

FINANCIAL AVAILABILITY AS A MODERATOR BETWEEN WORKPLACE FREE NETWORK INCENTIVE AND STAFF COMMITMENT IN PAINT MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship financial availability between workplace free network incentives and staff commitment of paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study adopted cross sectional explanatory survey research design. consisted of seven hundred (700) full time staff of nineteen (19) registered paint manufacturing firms operating in Rivers State. The sample size of the study consisted of Two Hundred staff of the Paint Manufacturing Firms. The above sample size is obtainable using the Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determination Table of 1970. Considering the disparity in the staff strength of the organizations, Bowley's (1960) Population Appropriation Formula was applied to determine the sample unit for each of the organizations. Structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for the collection of primary data. Face and content validity were done by supervisor and two other experts, whereas, Cronbach alpha was used to test the consistency (reliability). The presentation and analysis of data/results was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 21.0. It was found that financial availability moderate between workplace free network access and staff commitment such as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment in Paint Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. It was concluded that through digital incentive, employees of the Paint Manufacturing Firms will be exposed to most internet connectivity components where they can source information that will aid job performance on the assumption of this free network, the employee will technically commit themselves to the organizational goals.

Keywords: Financial Availability, Workplace Free Network, Affective Commitment, Normative Commitment, Continuance Commitment

INTRODUCTION

Staff commitment has constituted the research interest of many scholars over the years. For instance, Ayşe *et al.* (2013) examined the impact of mentoring on staff commitment and job satisfaction of accounting-finance academicians employed in Turkey and the study revealed that mentoring increased the commitment level of academicians in Turkey. Akpan *et al.* (2017) studied the relationship between workplace mentoring strategies and sustainable commitment and a positive relationship was found between mentoring and sustainable commitment of University Teaching Hospital Staff in South-South Region of Nigeria. Another study done by Uchendu (2017) revealed that there is a relative positive relationship mentoring and job satisfaction of bank workers in Nigeria. In another research effort, Agada (2019) examined the relationship between workplace social environment and staff commitment in road transportation firms in Rivers State. The study found that enabling workplace social environment is positively correlated with staff commitment. A more recent study done by Salvation (2021) revealed a positive correlation between workplace digital incentives and staff effectiveness in public Paint Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. Although related to the present work in the sense they both look at workplace digital incentives, the work of Salvation (2021) did not also provide empirical evidence on how workplace digital incentives interact with the commitment of employees within the context of Paint

manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This strengthens the researcher's perception that the link between workplace digital incentives and staff commitment has not received adequate research attention within the context of Paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This is the knowledge gap which this study seeks to fill. This gives credence to this study.

H₀₁: Financial availability does not have any significant moderating influence on the relationship between workplace digital incentive and staff commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Concept of Workplace Digital Incentives

Incentives is seen as the means under which gratification is offered to the employees in the workplace, or a set of motivational packages that are available in the work environment to satisfy the desires of individuals or employees for organizational productivity. National Productivity Council (2014) defines incentive as a measure stimulating human effort, whereby employees are driven to put in their best. Matocchio (2006) in Tongo (2016) encapsulated that the concept of incentives is a compensation, other than basic wages and salaries that fluctuate according to employees' attainment of some standard, such as pre-determined benchmark, individual or group goals or organizational earning.

Generally, incentives are payments or inducement made to employees on the basis of the amount of output or results attained (Banjoko, 2016). Accordingly, Tongo (2016) stated that the use of incentives dates back to the era of scientific management movement, championed by Frederick Taylor in the 20th century, and ever since then, the private sector has employed the use of incentives as a method to raise the productivity of their employees. Incentive provision is meant to drive employee to extra mile to achieve better result. It is a tool that can be engaged by any employer of labour, whether public or private employer and regardless of the type of task involved. However, amongst the various forms of incentives, an employer is at liberty to engage anyone considered suitable and affordable. Being a vocation and profit driven, paint manufacturing firms engaged in incentives provision to motivate workers and increase performance.

