

ROLE CLARITY AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF NON ACADEMIC STAFF OF RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT OWNED UNIVERSITIES

Nwokohu-Obidike, H. C.

*Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers State University,
Port Harcourt, Nigeria*

Email; Chiobidikechiobidike@gmail.com

Gabriel, J. M. O.

*Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers State University,
Port Harcourt, Nigeria*

Email; Gabriel.justine@ust.edu.ng

and

Ogbonda, E. H.

*Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers State University,
Port Harcourt, Nigeria*

Email; ogbonenyinda@ust.ng

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between role clarity and job performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities. A population of two thousand seven hundred and fifty two (2752) non academic staff of the two universities owned by Rivers State government was used and a sample size of 349 was arrived at using the Taro Yemen's formular. Structured questionnaire was distributed to 349 employees as respondent for the study and 299 copies were retrieved out of which 9 copies where consider not useful due to wrong filling and 290 was used for the study. Data was analyzed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science version 23.0. From the analysis, the study revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between role clarity and the measures job performance (task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance). Based on the finding, it was concluded that role clarity enhances job performance of non - academic staff of Rivers State Government owned universities, and it was recommended that management of Rivers State Government owned Universities should clearly defined each employees roles to enable them know what task they are suppose to accomplish and ensure that employees roles are not overlapping, to avoid roles ambiguity and role conflicts among the non academic staff of Rivers state owned universities.

Keywords: Role clarity, job performance, task performance, adaptive performance, contextual performance

INTRODUCTION

The success and failure of an organization depends on role clarity and goal clarity of its employees not only at employees' level but also at team level. Every organization works as a "team" where each team member has a set of expertise and operate within a scope. Every employee is assigned a set of responsibilities. Each employee operates within a defined functional scope which is called role clarity. Role clarity is the most important step which can facilitate operational efficiency and organizational effectiveness, when employee has role clarity they understand specifically what is expected of them in their job. They know what tasks they're supposed to accomplish, what their specific goals are, how their work impacts the larger goals of the organization. Role clarity are specific and clearly defined objectives used to engage employees in the company process that increases job performance (Locke & Latham, 2002). Role clarity explains the clarity on one's job profile, i.e employees knows what tasks they're supposed to accomplish and how their roles impacts the larger goals of the organization.

According to t (Rizzo, 1970), role clarity is defined as the degree to which required information is provided about how the employee is expected to perform his or her job. Role clarity is the extent to which an employee's work goals and responsibilities are communicated clearly. Role Clarity is a prerequisite for effective team performance. When team members know what is expected of them in order to achieve the goal, they perform and contribute collectively to achieve the goal within a given time frame, roles clarity impacts the larger goals of the organization, improve job performance. Job Performance is the result of work of a person or group in an organization at a particular time which reflects how well the person or group reach the qualification of a job in a mission of organization's goal achievement (Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit, 1999). Job Performance is extremely crucial for any organization as it ultimately leads to success of the organization because it's the building block of any organization. One of the main objectives of any working professional, be it managers or an employee, is to deliver high performance on the job and to support teams and coworkers to do the same. Hence this study investigated the empirical relationship

between role clarity and job performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities.

