

Employee's participation in decision making and workers commitment in selected telecommunication organizations in the Niger-Delta

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Abstract

This study was set up to examine the place of employee's involvement in decision making on worker's performance in telecommunication industry in the Niger Delta. The study was carried out using a sample of 329 respondents which cut across MTN, GLO and Airtel telecommunication companies operating in the Niger Delta Region Nigeria. The study adopted the use of questionnaire as the tool for data collection and descriptive statistics in the analysis of the data collected. The result of the study showed that participation in decision making has a nexus with employee commitment to organizational goals. Workers participation in decision making will besides committing them to organizational goals also enhance their productivity, employees in the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta Region do not participate in the decision making of their organizations and that participation in the decision making of their organization will enhance their commitment to their organization. The study also found that worker's participation in decision making will enhance a good work environment in the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta and that subordinates will put in their best if they contribute to the decision that concern their operation. The study therefore recommends that the telecommunication organizations should make employees participation in decision making as part of their company policy as this will enhance commitment, productivity and satisfaction as well as create a friendly working environment.

Keywords: Employee; Decision making; Participation; Workers commitment; Telecommunication

1. Introduction

In the age of global competition, it is very essential to identify and retain the efficient, competent and knowledgeable employees in organization by developing and maintaining an effective and efficient compensation management strategy targeted at overall employee performance [1].

There are attempts by many organizations today to identify innovative compensation management strategies directly linked to enhanced employee performance.

The relationship between employers and their employees, and the organization and its shareholders is expected to be mutually reciprocal. The employer expects employees to give their best in the areas of monitoring their performance, learning to develop themselves, adhere to rules and regulations in the performance of their assigned duties to increase productivity. They also expect their employees to be innovative and take initiative and address problems on their own.

Employees on the other hand are also looking up to the employer or management to provide the necessary tools and equipment they need to work with and also get fair compensation for the work they do and the other services they provide. Compensation management of which employee's participation is an integral aspect and employee performance

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plays an important role in organizations that want to reach their objectives and their goals. Employee's performance is a very important aspect in organizations that want to reach their objectives and their goals.

In this era of hyperactive environment, the formulation and implementation of traditional human resource management (HRM) strategies and practices are not enough to retain talented workforce. With the inclusion of more and more Generation X and Y employees in the workforce, utilization of these traditional retention strategies is becoming less effective to meet the requirements of these generations [2]. Organizations are compelled to find gateways to be more adaptive, accommodative, and cooperative as the challenges and pressures of competition in the global changing markets are nerve breaking and highly intense [3]. Taken in this context, combination of employee participation practices (e.g., delegation and consultation) and employee compensation can be a novel idea and unique methodology that could help organizations to achieve success and could outwit the competitors [4].

Employee retention is considered as the heart of organizational success. It is defined as "A process in which the employees are encouraged to remain with the organization for the maximum period of time or until the completion of the objectives" [5] The basic aim of employee retention strategies and practices is twofold within the organizations. One is to reduce employee turnover and, second, to considerably reduce the associated expenses of hiring and training and orientation of the new employees [6]. Organizations cannot forbid or lockout their employees from looking for more attractive and lucrative opportunities; instead, the purpose of the retention strategies is to make employees loyal for the time they stay with the organization. It is an observation that strategies like career aspirations, autonomy, delegation, involvement, and cooperative and supportive working environment could be the key factors of employee retention [7]. Employee consultation and delegation by managers is an immediate force, which influences their perception regarding work environment [8]. Managerial consultation, delegation, and encouragement are frequently viewed as variables that have effects on employee's performance and employee retention [9]. Thus, employee participation or involvement becomes a key aspect of organizational structure to achieve positive perceptions from employees and to increase efficiency and retention.

Organizations with effective employee participation practices (direct and indirect) have more positive attitudinal outcomes (commitment, job and pay satisfaction, retention). When employees have effective role in devising policies and decisions within their organization, leaving the organization can become difficult for them [10]. Studies conducted by [11] and [12] have shown that compensation has an indirect influence in employee retention. They also stated that salary or wage has a moderate influence on compensation. Whereas compensation satisfaction and transparency could have a direct influence on retention.

In a meta-analysis of 39 studies done by [13] which focused specifically on college students. the authors were interested in the effect of the use of financial rewards on the quality and quantity of performance. The study noted that the use of financial rewards is positively related to the quantity of performance but not its quality. In a 1986 research, [14], looked at the effect that employee's participation in the workplace processes and decision making have on their performance level. The study concluded that employees who perceive they are involved in decision making, or have a level of control over the job processes are 'more satisfied, more motivated, and more committed to the organization' than those who perceive lack of control or feel left out in decision making processes of the organization [15]. The state of the above situation with regards to Telecommunication industry in the Niger Delta is what this study is hinged on.

