

EFFECT JOB PRACTICE ON SMES PERFORMANCE IN BWARI AREA COUNCIL IN ABUJA

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Abstract

The study which focused on the effect job practice on SMEs performance in Bwari Area Council was based on objectives which were: to identify the effect of job design on SMEs performance, examine the effect of job description on SMEs performance, assess the effect of job specification on SMEs performance and edetermine the effect of job evaluation on SMEs performance. A cross-sectional survey design was employed. A multiple regression analysis was used to test effect of job practice on SMEs performance. The findings indicated that positive significant effect of job design, job description, job specification and job evaluation on SMEs performance. It is recommended that SMEs managers need to improve their job design so as to improve SMEs performance. It is recommended that SMEs managers should establish a well-articulated job description so as to SMEs performance. It is recommended that SMEs managers should ensure job specification in order to improve the SMEs performance. It is also recommended that SMEs managers need to improve their job evaluation so as to improve SMEs performance.

Keywords: Job Practice, Job Design, Job Specification, Job Evaluation, SMEs Performance

Introduction

The nature and characteristics of employees' work have a great impact on worker motivation and the way they perform at work. Well-designed jobs have a positive influence on employee motivation and performance, leading to improved individual and group SMEs performance outcomes such as their membership (joining/leaving an organization), reliable role behaviour (how well the worker does their job), and innovative/spontaneous action (going above and beyond the normal job) (Ugboro, 2016).

Work design refers to a spectrum of job factors, ranging from internal and external organizational factors to the way tasks are organized, that affect what people do at work and how effectively they can do it. The concept has roots in psychological research and theories of work motivation to improve employee satisfaction and performance and therefore increase organizational productivity and efficiency (Campion, Mumford, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2015). An employee with knowledge of results of their work, a sense of responsibility, and an understanding of the meaningfulness of their work will ultimately have greater satisfaction on the job.

While there are contributions in the area of job design and its effect on employee motivation and job performance (Lawler, 2016), a relatively few studies attempt to combine the two relationships into a larger relational flow between job design, employee motivation and job performance. Vroom (1964) proposed that people are motivated by how much they want something and how likely they are to get it. He suggested that motivation leads to effort and the efforts combined with employee's ability together with environmental factors which interplay shall result in performance. It is in furtherance of

this that this study reviews literature from a number of studies that attempts to outline how the job practice can affect SMEs performance.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect job practice on SMEs performance SMEs in Bwari Area Council. Other specific objectives are:

- To identify the effect of job design on SMEs performance.
- To examine the effect of job description on SMEs performance.
- To assess the effect of job specification on SMEs performance.
- To determine the effect of job evaluation on SMEs performance.

In order to pursue the objectives of the study which is focused on effect job practice on SMEs performance, the following hypotheses has been formulated.

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of job design on SMEs performance.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of job description on SMEs performance.

H₀₃: There is no significant effect of job specification on SMEs performance.

H₀₄: There is no significant effect of job evaluation on SMEs performance.

Literature Review

Job Practices

Job practice is one of the most important activities of human resource management and can perform multi-functions. A regular or proactive job analysis practices help to identify factors that shape the employees' motivation and job satisfaction. The researchers have established co-relationship between SMEs performance and job analysis in context to human resource management but the relationship between HRM practices like job analysis – job performance, the intervening process recruitment, connecting job analysis is yet to be explored in a full flow.

Companies that regularly conduct job analysis possess a much better knowledge of their strengths and limitations, and can take timely corrective action to improve any deficiencies in their skills and job behavior (Clifford, 2014). Brannick and Levine (2012) defined the job practices as an organized process whereby nature of a job is discovered. Job or task is divided into smaller units. Alabi (2016) opines that the collection and processing of job related information and other related tasks and qualifications through job analysis was a base for human resource management (HRM). Job analysis has a vital role. Sanchez and Levine (2010) argue that erroneous practice of the job analysis may affect other HR activities based on it. Former research by Mullins and Kimbrough (2018); Avolio and

Waldman (2019); Schmitt and Cohen, 2019 and Landy and Vasey, 2011 on job analysis persistent on the variable like demographic in job analysis ratings.

Cascio (2018) and Bowin and Harvey (2011) stressed the significance of job analysis as a strategic HRM practice linked with the SMEs performance. Anthenyet *al*,(2012) and Desslar (2013) recommended that with the recognition of the Human Resource–Performance linkage, organizations vigorously adopting job analysis as a human resource strategy were likely to grow more and put on aggressive benefits. Gatewood and Feild (2014) illustrated that extent to which tasks and employee attributes for an assigned job was termed as job analysis hence, job analysis techniques can also be termed as worker-oriented or work oriented Work or worker-oriented technique what so ever be, job analysis methods allow the assumption of employee's knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) characteristics.

