

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract

The study examines the nexus between Employees' Involvement and Organisational Commitment in Telecommunication Firms in Port Harcourt. The study looks at how employee involvement in decision-making, work autonomy, and delegation affects employees' emotional commitment to their jobs at certain telecommunication companies. The goal of the study is to find out how important these aspects of employee involvement are in building emotional attachment and loyalty to the company. The study used a cross-sectional survey design that was descriptive. The population was made up of 85 workers from MTN, GLO, AIRTEL, and 9MOBILE in Port Harcourt, and the Taro Yamane method was used to choose a sample of 70. We used structured questionnaires to gather data and then used descriptive and inferential statistics, with a focus on the Spearman Rank Order Correlation through SPSS (v23.0). The results showed that there were strong and positive connections between affective commitment and employee decision-making ($r = 0.786$), work autonomy ($r = 0.722$), and delegation ($r = 0.782$). These results show that when people are more involved in the activities of the organisation, they become more emotionally attached to them and stay committed to them for a longer period of time. The study finds that giving employees more say in decisions, more freedom, and more responsibility greatly increases their emotional engagement. It suggests that telecommunications companies should always include employees in decision-making, give them enough freedom, and assign them duties to give them a sense of ownership. This would boost loyalty and performance inside the company.

Keywords: Employee involvement, affective commitment, decision making, work autonomy, delegation, telecommunication firms, Port Harcourt.

Introduction

Every organisation has its personnel as a basic resource. An employee's commitment significantly influences the attainment of an organization's strategic goals and objectives. It is indisputable that dedicated personnel serve as a distinguishing success factor for organisations (Oloda and Ikharehon, 2018).

Workforce management is a fundamental component of the management process. Understanding the vital role of individuals inside an organisation is directly linked to the organization's performance in achieving its objectives. A well-managed organisation typically regards the average worker as the primary source of quality and productivity enhancements, while employees are viewed as the

essential drivers of development. An organisation is deemed effective based on its ability to attain its objectives. An efficient organisation will ensure a spirit of cooperation and a clear understanding of its scope of influence. As organization battle to get the most from their existing employee in an environment characterized by skill shortages such that the role of human resource practices in the organization in fostering employee engagement and commitment is paramount, in doing this many organizations are aware of the significant impact both positive and negative that employee have on, organizational performance and productivity. Many successful organizations are strongly committed to look after their employee needs because they believe that organization that foster employee satisfaction can secure greater employee commitment. (Popoola. et al 2017). Commitment is a belief, which reflects “the strength of a person’s attachment to an organization”. Researchers have suggested that reciprocity is a mechanism underlying commitment and that employees will offer their commitment to the organization in reciprocation for the organization having fulfilled its psychological contract.

By fulfilling obligations relating to pay, job security, and career development, employers are creating a need for employees to reciprocate, and this can take the form of altitudinal reciprocity through enhanced commitment and consequently influence employees to stay with the organisation.

Meyer & Allen (1991) in the previous studies of the concept commitment have 7 % substantiated that employee commitment to the organisation has a positive influence on job performance. Many successful organizations are strongly committed to look after their employee needs because they believe that organization that foster employee satisfaction can secure greater employee commitment as organization battle to get the most from their existing employee in an environment characterized by skill shortages as such, the role of human resources practice in the organization in fostering employee engagement and commitment is paramount. In this direction, attainment of organization objective is hinged on the significant impact both positive and negative that employees have on organizational performance and productivity (Wagar 2021).

Commitment is a belief which reflects the strength of an employee attachment to an organization. The policy of organizational commitment to employees can be used to gain employees support and in turn maximize the benefits it receives from their employee with greater productivity and the individual performance, also increase in the same proportion. Commitment is a measure of the relative strength of an employee’s identification with an involvement in a particular organization. It can also be viewed as the knowledge, skills, abilities and experience of the work force which is useful to the organization only if the employees are willing to apply it to the achievement of the organization goals.