2. Methodology

The study area is the Niger Delta Region, which is made up of nine (9) states of Nigeria, namely, Abia, Akwa/Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States. The Region is known as the hub of oil and gas activities. The population of the study is one thousand eight hundred and forty - two (1,842) employees of MTN, Glo and Airtel distributed across all the major offices and retail outlets of the telecommunication companies stated above in Rivers, Bayelsa and Akwa/Ibom states as extracted from the annual publications of MTN, Glo and Airtel Nigeria in 2020. MTN has a total of 763, GLO 599 and AIRTEL 480 persons across the three states bringing to a total 1842. The multiple stage sampling technique was used to select the organizations for the study, the states of the study and the staff of the organization. The simple random sampling technique was used to select three out of the nine states in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. The lottery method was used for this purpose. Purposive sampling techniques was adopted to select three telecommunication organization which are MTN, GLO and AIRTEL that provide comprehensive telecommunication services.

To determine the sample size from the population of 1,842, the study adopted the Taro Yamane Formula for sample size determination and this gave a sample size of 329. Primary and secondary date sources were used for the study. The Likert type questionnaire structured to capture the relevant data which the study requires was administered at the

various offices and outlets of the companies. The questionnaire was designed with both open-ended and closed-ended questions to generate data from the respondents from offices and retail outlets of MTN, Glo and Airtel in Rivers, Bayelsa and Akwa Ibom states. In the distribution of the questionnaire, using the proportionate sampling technique, the distribution according to the states was determined. Thus; Rivers 145, Bayelsa, 69 and Akwa Ibom 116

A further distribution was done using the proportionate sampling technique to determine the distribution in relation to the individual telecommunication companies. In Rivers State, MTN 62, GLO 44 and Airtel 39, Bayelsa MTN 29, GLO 26 and Airtel 16 and in Akwa Ibom MTN 45, GLO 38 and Airtel 32. The study adopted descriptive statistics method for presentation and analysis of data.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1 Participation in decision making enhances Staff commitment to organizational goals

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	293	89.1
No	36	10.9
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Employees were asked if their participation in decision making of their organization will enhance their commitment to organizational goals. Their responses as displayed in table 1, showed that 293 respondents out of the 329 respondents affirmed that employee's participation in decision making will enhance their commitment to organizational goals, only 36 respondents disagreed. This then means, 89.1 percent of the employees in the telecommunication organizations are sure that if employees are allowed to participate in the decision making of the organization, their commitment to organizational goals will be grossly enhanced. It is therefore our finding that employee participation in decision making has a nexus with employee commitment to organizational goals. Workers participation in decision making will besides committing them to organizational goals also enhance their productivity. When workers are involved in the decision making of their organizations, they work extra hard to ensure that the goals as set by them in the organization are met. When employees have that level of independence in their organizations it spurs them to give their best. Their morale definitely will be high, their performance will improve, work place stressors will be minimized and there will be the feeling of job satisfaction. This is because the employees are involved in the making of the decisions that guide their operations in the organizations.

Table 2 Employees are involved in the decision making of my organization

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	46	14.0
Agree	59	17.9
Neutral	33	10.0
Disagree	122	37.1
Strongly Disagree	69	21.0
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The study probed deeper by asking the respondents of employees are involved in the decision making of their organizations. The 329 respondents responded as displayed in table 2, thus, 46 respondents strongly agree, 49 respondents agree, 33 respondents are neutral, 122 respondents disagree, while 69 respondents strongly disagree. This means that 31.9 percent of the employees agree that employee participate in decision making of their organizations, 10 percent are neutral while 58.1 percent of the employee disagree that employees participate in the decision making of their organizations. It is therefore the finding of this study that employees in the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta Region do not participate in the decision making of their organizations. This was attested to by 58 percent of the employees as evident in the questionnaires retrieved from the respondents. The employees of the

telecommunication organizations at the time of this study do not participate in the decision making of their organizations. This study encourages the telecommunication organizations to involve employees to participate in the decision making process because of the many benefits that is associated with employee's participation in decision making of their organizations. It is beneficial to the employee and the employer because workers on their own part now take decisions that guide their operations which will spur them to be more productivity because of the sense of belonging as a result of their involvement in the decisions.