Job description

A job description is the outcome of job analysis which entails the detailed functions of the position requirements for the job. It documents the key responsibilities and duties the hired candidate is expected to perform (Fine *et al.*, 2016). A job description helps the human resources determine

appropriate pay ranges, recruit qualified candidates to fill vacancies and aids in appraising staff performance against set standards.

Job Specification

The job specification describes education, experience, skills, knowledge required to perform a job. It is a very important document used by HR professionals to communicate the desired people requirements in the organization. Job seekers generally only respond to a particular job after reading a job specification to determine whether or not they meet the qualifications criteria. The job specification reduces the number of applicants through its listing of qualifications and experience required which many interested applicants will be lacking thereby making the task of HR much easier (Franklin, 2015). A job specification is a statement which tells us minimum acceptable human qualities that helps to perform a job. Job specification translates the job description into human qualifications so that a job can be performed in a better manner. Job specification helps in hiring an appropriate person for an appropriate position.

Job Design

In the view of Opatha (2012), 'Job design is the functions of arranging task, duties and responsibilities in to an organizational unit of work'. The working definition for the study purpose is that, the job design is the way to organize the contents, methods and relationship of jobs in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives as well as satisfaction of job holders. There are various approaches to job design. Regarding this Aswathappa (2016) explained that, various approaches to job design are namely; Job Rotation, Job Engineering, Job Enlargement, and Job Enrichment. In the view of Garg and Rastogi (2016), it is closely associated with sophisticated computer applications, Computer Assisted Design (CAD), and human – machine interactions.

Job Evaluation

As defined by Werther and Davis (2013), job evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the worth of jobs and creating a link between job worth and salary. Gupta and Chakraborty (2018) further clarified that as the worth of a job is determined, it might be seen in terms of salary and other fringe benefits in accordance with the existing salary structure of the organization. Normally, other factors like age, gender, relevant job experience and additional qualification were also considered. The vital role of job evaluation in wage administration has been grown and gained importance hence several organizations are implementing alike worth policies. Das and Garcia-Diaz (2011) intimated a widely used method of job evaluation called point based job evaluation method, where jobs were rated on a set of various factors, which were easily understandable. This system has reliability in producing accurate results.

SMEs performance

Performance is considered to be a construction (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 2016; Venkatraman and Ramanujam, 2017; Henri, 2014) and the purpose of defining this concept is to determine its properties and dimensions. The notion of performance has an abstract character and its definition is made by reference to other concepts, on which we believe that performance is built. A concept is itself an abstraction of observable or measurable facts; certain concepts are at a high level of abstraction, and their explanation is achieved through other concepts, so they are called constructions (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 2016).

Since 1950, studies in organizational theory are based on the concept of effectiveness, and the terms of efficiency and performance are considered interchangeable (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 2017), because issues related to defining, measuring and explaining them are identical (Dalton et al., 1980, Thomson and Abernethy, 2010; Henri, 2014).

In addition, early studies on firms did not analyzing performance, but organizational behavior (Dalton et al., 1980), which demonstrates, on the one hand, the dynamic nature of the concept, and on the other hand, all the variables related to organizational behavior. Moreover, performance is difficult to define, but it can have at least three meanings or connotations: (1) a successful outcome of an action

or the action itself; (2) performance shows the ability to move, thanks to the constant efforts; (3) he word performance is the carrier of an ideology of progress, effort, always make better (Bourguignon, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Job characteristic theory (Hackman & Oldham 1976), Schermerhorn (2016), Hellriegel, Jackson & Slocum (2016) and Dugguh (2018) propose a framework to study how particular job characteristics affect job outcomes and job satisfaction. According to the framework, a number of fundamental job qualities have an influence on employment results. These are: Task Identity (the degree to which the job requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work, that is, one that involves doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome); Skill Variety (the degree to which the job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work and involves the use of different skills and talents of the individual); Job Autonomy (the degree to which the job allows the employee significant freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out), Task Significance (the degree to which the job has substantial impact on the lives or work of people in other departments in the organization or in the external environment), and Job Feedback are all factors to consider (the degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information on the results of his performance).

Empirical Review

Davis (2015), Gatewood and Feild, (2014) studied the employee's knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) characteristics included in job-related information and the necessary human abilities to perform certain job activities According to Gatewood and Feild, (2014) job analysis was an instrument to analytically gather data on tasks and behaviors leading to KSAs about virtually any kind of work activity Dunnette, (2016) and Wernimont and Campbell, (1968) linked job analysis information with recruitment process which was originated in the literature Schuler and Jackson, (2016), Sharman *et al.*, (2018) and Desslaret *et al.*, (2019) discussed the importance of Job Analysis and conduction of Job Analysis which was obvious from the fact that most of the researchers have declared job analysis as a backbone and cornerstone of each and every human resource activity.