Nevertheless, digital incentive is the provision of electronic palliative to the workers to stimulate their interest for greater or better performance. Jeffrey and Schaffer (2017) asserted that digital incentives are those digital programmes design to enhance and motivate employees in the workplace. They postulated that digital incentive could be in the dimensions of provision of free wifi for the employees and the distribution of digital devices to motivate them to work for organizational productivity. Azasu (2016) noted that workplace digital incentive could be short term palliative which includes monthly subscription of the staff devices that will enable it discharge duties within the period. Paint Manufacturing Firms embrace digital incentive scheme which enhance the academic staff to cushion the effect of the harsh economic realities. Digital incentive could manifest in the provision of digital devices in the likes of smart phone, laptop, ipad, etc. the provision of digital gadget propels the service of the staff through electronic transmission of files and other documents to the management and students in the Paint Manufacturing Firms. The digital incentive scheme provides ample opportunity for easy administration of services by the service providers, it closes the gap created in the conventional practice of distance and time in the academic institutions (Lazear, 2018). In addition, Schraeder and Becton (2019) opined that digital incentive is also deemed fit through the cash transfer to the staff for any of the electronic palliative program as designed previously.

As earlier defined, incentive is a factor that drives productive workers in the unit to work with all their strengths to achieve the set objectives. No doubt that there is a close relationship between motivation and the needs of the individuals. Motivational package enables individual act in a certain form. It is not enough that the individual is able to work, but it is important to be interested in it. However, when employers provide stimulus to fill the hearts of employees, they

will be satisfied from work then their dedication to the work will enhance their performance. This stimulus will remove the causes and manifestations of anxiety and stress and other reasons that weaken their performance. Ojokuku and Oyedokun (2017) postulated that the need for incentive in the Paint Manufacturing Firm include:

Engage employees in the administration: It is the opportunity for employees to post their performance and their ideas in the planning for the development of the organization and to overcome the problems they face, which makes them feel satisfaction and belonging to the organization.

Systems suggestions: systems are suggestions method of participation of workers in decision-making and lead the participation of workers in decision-making in the organization to increase and improve the performance and accountability and reduce complaints.

Upgrade: is one of the factors motivating employees to work, and the availability of opportunities for promotion means an increase Employee Engagement work in the organization.

Concept of Staff Commitment

Staff commitment has been described by scholars in several heights. This is a concept that tries to establish the sense on how employees are emotionally attached and dedicated to their respective jobs. However, as asserted by Dixit and Bhati (2012), the concept of staff commitment is derived from an article titled "The Organization Man" written by Whyte in 1956. It refers to the willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations, which are seen as self-expressive. Salancik (1977) described commitment as that state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his action and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities of his own involvement. Dixit and Bhati (2012) defined commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Committed employees actually show high level of consistency in their participation and dedication to organizational activities. They do not give flimsy excuses why a task or goal cannot be accomplished. Employees who are usually absent from meetings, and ongoing projects cannot be said to be committed.

To Brown (1969) commitment has to do with something of the notion of membership; it reflects the current position of the individual; it equally has a special predictive potential, providing predictions concerning certain aspects of job performance, motivation to work, spontaneous contribution, and other related outcomes of organizational workers called employees. Okpu and Jaja (2014) outlined the following definitions of staff commitment given by various authors:

Daan (2013) described staff commitment in the following ways:

- (i) The extent to which an employee is being bound to a goal or the determination in respect of a goal, regardless of the origin of the goal in his/her organization.
- (ii) The extent to which a staff believes in a goal and wants to achieve as long as it has to do with the organization
- (iii) A psychological state that binds an individual to the organization.
- (iv) Connection to a job: the probability that someone continues to work in that job and feels psychologically bound to it. This is regardless of whether it is fulfilling or not.
- (v) Someone's attitude towards their work.

Wiener and Vardi (1980) describe organizational commitment as: "behavioural intention or reaction, determined by the individual's perception of the normative pressure".

While O'Reilley (1989) sees it as: "an individual's psychological bond to the organization, including a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organization".

Financial Availability (Firm Factor)

Finance is a simple task of providing the necessary funds (money) required by the business of entities like companies, firms, individuals and others on the terms that are most favorable to achieve their economic objectives. Finance is the procurement of funds and effective (properly planned) utilization of funds. It also deals with profits that adequately compensate for the cost and risks borne by the business. A business without a funding source will flounder under the weight of its own debt (Didin, 2017). However, funding is the fuel on which a business runs. A business can take different avenues to attain funding, and more than one option can be used. The chosen funding will depend on the business' desire to be in debt, how solvent the business owners are at the time the business is founded and the amount of money a business will need to launch and maintain itself through a variety of events.