Table 3 If given the opportunity I will like to participate in the decision making of my organization

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	105	31.9
Agree	162	49.2
Neutral	46	14.0
Disagree	16	4.9
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The respondents were asked if they were willing to participate in the decision making of their organizations, given the opportunity. Their responses are presented in table 3, where 105 respondents strongly agree, 162 respondents agree, 46 respondents were neutral, while 16 respondents disagree. This means, 82.1 percent of the employees have the willingness to participate in the decision making of their organizations. It is therefore the findings of this work that the employees of the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta are willing to participate in the decision making of their organizations. Over 50 percent of the employees are desirous to participate in the decisions that govern their actions and operations in their organizations. There is a clear sense of willingness amongst the employee of the telecommunications organization to participate in the decision making of their organizations. This study therefore encourages the telecommunication organizations operating in the Niger Delta Region to allow workers to participate in decision making of their organization. Participation by workers in decision making surely, will be beneficial to the people; it will also improve productivity of employees in the organizations.

Table 4 Participation in decision making will enhance employee commitment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	92	27.9
Agree	135	41.0
Neutral	56	17.2
Disagree	36	10.9
Strongly Disagree	10	12.0
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

They were further asked if their participation in decision making will enhance their commitment to their organizations, and as presented in table 4, 92 respondents strongly agree, 135 respondents agree, 56 were neutral, 36 respondents disagree while 10 respondents strongly disagree. This means that 68.9 percent of the employees agree that their participation in the decision making of their organization will enhance their commitment to their organization. This simply means that the employees of the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta, opined that, their participation in decision making of their organizations will enhance their commitment to their organizational goals. Employees will naturally be committed to what motivates them. The response as observed in table 4 has clearly displayed the relationship between participation in decision making and employee commitment. Once an employee is a part of decision making, he owns that decision so compliance is usually beyond 100 percent. The employees will do

everything to ensure such decisions are followed to latter. The work environment will have positive atmosphere, there will be general feeling of commitment which will lead to productivity and by extension the organizational goals are met.

Table 5 Participation in decision making will facilitate friendly work environment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	132	40.1
Agree	138	41.9
Neutral	33	10.0
Disagree	26	8.0
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The respondents were also asked if their participation in decision making will facilitate friendly work environment. Their responses are presented in table 5, 132 respondents strongly agree, 138 respondents agree, 33 respondents were neutral, while 26 respondents disagree that participation in decision making will facilitate friendly work environment. This means, 82 percent of the employees are of the opinion that worker's participation in decision making will enhance a good work environment in the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta. The work environment to a great extent determines the work behavior of employees. The workers spend great part of their life in the work environment; hence it has a lot of influence on the worker. If there are stressors in the work environment, they will generally affect the performance of the employees. By participating in the decision making of the organization, the issues that generate agitation in the work environment are discussed and taken care of at the level of decision making. And any further matters that arise are given consideration in subsequent decision making since the employees are part of the decision. Definitely employee participation in the decision making of the organization facilitates friendly work environment and employee's performance blossoms in the work friendly environment.

Table 6 Subordinates will put in their best if they contribute to the decision that concern their operations

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	141	42.9
Agree	152	46.2
Neutral	33	10.0
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	3	0.9
Total	329	100

Source: Field Survey

From the presentation in table 6, 141 respondents strongly agreed, 152 respondents out of the 329 respondents agree, 33 respondents are indifferent, while only 3 respondents disagreed to the statement that subordinates will put in their best if they contribute to the decision that concern their operations. This means, over 89 percent of the employees of the telecommunication organization that participated in this study affirmed that subordinates will put in their best if they contribute to the decision that concern their operations. On management model that has over the years worked very well is the Japanese Model "Bottom-Up". When the subordinates are consulted in matters that concern their operations before decision are taken, it makes them have that sense of belonging which propel them to put in their best in the job as well as enhances their productivity and desire to meet set organizational goals. This study therefore encourages telecommunication organizations operating in the Niger Delta Region to always reach out to the subordinates in decision related matters. The participation or perceived participation in the decisions that concern their work will definitely propel them to put in their best in the work environment, it will make them feel very important, boost their confidence, as well as motivate them to meet the goals.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that telecommunication organizations do not encourage employee participation in decision making in their organizations, and lack of participation will affect the commitment level, productivity, attendance, and general performance.

From the findings of the study, there study has shown that a relationship between compensation management and employee performance exist. The study also found that worker's participation in decision making will enhance a good work environment in the telecommunication organizations in Niger Delta and that subordinates will put in their best if they contribute to the decision that concern their operation.

The Niger Delta Region is the hub of multinational oil and gas business operations and by extension a competitive ground for all businesses, inclusive of the telecommunication organizations. For any business to thrive and compete favorably, it must have a workforce that is committed to delivering effectively.

Recommendations

Hence the study recommends as follows;

- Telecommunication organizations should make employee participation in decision making a part of their company policy as this will enhance commitment, productivity and satisfaction.
 - The involvement of employee in decision concerning the job they perform should be made paramount as this will give them the mindset that they are a part of the job and hence drive in them the consciousness to always deliver on set targets.
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Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest

Statement of informed consent

For this study consent was sought from the respondents who freely consented to participating in the study.

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