
Cognitive Satisfaction and Employee Performance of Telecommunication Companies in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study investigated the relationship between cognitive satisfaction and employee performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study had a population figure of three hundred (300) employees of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine the sample size of one hundred and seventy-one (171). The Bowley formula was used to distribute the structured questionnaire to the six different telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The employees responded via the 5- point likert scale. The test for hypotheses was done using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient aided with Statistical Package for Social Science version 23.0 which was used to determine the strength, direction and linear association between the study variables. The findings revealed that cognitive satisfaction has a positive and significant relationship with employee performance of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study concludes that cognitive satisfaction positively and significantly influences employee performance of telecommunication firms to a very high extent. Therefore, the study recommends that management of Telecommunication companies should encourage employees that believe in their sense of judgment, values, work role and behaviours with connection to the work.*

Keywords: *Cognitive satisfaction, Employee performance, task and contextual performance.*

INTRODCUTION

The most precious asset to an institute is its employee, so retaining employees in their jobs is necessary for all organizations (Ng'ethe, Iravo & Namusonge, 2012). The employees are regarded as the major business resources that facilitate the daily activities and operations of an organization. Many organizations have now recognized that human resource play an important role in gaining a competitive advantage in today's highly competitive global business environment (Maicibi, 2012). Many scholars and practitioners believe that well written and sound human resource policies result in better level of job satisfaction which ultimately improves organizational performance (Applebaum, Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg, 2000). It is therefore; very important to understand what makes human resources satisfied in knowledge enterprises for performance to be realized. Organizations that examine their human resource needs are more likely to succeed in devising appropriate human resource polices for their staff as compared to those that do not analyze their human resource needs. Similarly, Oluwafemi (2010), asserted that organizational effectiveness and efficiency depends on how effective and efficient the employees in the organization are. Employer's ability to comprehend employee's satisfaction as it relates to

schedules and daily responsibilities will impact greatly on employee productivity and performance. Spector (1997) as cited by Qasim, Cheema & Syed, (2012) maintains that analyzing employee satisfaction or needs offers a better picture on how strategies and policies should be devised, which makes it pertinent in drafting appropriate human resource policies, thus satisfactions and increasing organizational performance.

The term “employee performance” signifies individual’s work achievement after exerting required effort on the job which is associated through getting a meaningful work, engaged profile, and compassionate colleagues/employers around, Karakas (2010) as cited in (Pradhan and Jena, 2017). Employee work performance has always been a major challenge in organizational management and adopting effective ways to motivate employees to achieve and deliver higher job performance as well as increase the organizational competitiveness is the main objective of every business organization (Lee & Wu, 2011). Employees are the most valuable resource to any organization and it is important that they perform optimally. It translates into good service delivery and interaction which affect every area of the firm. To achieve this, firms need to make policies that will encourage employee performance. The demand of an organization’s service depends on the level of quality service received by the customers.

According to Mowday, Porter and Steers (2013), most employees of today have a high degree of job dissatisfaction which create attitudes that are undesirable on the job and in turn degenerate their performance ability and that of their working place as well.

Therefore, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined cognitive appraisal as an evaluative process that reflects a person’s subjective interpretation of an event. Individuals may evaluate a negative life event differently on the basis of their perception of situational demands of the stressors in relation to their personal coping resources. The negative life event may be perceived as a threat (seeing the events as threatening to life), a harm (seeing the events as damaging to life), or a challenge (seeing the events as an opportunity for growth). A few studies have examined the associations between people’s appraisals of a negative life event and their adjustment outcomes. For example, threat appraisal and challenge appraisal were positively associated with Posttraumatic growth.

Cognitive satisfaction on the other hand, is the positive emotional feeling state resulting from an employee’s job experience (Parker, 2008). It involves people’s attitudes, feelings or thoughts towards their organization, work, and workers, (Beer, 1964 as cited by Saleen, Majeed, Aziz & Usman, 2013). Positive and favourable attitudes towards the job depict job satisfaction, whereas negative and unfavorable attitudes towards the job depict job dissatisfaction (Qasim et al. 2012). Managers ought to understand how their workers feel and perceive their work conditions, in order to devise appropriate human resource policies and realized the best out of them. In service institutions, human resource management is a very critical component in realizing organizational goals. This is because the performance of such organizations is largely based on people’s skills, talents and levels of experience, unlike the production industry which is largely based on mechanized systems to achieve performance.