Lack of organization commitment results in negative effects and employee low productivity which to a large extent contribute immensely to the failure of organization not achieving their goals. In recent times, the telecommunication firms have recorded abysmal performance resulting in network disruptions across Nigeria, most GSM providers have violated laid down rules of engagement and huge fines imposed on them. This have in no small measures contributed to low staff morale and lack of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment to employee can be achieved through various motivation incentives, however, they cannot easily be achieved due to a retinue of problems bedeviling the sector. Most employee lack commitment because they are not being involved in the scheme of things within their organizations. Evidence from previous researches reveals a yawning gap in literature concerning

employees' involvement and organizations commitment. This gives credence to this current effort to analyze the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment in the telecommunication firms to be specific and the Nigerian work environment in general. It is on this premise that this study seeks to examine the impact of employees' involvement and organizational commitment in telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Conceptual Framework

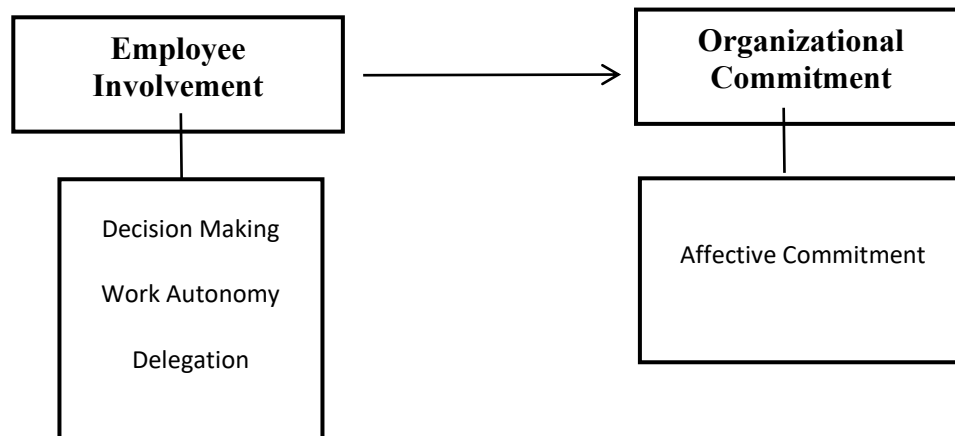


Figure 1.1: A conceptual framework showing the link between Employee Involvement and Organizational Commitment

Source: The dimension of employee involvement was adopted from the works of cotton et al, (1988) and Lawler et al (1992), while the measures of organizational commitment was adopted from the work of Mayer and Allen (1997)

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of employees' involvement and organizational commitment in telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt. Specifically, this study seek to;

- i. Examine if there is a significant relationship between employees' decision making and affective commitment of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.
- ii. Ascertain the effect of employees' work autonomy and affective commitment in telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.
- iii. Examine if there is a significant relationship between delegation and affective commitment of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

The following research questions were post to guide this study.

- i. What is the relationship between employees' decision making and affective commitment in telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt?
- ii. What is the effects of employees' work autonomy on affective commitment in the telecommunication firm in Port Harcourt?
- iii. What is the relationship between delegation and affective commitment in telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses will be formulated to give direction to this study:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between employee decision making and affective commitment.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between employee work autonomy and affective commitment.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between employee decision making and affective commitment.

Literature Review

Employee Involvement

Employee involvement is an old idea constantly being revitalized by organizations and new generations of practitioners throughout the world. However, employee involvement was revolutionized when McGregor (2016) and Herzberg (1966) first started writing about the topic in their articles “The Human Side of Enterprise” and “Work and the Nature of Man”. When an organization truly wants to create a positive work environment that is based on high trust, exceptional customer service, collaborative teamwork, operational excellence, and creative problem solving, then the leadership team must be able to understand, invest in, and be responsive to the needs of the group that represents the organization’s most valuable assets (the employees). The return on such nominal investments will come in the form of higher levels of employee motivation, creativity, productivity, and commitment that will move the organization forward with greater profitability. Market globalization has increased the rivalry between companies worldwide to acquire better market share. This has led to companies considering better policies and practices to reinforce organizational performance, in turn achieving competitive advantage. Innovation is a key success factor for organizations in different sectors. Nowadays, the changing values of employees and the use of advanced technology have impacted the workplace and the need for human skills. The participation in decision making, employee work autonomy and the sharing of new information and ideas results in an overall innovative environment within the organization.

