

COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION TECHNIQUES AND INFORMATION MANAGERS' PERFORMANCE IN CONSTRUCTION FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE

Eke, Josephine Onyeri (PhD)
Department of Office and Information Management
Faculty of Administration and Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study determines the relationship between wages and information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State. Ten research objectives, ten research questions and ten hypotheses guided the study. This study is built on two theories: Social Exchange Theory and Force-Field Theory of Change. The cross-sectional explanatory survey research design was used in this study. The population of this study consisted of one hundred and fifty-five (155) information managers from thirty-seven (37) active construction firms in Rivers State. The entire population of one hundred and fifty-five (155) information managers from thirty-seven (37) active construction firms in Rivers State were used as the study sample. Hence, the study is census research method. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection after ascertaining its reliability through the employment of Cronbach Alpha. A total of 155 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the target respondents through the help of two research assistants. Effort was made and 147 copies were successfully retrieved. mean and standard deviation were used for the univariate analysis while the bivariate analysis was done using Spearman rank order correlation in SPSS Version 22.0. Multivariate analysis was done using Partial Correlation. Findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State. The study concluded that it takes competitive wages to enhance the ability of information managers to circulate information effectively, relate interpersonally, and as well as manage records effectively. The study recommended amongst others that construction firms in Rivers State should establish a competitive wage structure that recognizes and rewards information managers' contributions, thereby encouraging them and other employees to step up their performances every now and then.

Keywords: Competitive Compensation Techniques, information Managers Performance, Effective Communication

Introduction

The performance of information managers in construction firms in Rivers State has been a subject of concern due to their crucial role in ensuring effective information circulation, fostering interpersonal relations, and managing records. Despite the significant responsibilities assigned to these professionals, many construction firms in the region have reported suboptimal performance outcomes (Peccei & Van De Voorde, 2019). This underperformance is often reflected in delays, miscommunication, and inefficient records management, which ultimately affect the overall productivity and project outcomes of the firms. One of the underlying factors contributing to this issue is the inadequacy of compensation techniques such as wages, salaries, and incentives. When information managers are not adequately compensated, their motivation and job satisfaction decrease, leading to a decline in their performance and a higher turnover rate (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Gupta & Shaw, 2014).

While extensive research has been conducted on the relationship between compensation and employee performance in various sectors, there is a notable gap in the literature specifically addressing how compensation techniques impact the performance of information managers in the construction industry, particularly in the context of Rivers State (Sajuyigbe *et al.*, 2019; Tahir *et al.*, 2019; Bakledi & Al Saud, 2017; Ogutu, 2014; Mohammed & Salah, 2016; Kaneez & Safia, 2016;

Muthoni & Thomas, 2019). Previous studies have primarily focused on general employee performance or other industries, leaving a significant gap in understanding the unique challenges and dynamics within construction firms (Gerhart & Fang, 2015; Milkovich *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, most of the existing research has concentrated on direct forms of compensation such as wages and salaries, with limited attention given to the role of incentives and non-monetary benefits in enhancing information managers' performance. This gap in the literature suggests a need for more targeted research to explore how comprehensive compensation techniques relate with information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State. This gives essence to this study.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant moderating impact of organizational policy in the relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State.

Concept of Compensation Techniques

Compensation strategies refer to the position of organizations on the job market, the level of the total cash, the main bonus principles in the organization and rules for the base salary setting (Richard, 2018). The compensation strategy is derived from the Human Resource Strategy. Compensation strategy lays out your organization's point of view on how you will determine pay and benefits for employees. It aligns all of your compensation resources to your business goals, helps you decide where you want to compete, how competitive you need to be and what you choose to reward. A compensation strategy forms the backbone of your compensation plan. With a solid strategy in place, your organization can quickly make sound decisions about compensation. The compensation strategy is extremely important as the right compensation strategy helps to build the effective and competitive organization and the wrong setting of the compensation strategy, which does not fit with the needs of the organization and with the HR and Business Strategies, can destroy the organization within several years and the organization suffers from decreased performance and not utilizing the full potential of employees.

Compensation is the remuneration received by an employee in return for his/her contribution to the organization (Naukrihub, 2019). It is an organized practice that involves balancing the work-employee relation by providing monetary and non-monetary rewards to employees. Compensation management is an integral part of human resources management which helps in motivating the employees and improving organizational effectiveness (Naukrihub, 2019). According to Folayan (2016), compensation management should be based on performance measured relative to the performance - of all firm or firms in the same industry rather than absolute measure of firm performance. Employees are compensated for their services and efforts they exert in their work. Robbins (2014) stated that when employees feel their efforts are appreciated and the company introduced a system of fair compensation and satisfaction, the company will have optimized motivation and hence increased employee performance. If employees feel that their effort is appreciated and the company has a good compensation structure based on job evaluation, the employee's motivation and commitment will improve and hence performance. Bates and Holton (2017) define performance as a multi-dimensional construct, the measurement of which varies, depending on a variety of factors. They add that it is important to determine whether the measured objective is to assess performance outcomes or behaviour. In the study conducted by Probst and Brubaker (2016), it indicated that the difference between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction lies in the employees and the amount and type of compensation that the employee expects. Employees expect that their contribution and efforts should be valued and given importance in the same way they value their job and work towards accomplishing the tasks assigned to them.