Conceptual Framework

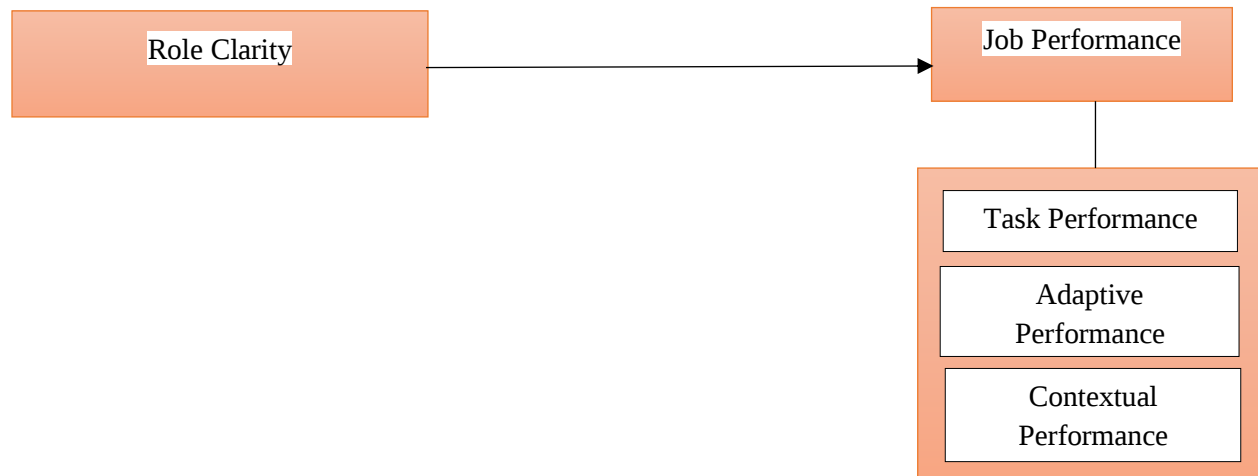


Figure 1: Role Clarity and Job Performance

Source: Desk Research (2023)

The following research questions were assessed in this study:

1. How does role clarity relate with task performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities?
2. How does role clarity relate with adaptive performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities?
3. How does role clarity relate with contextual performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Interactionism Theory

This study was anchored on interactionism theory. Social relationships and swift coordination among employees are the means by which a lot of work gets done. The interactionism theory was introduced by Mead and Weber (1987). Interactionism is a theoretical perspective that sees social behaviour as an interactive product of the individual and the situation. In other words, it derives social processes (such as conflict, cooperation, identity formation) from social interaction, whereby subjectively held meanings are integrated to explaining or understanding social behavior. According to Gallagher (2008) interactions are relationships between co-workers, managers and staff, and employees with the public. George Herbert Mead (1984) (under modern techniques) believes one may observe human behavior by three parts: trait, situation, and interaction (between trait and situation). 'Trait' refers to the extent to which personality directly affects behavior, independent of the situation and consistently across different situations); 'situation' takes into account the extent to which all different people will provide basically the same response to a given situation; and 'interaction' involves the ways in which the same situation affects individual differently. Larson (2018) says a positive relationship among employees who works in an interactive environment will lead to a better job performance. According to Bhavé and Lefter (2018), which highlighted the importance of workplace interactions in organizations, and quality of social relationships in the workplace matters for employee well-being and job performance

Conceptual Review

Concepts of Role Clarity

The success and failure of an organization depends on role clarity of the employees that works as an individual or as a team in the organization. Each team member has a define work role or assigned responsibility to carry out which is called role clarity. Role clarity are specific and clearly defined objectives used to engage employees in the company process that increases job performance (Locke & Latham, 2002). According to Rizzo *et al* (1970), role clarity is defined as the degree to which required information is provided about how the employee is expected to perform his or her job. When an employee has role clarity, they understand specifically what is expected of them in their job. They know what tasks they're supposed to accomplish, what their specific goals are, how their work impacts the larger goals of the organization. Role clarity is the extent to which an employee's work goals and responsibilities are communicated clearly, and whereby the employee understands the process required to achieve the specific goals (Sawyer 1996). Going by this definitions, role clarity can therefore be explained as clarity on one's job profile, i.e employees know what tasks they're supposed to accomplish and how their roles impacts the larger goals of the organization. Having a clear understanding of roles improve job performance. It also improves trust among colleagues and increases the chance of an employee committing to the organization for a longer period of time. In the light of the aforementioned, employees that understand their roles are much more effective and more productive than those who do not understand role clarity. In every organisation, role clarity is given higher attention at all levels because it's the prerequisite for effective job performance. Every organisation sets individual roles and reviews their performance. However, lack of role clarity is 1 of the top 5 challenges in the organizations which include overlapping responsibilities, unclear roles and reporting line, conflicting or frequently changing expectations of work standard which is a major problem that can occur when employees do not have a clear understanding of their job role. When the employees know what is expected of them, they tend to perform better. It is important for the employer to clearly highlight the roles and responsibilities of their employees, stating what they are expected to do, how they will be evaluated and how accomplishing the roles will help the organizations achieve their goals and

success. Having a structured role definition for the employees is very instrumental in improving job performance and organizational goal.