Employee Involvement is a term that has been used in the literature on organizations to refer to individuals’ attachments to both organizations and their jobs (Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson 2017). Grazier (2021) provides a more descriptive definition of employee involvement: “It is a way of engaging employees at all levels in the thinking process of an organization. It’s the recognition that many decisions made in an organization can be made better by soliciting the input of those who may be affected by the decision. It is important to understanding that people at all levels of an organization possess unique talents, skills, and creativity that can be of significant value if allowed to be expressed within the organization. Employee Involvement is a participative process that uses the entire capacity of workers and is designed to encourage employee commitment to organizational success (Lawler et al., 2021). Moreover, employee involvement is understood as a variety of techniques designed to achieve the objective of giving the employee some combination of information, influence and/or incentives (Cotton, 2018).

Decision Making

There is growing evidence that firm performance rests increasingly on the involvement of workers in decision making (Arthur, 2019; Daft & Lewin, 2018). Employee decision-making refers to the extent of employees' involvement in making choices that affect their jobs, positions, or the organisation as a whole. It is an important part of techniques for participative management and empowerment. These strategies are often associated with greater job satisfaction, productivity, and commitment to the organisation (Yukl, 2013). Giving employees the power to make decisions makes them feel like they own their work and are responsible for it. Giving employees more power makes them more motivated and involved because they know their opinions matter (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Spreitzer (1995) says that psychological empowerment, which includes purpose, competence, self-determination, and influence, makes employees want to be involved in decision-making. Vroom and Yetton's (1973) normative decision model also shows that incorporating employees in decision-making can be helpful in some situations, especially when their expertise and support are important. But the level of involvement should match the scenario to avoid delays or confusion. In short, giving employees the power to make decisions is an important part of how organisations work today. When done carefully, it may encourage innovation, accountability, and alignment with the organization's goals.

Work Autonomy

Employee work autonomy refers to the degree of freedom, independence, and discretion employees have in scheduling their work, making decisions, and determining how to carry out tasks. It is a central element of job design and a key predictor of motivation and job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Autonomy empowers employees to take ownership of their responsibilities, which can lead to higher levels of engagement, creativity, and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When workers feel trusted to make decisions, they are more likely to exhibit initiative and a proactive attitude toward problem-solving (Langfred, 2004). However, the benefits of autonomy often depend on individual and organizational factors. For instance, employees with high self-efficacy may thrive under autonomy, while others may require more structure and guidance (Humphrey, et al., 2007). In summary, employee work autonomy fosters a sense of responsibility and motivation, contributing to organizational effectiveness when appropriately matched with employee capabilities and organizational goals.

Delegation

Delegation of employees is the process by which managers or leaders give their subordinates the power and duty to make decisions or do certain tasks. It is an important part of management that makes things run more smoothly, helps employees learn new skills, and makes the organisation more effective (Yukl, 2013). Delegation is more than just giving people tasks to do; it also means giving them the freedom to make judgements within certain limits. If done right, delegation can help people trust one other, give them more confidence, and help them become leaders (Koontz & Weihrich, 2010). It also lets supervisors focus on big-picture issues while workers take care of day-to-day tasks. When combined with clear expectations, feedback, and the right amount of control, delegation can improve employee performance, job happiness, and commitment to the organisation (Chen, Aryee, & Lee, 2005). But bad delegation, such as not having clear expectations or authority, can cause uncertainty,

anger, and lower productivity. In short, good delegation encourages responsibility, empowerment, and leadership at all levels, making it an important part of managing an organisation and helping employees grow.

Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is one of the most investigated constructs in organizational research. Organizational commitment has become a highly researched job attitude in recent years. One reason that commitment is so well studied is that the impact of commitment is associated with work outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, performance, motivation, and job withdrawal behaviors. Organizational commitment has a strong association with intent to leave, employee retention, and job performance in many organization. There are a number of definitions for organizational commitment; there are some commonalities in the various definitions.

Mowday, Porter, and Steers, (1982) defined organizational commitment as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization”. Other researchers have defined organizational commitment as the psychological attachment that individuals develop toward an organization (Fiorito et al., 2017; Wright & Kehoe, 2017). More recently, Somunoglu, et al., (2012) defined organizational commitment as the degree to which an individual embraces the values and goals of an organization. The key notion in each of these definitions is that organizational commitment is a major variable that influences a number of organizational outcomes such as employee job performance and job satisfaction, personnel turnover, and organizational citizenship behavior. Gelade, Dobson, and Gilbert (2022) indicated that organizational commitment should be of interest to organizations because there is a body of research that links levels or organizational commitment to a number of outcomes for an organization.

