

EMPLOYEE SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF INTERIOR DECORATION COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

Stowe, A. N.

*Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Administration and Management, Rivers State
University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria*

Wechi, I.

*Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Administration and Management, Rivers State
University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria*
wechie.ibekwe@ust.edu.ng

and

Olomi, P. O.

*Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Administration and Management, Rivers State
University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria*

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between social integration and the productivity of interior decoration companies in Rivers State. A review of extant literature on social wellbeing and organizational productivity was undertaken, with productivity measures identified to include product quality, work output and efficiency. The study adopted a correlational design, and data was obtained from 129 management staff using the questionnaire instrument. The validity test was carried out using the Face validity, while the Cronbach alpha reliability test was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The bi-variate analysis was done using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The result showed that the relationship between social integration, and the measures of organizational productivity (product quality, work output and efficiency) are all significant, where social integration is revealed to significantly enhance and drive the productivity of the interior decoration companies in Rivers State. Thus, all related null hypotheses were rejected. It was concluded that the reinforcement of structures and features that emphasize and facilitate social integration will in turn impact positively on the productivity of interior decoration companies in Rivers State. It was therefore recommended that the management of the interior decoration industry structure work arrangements to be more interdependent and emphatic of social relationships and integration as a way of bolstering the productivity of the interior decoration companies in Rivers State.

Keywords: Employee social integration, organizational productivity, product quality, work output, efficiency.

INTRODUCTION

Productivity is important in ensuring the survival of the organization (Lawler, 2018). Productivity is defined by Bavelas and Lee (2018) as the measure of how efficiently and effectively resources (inputs) are brought together and utilized for the production of goods and services (outputs) of the quality needed by society in the long-term. This implies that productivity is a combination of performance and economical use of resources. High productivity indicates that resources are efficiently and effectively utilized, and waste is minimized in the organization. Productivity balances the efforts between different economic, social, technical, and environmental objectives (Lawler, 2018). High productivity provides more profit for investors and promotes the development of enterprises (Sitio & Ali, 2019).

Adhiputra (2017) argued that organizational productivity outcomes are tied to the workflow and disposition of workers toward their roles and responsibilities. According to Adhiputra (2017), productivity, extends beyond the concerns of capacity and capabilities alone, but are also a consequence of the workers' disposition toward work, as well as their well-being. This follows the position of Ardi and Permana (2017), that employees tend to perform better if they are informed about matters concerning them and also in the right frame of mind to function and collaborate within the organization. Adhiputra (2017) in this vein, identified employee social integration as the extent to which workers are able to connect with and build quality, supportive and healthy relationships within the workplace.

Research has scarcely examined the role or influence of social integration on organisational productivity. This is because, most studies, when it comes to productivity, have focused more on human resource features such as competence (Agwu & Oggiriki, 2014; Piwower-Sulei, 2021), technological capabilities (Almaiali, Masa'deh and Tarhini, 2016) and learning (Salah, 2016). Salah (2016) observed that advancing production is primarily a function of the expertise and capacity of the organisation's workforce. However, as Baxi and Ray (2012) pointed, social integration of workers is also a growing concern for organisations. According to Baxi and Ray (2012), social integration influences the workers disposition and attitude towards work; a

condition which could have significant implications for the productivity of the workforce. The lack of empirical research, addressing the relationship between social integration and organisational productivity, particularly a developing context such as the Nigerian interior decoration industry.

This research examines the relationship between employee social integration and organizational productivity within the context of the Nigerian interior decoration industry, emphasizing the importance of the former to outcomes such as product quality, work output and efficiency. On this basis, this study departs from previous research focus as it investigates the nature of the relationship between employee social integration and organisational productivity of interior decoration companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. This specificity of the focus of this research is crucial as it emphasizes the possibility of new knowledge generated from the unique conditions and factors that shape and impose on the behaviour of organisations within various markets, industries and environment. The purpose of this study was therefore to examine the relationship between employee social integration and organisational productivity of interior decoration organisations in Rivers State. The related objectives of the study are to:

- i. Determine the relationship between employee social integration and product quality of interior decoration in Rivers State.
- ii. Ascertain the relationship between employee social integration and work output of interior decoration companies in Rivers State.
- iii. Examine the relationship between employee social integration and efficiency of Interior decoration companies in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework



Figure. 1: Employee Social Integration and Organizational Productivity

Source: Researcher's Desk (2024) with dimensions sourced from Keyes (1998), and measures from Sanders, Rodrigues and Oliveira (2020).

