

TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY APPROACHES AS DETERMINANTS OF JOB
PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN
RIVERS STATE.

By

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the teamwork and leadership competency approaches as determinants of job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A correlational survey design was adopted for this study carried out in Rivers State. The population of this study consisted of one hundred and twenty-two(122) business education lecturers. The sample size for this study consisted of one hundred and twenty-two (122) business educators in Rivers State. Census sampling technique was adopted for this study. Two (2) sets of questionnaires titled 'Competency-Based Management Approaches of Business Educators Questionnaire (CBMABEQ)' and 'Job Performance of Business Educators Questionnaire (JPBEQ)' were collected for the study. The researcher employed face and content validity methods. A test-retest method of reliability was adopted in this study. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to analyze and answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses that were formulated at 0.05 level of significance. The study showed that there is a strong positive relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in Rivers State. Also it was observed that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in Rivers State. The study concluded that for business educators to be at their best performance and achieved higher productivity, it becomes imperative that their competency in terms of teamwork and leadership competency, approaches need to be acquired and developed on a regular basis in order to be competitive in this 21st century work environment. One of the recommendations made was that management of institutions should constantly assign lecturers to work in a team in order to strengthen the force of cohesion and sustain the existing high relationship with their job performance.

KEY WORDS: Teamwork, Leadership, Competency Approaches, Job Performance, Business Educators, Tertiary Institutions, Rivers State

Introduction

Competency-based management "is the practice of identifying the key skills necessary for employees to reach target performance in their specific roles, and then developing and optimizing those skills to best align with the business strategy of the organization". It is the application of a set of competencies to the management of human resources to achieve both excellence in performance and results that are relevant to the organisation's business strategies.

The most fundamental elements in the success equation for the educational sector now are management and competency. These are the basic elements that differentiate today's educational landscape from the past. Management is the world of action, it is the world that requires timely and appropriate actions. A cohesive workforce is an asset to every organization because competency in teamwork appears to be imperative to academic staff job performance. Sanyal and Hisam (2022) consider teamwork as a strong power given by a group of individuals to make better decisions efficiently. Team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities while working in team. Teamwork has the ability to enable the members of the team to have a high level of emotional security, self-confidence and the ability to plan and decide with others positively. Also, it helps in creating a healthy work environment with workable agendas, creative activities, positive strategies and values. On the other hand, the absence of teamwork's concepts and strategies can lead to occupational failure, disappointment, low morale and poor productivity which threaten the entity of the organization. The employees who work in an organization that does not have a strong concept of teamwork, usually fail to deliver the expected results and to achieve the goals and visions of that organization. The work performance of the team is higher than individual performance when the work requires a broader scope of knowledge, judgment and opinion. The question is, does teamwork competency has any relationship with job performance of business educators?

Furthermore, another area of competency that drives home the focus of this study is leadership styles. Several studies have revealed that academic staff leadership styles have greater impact on their performance. This affects students' project supervision, teaching, learning, community service and students' evaluation. There are various leadership styles of academic staff ranging from authoritarian, democratic and laissez faire, etc. Should competencies on these inevitable areas that will enhance employees' job performance be vigorously pursued? Manani and Ngrui (2023) consider leadership as being about getting things done in the right way, which can be used to motivate employees. In other word, to achieve these goals, the leader must strive to gain the employees' trust and make them followers. To gain their trust and properly accomplish their tasks for the university organization, the employees must be motivated, especially by upgrading of their competencies. Both the employees and the leaders help one another to attain high levels of morality and motivation. However, the relationship between competency in leadership styles and academic staff job performance is yet to be ascertained.

Statement of problem

This study was prompted by the State of Affairs in public tertiary institutions which have caused the institutions to come under heavy criticism. Several questions have been asked by the critics particularly in the following areas: why will tertiary institutions who fought seriously for autonomy now allow these activities to be influenced by the politics of the external environment even to the point that the appointment of the institutions administrators is now based on political affiliation not on competency? Why will the institution chief executive be hired, fired and replaced without strict adherence to the principle of succession planning which competency-based management stand for and whose institution ought to be a strong advocate? This is said to cause internal rancor and conflict within the institution system.

Research Objective

1. The relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State;
2. The relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State;

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Research Hypothesis

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Competency

The concept of competency has gone from a new technique to a common practice in the 49 years since it was first proposed as a critical differentiator of performance (Boyatzis, 2018). Today, almost every organization with more than 300 people uses some form of competency-based human resources management concepts such as competency. Mansfield in Armstrong (2019) defines competency as “an underlying characteristics of a person that will result in effective or superior performance”.

