

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY OF POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between employee engagement and organizational productivity of power distribution companies in Rivers State. The study was guided by 3 research objectives, research questions and hypotheses. This study was anchored on Herzberg Two-Factor Theory. The study adopted a cross-sectional design. The population of this study consists of twenty-four (24) power distribution companies in Rivers State. The entire population was utilized as sample size using Census method of sampling. The research data for the study was collected mainly from the primary source. The main data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire. The research instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was adopted in assessing the reliability of the study instrument. Hypotheses 1 to 3 was tested with Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (r^0). The result showed that employee engagement has a strong positive relationship with measures of organizational productivity (timeliness, goal attainment and quality service) of power distribution companies in Rivers State. It was concluded that employee engagement positively impacts organizations by boosting productivity, reducing turnover, improving customer satisfaction, and enhancing profitability. Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that management of power distribution companies in Rivers State should regularly acknowledge and reward employees' contributions and achievements to boost motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement thereby enhancing the overall productivity of the organization.

Keywords: Employee engagement, organizational productivity, timeliness, goal attainment, quality service

INTRODUCTION

Every organization focuses on increasing their productivity. This productivity can be achieved by building a strong culture that supports output, innovation, efficiency and effectiveness in order to realize the goal of the organization. Productivity is an average measure of the efficiency of production. It is an economic measure of output per unit of input. According to Mathis and Jackson (2013), productivity is defined as a measure of the quantity and quality of work completed while taking into consideration the cost of capital employed. According to Amah and Ahiauzu (2013) organizational productivity can be conceived as the capacity of a firm or company or any corporation to realize the intended outcomes by use of minimum energy and in the shortest time possible using the least amount of money, manpower and other inputs.

Employees are the lifeblood of any enterprise, understanding their behaviors and attitudes towards works and organization is a critical tool towards enhancing their productivity. Employee engagement is a complex, broad construct that subsumes many well researched ideas such as commitment, satisfaction, loyalty and extra role behaviour. An engaged employee extends themselves to meet the organization's needs, takes initiative, reinforces and supports the organization's culture and values, stays focused and vigilant, and believes he/she can make a difference (Macey, 2016). In practice, organizations typically define engagement as being a part of the organization, having pride and loyalty in the company, being committed, and going "above and beyond the call of duty". They drive innovation and move the organization forward (Gallup, 2014). Madu, Asawo and Gabriel (2017) views engagement as the passion, commitment and the willingness to invest oneself and expend one's discretionary effort to help the employer to succeed. Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. According to Robison (2017), engaged employees work with zeal and passion and exhibit a sense of belonging to their organization. However, disengaged employees are only at work to earn a living but do not contribute much towards the success of the organization. They may be regular and punctual at work but their performance on the job is poor and sometimes counter-productive.

Employee engagement plays an important role as predictor of organizational productivity as organizations uses this as a mechanism to monitor the attainment of goals and objectives (Performance Improvement Council, 2018). As per few authors, there exists a bidirectional relationship between employee engagement and organizational productivity (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Lee *et al.*, 2017). Another author found that there is a positive association between employee engagement and individual morale, task performance, extra role performance, and organizational productivity. Their investigation on relationship between employee engagement and organizational productivity reveals that it occurs at both team and organizational level (Bailey *et al.*, 2017). Other researchers also reported positive influence of employee engagement over organizational productivity based on the overlap in definitions (Bowling *et al.*, 2015). Employee engagement also support business outcomes of organizational productivity (Al-Khoury, 2014; Bailey *et al.*, 2017; Chowhan, 2016; Flink, 2015; Gupta & Sharma, 2016). It is evidence from the above review that most of existing studies were undertaken in the developed countries context. To the best knowledge of the researcher, little or no study has been conducted in Nigeria in general and Rivers State using power distribution companies in Rivers State as a focal point. Thus, to bridge this knowledge gap, this study examined the relationship between Employee Engagement and Organizational Productivity of Power Distribution Companies in Rivers State.

The specific objectives were:

1. To examine the relationship between employee engagement and timeliness of power distribution companies in Rivers State.
2. To examine the relationship between employee engagement and goal attainment of power distribution companies in Rivers State.
3. To examine the relationship between employee engagement and quality service of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

The study focuses on employee engagement which is the independent variable, while organizational productivity is the dependent variable, and its measures include; timeliness, goal attainment and quality service. This study intends to ascertain the relationship between the independent variable and the measures of the dependent variable.