This study was also guided by the following research questions;

- i. How does cognitive satisfaction influence task performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- ii. How does cognitive satisfaction influence contextual performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?

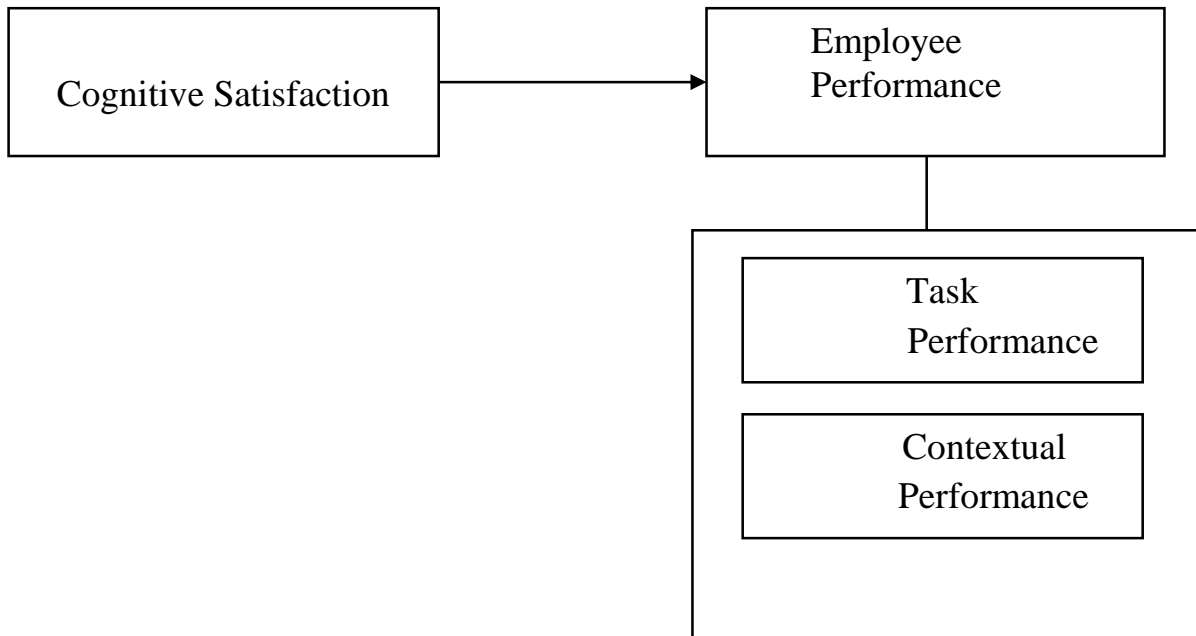


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework of Cognitive Satisfaction and Employee Performance

Source: Researcher's conceptualization (2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation or baseline theory for this study was anchored or drawn from the affective event theory. This theory going by Thompson and Phua (2001) was developed by Psychologist Howard and Cropanzano to explain how emotions and moods influence job satisfaction. The theory explains the linkages between employees' internal influence-cognitions, emotions, mental states etc., and their reactions to incidents that occurs in their work environment that affect their performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Wegge, Van Dick, Fisher, West and Dawson, 2006). The theory further proposes that affective work behaviours are explained by employee mood and emotions, while cognitive-based behaviours are the best predictors of job satisfaction. In addition, the affective events theory emphasized that positive-inducing and negative-inducing emotional incidents at work are

distinguishable and have a significant psychological impact upon employees' job satisfaction. This resulted in lasting internal and external affective reasons exhibited through job performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

According to Rolland and De Fruyl (2003), their research findings on personality in support of affective event theory shows that there are a number of factors that influence the theory. These are consciousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and extraversion. Finally performance feedback has been an important influence on employee affect. The type of feedback on performance provided by managers can affect employee performance and job satisfaction. It is clear from the explanation given by these scholars or researcher that, affect event theory has strong connection or link with cognitive satisfaction and employee performance in the organization.