Boyatzis (2018) describes competency as “a capacity that exists in a person that leads to behaviour that meets the job demands within the parameters of the organisational environment, and that, in turn brings about desired results”. There are three major classes of competencies needed for effective job performance, namely: behavioural competencies, technical competencies, and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) (Armstrong, 2019). Behavioural competencies define behavioural expectations that are the types of behaviours acquired to deliver results under such headings as team working; communication; leadership; decision making; etc. They are sometimes known as ‘soft skills’. On the other hand, technical competencies define what people have to know and be able to do (knowledge and skills) to carry out their roles effectively, hence are related to either generic roles (groups of similar roles), or to individual roles (role-specific competencies).

An easy definition of competency is that it is something one needs to be able to do well in a specific job role. In order to demonstrate competence, workers must be able to perform certain tasks or skills with a required level of proficiency. Competency is broken down into specific skills or tasks, each skill or task can be described in terms of what it looks like – specific behaviours at different levels of proficiency. To achieve competence in particular job, a person should be able to perform various tasks or skills at a target proficiency level. A

competency model encompasses all the competencies, tasks and skills, behavioral examples, and proficiency requirements for a particular job. It focuses on factors the organization has marked “critical” to achieving the corporate strategy (Ogbuji & George, 2022).

Job Performance of Business Education

Employee's work related performance is multi-dimensional and critical for organizational success and effectiveness. Job performance of the workers determines the overall performance of the organization. No organization can rise above the aggregate productivity of its workforce, hence Lee and Tan (2022) describe work performance as synonymous with behaviour people put at work that can be observed and measured in terms of each individual's experience or level of contribution. George in Lee and Tan (2022) indicate that performance can be viewed as “an evaluation of the results of a person's behaviour which includes determining how well or poorly a task has been completed”.

Performance provides a comprehensive picture of subordinate workplace behaviour, it is individual's success criteria in their work which is usually calculated as a personal output rate or evaluated as the success rate compared to expectations of the organization (Gunu & Oladepo, 2022). Gunu and Oladepo (2022) consider human performance as a result of the action set to achieve pre-specified goals based on a specific standard. This may include actions or behaviour of non-observable mental processing Owhem (2021) opined that performance refers to the degree of achievement and completion of the task of the business educators, it reflects the way to achieve it, or how the individual perform the job requirements.

According to Wang (2023), job performance is the output records of a specific job or activity at a particular time. Job performance is the result of specific function or activities of workers in a given period of time, it is identical to productivity. In the judgment of Cannice and Koontz (2018), productivity is the output-input ratio within a time period with due consideration for quantity, the scholars emphasize that performance can only be meritoriously measured if administrators of university set standard for achievement to academic staff.

Specifically, Onoyase (2022) defines business educators job performance using the outcome dimension, thereby describing it as the extent to which academic staff members achieve educational outcomes expected of them. Taking the process dimension adopted in this present study, Victor and Babatunde (2021) describe business educators job performance as the degree to which they complete their teaching responsibilities, which include lecture planning, research, and community service. Although these researchers' approach is used in this present study, because they related the process dimensions of business educators job performance to motivation but not instructional leadership. According to McCarthy (2018), lecture planning focuses on using the content outline of the assigned course unit(s) and the learning objectives it seeks to achieve to search for and select relevant subject matter for a particular lecture,

segmenting this subject matter into specific content sections and subsections, and determining which subject matter to cover within the allocated time. This author continued to show that lesson planning involves determining relevant teaching/learning materials and a pedagogical method to use in order to effectively deliver the subject matter in a manner that cultivates and maintains students' attention, interest, and participation necessary to realizing set learning objectives.

Public Tertiary Institution

Tertiary institutions like the universities are the highest level of tertiary institutions, which offer highest level of training to the award of Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate Degrees, They are broadly seen as educational institutions for higher learning that typically includes an undergraduate, college and graduate schools in various disciplines (Ben-David in Akuegwu, 2019). Tertiary institutions as organizations engage in the advancement of knowledge through teaching, training and examining students in a variety of scholarly, scientific and professional fields. Intellectual pursuits define the highest prevailing levels of competence in these fields, they provide opportunities for members of their teaching staff and for some of their students to conduct original research and further pursuit of academic laurels.

In the view of Obed (2023), basically, tertiary institutions exist to accomplish triple mandates as their core functions which include: knowledge generation (research function), knowledge transmission (teaching function) and knowledge application (community service). FRN (2014) considers the purpose of the universities as enshrined in the National Policy on Education as educational system established to impact positively on societal development through their objectives (purposes) which include: contribute to national development through high level of manpower training; provide high quality career counseling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare individuals with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; etc.