Huselid (2014), Huselid, (2015); Delaney and Huselid, (2016) confirmed that well-established human resource practices not only enhance job retention but also make a considerable involvement in objective performance and enhance productivity. SMEs performance is a multifaceted concept (Paauwe, 2014). Within the HRM literature, Dyer and Reeves (2015) use four dimensions to describe indicators of SMEs performance: human resource outcomes, organizational outcomes, financial or accounting outcomes and stock-market performance indicators It was explained by Stankard (2012) not to mean the performance of the single parts or units of the organization but the product of all interactions taking place in the organization.

According to Fried and Feriss (2017); Parkar, Wall, and Corrdary (2011) Job design has developed a great deal of interest in the area of HRM during the recent decades. Morgason and Campion (2013) and Parkar and Waall (2018) have discussed a basic principle in the job design research according to which jobs were stimulated and associated with motivational factors which contributed to the attitudinal and behavioral job performance outcomes. Hackman and Oldham, (2016) developed Job Characteristics Model (JCM) derived from the modern research on job design.

Core job characteristics of Job Characteristics Model were skill multiplicity, task distinctiveness, tasks implications, self-sufficiency and job feedback which actively contributed to job stimulus and subsequently to three vital emotional states practiced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility and knowledge of results, which has a great positively impact on employee motivation, job performance and outcome of these like job satisfaction and job retention. Kopelman (2015); Fried and Ferris (2017); Fried (2011); Oldham (2016) and Parker *et al.*, (2011) exposed diverse results on the linkage between inspiring job characteristics and job performance and outcome like turnover and absenteeism.

Rousseau and Fried (2011) and Johns (2016) found inconsistent results and suggested that background might play a vital role in moderating employee reactions. Fried and Ferris (2017); Fried (2011); Parker *et al.*, (2011) supported the hypothesized linkage between stimulating job characteristics and job satisfaction, the extent of the relationship between the core job characteristics and outcomes appeared to be moderate rather than high.

Statt (2014) discussed that the job description outlines the job tasks, duties and responsibilities and serves as a guide for the recruitment and selection process going forward. In general, a job description can be seen as relating to all the technical, administrative and managerial aspects of the job, the job title, job summary, job duties, tasks and outputs. Byars and Rue (2016) further described job description as a written narrative of the tasks to be performed and what it entails. As defined by Werther and Davis (2013) "Job evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the worth of jobs and creating a link between job worth and salary".

Gupta and Chakraborty (2018) further clarified that as the worth of a job is determined, it might be seen in terms of salary and other fringe benefits in accordance with the existing salary structure of the organization. Das and Garcia-Diaz (2011) intimated a widely used method of job evaluation called point based job evaluation method. Further studies of Collans and Muchinsky 2013, Chen *et al.* 2019, Rutt and Doverspikke 2019, Olson *et al.* 2010, Welbourne and Treivor 2010, Arnault *et al.* 2011, Morgeson *et al.* 2011, Rotundo and Sackatt, 2014 have also tested the validity and outcome of the job evaluation system in vogue used for salary determination.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design applied in this study is the survey design. The survey approach is used because it involves collecting data in order to answer research questions as well as to test hypothesis related to the study.

Population and Sample Size

The geographical location of this study was Nigeria. The study population for the survey research was all owner/managers of SMEs in Bwari Area Council. There are total of five hundred and eight (508) owner/managers of SMEs in Bwari Area Council, Abuja which forms the total population of this study. Taro Yamani formula was used to draw a sample size of 224 from the population with error limit of 10% is considered appropriate for this study. A total number of 250 copies of the questionnaire was distributed.

Instrumentation

In order to obtain necessary information, the dependent variable was measured by a 14-item scale adopted from the scale developed by Meyer and Allen's (1991). While the independent variable was measured by a 21-item scale adopted from the scale developed by Suthara, Chakravarthi and Pradhan (2014). The likert five point scales method was used in designing the questionnaires, which included Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Procedure for Data Analysis

Data collected with the use of research instrument were analyzed and interpreted using the simple percentage method. Thus, each statement in the questionnaire as well as the response from the closed-ended questions was analyzed using simple percentage method. The procedure for analyzing the data was econometric procedure. Here the technique used was the multiple regression analysis to test whether the Job Practices indices have impacted on the SMEs performance.

Model Specification

Model which specifies that SMEs performance (OP) is significantly influenced by the job analysis indices (job design, job description, job specification and job evaluation) is formulated as follows,

$$OP = f(JD, JDN, JS, JE)$$

$$OP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 JD + \alpha_2 JDN + \alpha_3 JS + \alpha_4 JE + U$$

Where;

The a priori expectation is $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3, \alpha_4 > 0$

OP = SMEs performance

JD = Job design

JDN = Job description

JS = Job specification

JE = Job evaluation

U = Error Term

α = Intercept

$\alpha_1 - \alpha_4$ = Coefficient of the Independent Variables.