Job performance

Job Performance is extremely crucial for any organization as it ultimately leads to success of the organization. Also job performance is important for individuals, as achieving tasks can be a source of job satisfaction (Muchhal, 2014). Job performance can be defined as behaviors or activities that are performed towards accomplishing the organization's objectives (Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit, 1999). Job Performance is the result of work of a person or group in an organization at a particular time which reflects how well the person or group reach the qualification of a job in a mission of organization's goals. Beale (2007) refers to job performance as the result of two elements, which consist of the abilities and skills (natural or acquired) that an employee possesses and his/her is willing to use them in order to perform a better job. Job Performance is composed of many other different concepts but on a basic level. It can be described as behavioral engagement with an expected outcome, where behavior shows the action people perform to complete the work, outcomes exhibit the results of individual job behavior (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Therefore, managers have given more concern about managing the task and contextual performance of their employees. They have identified different factors that can affect job performance which includes equipment, physical work environment, meaningful work, standard operating procedures, reward for good or bad systems, performance expectancy, feedback on performance, in addition to knowledge, skills and attitudes (Stup, 2003), job performance depends on a large set of variables, with highlight to the nature of the work, the personal characteristics of workers, the normative attributes that the organization establishes for the performance of each role, as well as the understanding that each employees has of the organizational objectives and their stage of development. In this sense job performance is not static but necessarily involves changes over time, either through adjustments to what the organization

demands from employees, or through the very professional development of the employees (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015; Sonnentag et al., 2008).

Measures of Job Performance

Task Performance

Task performance is an employee's fulfillment of the duties and responsibilities of the relevant roles in the job description (Pradhan & Jena, 2016). According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993), task performance is the work that an employee is hired to do. It is the level of performance that is necessary to complete the task that comprises of the behaviors channeled towards fulfilling fundamental job responsibilities that are enshrined in employee's job description; and has a direct connection to those set of actions that are part of the reward system. Bernadin *et al* (1995) argued that task performance should be measured in term of the work related behavior and depends on the employee's efficiency to fulfill the duties and responsibilities. In other words, it is about how effectively and efficiently the employees fulfill their responsibilities. Hence employees task performance contributes directly or indirectly to all company activities, including production and the efficiency of the productivity of the company.

Task performance as an important measure of an employee's ability to complete the work that is assigned to them can increase productivity, goal realization of the organization and job satisfaction of the employee. It can also be an indicator of employees' dedication to their job and their ability to follow instructions. Good task performance can lead to promotions and recommendations, while **poor task performance** can result in demotions or even termination of employees' job appointment. (Smith, 2014).

Adaptive performance

The twenty-first century has spawned rapid changes in technology and working conditions. The capacity to adapt to these changes is important. Consequently employers have focused on employees who are capable of adapting to performance in an environment characterized by a high level of Volatility, Uncertainty,

Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA). The ability to be adaptable is important at both the individual and organizational at all level. Adaptive performance is an employee's ability to adapt to rapidly change working conditions (Park & Park, 2019). When an employee is adaptive this can lead to improved job performance and career success (Park & Park, 2019). Adaptive performance includes solving problems creatively, dealing with uncertainty, learning new tasks, demonstrating interpersonal adaptability, and handling crises (Pulakos, Donovan & Plamondon, 2000). Employers seek employees with high adaptability, due to the positive outcomes that follow, such as excellent work performance, work attitude, and ability to handle stress. Employees who display adaptive performance are allowed to perform at a high level in the face of changing job tasks and work methods. Given the increased need for flexibility in the workplace, adaptive performance is important for today's employers and employees.

Contextual Performance

One of the most important functions of an organization is to ensure that employees are effective in performing their jobs, in the global market and increased competition. Employees are now expected to go beyond what is in their job description. Contextual performance is defined as the activities employees perform to contribute to the social and psychological core of their organization (Borman&Motowidlo, 1993). In recent years, it has emerged as an important aspect of employee job performance. Employees who demonstrate self-motivated effort and innovative behavior are becoming increasingly important to an organization's competitive advantage. Contextual performance captures the ability of employees to engage in activities that contribute to the overall well-being of the organization. Contextual performance goes beyond formal job description, contextual also referred to as "discretionary extra-role behavior" (Koopmans l. 2011) contextual performance is reflected in activities such as coaching coworkers, strengthening social networks within an organization and going the extra mile for the organization. One of the main objectives of any working professional, be it a manager or an employee, is to deliver high performance on the job and to support their teams and coworkers to do the same. Consequently, the concept of contextual performance is an important building block in management. However, even though the term contextual

performance is a widely used tool in management, organizations rarely address what it really is, which dimensions it includes, and in which areas of organizational practice that its important. Contextual performance includes volunteering for additional work, and being a good organizational citizen, cooperating with coworkers in additional discretionary behaviors (Borman& Motowidlo, 1993)