According to Okoli and Ubogu (2021), tertiary institution from their origin are centres of excellence, instrument for transformation and modernization, they are bound to dispel ignorance, raise men and women of dignity given to learning and knowledge, and to meet international standard. Edogun in Chiadi (2020) noted that globally, universities were designed to carry out specific functions which are to create knowledge, promote, advance, and transfer knowledge through the act of teaching, research and innovation in diverse areas. This implies that the production of knowledge is the core function and mission of the universities most especially in the new century.

Teamwork Competency Approach and Job Performance of Business Educators

Team-working is rapidly becoming the preferred practice in many organisations as traditional corporate hierarchies give way to flat, multi-skilled working methods. Managing teams is an indispensable and practical guide to leading teams with expertise, covering areas defining the skills required to

complete a project, establishing trust between individuals within a team, and maximizing the performance of that team. A true team is a living, constantly changing, dynamic force in which a number of people come together to work. Team members discuss their objectives, assess ideas, make decisions, and work towards their targets together. In the university, teamwork strengthens the force of cohesion among the academic staff and enhances their job performance.

Sanyal and Hisiam (2021) sees a team as a group of individuals who work collectively to achieve the same purposes and goals to provide an excellent quality of service. The educational experts describe teamwork as a strong power given by a group of individuals to make better decisions efficiently. Team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities while working in team. Teamwork has the ability to enable the members of the team to have a higher level of emotional security, self-confidence and the ability to plan and decide with others positively. Also, it helps in creating a healthy work environment with workable agendas, creative activities, positive strategies and values.

On the other hand, the absence of teamwork's concepts and strategies can lead to occupational failure, disappointment, low morale and poor productivity which threaten the entity of the organization. Igbojekwe et al. (2021) affirmed that employees, who work in an organization that does not have a strong concept of teamwork, usually fail to deliver the expected results and to achieve the goals and visions of that organisation. The presence of teamwork concept is a necessary rule to help the employees in working together towards common aims and goals creatively. The work performance of the team is higher than individual performance when the work requires a broader scope of knowledge, judgment and opinion.

Similarly, Mustafa and Njoku (2019) view teamwork as the extent to which members have a positive attitude towards working in a team, this is an essential aspect of teamwork. Such an attitude reflects the level of an individual's willingness to work with others in a cooperative manner, and his or her commitment to group's goals and interpersonal relationships.

Besides many other factors, team composition has been identified as a key factor that influences team performance. The educational scholars further explained that team composition not only questions what individual members bring to the group in terms of skill, ability, experience, role etc. but also whether these individual capabilities combine to result in higher performance for the team as a whole forming in synergy. Recently team-work has been brought into the front burner because of its role in enhancing job performance. In view of this, literature that has focused on design factors points at aggregated member characteristics, member heterogeneity and team size as categories associated with team composition.

Leadership Competency Approach and Job Performance of Business Educators

Another area of competency that drives home the focus of this study is leadership styles, several studies have revealed that academic staff leadership styles have greater impact on their performance. This affects students' project supervision; teaching; learning; community service; students' evaluation; etc.

There are various leadership styles of academic staff ranging from authoritarian, democratic, and laissez faire, etc. Competencies on the inevitable areas that will enhance employees' job performance must be vigorously pursued. Manani and Ngrui (2023) consider leadership as being about getting things done the right way, which can be used to motivate employees. In other word, to achieve organisation'slofty goals, the leader must strive to gain the employees' trust and make them followers. To gain their trust and properly accomplish their tasks for the university organization, the employees must be motivated, especially by upgrading of their competencies. Both the employees and the leaders help one another to attain high levels of morality and motivation.

Ibrahim (2017) opined that Nigerian organisations generally, and particularly tertiary institutions have suffered leadership problems that have come to the fore (front burner) in recent times. These problems manifest themselves in form of organizational politics; power tussle; insubordination; tribalism; suppression; etc. In some cases however, a lack of conceptual clarity of the term leadership magnifies these problems. For instance, a common practice, predominantly in universities and other academic institutions, when the organisation fails to achieve its objectives, the employees will blame the leaders in some cases. In other cases, when an organization fails, the leader blames the employees. However, the success or failure of an organisation is supposed to be shared by leadership namely; the leader, the followers and the situation/environment. "When leadership, comprising these tripartite variables fail, it leads to low' productivity (low job performance), low profitability, high employee turnover, low job satisfaction, etc. The net effect of all these is low institutional performance".