To this end, financial availability is concerned with the state of funds deposited into an account that a customer is able to withdraw. It equally deals with the financial strength of an organization. It is concerned whether the organization does or does not have the monetary resources to finance its operations and projects (Devraj, 2014). Financial availability means, with respect to any obligation that constitutes a manager expense, an operating disbursement or a direct reimbursement expense, that sufficient funds have been provided by owners and are available to manager to pay such obligation. For sake of clarity, with respect to costs for manager's obligations constituting manager expenses, availability of funds means that the asset management fee has been paid, without regard to the actual costs necessary to be incurred by manager to fulfill such obligations. The availability of funds in several organizations such as paint manufacturing firms is anchored on how the organization performs financially (Alrowwad *et al.*, 2017). However, financial performance of every organization must be high to enable them make funds available.

Financial performance is the company's financial condition over a certain period that includes the collection and use of funds measured by several indicators of capital adequacy ratio, liquidity, leverage, solvency, and profitability. Financial performance is the company's ability to manage and control its resources (IAI in Investopedia, 2016). The financial statements are financial records covering cash flows, balance sheets, profit, loss and capital changes that become information for corporate managers in taking the company's financial policy. Financial performance is the extent to which a corporate organization keeps progressing in the generation, use and control of financial resources. It is a subjective measure of how well a firm can use assets from its primary mode of business and generate revenues. Its expression can also be used as a general measure of a firm's overall financial health over a specific time, and can be used to compare similar firms across the same industry or to compare industries or sectors in aggregation. It is the scientific evaluation of profitability and financial capacity of any business concern as it assists the management in the formation of sound operating and financial policies. Financial performance principally reflects business sector outcomes and results that show overall financial health of the sector over a specific period of time (Fara *et al.*, 2016). Within the context of this study, return on equity and liquidity ratio are used here as indicators of financial availability.

Return on Equity: Return on Equity (ROE) measures the rate of return that the owners of common stock of a company receive on their shareholdings (Economic Times, 2020). Return on equity signifies how good the company is in generating returns on the investment it received from its shareholders. Mathematically, Return on Equity = Net Income or Profits/Shareholder's Equity. The denominator is essentially the difference of a company's assets and liabilities. It is the amount left over if an organization decides to settle its liabilities at a given time.

So, if a firm has an ROE of say 1, it means #1 of common shareholding generates a net income of #1 (i.e. one naira). This metric is especially important from an investor's perspective, as he/she uses it to judge how efficiently the firm will be able to use his/her investment to generate additional revenues. Investors generally prefer firms with higher ROEs. However, this can be used as a benchmark to pick stocks within the same sector only. Across sectors, profit and income

levels vary significantly. Even within the same sector, the ROE levels may vary if a company chooses to give dividends and not keep the profit generated as idle cash. Suppose paint manufacturing firm XYZ has generated a profit #100,000 and has about 1,000 shares with stockholders at a value of # 50 each. The board decides to issue dividend worth #10,000 to the shareholders.

$$\text{ROE} = (100,000 - 10,000) / (1,000 * 50) = 1.8$$

This would mean that for every naira invested in XYZ bank, investors would generate #1.8 (one naira, eighty kobo). In general terms, this looks like a high value. This can imply that XYZ was started recently and is in its fast growth stage. Furthermore, return on equity ratio (ROE) is a profitability ratio that measures the ability of a firm to generate profits from its shareholders investments in the company (Whyte, 2017). In other words, the return on equity ratio shows how much profit each dollar of common stockholders' equity generates. Thus, a return on 1 means that every dollar of common stockholders' equity generates 1 dollar of net income. This is an important measurement for potential investors because they want to see how efficiently a company will use their money to generate net income.