Affective Commitment

Affective or moral commitment occurs when individuals fully embrace the goals and values of the organization. They become emotionally involved with the organization and feel personally responsible for the organization’s level of success. These individuals usually demonstrate high levels of performance, positive work attitudes, and a desire to remain with the organization. Affective commitment is defined as an emotional connection to, association with, and participation in an organization (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Affective commitment to an organization is shown when an employee has psychological attachment and identification with the organization (Fields, 2002). Past research has revealed that affective commitment is related to employee outcomes such as productivity, attendance, and retention (Hunton& Norman, 2018).

Theoretical Underpinning Expectancy Theory

According to expectancy theory (Porter & Lawler, 1968; Vroom, 1964), the interactions among three different beliefs determine motivation: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. For an individual to be motivated to perform a certain task, he must believe that if he exerts enough effort, he will be able to achieve whatever level of performance is required. Using job performance as an example, if a person works hard at his job, he must believe that he will be able to meet his employer’s performance

requirements. This relationship is referred to as expectancy. An individual must also believe that his performance will result in a particular outcome. The linkage between performance and outcomes is called instrumentality. An individual may view an outcome as desirable or undesirable. The final condition needed for an individual to be motivated is for that individual to positively value the outcomes which will result from his performance.

Empirical Review

Saks, (2022) conducted an important study among 102 employees working in a variety of jobs and organizations in Canada to test a model of the antecedents and consequences of a job engagement and organizational engagement based. The study found that employee involvement represents a mediating role in the relationship between the precursor (job characteristics, perceived organization support, perceived supervisor support, rewards and recognition, procedural justice, and distributive justice) and consequences of involvement (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to quit, and organizational citizenship and behavior).

Moreover, Brown and Leigh, (2018) concluded that an environment perceived as psychologically safe and meaningful by employees usually leads to increase job involvement and commitment of time and energy into the work of the organization. In addition, they found that psychological climate has been linked to the cognitive and affective states of job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation.

Hakanen et al., (2022) set out to test the motivational and health impairment processes was proposed in the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model, and to examine the extent home resources and home demands may influence both processes over a certain period. The study found that job resources impact on future work engagement ultimately leads to organizational commitment, as compared to job demands which foretell burnout within a certain period that eventually led to predicted prediction of future depression. Additional evidences similarly were found in the literature concerning the influences of employee involvement and organizational commitment, since involvement conceptualized as the opposite of (Maslach et al., 2020; Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2022). For example, Maslach et al., (2020) seek to provide a serious analysis of the past 25 years of literature on job burnout. The analysis revealed six areas of work-life that may either lead to involvement: workload, control, rewards and recognition, community and social support, perceived fairness, and values. They found that a sustainable workload, feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, a supportive work community, fairness and justice, and meaningful and valued work can contribute positively to work involvement. Furthermore, they concluded that involvement is mediating the six work-life factors and various work outcomes such as performance commitment, satisfaction, and job tenure.

Baskin, (2017) also found that an employee who is not engaged is more likely to leave the organization. In a recent global workforce study by the Towers Watson Company (2021), involving 32 000 employees across different industries in the world, the link between engagement and retention is confirmed.

Methodology

The present investigation employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design technique. The population of this study are the employees of telecommunication firm in Port Harcourt, therefore,

the accessible population for the study includes MTN (25), GLO (27), AIRTEL (18), 9MOBILE (15), making it a total population of 85, comprising of their managers, and supervisors of the firms. The sample size from the study population, calculated using the Taro-Yamene Formula, is 70. The questionnaire instrument, which was given to the respondents in person to collect the data, was also used to create data for the inquiry. The dependent variable (organizational commitment) is operationalized by three (3) statement items for (affective commitment). While the independent variable (employees' involvement) is operationalized by twelve (12) items each, for each items (decision making, work autonomy and delegation). The reliability of the study's instruments was evaluated using the Cronbach alpha test. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in this study's data analysis. Testing hypotheses was the main emphasis of the inferential analysis. With the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 23.0 window version, Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Statistics were used.

