

**QUICK SERVICE DELIVERY AND FORMATION OF EFFICIENT WORKFORCE AS
FUNCTIONS OF WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGERIAL DECISIONS IN
SYSTEM METAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED, CALABAR**

BY

**DR. AKPAN, E. EBENEZER, FCICN, AP
CORPORATE BUSINESS RESEARCH SERVICES
140 IKOT EKPE NE ROAD
UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE.**

ABSTRACT

The study ascertained level of workers' participation in managerial decisions level and productivity of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar. The population of this study comprised of all the staff of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar. The study adopted survey research method while simple random sampling was used in selecting the respondents. The instrument for data collection which was tagged "Decision Making Participation and Productivity Questionnaire" (DMPPQ) was administered to the respondents and used for the study. The instrument was designed by the researcher, vetted by 1 statistician and 1 expert in test and measurement before the reliability test was conducted with 30 respondents. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis, the result yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.75. From the results of the data analysis, it was observed that there is significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company and quick service delivery. The conclusion revealed that workers are remarkably involved in decision making in companies in Calabar. It was therefore recommended that employees should be motivated by the Management in order for the former to give their best; thereby raising the company's achievement to the high level of performance, efficiency, productivity and profitability and rapid growth.

Key Words: Employees participation, decision making, quick service delivery, formation of efficient workforce

INTRODUCTION

It has been a common statement that "two heads are better than one". Therefore, the undivided participation of employees in a company is capable of maximizing the productivity of the company. Participation does not only involve group process reflecting democratic values, it is also a reflection of the extent and manner in which responsibilities and tasks are delegated to subordinates. It has been suggested in several quarters that, when workers are involved in the decision making process of their organizations, they become committed to the attainment of the organizational goals. Several behavioral scientists have proved in their various studies that employees cannot only be motivated for enhanced performance with only monetary incentives but could be motivated through their involvement in decision-making – participation in the management process. While supporting this proposition, Davis (1981) declares that the extent to which a person is committed to any action is a function of his involvement in the planning; and that workers' separation from planning the

organizational objectives would lead to lower overall performance. In addition, the cost of implementing participatory management systems may far exceed the actual return. However, the commentators provide numerous professional examples to suggest that participation in workplace decision-making in government setting not only improves employees' attitudes toward work, but also increases their performance and make them more efficient.

In other words, when workers are denied the opportunity to participate in the decision making process that would affect them, their attitude to work will change automatically and the obvious consequence is low productivity. They said that employees' participation in decision-making will facilitate the development of internalized motivation, serve to increase human satisfaction and morale in the organization. Changes in the nature of organization and task environments, employees' desires to participate in workplace decision making, as well as rapid advances in technology facilitating such exchanges, may make participation an even more important determinant of performance in the future. Therefore, it is the integration of the employees into the "administrative caucus" that will certainly lead to better understanding between both parties – management and employees. Premised on this background, this study was provoked to ascertain the level of workers' participation in managerial decisions and the extent to which this has negatively or positively affected the level of the productivity of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar.

Statement of the problem

The case of workers' participation in managerial decision making has been of great concern to various sectors today as a result of the spread of democratic values to virtually every society. However, it has been said that when an employee discovers that his work does not provide him the opportunity to realize his potentials through participatory management, he tends to engage in negative behaviours like absenteeism, apathy, lack of commitment and low productivity. Participation, therefore, is inherent in the superior/subordinate relationship. The denial of workers from active involvement in decision making has been identified to be one of the major causes of the problems manifesting daily in the work lives of the modern employees.

To what extent is this true with the workers of System Metals Industries, Calabar? These issues will be considered in this study. The study puts forward steps necessary for an increase worker participation in management of the public sector industries, particularly in the Khulna Newsprint Mills Ltd.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to ascertain level of workers' participation in managerial decisions level and productivity of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar:

1. To access the effect of employees' participation in managerial decision on quick service delivery by the company.
2. To find out the relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company.