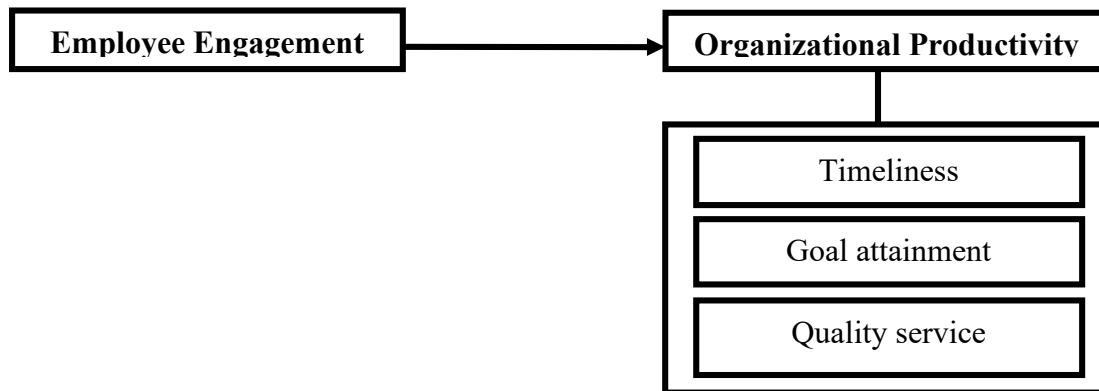


Figure 1: Relationship between Employee Engagement and Organizational Productivity

Source: From the Researcher’s Desk, (2025) with Measures of Organizational Productivity is adapted from the work of Elliot (2009).

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the following research questions will guide the researcher:

1. What is the relationship between employee engagement and timeliness of power distribution companies in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between employee engagement and goal attainment of power distribution companies in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between employee engagement and quality service of power distribution companies in Rivers State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were given in null form so as to arrive at a logical conclusion and to achieve its stated objectives.

Ho:1 There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and timeliness of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

- Ho:2** There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and goal attainment of power distribution companies in Rivers State.
- Ho:3** There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and quality service of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

This study was anchored on Herzberg Two-Factor Theory. This theory was developed by Fredrick Herzberg (1966). This theory argues that managers should seek job improvements by planning personal and professional development of employees in order for them to be satisfied that they have significant personal and professional growth in future in their current employment (Herzberg, 1966). Herzberg defined two sets of factors in deciding employees' working attitudes and levels of performance, named motivation and hygiene factors (Robbins & Judge, 2007). Herzberg et al. (1959) argues that motivation factors are necessary to improve job satisfaction. These motivators, according to Herzberg, are intrinsic to the job and lead to job satisfaction because they satisfy needs for growth and self-actualization (Herzberg, 1966). Examples or characteristics of the motivation factors are; advancement, the work itself, growth and responsibility, recognition and achievement. On the other hand, the Hygiene factors are those which decrease job dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors, rather than relating to the content of the job in itself, tend to relate to contextual factors example; interpersonal relations, salary, company policies and administration, relationship with supervisors and working conditions.

Herzberg's two-factor theory affects employee performance because when employees have high levels of both hygiene factors and motivators, they are more likely to be highly engaged and motivated in their work. The Herzberg's two-factor theory is a useful reminder that there are two important aspects of all jobs: what people do in terms of job tasks (job content), including the work setting in which they perform it (job context). As such, managers should attempt to always eliminate poor hygiene sources of job dissatisfaction in the workplace and ensure there are more satisfiers in job content to maximize opportunities for job satisfaction. This theory is relevant and significant to this study because it distinguishes between factors that prevent dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) and those that actively drive satisfaction and motivation (motivators). This distinction is crucial for organizations aiming to create a positive work environment that fosters both engagement and high performance.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a complex, broad construct that subsumes many well researched ideas such as commitment, satisfaction, loyalty and extra role behaviour. An engaged employee extends themselves to meet the organization's needs, takes initiative, reinforces and supports the organization's culture and values, stays focused and vigilant, and believes he/she can make a difference (Macey, 2006). In practice, organizations typically define engagement as being a part of the organization, having pride and loyalty in the company, being committed, and going "above and beyond the call of duty". They drive innovation and move the organization forward (Gallup, 2004). Madu, Asawo and Gabriel (2017) views engagement as the passion, commitment and the willingness to invest oneself and expend one's discretionary effort to help the employer to succeed Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their

company. They drive innovation and move the organization forward (Gallup, 2004). Gabriel and Gabriel (2019) opined that employee engagement is broader in scope, which entails a two-way relationship between the employer and employee, that have the potential to bring employers and employees together for the benefit of both. This afford employees the opportunity to experience a sense of oneness while at work and positive contribution to the goals of the organization.