Data Analysis

Questionnaire Distribution and Collection

A total of seventy (70) copies of questionnaire were distributed to managers and supervisors of four telecommunication firm in Port Harcourt in Rivers State. Out of seventy set of questionnaire distributed in this study, all of them were retrieved. This represent 100% rate of return. The researcher discovered that the entire questionnaire returned where correctly filled.

Bi-variate Analysis

Description of the Range of Correlation (Rho) Values, As Well As the Correlative Level of Association

Range of Rho (+ and – sign value)	Association strength
± 0.80 – 0.99	Very strong
± 0.60 – 0.79	Strong
± 0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
± 0.20 – 0.39	Weak
± 0.00 – 0.19	Very weak

Source: Bryman and Bell (2003)

The Table above shows the rule of thumb correlation coefficient which is a decision table that defines the level of acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses from that of very strong or very weak either positive or negative.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between employee decision making and affective commitment of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Correlational outcome of the relationship between Decision Making and Affective Commitment

Correlations			Decision Making	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Decision Making	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.786**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	70	70
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.786**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 — tailed)

Interpretation:

From the result of the above table, the correlation coefficient ($r_{0.786}$) between decision making and affective commitment is strong and positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.62$) indicates that 62% change in affective commitment can be explained by employee's decision making. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected, thus accepting the alternative. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between employee's decision making and affective commitment in telecommunication firm in Port Harcourt.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between work autonomy and affective commitment of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Correlational outcome of the relationship between Work Autonomy and Affective Commitment

Correlations			Work Autonomy	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Work Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.722**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	70	70
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.722**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 — tailed)

From the result of the above table, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.772$) between work autonomy and affective commitment is strong and positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.60$) indicates that 60% of change in affective commitment can be explained by employee's work autonomy. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected, thus accepting the alternative. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between employee's work autonomy and affective commitment.

H03: There is no significant relationship between employee decision making and affective commitment of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Correlational outcome of the relationship between Delegation and Affective Commitment

Correlations			Delegation	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Delegation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.782**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	70	70
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.782**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 — tailed)

From the result of the above table, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.782$) between delegation and affective commitment is strong and positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.65$) indicates that 65% of change in affective commitment can be explained by delegation by management. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected, thus accepting the alternative. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between delegation and affective commitment.

Discussion of Findings

The results showed that there was a strong link between employees decision making and affective commitment. The respondents revealed that they were given complete access to knowledge and training, as well as the ability to share information, which proved that this was true. The organisation likes to get their staff involved. Noah (2022) says that there is a strong link between how often employees consult one another and how committed they are to the organisation. Also Lawler et al. (1992) concur that training and abilities, such as decision-making, problem-solving, and leadership, can change what you know. Employees' knowledge of their power over how and what to do at work proves a strong link between work autonomy and affective commitment. This agrees with Breugh (2021), who says that job Autonomy is the degree to which workers may control and affect their own job tasks. It means the range of choices an employee has about the content, techniques, scheduling, and performance of job activities. Affective commitment is linked to employee outcomes including productivity, attendance, and retention (Llunton & Norman, 2018).

The study's results showed that delegation is important and has a strong, positive link to affective commitment. The study's results are backed up by Handan et al. (2015), who said that delegation keeps employees in their jobs and helps with business matters, keeps employees loyal, and lets them improve their performance over time.

Conclusion

Demonstrating employees' involvement in any organisation strengthens their loyalty to that organisation. the study has contributed to the corpus of research in this area. The study also

discovered that granting workers autonomy, ability in decision-making and delegation of roles by management can enhance job performance which are critical strategy for increasing workplace commitment. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that in order to get the most out of any company's staff, affective commitment is necessary. Employees will be more loyal and committed to staying with the company for the long haul as a result.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended;

1. Given the fact that decision making enhances Organization commitment, it becomes imperative that management of telecommunication firms should always ensure that employees are carried along in the decision-making process, and give them full access to information sharing, this will build confidence in them and ensures their emotional attachment to the organization.
2. Organizations should endeavor to involve their employees and give them full access to knowledge and trainings, this will make the employee to exercise control and influence over their immediate work activities.
3. Involvement of employees should be strengthened and tasks should be delegated to employees continuously in order for them to feel that the problems of the organisation are also theirs. This makes them to think rationally along with management in solving those problems.

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