Employee Performance

Employee performance has always been an important concern for managers of organizations (Kelidbari, Dizgah, & Yusefi, 2011). Similarly, employee performance is key edifice of an organization, therefore aspects that place the grounds for high performance must be scrutinized critically by the organizations for them to succeed (Abbas & Yaqoob, 2009). According to Lioa, Lu, Huang and Chiang (2012), in a study titled —The effects of internal marketing, job satisfaction and service attitude on job performance among high-tech has always been regarded as an important item in organizational management which defined job performance as workers' total performance in meeting the anticipated worth and achievement of tasks under the procedure and time requirements of the organization. Ahmad and Khurram (2011), also argue that employee performance symbolizes the broad belief of the personnel about their behaviour and contributions towards the achievement of the organization. According to Ahmad and Shahzad (2011), apparent employee performance embodies the whole belief of the employee about their conduct and contributions to the accomplishment of the organization and further stated that compensation practices, performance evaluation and promotional practices as a determinant of employee performance. Similarly, Anitha, (2013) defined employee performance as an indicator of financial or other outcome of the employee that has a direct connection with the performance of the organization as well as its achievement, further revealed that working atmosphere, leadership, team and co-worker relationship, training and career development, reward programme, guidelines and procedures and workstation wellbeing as well as employee engagement are major factors that determine employee performance.

Employee performance has been defined as the degree to which an employee executes the duties and responsibilities. Therefore, employee performance has been related to outcomes, results and accomplishments by candy and collective efforts and behaviours relevant to organizational goals, which are controlled by the employees. Researchers like Richard and Morrison in their study, however explained the concept of employee performance from a different perspective. According to their observation, employee performance cannot be defined in general performance criteria and it can be explained only in the context of organizational situations and perspectives. Scholars like Nyberg, Pieper and Treor and others have also related the employee performance issues to the organization culture. Richardson and Beckham in their studies on employee

performance issues in Canadian banking industry have noted that organizational performance framework plays important role in influencing employee performance. According to them, such performance framework includes opportunities of career growth, learning, cultural facilitators etc.

Task performance

Task performance is a contractual understanding between a manager and a subordinate to accomplish an assigned task (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Task performance focuses on performing role prescribed activities, downtime on lateness, tardiness, and absence or broadly the negative pole of time on task, interpersonal on helping others, teamwork ratings, and pro-social behaviors and finally, destructive behaviors on compliance with rules (or lack of it), violence on the job, theft and other behaviors counter-productive to the goals of the organization (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, de Vet, & Van der Beek, 2014). Therefore, task performance as the behavior that is directly linked to completion of the job. Task related behaviors contribute to the technical core of the organization. Behavior in the domain of task performance is usually recognized as a formal requirement of an individuals' job. Job description often explicitly stipulates that the job holders must perform these activities. Task performance refers to the patterns of behaviors that are directly involved with all procurement of documentations until the returning of final outcomes by the employees and in producing goods or services that provide indirect support for the organization's core management and technical processes. Many researchers have identified the disruptive effect of different stressors on the task performance by the interruption on tasks with annoyance and anxiety (Bailey, Konstan, & Carlis, 2001). Employees are under a great deal of stress and due to many antecedents of stress such as overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility for people, participation, lack of feedback, keeping up with rapid technological change, being in an innovative role, career development, organizational structure and climate, and recent episodic events; one of the affected outcomes of stress is on task performance accordingly on job performance (Bashir & Ramay, 2010).

Contextual Performance

Contextual performance refers to the task and interpersonal behavior instruments are therefore considered. This means only behaviors that support the organizational, social and psychological environment were tested (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, de Vet, & van der Beek, 2014). Nevertheless, these existing scales show several limitations (Koopmans et al., 2014), which this study hopes to remedy by adding work engagement as another tool for measuring employee job performance. Therefore, employees that are engaged with their jobs have a low turnover intention level and a high job performance quality (Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012). Contextual performance can be defined or seen as an individual's performance, which maintains and enhances an organization's social network and the psychological climate that supports technical tasks. Furthermore, they explained that contextual performance includes activities that may not represent formal work tasks, although they still make an important contribution to the effectiveness of an organization.

According to Latifi (2012), Contextual performance is when an employee helps his/her colleagues voluntarily and spends more time and effort to fulfill his/her responsibilities better. It is actually a form of a voluntarily behavior which is beyond the content of job description. This behavior is intended, not prescribed, and an individual is satisfied by showing it. Contextual performance actually shows employees' tendency to participate and interact with other members of the organization. Van Scatter & Motowidlo's model is used to measure performance. According to this model, Contextual performance consists of two different behaviors which include: behaviors facilitating interpersonal relationships, and behaviors related to job dedication. Porter, Bigley, & Steers's (2003) conducted a survey or research which shows that creating an attractive working environment increases employees' contextual performance and commitment; this will finally lead to increase job utility.

