivity is high. There is clear agreement amongst managers that in this century, the demand for productivity and efficiency in the organizational context is more, when comparing with other times. The one major factor that can play a large role in optimizing firm level productivity is human resource productivity (Dike, 2019). Productivity in general is limited to enhancing the skills required by employees that can help perform their set tasks efficiently. For ensuring employee productivity is high, efficient usage has to be made of materials, facilities, talents, capabilities, and powers of an organization.

Productivity is of fundamental importance to employees, in turn to the organization, and ultimately it influences the national economy (Akinyele, 2009). Almost all developed countries, and developing countries alike are taking steps to improve their national productivity. When an economy becomes more productive, it becomes more competitive in the global market. It also helps countries lower their rate of unemployment (Leonova, Legky, & Prasolov 2021). Effective management of human capital is thus essential for organizations. Apart from increasing the efficiency of the workforce, by concentrating on employee productivity organizations can further increase their competitiveness. Innovation is a significant driver of the growth, success, and profitability of organizations and nations. Innovation is not the only driver of growth.

Managements should commit to the recruitment, retention, and strategic support of employees (Agrawal, 2012). According to Lebo and Edema (2019), organization is immune to change in order to meet local and global needs. Culture in organizations has become a common perception that sets the tone within an organization (Marga, 2020). A factor that affects the performance of workers is management's strategy within an organization. The way organizational managements treat the employees and the respect shown to employees may set the atmosphere for an entire shift. Managers with poor attitudes may reduce the employees' performance, and retention could become a problem for organizations when employees feel disconnected and leave. Beheshtifar and Nazarian (2013) noted employees who do not feel connected exhibited dissatisfaction through withdrawal behaviors such as a reduction in productivity, absenteeism, low employee morale, and high turnover rates. The general business problem in this study was that employee withdrawal behaviors can hinder an organization's productivity. This is because there are variables that related to workers' productivity. The specific business problem was that some organizational managements lack strategies to improve workers' performance in Cross River State.

2. Concept of Managerial Strategy

Management strategy is an established concept used by managers in everyday administration towards the achievement of set goals and objectives of a given organisation. Managerial strategies are the methods, techniques, procedures and processes that a manager uses in the workplace. Eteng (2017) defined management strategies as the management of an organisation's resource to achieve its goals and objectives. Strategic management involves setting objectives, analyzing the competitive environment, analyzing the internal organization, evaluating strategies, and ensuring that management rolls out the strategies across the organization.

Management strategies are divided into several schools of thought. A prescriptive approach to strategic management outlines how strategies should be developed, while a descriptive approach focuses on how strategies should be put in practice. These schools differ on whether strategies are developed through an analytic process, in which all threats and opportunities are accounted for, or are more like general guiding principles to be applied. Greg (2017) defined management strategies as the managing of an organisation's resources, analyzing internal and external forces, and developing strategies to realise goals and objectives. The aim of management strategy is to ensure that organization goals are supported and achieved by developing and stimulating a culture of productivity.

2.1 Communication

With the rapid advances in mobile technologies, workers are becoming increasingly accustomed to accessing rich information anywhere and anytime. This rise in digital information may have negative impact on workers' productivity which lacks the connectivity and richness" of mobile technologies. Leonvova, Legky and Prasolov (2021), with similar opinions have defined communication as the transmission of ideas from one person to another. Some looked at communication as a three- dimensional process involving;

- 1) The transmission of message from the sender to a target audience.
- 2) The reception and comprehension of the transmitted matter.
- 3) The acceptance or rejection of the transmitted matter.

2.2 Staff Training

Staff training has significant relationship with workers' productivity. Training is the acquisition of skills for better job performance. Oshati *et al.*, (2019) gave the objectives of training to be the following:

- 1) To strengthen the organizational culture by developing the understanding or ways to do things in the organizations.
- 2) To promote a feeling of commitment and provide for the organization.
- 3) To assist workers to perform at the optimum level in current jobs.
- 4) To develop a better understanding of authority structure of the organization.
- 5) To familiarize recruits with the overall objectives of the organization.
- 6) To gain a better understanding of the duties, roles and regulation of the organization.