According to Ephraim et al. (2020) "leadership is a social influence process that seeks to elicit cooperation and support of individuals towards actualization of some set goals". The process of leadership is a continuously evolving concept that changes with the context and era of its essence. From the core of human existence, family, leadership plays a vital role in assuring stability and harmonious growth. Filtering into the wider scope of human existence, the society thrives on effective leadership as a pilot for cohesiveness among habitants. At the helm of leadership processes sits the leader; an individual who influences individuals to win their support and cooperation at achieving some set goals. "The quality and effectiveness of leadership processes rely heavily on the systemic embodiment of leadership and the strategic fit of the leader".

Principally, this research has its core direction in leadership styles as they impact performance in institutions of academic learning, this is because leadership style, as a concept has been variously defined by many scholars. It should be noted however, that leadership styles are as many and diverse as there are definitions and concepts of leadership. Different researchers and academicians alike have posited different leadership styles opining that every leader in every organisation performs certain roles/tasks for the smooth operation of the organisation and improvement of organisational performance.

The manner in which the leader performs these roles and directs the affairs of the organisation is referred to as his/her leadership style.

Some leaders are more interested in the work to be done than in the people they work with, whilst others pay more attention to their relationship with subordinates than the job. The leader's emphasis on either the task or human relations approach is usually considered central. Specialists in many fields are concerned with institutional performance including strategic planners; operators; finance; legal; and institutional performance. Performance in different scopes is measured adopting certain set of parameters as benchmark to rate a subject (individual, group or organisation). Many studies conducted on institutional performance view it as a process of establishing shared understanding about institutions' outputs to leadership style.

Methodology

Correlation survey design was adopted for this study. This study was carried out in Rivers State. The population of this study consisted of one hundred and twenty-two(122) business education lecturers. The sample size for this study consisted of one hundred and twenty-two (122) business educators in rivers state. Census sampling technique was adopted for this study. Two (2) sets of questionnaires titled 'Competency-Based Management Approaches of Business Educators Questionnaire (CBMABEQ)' and 'Job Performance of Business Educators Questionnaire (JPBEQ) were collected for the study. The researcher employed face and content validity methods. A test-retest method of reliability was adopted in this study. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to analyze and answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses that were formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Research Questions and Hypothesis

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Analysis of Responses to Research Question One

		Teamwork CompetencyApproach	Job Performance
Teamwork CompetencyApproach	Pearson Correlation	1	.852**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.852**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	122

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 1 yielded a correlation value of .852 on the respondents' view about the relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient ($r = .852$) represents a strong positive relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators. Hence, this showed that if teamwork competency approach is acquired, job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers States would be high. This finding is in agreement with Sanyal and Hisiam (2021) who sees a team as a group of individuals who work collectively to achieve the same purposes and goals to provide an excellent quality of service.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Analysis of Responses to Research Question Two

		Leadership Competency Approach	Job Performance
Leadership Competency Approach	Pearson Correlation	1	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.763**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	122

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 2 presents a correlation value of 0.763 on the respondents' view about the relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient ($r = .763$) represents strong positive relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators. Hence, this shows that if leadership competency approach is acquired, job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State would be high. This finding is in line with the assertion of Manani and Ngrui (2023) who considers leadership as being about getting things done the right way, which can be used to motivate employees.

Presentation of Null Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient between Teamwork Competency Approach and Job Performance

		Teamwork Competency Approach	Job Performance
Teamwork Competency Approach	Pearson Correlation	1	.852**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.852**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	122

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

Table 3 presents the correlation between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The p-value ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$) depicts a significant relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between teamwork competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4: Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient between Leadership Competency Approach and Job Performance

		Leadership Competency Approach	Job Performance
Leadership Competency Approach	Pearson Correlation	1	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.763**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	122

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

Table 4 present the correlation between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The p-value ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$) depicts a significant relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between leadership competency approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Conclusion

The study considered competency-based management approach and job performance of business educators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, it can be deduced that for business educators to be at their best performance and achieved higher productivity, it becomes imperative that their competency in terms of teamwork and leadership competency, approaches need to be acquired and developed on a regular basis in order to be competitive in this 21st century work environment.

Recommendations

1. Management of institutions should constantly assign lecturers to work in a team in order to strengthen the force of cohesion and sustain the existing high relationship with their job performance.
2. Tertiary institutions administrators should ensure that high level of leadership competency among lecturers is unswervingly sustained by creating enabling environment for lecturers in order to use their leadership style to influence others positively.

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