Concept of Information Managers' Performance

Base on conceptual knowledge, an information manager refers to office secretaries and information managers. It has been given different meanings by different authors based on their perceptions and

societal trend. Clement (2017) pointed out that the Human Resource Management nomenclature "Information Manager is synonymous to 'Secretary' which describes a staff who provides administrative support or who is in charge of clerical and administrative activities of a Chief Executive Officer, department, unit, or an entire organization.

It is the responsibility of an information manager to monitor and review systems, usually focusing on specific outcomes such as improved timescales, turnover, output, sales, etc. (Olali, 2017). They may supervise or manage a team of administrators, allocating roles, recruiting and training, and issuing assignments and projects. Information Managers are in charge of customer service, report writing, budget management, database management, systems analysis, purchasing, book keeping, human resources supervision, recruitment, sales and marketing, records management, form/template design, website maintenance, project management, management consultancy, facilities management, space management, risk management, and payroll management in most public and private establishments (Bedford, 2016).

The information manager is described by the Online Business Dictionary (2018) as an employee of a business or organization whose duties typically include allocating physical resources such as office space and supplies, scheduling internal events, overseeing operational staff such as accountants, technicians, and administrative personnel, and other details necessary to run an office in any industry or field. Managers, also called administrative service managers, are business professionals who are responsible for a diverse set of administrative tasks. Elems (2009) in Urang (2018) identified the following activities carried out by administrative officers (Information Managers) in an organization:

1. Arranges conferences and meetings; prepares and assembles materials; makes, confirms, and processes travel arrangements and expense reports; schedules appointments and arranges meetings; screens phone calls; maintains schedules and calendars; monitors inventory.
2. May supervise clerical/student staff; performs other duties as assigned.
3. Prepares and processes confidential correspondence, reports, agendas, and general papers; composes and types routine correspondence, memos, letters, reports, etc.; processes exams, forms, schedules, contracts, grants, and general correspondence; prepares and edits papers, reports, agendas, and/or manuscripts for publication.
4. Maintains departmental databases, budgets, cash controls, and accounting and purchasing records; coordinates billing to departments; maintains accounts receivable database system; processes and maintains payroll and personnel records for staff and students; researches, gather, and analyzes data.
5. Regularly coordinates the activities of a department project or program; coordinates department events; coordinates department computing and software resources, which may include a web page.

Organizational Policy, Compensation Techniques, and Information Managers' Performance

Organizational policies, particularly ethics and HR policies, play a critical moderating role in the relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State. Ethics policies ensure that compensation practices, such as wages, salaries, and incentives, are administered fairly and transparently. This transparency fosters trust and morale among information managers, which, in turn, enhances their performance. According to Brown and Treviño (2019), ethical compensation practices prevent favoritism and bias, ensuring that all employees feel valued and motivated to perform at their best. This ethical framework supports effective information circulation as managers are encouraged to maintain integrity in their communication processes.

Human Resource (HR) policies are instrumental in structuring compensation techniques to maximize employee performance. These policies outline the criteria for wage increases, salary adjustments, and distribution of incentives, ensuring consistency and fairness. Clear HR policies help information

managers understand the direct link between their performance and their rewards, which boosts their motivation and productivity. As per a study by Wright and McMahan (2020), well-implemented HR policies enhance job satisfaction and performance by aligning employee goals with organizational objectives. This alignment is crucial for fostering interpersonal relations among information managers, as fair compensation practices reduce conflicts and promote teamwork.

Furthermore, the integration of ethics and HR policies ensures that compensation techniques are used to incentivize behaviors that align with organizational values and objectives. For example, HR policies that reward accuracy and efficiency in records management through structured incentives encourage information managers to maintain high standards in their documentation practices. Ethical guidelines ensure that these incentives are distributed equitably, preventing any potential misuse or favoritism. Research by Dessler (2019) highlights that such comprehensive policy frameworks lead to improved records management, as employees are consistently motivated to adhere to best practices, knowing that their efforts will be recognized and rewarded fairly.

Force-Field Theory of Change

The Force-field theory of change was developed by Kurt Lewin in the mid-20th century, specifically around 1947 (Burnes, 2020). This theory focuses on identifying and analyzing the driving and restraining forces that impact change within an organization, and it has been foundational in understanding organizational development and change management processes. George (2013) described the Force-Field Theory as a broad variety of forces arising from the way an organization operates, from its structure, control systems and culture that makes it oppose change. At the same time, a wide variety of forces arise from changing task and general environments that push organizations towards change. These two sets of forces are always in opposition in organization. For organizations to re-engineer, top management must find ways to increase the forces for change, decrease the resistance of change, or do both at the same time. Lewin's force field analysis is used to distinguish which factors in a firm drive an individual towards or away from a desired state, and which resist the driving forces. These can be analyzed in order to inform decisions that will make change more acceptable (Walker & Ruekert, 2014). Forces are more than attitudes to change. To recognize what makes individual resist or accept change, it is important to know the morals and skills of that particular individual. Thus, creating self-responsiveness and intelligence in emotions can aid in understanding these powers that work within people. It is the behaviour of individuals that will alert you to the presence of driving and restraining forces at work (Chalos, 2015). The assumptions of the theory are:

- i. human behavior is determined by a combination of forces that either push towards a particular goal (driving forces) or inhibit movement towards that goal (restraining forces).
- ii. any individual or system tends to achieve a state of equilibrium where the sum of driving forces equals the sum of restraining forces.
- iii. any individual or system tends to achieve a state of equilibrium where the sum of driving forces equals the sum of restraining forces.
- iv. understanding the forces at play allows for predictions about behavior change.

The Force Field Theory, propounded by Kurt Lewin, provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of implementing compensation techniques (wages, salary, and incentives) and their impact on information managers' performance (effective information circulation, interpersonal relation, and records management) in construction firms in Rivers State. According to Lewin, change within organizations involves balancing driving forces (in this case, the motivating impact of fair compensation) and restraining forces (resistance to change due to perceived inequities or dissatisfaction). By identifying and addressing these forces, firms can enhance information managers' performance and overall organizational effectiveness (Lewin, 1947).

The justification of Force Field Theory for the topic "Compensation techniques (wages, salary, and incentives) and information managers' performance (effective information circulation, interpersonal relation, and records management) in construction firms in Rivers State" lies in its ability to explain how these compensation strategies can drive or inhibit performance improvements. By analyzing driving forces (e.g., motivational impacts of fair compensation) and restraining forces (e.g., dissatisfaction with current compensation), organizations can strategically enhance information managers' performance. Lewin's theory helps identify and mitigate resistance, thereby facilitating successful implementation of compensation reforms.

Research Design

The cross-sectional explanatory survey research design was used in this study.

Research Population

The population of this study consisted of one hundred and fifty-five (155) information managers from thirty-seven (37) active construction firms in Rivers State.

Sample Size/Sampling Techniques

The entire population of one hundred and fifty-five (155) information managers from thirty-seven (37) active construction firms in Rivers State were used as the study sample.

Instrumentation and Measurement

The study made use of structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

For data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used for the univariate analysis while the bivariate analysis was done using Spearman rank order correlation in SPSS Version 22.0. Multivariate analysis was done using Partial Correlation. Thus, Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was computed with the formula below:

$$R = \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Results

Multivariate Analysis

Organizational Policies, Compensation Techniques, and Information Managers' Performance

H₀₁: There is no significant moderating impact of organizational policy in the relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State.

Table 1: Correlations Between Organizational Policies, Compensation Techniques, and Information Managers' Performance

Control Variable			Compensation Techniques	Information Managers' Performance	Organizational Policy
-none ^a	Compensation Techniques	Correlation	1.000	0.839**	0.855**
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	000	147	147
		Correlation	0.839**	1.000	0.507**

Information Managers' Performance	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
	Df	147	000	147
	Correlation	0.855**	0.507**	1.000
Organizational Policy	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	147	147	000
	Correlation	1.000	0.639**	
Compensation Techniques	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	
	Df	000	147	
	Correlation	0.639**	1.000	
Organizational Policy Information Managers' Performance	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	
	Df	147	000	
	Correlation	0.855**	0.507**	1.000

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

Table 1 above reveals r value of 0.839 at a significant level of 0.00, signifying a relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance. Clearly, this shows a very strong positive relationship, and is significant. The partial relationship which controls for organizational policy is a very strong positive association given the r-value 0.855, which is clearly huge. In addition, the significance value of 0.00 which is less than the alpha level of 0.05 implies that the relationship between compensation techniques and information managers' performance is very strongly moderated by the influence of organizational policy. This implies that the degree at which compensation techniques positively relates with information managers' performance in construction firms in Rivers State, is very strongly dependent on the organizational policy.

Conclusion

Conclusively, the strategic implementation of comprehensive compensation strategies, encompassing wages, salaries, and incentives, is a crucial determinant of exceptional information managers' performance. This underscores the critical importance of well-designed compensation packages. By investing in competitive wages, salaries, and incentives, construction firms can motivate information managers to excel, leading to improved productivity, efficiency, and organizational success.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Construction firms in Rivers State should establish a competitive wage structure that recognizes and rewards information managers' contributions, thereby encouraging them and other employees to step up their performances every now and then.
2. Construction firms should adopt a total rewards strategy, combining salary with other benefits and incentives to enhance information managers' job satisfaction and performance.
3. Construction firms in Rivers State should ensure that their compensation techniques align with well-communicated organizational goals, objectives, and values, as this is capable of spurring information managers to perform better in information circulation, interpersonal relations, and records management, among others.
4. Firms should establish comprehensive compensation policies that outline clear performance expectations, reward structures, benefits and incentives, and career advancement opportunities. This will encourage information managers and other employees to perform outstandingly in their roles

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