2.3 Decision Making

Decision making has significant relationship with workers' productivity. Decision making is the central theme of research, policy and practice in business organization. In contemporary organization, large groups have been widely considered as a source of valuable information and aggregation of individual contributions under certain conditions produces results as valuable as that of an expert. Organisations and government have turned to large groups as sources to help strategic decisions. Studies have been carried out as a means of harnessing information for problem solving and idea, generation, through participation of large number of people (Singh, 2019).

The collective participative decision-making style indicates that a leader must involve the member of the organization. The level of involvement includes the members sharing information, ideas and perceptions with the leader. According to Karel (2021), collective participative decision making (sometime referred) to as industrial democracy or co-determination) is an alternative approach to employee participation. Collective participative decision making is an institutionalized involvement of employee representative in decisions that are relevant to labour-management relations.

2.4 Financial Incentives

All individual engaging in one form of labour or the other have an expectation of receiving benefits for work done in form of wages, salary, compensation, bonus, etc. as well as other non-financial incentives. The payment received for work done can fulfill certain basic needs such as clothing, food, and shelter. Every company in setting the amount of the wages paid to an employee must be viable so that the lowest wage given should be able to meet the needs of their employee (Kempfer, 2018). A financial incentive is money that a person, or organization offers to encourage certain behaviours or actions.

2.5 Survival Strategy

Nowadays, ventures are hugely managed with the hope to either survive or die while ensuring to make ends meet. However, the need to survive also comes with certain survival strategies which entrepreneurs engage with, pending the successful amelioration of any trying circumstance or season. In addition, the survival strategies are not fixated as it were, just like it is for individual personality traits, but can be explicitly taught or learnt via modeling. While organizations are faced with limited access to financial resources, strong managerial capabilities, technology, specialized skills and the basic infrastructures, etc. they somehow create several opportunities arising from diverse ideas and the available information, in order to accommodate and or deal with their challenges as a form of survival strategies during such hard times.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. This theory was developed by Herzberg in 1959. The two-factor theory grew out of a research conducted by Herzberg and his associates (1959) on a group of 200 accountants and engineers (who worked in different companies in United States of America) in which they sought to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and staff productivity. The researchers using a

critical incidents procedure, asked their respondents to recall a time when each felt exceptionally good about his or her job and times when each felt exceptionally bad, and then to describe the events associated with these feelings. From the result of the analysis, two distinct kinds of factors emerged satisfiers and dissatisfiers. This means that the factors involved in producing job satisfaction (and managerial strategies) are separate and distinct from the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction' (Herzberg, 1998). The authors identified two categories of factors or rewards — those that are related to job satisfaction and those that are related to job dissatisfaction. Those factors that are related to satisfaction or positive feeling about the job are called motivators or satisfiers. This is because these factors are related to the nature of the work and the content of the job itself. They are sometimes referred to as intrinsic factors. These factors encourage the growth and the development needs of people at the workplace. Herzberg identified the following six factors as managerial strategies factors or events.

- i) Achievement
- ii) Recognition for achievement
- iii) The work itself
- iv) Responsibility
- v) Advancement (promotion)
- vi) The possibility of personal growth

According to Herzberg, motivators are related to job satisfaction but not to dissatisfaction. That is, when these managerial strategies factors are present in a work situation they lead to strong managerial strategies, satisfaction and good staff productivity, but do not cause dissatisfaction when they are absent. At worst, the absence of motivators can only result in no satisfaction. Those factors that are related to dissatisfaction are called hygiene or dissatisfiers or maintenance factors or events. This is due to the fact that these factors are all related to the context (environment) of the job. Herzberg maintained that if these maintenance factors are present in the work situation, the employee will not necessarily be either satisfied or motivated. He or she will simply not be dissatisfied. If these factors are not forthcoming, the employee will be dissatisfied.