The following research questions were put forward in view of the purpose and objectives of the research:

- i. What is the relationship between employee social integration and product quality of interior decoration companies in Rivers State?
- ii. What is the relationship between employee social contribution and work output interior decoration companies in Rivers State?
- iii. What is the relationship between employee social coherence and efficiency of furniture interior decoration companies in Rivers State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory is based on the motivation and hygiene and shows the relation that employees have towards the work environment. It also covers the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction and how it influences the employee performance. Herzberg (cited in Chan, Mai, Kuok & Kong, 2016) interviewed accountants and engineers and sought information on motivating factors that led to employee satisfaction

or dissatisfaction with their working conditions. The motivating factors included aspects like career advancement, recognition, increased responsibilities and opportunities and possibility of growth within the organization.

The theory has concentrated on job enrichment and ignored the work satisfaction of the workers (Hur, 2018). But still the theory is valuable in giving directions to managers on how to structure work tasks to include means of motivating and satisfying the employees (Stello, 2011). The theory is important in this study as it focused on satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels as predictors of loyalty or disloyalty to the organization. A satisfied employee with the working conditions is motivated and engaged to stay for longer at the organization; while dissatisfaction will be on the prowl looking for alternative working places and is likely to leave the workplace (Chien, 2013).

Conceptual Review

Social Integration

Integration was first studied by Valle and Burgess in 1921 through the concept of assimilation. They defined it as "a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitude of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life. Social integration is "a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and horizontal interactions among members of society as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that include trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioral manifestations" (Chan & Chan, 2006; Keyes, 1998).

Social integration is the sense of being a part of a community and society based on the appraisal of the quality of that relationship (Blau, 2016). Seeman (2016) defined social integration as the evaluation of the quality of one's relationship to society and community. Healthy individuals feel that they are a part of society. Integration is therefore the extent to which people feel they have something in common with others who constitute their social reality (e.g. their neighborhood), as well as the degree to which they feel that

they belong to their communities and society (Turner & Turner, 2009). Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. Social integration, together with economic integration and identity integration are three main dimensions of newcomers' experiences in the society that is receiving them (Ware, Hopper, Tugenberg, Dickey & Fisher, 2008).

Organizational Productivity

According to Bhatti and Qureshi (2017), organizational productivity has become an important facet of work culture in the organization. Every organization strives to have a productive workforce because this is critical for the growth and sustainability of the organization. Organizational productivity is a measure of economic performance that compares the amount of goods and services produced (output) by an employee with the number of inputs used to produce those goods and services in a specific period of time. Organizational productivity is broadly defined as the efficiency of a worker, and it is important for an organization (Ma & Ye, 2019).

According to Kihama and Wainaina (2019), organizational productivity estimates the individual contribution of each employee in an organization. Organizational productivity is the degree to which employees execute their duties and responsibilities and produce required volume or value of output (Okochi & Ateke, 2020). Employee's productivity is one factor used to evaluate human capital in an organization. Cardy and Leonard (2004, as cited in Bhatti & Qureshi, 2017) conceive organizational productivity as outcomes, results and accomplishments emanating from an employee. Organizational productivity also represents results of behaviors and actions of employees that result to attainment of organizational goals. Organizational productivity is hinged on ability and motivation (Okochi & Ateke, 2020).