Financial Availability, Workplace Digital Incentives and Staff Commitment

In the digitalized business environment, staff are relieved of carrying bulk duties manually. This is because the advent of information and communication technology played important role in making work easy for employees of every organization that adopt them. However, business organizations need some level of financial strength to be able to leverage adequately on the philosophy of workplace digital incentives. Provision of free workplace internet access and digital gifts to employees is capital-intensive. It therefore, take financial availability to an organization to provide digital incentives which will ignite commitment on the part of the employees. This study posits sees financial availability as a firm factor that can significantly moderate the interaction between workplace digital incentives and staff commitment. The commitment of staff in digitalized organizations improves if such organization are able to provide workplace digital incentives. Thus, Jeffrey and Schaffer (2017) asserted that financial capital is a major determinant of the attitude of management towards employee incentives. Digital incentives are those digital programmes designed to enhance and motivate employees in the workplace. They postulated that digital incentive could be in the dimensions of provision of free wifi for the employees and the distribution of digital devices to motivate them to work for organizational productivity. Azasu (2016) noted that workplace digital incentive could be short term palliative which includes monthly subscription of the staff devices that will enable it discharge duties within the period. Paint Manufacturing Firms embrace digital incentive scheme which enhance the academic staff to cushion the effect of the hash economic realities. Digital incentive could manifest in the provision of digital devices in the likes of smart phone, laptop, ipad, etc. the provision of digital gadget propels the service of the staff through electronic transmit ion of files and other documents to the management and students in the Paint Manufacturing Firms.

Workplace digital incentive could manifest through workplace free network access, digital cost palliative and provision of digital devices which aim at ensuring that work are easily done by employees thereby enhancing their commitment in terms of affective commitment, normative commitment and commitment. This is because a committed staff is one who is loyal and identifies with the goals and values of the organization. Staff commitment can be described as a sustainable binding force or mind-set that propels an individual to stay and work dedicatedly and wholeheartedly to achieve organizational or unit goals (Agada, 2020).

The moderating role of financial availability in the relationship between workplace digital incentives and staff commitment is predicated on the fact that financial availability is drawn from

the financial strength of an organization. If the organization such as paint manufacturing firms do not have the necessary funds, they will not be able to provide workplace digital incentives and this will in-turn demotivate staff. But if they have the financial strength, they will make available funds to adequately ensure that staff in their organization get workplace digital incentives. Hence, IAI in Investopedia (2016) asserted that company's ability to manage and control its resources tells more id they could offer incentives or not to their respective staff. So to say, how staff commitment in terms of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment is been enhance through workplace digital incentives such as office network access, digital cost palliative and provision of digital devices is attributed to adequate financial availability in terms of return on equity and liquidity ratio.

Empirical Review

Abdul et al. (2014) investigated the Impact of compensation on employee performance empirical evidence from banking sector of Pakistan. The purpose of this research is to measure the impact of compensation on employee performance. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data on the factors related to compensation like salary, rewards, Indirect Compensation and employee performance. The data was collected from different banks of Pakistan. The data collected were analyzed in SPSS 17.0 Version. Different analytical and descriptive techniques were used to analyze the data. Findings: It is founded from different results that Compensation has positive impact on employee performance. It is proved from correlation analysis that all the independent variables have weak or moderate positive relationship to each other. Regression analysis shows that all the independent variables have insignificant and positive impact on employee performance. Descriptive analysis also reveals that all the independent variables have positive impact on employee performance. ANOVA results reveal that education have not same impact on employee performance. Limitations/implications of the research: The major limitation of this research is that this study only covers the banking sector of Punjab. Another limitation is that it excludes many variables of compensation due to shortage of time. Funds were also another limitation. Apart from these limitations this research may provide insights to the managers to enhance the employee performance of their subordinates.

Ogutu (2014) perception of the influence of incentives on staff commitment in the ministry of education in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to determine the perception of the influence of incentives on employee performance at the Ministry of Education. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire from 45 respondents drawn from various departments at the Ministry, and then analyzed. Quantitative data collected were analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented through percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. Respondents were required to indicate how they perceive the influence of incentives on employee performance at the Ministry of Education by scoring on statements describing such a link that were presented in a 1-5 point likert scale. To determine the perceived link, the study adopted the use of perception indices. The findings of the study showed that the use of incentives is perceived to have improved performance at the Ministry of Education to some level. The study concludes that employees had different views on the influence of incentives on job performance. The study therefore recommends that employees in the various departments should have the same type of incentive system to avoid discrimination at the Ministry of Education. Based on the limitations of the study, suggestions for further research relating to the influence of incentives on job performance have been put forth.