Research Hypothesis

In line with the research questions and objectives of this study, the following research hypotheses will be tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and quick service delivery by the company.
2. There is no significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company.

Literature Review

Armstrong (2009) states that people will use their energy to subvert the ends sought by the firm if management fails to recognize their existence. There is growing evidence that firm performance rests increasingly on the involvement of workers in managerial decision (Arthur, 1994; Daft & Lewin, 1993; Deninson & Mishra, 1995; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999). Scholars have argued that employee involvement contributes to organizational efficiency because it has the capacity to enhance the quality of decision making by increasing the inputs and promotes commitment to the outcomes of the decision making process in the workplace (Markey, 2006).

James, Debra, and Laurie (2006) reported that while participation in workplace, decision making may have positive effects on employees' attitudes toward their work, it may have less impact on employee performance. In addition, the cost of implementing participatory management systems may far exceed the actual return. However, the commentators provide numerous professional examples to suggest that participation in workplace decision-making in government setting not only improves employees' attitudes toward work, but also increases their performance and make them more efficient. Participation tends to improve motivation because employees feel more accepted and involved in the situation. Their self-esteem, job satisfaction and cooperation with management may also improve. The results often are reduced conflict and stress, more commitment to goals, and better acceptance of change. Turnover and absence may be reduced because employees feel that they have a better place to work and that they are being more successful in their jobs. The act of participation in itself establishes better communication as people mutually discuss work problems.

Connor (1992) identified that by being personally and meaningfully involved, beyond just doing assigned tasks, employees are said to be more motivated and productive. Hossain (1992) revealed that job security is a de-motivating factor. However, the study of Bashir et al (2003) reported that job security proves as a significant factor for both government and non-government enterprise. Participation also seems to help satisfy the awakening employee need for meaning and fulfillment at work. According to Newstrom & Davis (2004), the use of participative practices is noteworthy. The educational level of the workforce often provides workers with unique capacities to be added creatively to work problems. These employees also acquire a greater desire for influencing related decisions and an expectation that they will be allowed to participate in these decisions. Robinson (2004) states that productivity is a performance measure that includes both efficiency and effectiveness. Effective and high performing organizations have a culture that encourages employee involvement hence employees are more willing to get involved in goal setting, decision-making or problem solving activities that results in higher employee performance.

Participatory Decision Making and Employee commitment for quick delivery

Most scholars argue that employee commitment to the goals of an organization is paramount for successful business. Guest (2001) explains that employee commitment refers to congruence between the goals of the individual employee and the organization whereby the individual identifies with and extends effort on behalf of the goals of the organization including quick delivery of satisfactory service that attract more patronage. According to Guest & Hoque (1994), most employees commit themselves to decisions and goals that they have taken part in formulation. Employees feel that they have their own goal and objective; that they have been actively involved in formulation. Employee involvement ensures that workers commit themselves to the responsibility and duties assigned to them. Wagner (1994) explains that employees commit themselves to goals of organization if they are allowed to come up with ideas and strategy for the organization. Workers perform their duty not only because they are supposed to do that, but because they have passion and commitment towards the task. All of this can be achieved only if companies can take the initiative and involve employees in decision-making, goal formulation and policy formulation of the company.

According to a research conducted in Britain by Ackers, Wilkinson & Dundon (2006), most employees were asked to commit themselves to company goals when they were actively involved in formulation process. The report further shows that employees who were not actively involved in decision-making were less likely to commit themselves to the goals of the company. This clearly shows that employee involvement plays a critical role in daily management and running of organization. Without proper mechanism to commit employees to the goals of the company, it would be hard for the organization to meet their target. The issue of employee committing themselves to projects and responsibility has a great effect on company's efficiency and work output (Yousef, 1998).