Cognitive Satisfaction

Cognitive satisfaction is satisfaction that is based on a more logical and rational evaluation of the job conditions. Satisfaction is an appraisal based on comparisons which do not rely on emotional judgments, but instead are evaluations of conditions, opportunities, or outcomes. Job satisfaction scales which reflect job cognitions include questions about the nature of the job, the working conditions, and the opportunities to satisfy important needs. The questions ask for appraisals of the job, not descriptions of the feelings. The relationship between job satisfaction and cognitive factors is very strong. Job satisfaction stands on two important aspects they are, affective and cognitive factors. The present study concentrates only on cognitive factors which are related to autonomy, liberty and freedom in decision making given to the employees by the employer. Cognitions are often characterized as the content of thoughts or beliefs about an attitude object or statement of fact in question, usually in comparison to a standard or expectation (Samson and Nagendra Babu, 2017).

According to Samson and Nagendra (2017), cognitive factors are related to autonomy at work place. Usually, the people oriented business that is demand more of autonomy at their work place and they give less importance to emotions. The technically qualified employees demand more of liberty and autonomy at the work place, and if they feel that they have been deprived of this it results in absenteeism and may lead to turnover. Therefore, the companies must give due importance to cognitive factors related to job satisfaction.

Relationship between Cognitive Satisfaction and Employee Performance

Following review of literature, several studies have been conducted or carried out on job satisfaction and employee performance in so many contexts. It has also been conducted on job satisfaction and other study variables.

Empirically, a survey conducted by Rose, Kumar and Pak (2011) that was aimed at observing the connection between job satisfaction and employee performance by a sample of public service officials in Malaysia realize that organizational learning was establish to be positively of the same kind to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance.

In the same vein, Raza, Rafique, Ali, Mohsin, and Shah, (2015) also conduct a study with the goal of probing the connection between job satisfaction and sales representative's performance

with adaptive selling deeds of organizations, the study divulges that there is a strong association of sales person performance and job satisfaction.

Moreover, in the exertion of Vermeeren, Kuipers and Steijn (2014), in a study aims to observe the affiliation concerning public organizational performance and workers management with specific emphasis on job satisfaction as a credible mediating variable between organizational performance and Human resource management, on the impact of a supervisor's management smartness on the application of human resource (HR) practices. However, their discoveries direct that job satisfaction is positively related to employee performance.

Furthermore, in a study carried out by Al- Ahmadi (2009), in order to ascertain causes impelling performance of hospital nurses in Riyadh Region, Saudi Arabia came to the conclusion that job satisfaction has a positive correlation to employee performance.

Thus, a study that was carried out in the Nigerian educational institutions by Ogbulafor, (2011) suggested that the deteriorating level of employee performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions is fast becoming a serious threat to survival of universities in Nigeria which needs to be addressed urgently. It is therefore believed that employee performance is instrumental to organizational growth and profitability. The employees are regarded as the major business resources that facilitate the daily activities and operations of an organization. Nigerian Universities keep increasing and becoming a current issue especially among academics.

Currently, Nigerian Universities are notable areas of focus as regards to performance of employee. The concept of employee performance is preferably stressed lately in the viewpoint of transparent and managerial accountability, a performance measurement and managerial control. Moreover, the institution of higher education is commonly seen as official institutions well-known by the public with mandate to enrich awareness, rich philosophies and epitomes (Arikewuyo, 2012).

The foregoing argument gave rise to the following hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between cognitive satisfaction and task performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between cognitive satisfaction and contextual performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a Cross – sectional survey design. Cross – sectional research design involves a situation where data are collected at one point in time from a sample collected to represent a larger population. It is also a situation whereby the researcher goes to the field in terms of data collection just once (Ahiuazu & Asawo, 2016). This study also adopted a Quasi – experimental research design because it is survey oriented. The population of this study was drawn from six (6) registered Telecommunication companies that are known for voice call rather than only service providers. They include; MTN, GLO, AIRTEL, 9 MOBILE (Formally Etisalat), MTEL and SMILE as accredited by the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC). The target

population of three hundred (300) for this study which constitute the following units; Customer Care officer, Relationship Officer, Marketers, Admin Officers, Account Officers, System Analyst and Sales Representative including the contract staff of the firms also made up the unit scope of the study and it was obtained from the Human Resource Department. Taro Yamane formula was used to obtain the sample size of one hundred and seventy one (171). The structured questionnaire was the primary source of data generation. The reliability test for the instrument was done using the Cronbach Alpha co-efficient and all the items were greater than 0.7 as in the table below while the content validity was made use of. The study made use of the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient to determine the strength and direction of relationship between the study variables.

