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THE CONNECTION BETWEEN STAFF TRAINING, WORK ENVIRONMENT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY IN RIVERS STATE

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This study investigated staff training and a positive work environment as predictors of organizational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. Two objectives, research questions, and hypotheses were formulated and guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design, with a population of 40,667 Civil Servants in the Rivers State Civil Service from 26 ministries. The sample of 381 Senior Management employees from 10 out of the 26 ministries of the Rivers State Civil Service, was derived from Taro Yemen's sampling formula. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample size, and a questionnaire titled Motivational Strategy and Organizational Productivity Questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of measurement and evaluation and then subjected to a pilot study to ascertain its reliability, which yielded an index of 0.821 through the Cronbach Alpha test. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings from this study showed, among others, that there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service, and there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The study concluded that staff training and a positive work environment are key drivers of organizational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The study recommended, among others, that the Rivers State Civil Service Commission should prioritize allocating resources towards staff training programs to continuously enhance employee skills and knowledge within the civil service.

Keywords: Staff Training, Positive, Work Environment, Predictors, Organizational Productivity

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Introduction

The Rivers State Civil Service plays a critical role in the socioeconomic development of the region. As such, the productivity of this organization is of utmost importance. The Civil Service is made up of various ministries, departments, and agencies, each with its specific mandate. These entities work together to ensure that the government's objectives are met and that those citizens receive the necessary support and assistance. From the education, health, and infrastructure sectors to social welfare and public administration, the Civil Service is responsible for a wide range of services that directly impact the lives of the people in Rivers State. The Civil Service needs to operate efficiently and effectively to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to the community. However, without being productive, the Rivers State Civil Service may struggle to deliver quality services and meet the needs of its citizens promptly. Therefore, it is crucial for the Civil Service to continually strive for improvement and innovation to best serve the people of Rivers State.

The productivity of any organization requires ongoing attention and effort, and the Rivers State Civil Service is no exception. Bhatti and Qureshi (2017) defined organizational productivity as the ability of an organization to efficiently utilize its resources to achieve its goals. Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2016) measured the efficacy of organizations in terms of their productivity. By implementing new technologies, streamlining processes, providing a positive work environment and investing in employee training, the Civil Service may enhance its productivity and ultimately provide better services to the community. However, when those ingredients are lacking, it may lead to inefficiencies, delays, and dissatisfaction among both employees and the public. Buttressing the foregoing, Glen (2014) explained that several factors including corruption, insufficient funding, and subpar infrastructure have hampered productivity in the Nigerian public sector. Therefore, it can be deduced that addressing these underlying issues is crucial to improve the overall performance of the Civil Service and better serve the needs of the community.

One measure that can be taken to improve organisational productivity in the public service is staff training. Amadi and Abraham (2021) defined staff training as the process of equipping employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively. By investing in staff training, organizations can enhance employee performance, boost morale, and ultimately improve overall productivity in the public sector. Eghonmwan (2018) further explains that staff training can take various forms, such as workshops, seminars, on-the-job training, and online courses. Additionally, continuous professional development opportunities can help employees stay updated with the latest industry trends and best practices. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the Rivers State Civil Service Commission can ensure that employees have the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles by implementing a comprehensive training program that covers a wide range of topics relevant to their positions. When such a program is in place, employees are more likely to feel motivated, engaged, and equipped to perform their duties effectively, but when the reverse is the case, they may become stagnant in their roles and struggle to keep up with the evolving demands of their jobs. This can ultimately lead to decreased productivity and job satisfaction within the organization.

Another measure that can be taken to improve organisational productivity in the public service is providing a positive work environment for employees. Agogbua et al. (2022) defined a positive work environment as one that promotes open communication, collaboration, and a supportive culture. This type of environment can boost

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employee morale, increase job satisfaction, and ultimately lead to higher levels of productivity and performance. Saidu, et al. (2021) explained that a positive work environment includes factors such as open communication, recognition of achievements, and opportunities for growth and development. When employees feel valued and supported in their workplace, they are more likely to be motivated to perform at their best and contribute to the overall success of the organization. On the contrary, a negative work environment characterized by poor communication, lack of recognition, and limited growth opportunities can lead to disengagement, low morale, and decreased productivity among employees.

As a result of the preceding discussion, it is possible to conclude that staff training and a positive work environment are critical components that can have a significant impact on organisational productivity; however, no known research in the context of the Rivers State Civil Service Commission has empirically validated this evidence. This is because the link between employee training and productivity is complex and multifaceted. As such, this study focused on staff training and the work environment as predictors of organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

Statement of the Problem

The Rivers State Civil Service is one of the largest employers in the state, with thousands of employees across various departments and agencies. However, there have been reports of inefficiency, corruption, and a lack of accountability within the civil service system. These issues have led to delays in service delivery and hindered the overall development of the state. In the Rivers State Civil Service, the lack of staff training and a positive work environment have been identified as significant factors contributing to reduced organizational productivity. Without proper training, employees may struggle to perform their duties effectively and efficiently, leading to decreased output and performance. Additionally, a negative work environment can impact employee morale, motivation, and overall satisfaction, which in turn can hinder productivity and organizational success.