Mones and London (2010) defined employee engagement is a condition of employee who feels involved, committed, passionate, and empowered and demonstrates those feelings in work behaviour". It is thus the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee. Thus, employee engagement is a barometer that determines the association of a person with the organization. The concept of employee engagement itself is a positive one and always associated with the progress and growth aspect of the business organisation. There is always a cost aspect linked to the better employee engagement levels starting from the recruitment of best talent and also the energy and time invested in nurturing and developing such talents (Johnson, 2004).

Organizational Productivity

Productivity can be referred to as the quantity of work that is attained in a unit of time by means of the factors of production. These factors include technology, capital, entrepreneurship, land and labour. It is the link between inputs and outputs and increases when an increase in output occurs with a lesser than comparative increase in input. It also occurs when equal amount of output is generated using fewer inputs (ILO, 2005). According to Amah and Ahiauzu (2013) organizational productivity can be conceived as the capacity of a firm or company or any corporation to realize the intended outcomes by use of minimum energy and in the shortest time possible using the least amount of money, manpower and other inputs.

Bhatti (2007) and Qureshi (2007) were of the perspective that organizational productivity can be seen as a measure of performance that encompasses both efficiency and effectiveness. It can also be referred to as the ratio of output or production capacity of the workers in an organization. It is the correlation that exists between the quantity of inputs and outputs from a clearly defined process. The performance of a business which determines its continued existence and development is largely dependent on the degree of productivity of its workers. Yesufu (2000) stated that the prosperity of a nation as well as social and economic welfare of its citizens is determined by the level of effectiveness and efficiency of its various sub components. McNamara (2003) asserted that organizational productivity can be measured in terms of quality, quantity, time, and cost, among other metrics. As a result, he argued that analyzing productivity is concerned with determining the amount of time it takes an average individual to produce a specific level of production. This study utilized three indicators to measure organizational productivity. They include; timeliness, goal attainment and quality service.

Timeliness

Timeliness is a measure of employee productivity. Timeliness reflects the ability of the organization to produce a response within an allotted time determined by the task requirements. Delays in completing a task are due both to the time required for processing information and making decisions and to the time required to effect communications among decision makers. Timeliness measures whether a unit of work was done correctly and on time, given that time is

the most crucial resource to be considered in the performance of any activity. Time determines the imperativeness of any other resources in accomplishing organizational set out objectives and goals (Ugwulashi, 2011). It is an essential resource every manager needs to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization (Adejojo, 2012).

Timeliness according to Mayberry, Nicewander, Qin and Billard (2006), can be referred to as the ability to reduce waiting times and sometimes harmful delays to clients by employees in attending to their needs. Timeliness refers to the delivery of value to customers at an appropriate time. This is distinguished from the notion of speed which typically refers to how fast an organization could be in producing and introducing valuable products to the market ahead of its competitors (Mayberry *et al.*, 2006). This simply goes to mean that speeding up the work that is being done does not necessarily translate to responsiveness even though it can certainly yield greater output.

Goal Attainment

Goals are specific targeted achievements of an individual or organization. Goals have a pervasive influence on employee behavior and performance in organizations and management practice (Locke & Latham, 2002). Nearly every modern organization has some form of goal setting in operation. Organizational goal attainment is perceived as the ability of the organization to meet its tasks, requirements and objectives through strategic investment into organizing, executing and accomplishing roles and duties in the minimum time possible (Adair 2005). According to Mathis & Jackson (2009) goal attainment is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individuals, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resource within a changing environment. Consequently, organization goal attainment is operationally perceived as: executing defined duties, meeting deadlines team input and achieving departmental goals. The above should, as pointed by Armstrong (2005), lead to efficiency, specialization, effective feedback and good organizational relation.