Herzberg concluded that the opposite of job dissatisfaction was not job satisfaction. It was simply no job dissatisfaction, and the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction. In effect, the hygiene factors are related to job satisfaction but not to satisfaction. The relevance of this theory to the study is that when managerial strategies factors like responsibility, advancement (promotion), are present in the industry, the workers will be motivated and high staff productivity will result or attained in the industry. The theory further shows that when hygiene or maintenance factors like salary, working conditions, status, are present in the industry, the workers will not be dissatisfied. In other words, managerial strategies and high staff productivity will be attained in the industry. If these factors are not present in the industry, the workers will be dissatisfied or have no satisfaction.

4. Empirical Studies

Wijetunge (2022) in a study of manufacturing firms in Western Province in Sri Lanka found that establishments are moderately engaged in managerial strategies and there is a positive relationship between managerial strategies and workers' productivity. Data were collected through personally attended structured questionnaire distributed among 275 owner and managers of manufacturing firms in Western province. They have used both descriptive and inferential statistics techniques to analyze the collected data. Managerial strategies construct was measured in communication and training.

Burugo (2019) examined the influence of managerial strategies on business profitability with particular reference to the Chai trading company limited in Kenya. The result of the analysis indicates that managerial strategies have a significant relationship with workers' productivity. Another study conducted in Nairobi City of Kenya. They used descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean scores to establish the influence of managerial strategies on workers' productivity. The results show that managerial strategies have a positive influence on performance.

Abosede (2023) examine the relationship between managerial strategies and workers' productivity. The conclusion drawn was that the implementation of management is a veritable tool for SMEs survival and development. Another study carried out in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. The result reveals that management practices have an influence on organization performance.

Abed (2024) conducted a study on managerial strategies and performance of organization in Commercial banks in Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to examine the impact of communication, training and survival strategy on performance of the organization. The study employed survey design and data were primarily sourced from the respondents of commercial banks. Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Based on the results, it was discovered that communication, training and survival strategy had a significant relationship with organizational performance. The study

recommended that in-service training and development of staff should be done in order to build up capacity for increased staff productivity and provide room for advancement.

Abubakar (2024) studied the impact of managerial strategies on organizational performance in manufacturing companies in Nigeria. The objective was to examine the impact of managerial strategies on organizational performance. Primary data was used and obtained through questionnaire instrument. The study employed regression analysis technique. The finding showed that managerial strategies had a positive and significant impact on organizational performance. The study recommended that workers should be allowed to participate actively in decision making of the organization that are relevant to labour-management relations.

5. Summary of the Study

Based on the research study, the following were summarized thus:

- 1) Workers are becoming increasingly accustomed to accessing rich information anywhere and anytime.
- 2) Training is the acquisition of skills for better job performance. Training strengthens the organizational culture by developing the understanding or ways to do things in the organizations.
- 3) Decision making is the central theme of research, policy and practice in business organization. In contemporary organization, large groups have been widely considered as a source of valuable information and aggregation of individual contributions under certain conditions produces results as valuable as that of an expert.
- 4) All individuals engaging in one form of labour or the other have an expectation of receiving benefits for work done in form of wages, salary, compensation, bonus, etc. as well as other non-financial incentives.
- 5) The survival strategies are not fixated as it were, just like it is for individual personality traits, but can be explicitly taught or learnt via modeling.

6. Conclusion

Management strategy is an established concept used by managers in everyday administration towards the achievement of set goals and objectives of a given organisation. Managerial strategies are the methods, techniques, procedures and processes that a manager uses in the workplace. Management strategy is embedded on organisation's resource to achieve its goals and objectives. The aim of management strategy is to ensure that organization goals are supported and achieved by developing and stimulating a culture of productivity.

7. Recommendations

Based on the objectives and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. That government should allow workers to have effective communicate skills that will improve the performance of the workers.
- ii. That in-service training and development of staff should be done in order to build up capacity for increased staff productivity and provide room for advancement.
- iii. That workers should be allowed to participate actively in decision making of the organization that are relevant to labour-management relations.
- iv. That government and other employers of labour should make adequate provision for financial and other incentives to motivate and encourage workers' productivity such as reward, bonus and pay raise.

That government should include survival strategy in their scheme of work such as monitoring the company's cash flow, checking in with their business plan.

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