Over the years, employees were provided with little or no staff training and a positive work environment; which has ultimately resulted in high turnover rates and low employee engagement. Issues of inefficiency, corruption, and a lack of accountability within the civil service system may be contributing factors to the negative work environment. This is because, when employees do not receive proper training or support, they may feel undervalued and unmotivated to perform at their best. Furthermore, without clear guidelines and consequences for misconduct, employees may feel empowered to engage in unethical behaviour, further perpetuating a toxic work culture. As a result, this study aims to explore the relationship between training, work environment, and organizational productivity to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to enhance employee performance and job satisfaction.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study investigated staff training and positive work environment as predictors of organizational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. ascertain the relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

2. investigate the relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

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Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service?

2. What is the relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service? **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

2. There is no significant relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

Literature Review Staff Training Development as a predictor of organizational productivity

Staff training development is one of the most effective motivational strategies for public service employees. Khawaja and Nadeem (2013) see training as a method for learning and growing that helps the individual, the group, and the organisation as a whole. Development is an effort to provide employees with skills that the organisation will require in the future (Chew, 2014). By providing employees with opportunities to learn new skills and acquire knowledge, they can improve their job performance and feel more confident in their abilities. This can lead to increased job satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment in their work. The purpose of training in the workplace is to develop the individual's skills and meet the organization's current and future manpower needs. To this study, the training-acquired knowledge and skills of workers are crucial in light of the need to enhance the productivity of the public civil service.

Positive work environment as a predictor of organizational productivity

The term "work environment" refers to the overall setting in which employees perform their duties. The work environment consists of physical conditions such as workplace temperature, equipment or instruments, computers, work processes or procedures, etc. The building's characteristics influence the work environment (Saidu, et al., 2021). Poor ventilation, offgassing of chemicals used in construction, and mould and mildew growth can all contribute to poor building syndrome. Vischer (2018) emphasized that a conducive workplace environment should be sufficiently conducive to assist employees in performing their jobs.

Organisational Productivity

According to Bhatti and Qureshi (2017), productivity can be viewed as a measure of performance that incorporates both efficiency and effectiveness. It is also known as the ratio of output or production capacity of an organization's employees. It is the relationship between the input and output quantities of a clearly defined process. The level of worker productivity is the primary determinant of an organization's performance, which determines its continued existence and growth. Worker productivity is a crucial factor in determining the success of any organization. In the context of the Nigerian public service, productivity can be described as the ability of government agencies to deliver quality services to citizens within a reasonable timeframe.

Githinji (2014) highlighted that the image of the public sector has been marred by low wages, high labour turnover, inadequate working conditions, poor performance, and low productivity. This problem has resulted in a lack of trust and confidence in government institutions, which ultimately hinders economic growth and development. To combat these issues, the government must prioritize the recruitment and retention of skilled and

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motivated employees, as well as invest in training and development programs that enhance their skills and knowledge. Additionally, the implementation of performance-based incentives can help motivate employees to work harder and increase their productivity levels.

Empirical Review

Amadi and Abraham (2021) investigated mentoring service and in-service training predictors of quality job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two corresponding null hypotheses were postulated in the study. The design engaged for the study was correlation survey design and the population of the study was 7,142 teachers out of which 393 teachers were sampled for the study using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Instruments used for the collection of data were a self-designed questionnaire tagged "Mentoring and In-service Training Scale (MITS) and Teachers" Job Performance Scale (TJPS)". The instruments were face and content validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation at, the University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach alpha and the coefficients for Mentoring Service and In-service Training were 0.88 and 0.81 respectively while TJPS was 0.87. On average, the reliability of MITS was 0.85 while TJPS was 0.87 and this implied that the instruments were reliable. Out of the 393 copies of the instruments administered, 391 copies were retrieved implying a 99% retrieval rate which was adequate for the study. The research questions raised were answered using simple regression while the hypotheses were tested with a t-test associated with simple regression at a 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that mentoring had a low, positive and significant relationship with teacher-quality job performance while in-service training had a high, positive and significant relationship with teacher-quality job performance in senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It was recommended that regular interactive sessions should be organized between old and beginning teachers to improve their job strategies and performance.

Shimelis and Mahesh (2021) investigated the impact of the working environment on the organizational performance of the Arjo Dedessa Sugar Factory (ADSF) and Finchaa Sugar Factory (FSF) in Ethiopia, including the physical working environment, work-related risks and injuries, as well as the psychological and social working environments. The two sectors have a total of 867 and 2824 employees, respectively. Using Pearson's correlation and linear regression analysis, the statistical program SPSS V 23.0 was used to examine and determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. According to the findings, ADSF employees have a more modest social work environment than FSF employees, while both firms' physical work environments contribute the least. The physical working conditions of both the ADSF and the FSF had a statistically significant impact on performance. Employees' psychological health has been suggested to be improved by changes in the social environment. ADSF organization performance = 0.173 + 0.250 physical work environment + 0.304 administrative work environment is the result. Organizational Performance of the FSF = 0.157 + 0.355 Working in a social environment.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design. The design was adopted since the study is concerned with examining the relationships between staff training, positive work environment, and organizational performance. Nwankwo (2013) added that correlational research designs are useful for identifying potential predictors of organizational productivity and understanding the connections between different variables.