Kariuki (2015) studied the impact of information technology on organizational performance: case of population services Kenya. This study sought to determine the level of use of information technology and its relationship with organisational performance at PS Kenya. To achieve the

objectives of the study, a descriptive survey was used. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The population for this study comprised of the entire PS Kenya staff which was 438. The questionnaire was administered electronically for data collection, out of which 311 respondents responded to the study resulting in a response rate of 71 percent which was considered as a sufficient representation of the organisation. The study findings revealed that majority of the respondents had various IT company devices at their disposal to enable them perform their duties. The study findings also revealed that there was a positive relationship between the level of IT use and organisational performance at Population Services Kenya. The study results indicated that IT use explains 82.4% of organisational performance at PS Kenya. The study recommends that organisations should embrace IT tools and services so as to have competitive edge and improve service delivery to their customers. The study also recommends that more study should be done on challenges facing information technology use in organizations in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional explanatory survey research design. The population of the study consisted of seven hundred (700) full time staff of nineteen (19) registered paint manufacturing firms operating in Rivers State. The sample size of the study consisted of Two Hundred (200) staff of the Paint Manufacturing Firms. The above sample size is obtainable using the Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determination Table of 1970. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The data presentation and analysis of the work were done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0. Descriptive statistical tools such as arithmetic mean and frequency tables were used to conduct univariate analysis (analysis of each of the sub-variables). The bivariate analysis was carried out using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The test of hypothesis was done at a significance level of 0.05 (two-tailed test). Partial Correlation was used to run the multivariate analysis.

RESULTS

Multivariate Analysis

Ho₁: Financial availability does not have any significant moderating influence on the relationship between workplace digital incentive and staff commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Correlations of Financial Availability as a Moderator to Workplace Digital Incentive and Staff Commitment

Control Variables			Workplace Digital Incentives	Staff Commitment	Financial Availability
-none^a					
Financial Availability	Workplace Digital Incentives	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.676**	0.676**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
		Df	0	221	221
	Staff Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.676**	1.000	.676**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	221	221	221
	Financial Availability	Correlation Coefficient	.538**	0.676**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
		Df			

	Df	221	221	0
	Correlation	1.000	0.676**	
Workplace Digital Incentives	Coefficient			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	Df	0	221	
	Correlation	0.676**	1.000	
	Coefficient			
Staff Commitment	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	221	0	

Source: SPSS Output

Table above shows r value of 0.676 at a significant level of 0.00 showing a relationship between workplace digital incentive and staff commitment. This obviously shows a high positive relationship. The introduction of the controlling variable (financial availability) reduces the r value to 0.538. this implies that the relationship between workplace digital incentive and staff commitment is attributed to financial availability and its moderating effect is at a moderate level.

Financial Availability, Workplace Digital Incentives and Staff Commitment

The test of hypothesis ten revealed that financial availability has a moderating role in the relationship between workplace digital incentive and staff commitment of paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Workplace digital incentive could manifest through office network access, digital cost palliative and provision of digital devices which aim at ensuring that work are easily done by employees thereby enhancing their commitment in terms of affective commitment, normative commitment and commitment. This is because a committed staff is one who is loyal and identifies with the goals and values of the organization. Staff commitment can be described as a sustainable binding force or mind-set that propels an individual to stay and work dedicatedly and wholeheartedly to achieve organizational or unit goals (Agada, 2020).

The moderating role of financial availability in the relationship between workplace digital incentives and staff commitment is predicated on the fact that financial availability is drawn from the financial strength of an organization. If the organization such as paint manufacturing firms do not have the necessary funds, they will not be able to provide workplace digital incentives and this will in-turn demotivate staff. But if they have the financial strength, they will make available funds to adequately ensure that staff in their organization get workplace digital incentives. Hence, IAI in Investopedia (2016) asserted that company's ability to manage and control its resources tells more id they could offer incentives or not to their respective staff. So to say, how staff commitment in terms of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment is been enhance through workplace digital incentives such as office network access, digital cost palliative and provision of digital devices is attributed to adequate financial availability in terms of return on equity and liquidity ratio.

CONCLUSIONS

Paint Manufacturing Firms that make provision for workplace digital incentive such as workplace free network access, digital cost palliative and digital devices provision is capable of achieving staff commitment in terms of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment that others who neglects them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms should equally motivate their customers by enabling them gain access to their network.

2. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms should assist staff with data subscription for optimal commitment.
3. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms should ensure their staff are given free airtime every weekend.
4. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms could give their staff smart phones as Christmas gift as a way of appreciating their good work.
5. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms should ensure they provide printer in their workplace to lessen burden of going out to do printing jobs.
6. Management of Paint Manufacturing Firms should always ensure that they set aside finance on yearly basis to fund digital incentive.

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