Participatory Decision making and formation of efficient Workforce by the company

James, Debra, and Laurie (2006) reported that while participation in workplace decision making may have positive effects on employees' attitudes toward their work, it may have less impact on employee performance. In addition, the cost of implementing participatory management systems may far exceed the actual return. However, the commentators provide numerous professional examples to suggest that participation in workplace decision-making in government setting not only improves employees' attitudes toward work, but also increases their performance and make them more efficient. Changes in the nature of organization and task environment, employees' desires to participate in workplace decision making, as well as rapid advances in technology facilitating such exchanges, may make participation an even more important determinant of performance in the future.

Participation tends to improve motivation because employees feel more accepted and involved in the situation. Their self-esteem, job satisfaction and cooperation with management may also improve. The results often are reduced conflict and stress, more commitment to goals, and better acceptance of change. Turnover and absence may be reduced because employees feel that they have a better place to work and that they are being more successful in their jobs. The act of participation in itself establishes better communication as people mutually discuss work problems. Management tends to provide workers with increased information about the organization's finances and operations, and this sharing of information allows employees to make better-quality suggestions (Newstrom & Davis, 2004).

Bashir (2003) identified that the job design, structure and its relation to the motivation and performance of the employees in insurance industry sector of Bangladesh. A redesigned interview schedule study was conducted on 40 executives of various levels of two insurance companies in the private and public sectors. The finding of the study reveals that executives of the insurance sector in Bangladesh are motivated in their job in terms of task variety, clearly defined authority and responsibility, accountability, information processing, internal co-ordination and job security.

Hyman & Thompson (2003) explain that employee involvement has significantly reduced industrial dispute in many organizations. This is attributed to better communication between management and employees. Most organizations have given employees freedom to express issues that affect them both in the workplace and at home. Some organizations have gone a step further to provide psychologist to assist workers to deal with work pressure. This has significantly reduced the cases of strike in many organizations around the world. Most organizations have come up with strategy that allows them to communicate directly with employees without involving trade unions.

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METHOD

Research Design

The study was designed to use survey research method in which, the opinion of the workers and management of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar were sought on the extent of participation of employees in managerial decisions. This design method was considered suitable because of its cross-sectional approach that ensures seeking the views of individual employees, supervisors, and managers. It provides generalized statistics when data are abstracted from the number of individual cases. The method used both exploratory and explanatory designs.

Area of Study

The focus of this research was to appraise the participation of employees in managerial decisions towards the formation of efficient workforce of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar. Thus, the research is limited to System Metal Limited Calabar. All discussions, findings and recommendations are therefore, limited to this organization.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of all the staff of System Metal Industries Limited, Calabar. They are four hundred and twenty seven (427) according to the nominal roll of the company.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

To eliminate biases, the simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of respondents in the company. In doing this, the researcher mathematically obtained a ratio of the sample size against the population. This gave an approximation of 207. This means that every 2nd name on the nominal roll was picked as respondent.

Instrumentation

The main instrument used in this study was research questionnaire titled “**DECISION MAKING PARTICIPATION AND PRODUCTIVITY** Questionnaire” (DMPPQ). The questionnaire was made up two sections, sections A and section B. Section A was used to collect information on personal data of the respondents while the company made up section B of the questionnaire of three variables such as employees’ participation in managerial decision on quick service delivery and formation of efficient workforce.

Validation of the Instrument

The supervisor and a statistical consultant with experience in test assessed the validity of the instrument and measurement to confirm the relevance of each item in relation to the objectives of the study, the hypotheses to be tested as well as the comprehensibility of each item in relation to the understanding levels of the respondents. Based on such assessment, the instrument was validated by effecting necessary corrections, examining the coverage and format, ascertaining clarification of ideas and appropriateness of the items.

Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from the one developed by (Fourie 1989) that was successfully utilized on staff participation in decision making in four banks in South Africa. The questionnaire was first subjected to a pilot study with thirty (30) respondents using test and re-test method within a gap of two weeks between the two test administrations. The test scores were collated and subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis using SPSS. The result yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.75. In the words of Nunnally (1978), a questionnaire with Cronbach Alpha coefficient of at least 0.72 is acceptable. The instrument was therefore, accepted to be reliable in producing accurate results.