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The population of this study consisted of 40,667 Civil Servants in the Rivers State Civil Service from 26 ministries (Source: Rivers State, Ministry of Finance, 2022). The sample of the study consisted of 381 Senior Management employees from 10 out of the 26 ministries of the Rivers State Civil Service. The sample was derived from the population of the study based on the derivation of the Taro Yemen's sampling formula.

The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the participants for this study. This technique allowed the researcher to intentionally choose individuals who possess specific characteristics or experiences that are relevant to the research objectives. In this study, the researcher selected participants who hold key positions within the Rivers State Civil Service and have extensive knowledge and experience in the subject matter.

A questionnaire designed by the researcher, titled "Motivational Strategy and Organizational Productivity Questionnaire (MSOPQ)," was used to gather data from the respondents based on the items of the questionnaire. The instrument was a 21-item questionnaire scale on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points; Agree (A) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point with a 2.5 criterion mean.

To ensure that the instrument measured what it ought to measure, face, and content validity were carried out by two experts in the field of measurement and evaluation for scrutiny and evaluation to ensure its face and content validity and to ascertain the degree corresponding with the research objectives and research questions. The instrument was tested for reliability through a pilot study, with a reliability coefficient of r = 0.821 ascertained through the Cronbach Alpha test.

The collected data was analyzed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Ver. 22. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service

Table 1: PPMC Analysis on the relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service Correlations

	Staff Training	Organizational Productivity
Pearson Correlation Staff Training Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.830^{**}
		0.000
N	381	381
Pearson Correlation Organizational Productivity	0.830^{**}	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	381	381

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In answering research question 1, Table 1 revealed the relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The result showed that staff training development

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has a positive and very strong relationship with organisational productivity (r = 0.830) since the correlation coefficient (r = 0.830) is within r ≤ ±0.80 to ±1.00.

Furthermore, in testing hypothesis 1, Table 1 shows that there is a significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service (r = 0.830, p = 0.00 < 0.05). The findings imply that there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. Thus, null hypothesis 1 was rejected at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service.

Table 2: PPMC Analysis on the relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service

Correlations

		Positive Work Environment	Organizational Productivity
Positive Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	0.851**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	n	381	381 1
Organizational Productivity	Pearson Correlation	0.851**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	n	381	381

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In answering research question 2, Table 2 revealed the relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The result showed that positive work has a positive and very strong relationship with organisational productivity (r = 0.851) since the correlation coefficient (r = 0.851) is within r ≤ ±0.80 to ±1.00.

Furthermore, in testing hypothesis 2, Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service (r = 0.851, p = 0.00 < 0.05). The findings imply that there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. Thus, null hypothesis 2 was rejected at a 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated staff training and positive work environment as predictors of organizational productivity of the Rivers State Civil Service. However, the result in Table 1 showed that staff training development has a positive and very strong relationship with organisational productivity. Furthermore, the test of the hypothesis revealed that there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between staff training development and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The findings from this study are corroborated by the study by Amadi and Abraham (2021), which revealed that in-service training had a high, positive and significant relationship with teacher quality job performance in senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

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The result in Table 2 showed that positive work has a positive and very strong relationship with organisational productivity. Furthermore, the test of the hypothesis revealed that there is a positive, very strong and significant relationship between positive work and organisational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service. The finding from this study is corroborated by the study by Shimelis and Mahesh (2021) which investigated the impact of the working environment on the organizational performance of the Arjo Dedessa Sugar Factory (ADSF) and Finchaa Sugar Factory (FSF) in Ethiopia. The study revealed that ADSF employees have a more modest social work environment than FSF employees, while both firms' physical work environments contribute the least. The physical working conditions of both the ADSF and the FSF had a statistically significant impact on performance.

Conclusion

The study investigated staff training and positive work environment as predictors of organizational productivity of the Rivers State Civil Service. The findings of the study revealed that staff training significantly predicted organizational productivity, while a positive work environment also had a significant impact on productivity levels. These results suggest that investing in staff training and creating a positive work environment are crucial factors in enhancing organizational productivity within the Rivers State Civil Service. Therefore, the study concluded that staff training and a positive work environment are key drivers of organizational productivity in the Rivers State Civil Service, highlighting the importance of continuous learning and a supportive workplace culture.

Recommendations

Considering the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Rivers State Civil Service Commission should prioritize allocating resources towards staff training programs to continuously enhance employee skills and knowledge within the civil service.

2. By implementing initiatives to promote a positive work environment, such as recognition programs and open communication channels, the Rivers State Civil Service Commission can further improve productivity levels within the civil service.

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