Table 1. Reliability Coefficients of the Variables

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
0.707	0.882	15

Source: Research data output, 2020

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation co-efficient tool at a confidence interval set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study. Specifically, the test covers hypotheses H₀₁ to H₀₂ which were bivariate and all stated in the null form. We have relied on the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation co-efficient statistic to undertake the analysis. The 0.05 significance level is adopted as criterion for the probability of either accepting the null hypotheses at (p>0.05) or rejecting the null hypotheses at (p<0.05).

Table 2: Correlation Matrix for cognitive and Measures of Employee performance

Correlations			Cognitive	Task
Spearman's rho	Cognitive	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.937**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	114	114
Task	Task	Correlation Coefficient	.937**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	114	114

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

Source: Research data output, 2020

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between cognitive satisfaction and task performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

From the result in table 2: It is shown that a positive relationship exists between Cognitive and Task Performance of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The *rho* value 0.937 indicates the strength and magnitude of this relationship and it is significant at $p= 0.000 < 0.01$.

Ha₁: There is a significant relationship between Cognitive and Task Performance of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix for Cognitive and Measures of Employee performance Correlations

		Cognitive	Contextual
Spearman's rho	Cognitive Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.935**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	114	114
Contextual	Correlation Coefficient	.935**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	114	114

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

Source: Research data output, 2020

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between cognitive satisfaction and contextual performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

From the result in table 3: It is shown that a positive relationship exists between Cognitive and contextual performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The *rho* value 0.935 indicates the strength and magnitude of this relationship and it is significant at $p = 0.000 < 0.01$.

Ha₂: There is a significant relationship between Cognitive and Contextual Performance of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the relationship between cognitive satisfaction and employee performance of telecommunication companies in Rivers State, Nigerian. The findings revealed that a significant relationship exist between cognitive satisfaction and employee performance of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria- using Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation coefficient tool and at a 0.05 significance level. The findings of this study confirmed that job satisfaction and its dimension/ manifest actually influence employee performance and it measures of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study also reinforce with other studies that was conducted on these variables.

Empirically, a survey conducted by Rose, Kumar and Pak (2011), that was aimed at observing the connection between job satisfaction and work performance by a sample of public service officials in Malaysia realize that organizational learning was establish to be positively of the same kind to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and work performance.

In the same vein, Raza, Rafique, Ali, Mohsin, and Shah, (2015) also conduct a study with the goal of probing the connection between job satisfaction and sales representative's performance with adaptive selling deeds of organizations, the study divulges that there is a strong association of sales person performance and job satisfaction. This study is also in congruence with the study carried out or conducted by Al- Ahmadi (2009), in order to ascertain causes impelling performance of hospital nurses in Riyadh Region; Saudi Arabia came to the conclusion that job satisfaction has a positive correlation to employee performance.

Similarly, a study that was carried out in the Nigerian educational institutions by Ogbulafor, (2011) suggested that the deteriorating level of employee performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions is fast becoming a serious threat to survival of universities in Nigeria which needs to be addressed urgently. It is therefore believed that employee performance is instrumental to organizational growth and profitability. The employees are regarded as the major business resources that facilitate the daily activities and operations of an organization.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concludes that cognitive satisfaction positively and significantly influences employee performance of telecommunication firms to a very high extent. Satisfaction equipped with tools, information, and support, people's skill base will improve, will increasingly make informed decisions and overall accomplish more, thereby benefiting the organization as a whole. This study thus, concludes that job satisfaction significantly influences employee performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Therefore, the study recommends that management of Telecommunication companies should encourage employees to believe in their sense of judgment, values, work role and behaviours with connection to the work. Employees should have sense of freedom or autonomy about how they do their own work and be able to influence organization strategy, administrative or operating outcomes at work place. In the same vein, leading to job satisfaction that significantly influences employee performance to improve organizational efficiency.

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