Empirical Review

Thangavelu and Sudhahar (2017) investigated the relationship between employees' role clarity and job performance. A survey was conducted in small and medium sized IT companies in Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu, India. The relationship between role clarity related dimensions and various demographic characteristics of the employees and their perception of their performance was analyzed. The data for the survey was collected using self administered questionnaire which was based on COPSQ and industry employee effectiveness surveys covering role clarity and job satisfaction. The data was quantitatively analyzed using Z-test and Chi-square test. The analysis results indicate that there is a significant correlation between role clarity and job performance and employee satisfaction on the perception of performance. Also, a significant correlation was found to be existing for the job performance feedback and the perception on their performance. The researcher concluded that there is a significant correlation existing between the age group, experience of the employee and job performance. Mishra and Kumar (2019) investigated on role clarity and employees' perceptions found out that role clarity has positive relationship with knowledge of goals and objectives of job, priorities at work, job responsibilities, expected outcomes, and responsibilities of other staff. The role clarity will improve the job satisfaction and in turn their job performance. Having a structured role definition for their organization becomes very instrumental in improving the employee and the organizational performance. Setting role expectations is an important first step when employers hire people for their organization. When the employees know what is expected of their role, then they tend to perform better. Consequently, the following hypothesized relationships are considered for assessment:

The following research questions were assessed in this study:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between role clarity and task performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between role clarity and adaptive performance of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design with a population of two thousand seven hundred and fifty two (2,752) of non academic staff of rivers state government owned universities. The sample size of the study was drawn from Taro Yemen sample determination table of 1970 to represent the sample respondent of 349 employees. The study validity and reliability were validated by two experts in the field management science. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire in a five point liked scale format, ranging from strongly agreed to strongly agreed to strongly disagree. Data collected were analyzed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (version 23.0).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation matrix for role clarity and job performance

Role clarity		Task Performance	Adaptive Performance		Contextual Performance	
Spearman's rho	Role clarity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.751**	.652**	.815**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	290	290	290	290
	Task Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.751**	1.000	.816**	.663**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	290	290	290	290
	Adaptive Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.652**	.816**	1.000	.796**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	290	290	290	290
	Contextual Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.815**	.663**	.796**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	290	290	290	290

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

Source: Research Data 2023 and SPSS output version 23.0

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between role clarity and task performance of non academy staffs in Rivers State government owned universities.

From the results in table 1 the correlation coefficient shows that there is a strong positive relationship between role clarity and task performance. The correlation coefficient of 0.751 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between role clarity and task performance of non academy staffs of Rivers State government owned Universities.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between role clarity and adaptive performance of non academy staffs of in Rivers State government owned universities

From the results in table 1 the correlation coefficient shows that there is a strong positive relationship between role clarity and adaptive performance. The correlation coefficient of 0.652 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between role clarity and adaptive performance of non academy staffs in Rivers State government owned Universities.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between role clarity and contextual performance of non academy staffs of in Rivers State owned universities

From the results in table 1 the correlation coefficient shows that there is a very strong positive relationship between role clarity and contextual performance. The correlation coefficient of 0.815 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a very strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between role clarity and contextual performance of non academy staffs in Rivers State government owned Universities.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings in this study are in agreement with the findings of other scholars that there is a significant and strong positive relationship exist between role clarity and adaptive performance. Hence, the study empirically found that there is a positive and strong relationship between role clarity and task performance, adaptive performance and contextual performance of rivers state government owned universities. The

findings corroborate with the conclusion of Mishra and Kumar (2019) that investigated on role clarity and employees perceptions found out role clarity has positive relation with knowledge of - goals and objectives of job, priorities at work, job responsibilities, expected outcomes, responsibilities of other staff).The role clarity will improve the job satisfaction and in turn their job performance. Having a structured role definition for their organization becomes very instrumental in improving the employee and the organizational performance. Setting role expectations is an important first step when employers hire people for their organization. When the employees know what is expected of their role, then they tend to perform better.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research findings, that showed a positive and significant relationship between role clarity and job performance (task performance, adaptive performance, contextual performance), the study concludes that role clarity enhances job performance of non academic staff of Rivers State government owned Universities. It is therefore recommended that management of Rivers State government Universities should ensure employee's work roles and responsibilities are communicated clearly at the point of recruitment.

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