Measures of Organizational Productivity

Product quality

A firm's or organizations most significant asset is its human capital, which may assist businesses in achieving their objectives. Werdhiastutie, Suhariadi and Partiwi (2020) narrate the achievement of company goals comes from the individual spirit of its human resources, which is closely related to achievement motivation. The development of high-quality human resources is challenging. The business must be dedicated to this objective, as must its personnel. Sabuhari, Sudiro, Irawanto and Rahayu (2020) contend that the quality of the work that employees create is significantly influenced by human resources. The quality of employees' work is the best performance that each individual can give. The company can obtain good quality work if the supporting factors in creating good quality work are fulfilled.

Work output

The output of work is a critical aspect that managers and supervisors consider during a performance review; it refers to the amount of work an employee completes within a given period (Podsakoff, Ahearne & MacKenzie, 2017). It can be assessed by evaluating the number of tasks, projects or assignments completed, and their respective deadlines met. Barling, Rogers and Kelloway (2015) describe quantity of work as the productivity level, time management and ability to meet deadlines. Bavelas and Lee (2018) posit that work quantity is the amount of work performed, that is, the volume of work produced in relation to the amount of work requiring completion or attention. Kallio, Kallio and Grossi (2017) affirms that work quantity is the completion of work on schedule which further explains the extent to which an employee completes work within given or reasonable time limits.

Efficiency

Efficiency is very important in the activities of employees. Not only must firms do the right thing such as offering high-quality products, but they must also produce their products efficiently (Everard & Burrow, 2011). The field of management associate efficiency with how well a relevant action is performed, that is,

“doing things right”. According to Storto and Gončiaruk (2017), employee efficiency means the ability of an organization to derive maximum output from a minimum input of a given quantity of resources. Venkatraman and Ramanujam (1986) posit that employee efficiency is defined as the ability of organizations to do things the right way in the face of competition and scarce resource. Employee efficiency is the ability to avoid wasting materials, energy, efforts, money and time in doing something or in producing a desired result (Madanhire & Mbohwa, 2016; Richardo & Wade, 2001).

Empirical Review

Relationship between Social Integration and Organizational Productivity

In a study carried out by Kelvin and Odunaya (2019) on social integration and employee commitment in Nigerian manufacturing firms. The purpose of the study aims to examine the interaction between social integration as an emergent concept of quality of work life and employee commitment in Nigeria, adopting a literary review approach. Data gathered from 320 respondents interviewed indicates that social integration is a strong predictor of employee commitment such as affective, continuance and normative commitment. Hence, we recommend that manufacturing firms should adopt policies that will orient their employees and integrate them to the culture of the organization so as to prevent work alienation, and that structures should be designed in a manner that give employees right and access to positions and status in core institution of the organization, as this will increase the commitment level of the employees.

Valk (2018) carried out a study on social integration of organizational newcomers: Socialization tactics and emotional stability in relation to access to resources and social integration. A model based on the uncertainty reduction theory has been created to explore the relationships between serial socialization tactics and social integration mediated by access to resources and information. Furthermore, emotional stability is included as a moderator in the relationship between serial socialization tactics and access to resources and information. This research was a case study and the data were collected within a large international

company with its headquarters in the Netherlands. A survey has been distributed to all newcomers who had been at the company for one to three months.

Consequently, the hypotheses of stated in this study include:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between employee social integration and product quality of interior decoration in Rivers State

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between employee social integration and work output of interior decoration companies in Rivers State

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between employee social integration and efficiency of interior decoration companies in Rivers State

METHODOLOGY

As a correlational and explanatory research, this study adopted the correlational research design in assessing the relationship between social well-being and organizational productivity. The population for this study was 89 interior decoration organizations, registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), with their main offices in Rivers State. For this research, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table was utilized in the arriving at a sample size of 73 of the firms for this study. Two management staff were reached from each of the 73 interior and furniture organizations, thus arriving at 146 study elements who participated in the study. The data instrument adopted in this research is the structured questionnaire. A 3-item instrument is utilized in the measurement and scaling of social integration drawing on the empirical research (Arya and Lal, 2018; Baxi and Ray, 2012). Organizational productivity is operationalized using product quality, work output and efficiency. The instrument for organizational productivity is also adapted from previous empirical research (Saunders et al, 2020; Iqbal *et al*, 2019; Mathis *et al.*, 2013). Scaling for this research for both variables is based on the 5-point Likert scale with values ranked from 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

The bi-variate relationships were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Social integration and organizational productivity

The test on the relationship between social integration and the measures of organizational productivity, served to identify the extent to which social integration significantly correlates with the outcomes of product quality, work output and efficiency of the interior decoration companies in Rivers State.