Method of Data Analysis

Considering the nature of data collected as well as the hypotheses formulated for the research, the statistical methods adopted were simple percentage frequency statistic, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) denoted by ‘r’.

Result and Discussion

Data Presentation

The copies of the questionnaire administered on the respondents and their rate of response are shown in Table 1 & 2

Table 1: Questionnaire Administration

Respondents' Gender	Number of Questionnaire Administered	Number Returned	Percentage (%) Return
Male	135	135	65**
Female	72	72	35*
	207	207	100%

****The highest percentage frequency**

*** The least percentage frequency**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 1 shows that out of the one hundred (207) respondents, (65%) were male, while (35%) were female. All of the respondents (135 male and 72 female) filled and returned their questionnaire in a useable form.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents According to Age.

Age Bracket	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
21 – 30 Years	54	26
31 – 40 Years	85	41**
41 – 50 Years	64	31
51 and Above	4	2*
	207	100%

****The highest percentage frequency**

*** The least percentage frequency**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

From table 2, it is shown that 26% of the respondents were between the age bracket of 21 – 30 years. 41%) of them were between 31-40 years. Those between 41 – 50 years were 31% and those above 50 years of age were just 2%. This is an indication that the majority of the staff who were our respondents were mature enough to be able to respond independently to the questions asked in the questionnaire.

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between employees’ participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was performed on the data (see table 3).

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between employees’ participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company.

Variable	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Employees’ participation in managerial decision(X)	2449	29417		
			38364	0.87*
Formation of efficient workforce By the company (Y)	2578	32576		

***Significant at 0.05 level; df = 205; N=207; Critical r-value = 0.138**

The above table 3 presents the obtained r- value (0.87). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value at 0.05 levels with 205 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.87) was greater than the critical r-value (0.138). Hence, the result was significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is significant relationship between employees’ participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between employees’ participation in managerial decision and quick service delivery by the company. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was performed on the data. (See table 4).

Table 4

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between employees’ participation in managerial decision and quick service delivery by the company.

Variable	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Employees’ participation in managerial decision (X)	2449	29417		
			37953	0.95*
Quick service delivery by				

the company (Y) 2610 333510

*** Significant at 0.05 level; df = 205 ; N=207 ; Critical r-value = 0.138**

The above table 4 presents the obtained r- value (0.95). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r value at 0.05 levels with 205 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.95) was greater than the critical r-value (0.138). Hence, the result was significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and quick service delivery of the company.

Discussion of the Findings

The result of the data analysis in table 3 was significant due to the fact that the obtained r-value (0.87) was greater than the critical r-value (0.138) at 0.05 level with (205) degree of freedom. This result implies that there is significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce by the company. The significance of the result is in agreement with the findings of James, Debra, and Laurie (2006) who reported that while participation in workplace decision making may have positive effects on employees' attitudes toward their work, it may have less impact on employee performance. In addition, the cost of implementing participatory management systems may far exceed the actual return. However, the commentators provide numerous professional examples to suggest that participation in workplace decision making in government setting not only improves employees' attitudes toward work, but also increases their performance and make them more efficient. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

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Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research, the researcher wishes to conclude that workers are remarkably involved in decision making in companies in Calabar. Besides that, it can be concluded that there is significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and formation of efficient workforce. Finally, it is a fact that there is significant relationship between employees' participation in managerial decision and quick service delivery of the company.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. The employees should be motivated by the Management in order for the former to give their best; thereby raising the company's achievement to the high level of performance, efficiency, productivity and profitability and rapid growth.
2. They should be given the opportunity to participate in decision making in order to ensure the implementation of quick service and delivery.
3. Employees should be given opportunity to participate in decision making in order to ensure the implementation of the decision made.
4. There should be an involvement of each head of department in the management meeting in order to accommodate the interest of all workers in the meeting and promote the accomplishment of the organizational goal.

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