Quality Service

Quality service as a multi-dimensional construct is commonly based on customer judgments about service supplier and customer interactions and services itself (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2016). Many researchers defined quality service in different ways. For example, Bitner *et al.* (2014) defined quality service as the customer's overall feeling of the comparative inferiority or superiority of the company and its services. Although other researchers (Cronin & Taylor, 2014) view quality service as a form of thoughts representing a long-run general evaluation. The quality of a service or product is determined by the user's perception. It is the degree to which the bundle of service attributes as a whole satisfies the user. This is called expectation to perception match. Quality, therefore, comprises the degree to which attributes of the service desires by the users are identified and in corporate levels of these attributes are perceived by the users to be achieved (Murdick, 2020). Parasuraman *et al.* (2005) defined quality service as a comparison between expectation and outcome (performance) along the quality dimensions. This has appeared to be in line with Roest and Pieters' (2017) explanation that quality service is a relativistic and cognitive inconsistency between experience-based standards and performances regarding service benefits.

Quality service is a divergence amongst client's anticipation of the service supplier and their assessment of the services (Saleh, *et al.* 2021). Another definition has been proposed by (Othman & Abdullah, 2016) argued that quality service is a dissimilarity amongst consumers' anticipation for service execution before the service encounter and their observations of the rendered services. And the last the definition by Gefan 2002 as cited in (Abdullah & Othman, 2016), who said that quality service as the particular appraisal made by consumers among the expected quality service and actually rendered services (Abdullah & Othman, 2021).

Empirical Review

Atolagbe, Abdullahi, Ibrahim, Filani and Gambo (2024) investigated the impact of employee engagement on organizational productivity within the hospitality sector in Abuja, Nigeria. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey design, data was collected from 841 hotels using census-based sampling methods. The research objectives were to assess the influence of Emotional Engagement (EE), Intellectual Engagement (IE), and Social Engagement (SE) on organizational productivity. Findings from multiple regression analysis revealed significant positive effects of EE, IE, and SE on organizational productivity, highlighting the importance of fostering engagement across these dimensions. In conclusion, this study underscores the critical role of employee engagement in driving organizational productivity within the hospitality sector in Abuja. The findings highlight the significant positive effects of Emotional Engagement, Intellectual Engagement, and Social Engagement on productivity levels, indicating that engagement initiatives targeting these dimensions can lead to tangible performance improvements.

Ahmed, Khan, Thitivesa, Siraphatthada, and Phumdara (2020) conducted a study to examine the effect of employee engagement on organizational performance, mediated by knowledge sharing in higher educational institutions. Employing a quantitative research method, they utilized a nonprobability sampling design, focusing on convenient sampling. The questionnaire, adapted from previous studies, initially employed Google Forms for data collection, later switching to distributing hard copies due to a low response rate. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to test the conceptual framework, revealing significant and positive impacts of employee engagement and knowledge sharing on organizational performance. However, knowledge sharing only partially mediated the association between employee engagement and organizational performance.

Riyanto, Endri, and Herlisha (2021) analyzed the impact of motivation and job satisfaction on performance, with employee engagement as a mediating variable, focusing on Information Technology (IT) companies in Jakarta and Bandung, Indonesia. Using convenience sampling, they collected responses from 103 IT developers and employed Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis. Results showed that motivation positively affected IT employee performance, while job satisfaction was independent. Employee engagement did not directly affect performance but mediated the relationship between motivation, job satisfaction, and performance.

Juevesa and Castino (2020) determined the relationship of employee engagement and organizational performance among multigenerational workforce in a private non-sectarian school. The findings of the study served as the basis in the formulation of human resource development plan. The descriptive survey and correlational research design was used employing

quantitative method. The data were gathered through the survey questionnaire and administered to the one hundred fifty (150) respondents composed of employees from teaching and non-teaching personnel. The data gathered were analyzed through frequency, percentage, weighted mean and Pearson correlation. The findings of the study revealed that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y “agreed” that their employee engagement has positive correlation to organizational performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho1) which states that there is no significant relationship between employee engagement when grouped by generations and organizational performance is rejected. On the overall results, the study recommends that human resource development plan which is formulated based on the findings of the study should be adopted by a private non-sectarian school in General Santos City.