Data Presentation and Analyses

The presentation and analysis of this research work is based on evaluation of both primary and secondary data sourced in the course of this research work. The result from the use of questionnaire and interview conducted will be enlightened. From the research question in chapter one, it could be seen that questionnaire can only be used for some direct question by way of questionnaire and interviews would be appropriate to other areas of technical question.

Test of Hypotheses

To test the hypothesis that is formulated in the course of this research, simple linear regression was used to test the hypothesis, the result of the test will determine whether to accept null hypothesis or reject it. To further investigate the predictive ability of our predictor variables on the criterion variable we employed the multiple regression analysis. The analysis was guided by the simple definitional model specified in section three. We recall the model for emphases:

$$OP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 JD + \alpha_2 JDN + \alpha_3 JS + \alpha_4 JE + U$$

The regression result is shown in table 30.

Table 2: Multiple Regression Statistics

Variables /Description	Beta	Coefficients	T – Value	P – Value	F
Job design	0.303	0.301	5.083	0.000	
Job description	0.283	0.306	4.029	0.001	
Job specification	0.327	0.360	4.057	0.002	
Job evaluation	0.603	0.601	5.073	0.000	
R					0.818
R ²					0.669
Adjusted R ²					0.664
F – Value					127.42
P – Value (Probability of F - Statistics)					0.000
Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)					3.702
Cronbach Alpha Value					0.784
Durbin-Watson					0.773

Source: SPSS, 2021.

From Table 2, there is no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent variables used for this study because the highest Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is 3.7. A VIF within the range of 1 to 10 indicates no evidence of multicollinearity. The Durbin Watson statistic of 0.77 indicates the absence of autocorrelation as the standard requirement is within 1.5 to 2.5. R is the correlation coefficient measuring the strength and direction of the linear relationship. The R value is 0.818 which implies a strong positive linear relationship.

The R^2 value is the coefficient of determination (expressed as a percentage) and shows variability in dependent variable explained by the variability in independent variables. The R^2 value of 0.669 implies that 66.9% of the variations in the dependent variable (SMEs performance) are explained by the variations in independent variables (job design, job description, job specification and job evaluation). Therefore, the findings reveal that the independent variables appear to be strong variables for predicting SMEs performance in the study area. The Adjusted R^2 is used to estimate the expected shrinkage in R^2 , in this case is 0.664 which is very close to R^2 value of 0.669. This shows that there is minimal shrinkage.

In this analysis, the model is significant since the F value of 127.42 is large and the P- value of 0.01 is less than 0.05 significance level of this study. Therefore, the researcher rejected all the three null hypotheses while the alternate hypotheses were accepted.

The coefficients of job design, job description and job specification are 0.301, 0.306 and 0.360 respectively. They are all positive, meaning that as the magnitudes of the independent variables increases, the magnitude of the dependent variable (SMEs performance) also increases. The result also shows the unique contribution of each component of staff development in explaining the variance of SMEs performance. The beta values in Table 30 above assess the contribution of each independent variable towards the prediction of dependent variable, since these values have been converted in the same scale to enable comparison. Job specification, having the biggest beta of 0.327 has the largest effect in explaining the variance of SMEs performance. The second most important variable was job design with a beta of 0.303. The least important predictor of these three independent variables is job description with a beta of 0.283.

Discussion of Findings

The result shows that there is a significant relationship between job practices and SMEs performance. The overall result also shows that job practices have significant effect on SMEs performance.

The following findings were made or identified on the questions asked on the case study.

- i. The result shows that there is a positive significant relationship between job design and SMEs performance. This is in line with the findings of Seleim, Ashour and Bontis (2007) that empirically studied 38 software development organizations of Egypt and found a positive correlation between job design and SMEs performance.
- ii. The result shows that there is a positive significant relationship between job description and SMEs performance. This is in agreement with the findings of Schiller (2008) who concluded that investment in job description has a positive relation with organizational growth.
- iii. The result shows that there is a positive significant relationship between job specification and SMEs performance. This confirms the findings of Owoeye and Adenuga (2000) who concluded that job specification have a significant positive impact on SMEs performance.
- iv. The result shows that there is a positive significant relationship between job evaluation and SMEs performance. This is in line with the findings of Bontis (2007) that empirically studied 38 software development organizations of Egypt and found a positive correlation between job evaluation and SMEs performance.

Conclusions

In conclusion; the study found that there is relatively and significant relationship between job practice and SMEs performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:-

- The SMEs managers need to improve their job design so as to improve SMEs performance.
- The SMEs managers should establish a well-articulated job description so as to SMEs performance.
- The SMEs managers should ensure job specification in order to improve the SMEs performance.

- The SMEs managers need to improve their job evaluation so as to improve SMEs performance.

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