Table 1: Social integration and measures of organizational productivity

		Social Integration	Product Quality	Work Output	Efficiency
Social Integration	Pearson Correlation	1	.717**	.743**	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	129	129	129	129
Product Quality	Pearson Correlation	.717**	1	.797**	.732**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	129	129	129	129
Work Output	Pearson Correlation	.743**	.797**	1	.875**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	129	129	129	129
Efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.611**	.732**	.875**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	129	129	129	129

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data (2024)

Result from the test on the significance of the relationship between social integration and the measures of organisational productivity, show that not only does social integration significantly impact on measures such as product quality ($R = 0.717$ and $P = 0.000$), work output ($R = 0.743$ and $P = 0.000$) and efficiency ($R = 0.611$ and $P = 0.000$), all of these relationships are high in terms of influence and are also positive in nature. This shows that social integration is significant as an antecedent of organizational productivity as it enhances the capacity of interior decoration companies in terms of their product quality, work output and

efficiency; hence, all previous hypothetical statements of no significant relationships are rejected, as the results show as follows:

- i. Social integration significantly influences product quality of interior decoration companies in Rivers State
- ii. Social integration significantly influences work output of interior decoration companies in Rivers State
- iii. Social integration significantly influences efficiency of interior decoration companies in Rivers State

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Social integration is presented in this research as an integral attribute of the organization, which is also essential to its productivity. The extent of its significance is demonstrated in the strength of its influence on organizational productivity measures such as ($R = 0.717$ and $P = 0.000$), work output ($R = 0.743$ and $P = 0.000$) and efficiency ($R = 0.611$ and $P = 0.000$); indicating its position as a predictor of the organization's capacity to achieve its production objectives and goals. The findings of this research, corroborate and reinforce earlier views from (Turner & Turner, 2013; Malik & Malik, 2022) who affirmed to the importance and need for organizations to be internally integrated. This as Seeman (2016) pointed out, helps promote effective and efficient operations and processes as members who are integrated tend to be more collaborative and supportive of each other, transferring skills and knowledge in ways that address vulnerabilities and enhance the dynamic nature of the system.

The findings of this research are such that further the position of previous scholars (Turner & Turner, 2013; Stage, 2019; Rienties & Tempelaar, 2013), and theoretical views, particularly that of Herzberg's two factor theory and the cognitive dissonance theory. The findings in this vein, reinforce the tenets and position on motivation through relationships in the workplace, as well as the need for organizations to be conducive and offer social support for workers, through the advancing of social integration and acceptance. Such not

only enables the well-being of the workforce but also enriches their work experience, thus facilitating improved interest and commitment to related functions and objectives of the organization, particularly with regard to the actualization of organizational productivity outcomes such as product quality, work output and efficiency.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research, based on the evidence generated, affirms the relationship between social integration and organizational productivity of Interior decoration companies in Rivers State as significant and positive. This research thus identifies the social integration of the workforce as a significant predictor and antecedent of organizational productivity. In this vein, this study concludes that the structuring of roles and the arrangement of work, such that increases and advances the social integration of the workforce and also drives the extent of product quality, work output and efficiency, thus enhancing outcomes of organizational productivity within the context of interior decoration companies in Rivers State. In view of the established role of social integration in the outcome of organizational productivity, it is recommended that the leadership of interior decoration companies in Rivers State, structure work arrangements and responsibilities to be interdependent, and emphatic on correspondence for increased integration and collaboration as a way of advancing the outcomes of organizational productivity.

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