Muller, Smith and Lillah (2018) investigated employee perceptions regarding the impact of engagement on organisational performance in the Eastern Cape Province. This study, consequently, utilised the balanced scorecard (BSC) approach, consisting of financial, customer, internal process as well as learning and innovation measures to evaluate perceptions of organisational performance. A quantitative research design was utilised, surveying employees (n=428) from private organisations through non-probability convenience sampling. Using multiple regression analysis, the empirical results revealed that employee engagement positively and significantly influenced all four measures of the BSC.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopts cross-sectional design, which is a type of quasi-experimental research design. The population of this study consists of twenty-four (24) power distribution companies in Rivers State. The entire population was utilized as sample size using Census method of sampling. For proper coverage of the sample, 3 management staff was drawn from three departments such as Operations, Customer Service and Human Resource department of the respective organizations, thereby making a total of 69 respondents. The research data for the study was collected mainly from the primary source. The main data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire. The research instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was adopted in assessing the reliability of the study instrument. In this research work, hypotheses 1 to 3 was tested with Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient (r^o). All analyses were done through the application of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 27.0).

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following results were obtained from the study:

Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Employee Engagement and Timeliness

Table 1: Showed Correlations Analysis on Employee Engagement and Timeliness

			Engagemen t	Timeliness
Spearman's rho	Engagement	Correlation	1.000	.646**
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	59	59
	Timeliness	Correlation	.646**	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.	
	N	59	59	

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2025 (version 27.0)

Table 1 showed how employee engagement affects timeliness using Spearman’s Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients techniques. The result showed that employee engagement has a strong positive effect on timeliness (rho =0.646) of power distribution companies in Rivers State. The results also showed that employee engagement has a significant relationship with timeliness (P-v 0.000 <0.05%). Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that stated that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and timeliness of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship between Employee Engagement and Goal Attainment

Table 2: Showed Correlations Analysis on Employee Engagement and Goal Attainment

			Engagement	Goal attainment
Spearman's rho	Engageme nt	Correlation	1.000	.566**
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	59	59
	Goal attainment	Correlation	.566**	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.	
	N	59	59	

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2025 (version 27.0)

Table 2 showed how employee engagement affects goal attainment using Spearman’s Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients techniques. The result showed that employee engagement has a moderate positive effect on goal attainment (rho =0.566). The results also showed that employee engagement has a significant relationship with goal attainment (P-v 0.000 <0.05%). Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate that stated that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and goal attainment of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship between Employee Engagement and Quality Service**Table 3 Showed Correlations Analysis on Employee Engagement and Quality Service**

			Engagement	Quality service
Spearman's rho	Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.610**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	59	59
	Quality service	Correlation Coefficient	.610**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	59	59

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2025 (version 27.0)

Table 3 showed how employee engagement affects quality service using Spearman's Rank-order Correlation Coefficients techniques. The result showed that employee engagement has a strong positive effect on quality service ($\rho = 0.610$). The results also showed that employee engagement has a significant relationship with quality service ($P < 0.000 < 0.05\%$). Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that stated that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and quality service of power distribution companies in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result showed that employee engagement has a strong positive relationship with measures of organizational productivity (timeliness, goal attainment and quality service) of power distribution companies in Rivers State. This implies that increase in employee engagement will result to increased organizational productivity. Supporting this result, Park *et al.* (2021) have reported that employee engagement act as a mediator in encouraging affective organizational commitment and task performance in their study. Prior researchers also have found that employee engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between work resources and performance (Airila *et al.*, 2014; Kim *et al.*, 2019; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Atolagbe, Abdullahi, Ibrahim, Filani and Gambo (2024) also found a significant positive effects of EE, IE, and SE on organizational productivity, highlighting the importance of fostering engagement across these dimensions. In conclusion, this study underscores the critical role of employee engagement in driving organizational productivity within the hospitality sector in Abuja. The findings highlight the significant positive effects of Emotional Engagement, Intellectual Engagement, and Social Engagement on productivity levels, indicating that engagement initiatives targeting these dimensions can lead to tangible performance improvements. It shows that employee engagement positively impacts organizations by boosting productivity, reducing turnover, improving customer satisfaction, and enhancing profitability. Engaged employees are more likely to be committed to their work, resulting in better quality and fewer errors, as well as increased innovation and a stronger company culture.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings, the study concludes that employee engagement positively impacts organizations by boosting productivity, reducing turnover, improving customer satisfaction, and enhancing profitability. Engaged employees are more likely to be committed to their work, resulting in better quality and fewer errors, as well as increased innovation and a stronger company culture. Based on the findings and conclusion, it is recommended that Management of power distribution companies in Rivers State should regularly acknowledge and reward employees' contributions and achievements to boost motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement thereby enhancing the overall productivity of the organization.

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