
WORK GROUP MANAGEMENT AND ITS IMPERATIVES ON TEAM MEMBERS' PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

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***Abstract:** Managing organization and developing managerial competency of employees could be time and resource consuming, however, organization that intends to keep a top flight and secure its competitiveness cannot but make this a priority, hence, recent innovations in organizational practices and management style, intended towards driving organizational performance by enhancing employee productivity, developing managerial competencies and leadership potentials, resulting in the adoption of relatively new models of employee management style by adopting a team model to work-place management. This study examines how the management of work group influences performance and personal development of employees. Respondents were selected from the Call Centers of one of Nigeria's leading telecommunication outfit and administered questionnaire, 110 of the responses were analyzed to arrive at the findings of this research work using a mixture of Regression and correlation analysis and Chi square . The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between team leaders' management style and team performance, and that individual performance is significantly related to their propensity for self-development, it was also discovered that the group management style impact the process of building employees' leadership skills and personal development.*

Keyword: Work Group, Team, Tele-density, Employee Performance, Self Development, Productivity

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Bunmi Gabriel Ogunshola, & Taiwo Adewale Shobande (2017), Work Group Management and its Imperatives on Team Members' Performance and Development. *J. of Social Sciences and Public Policy*, Vol. 9, Number 3, Pp. 61-75

INTRODUCTION

Recent development and changes in the structure of Nigerian economy is beginning to drive new innovations in organizational practices and management style; the central focus of which is to drive organizational performance by enhancing employee productivity, developing managerial competencies and leadership potentials, one of such rapidly growing innovation is the use of work group, usually referred to as team to achieve organizational goals and drive productive engagements in organizations, Cohen and Bailey (1997) noted that the use of teams has expanded dramatically in response to competitive challenges. Bohlander, Snell and Sherman (2001) noted that while people have always been central to organization, today, they have taken up an even more central role in building firm's competitive advantage. People are essentially a valued asset of any organization, and their perception of managerial responsiveness to their individual goals affects their overall performance in the work place. For this purpose proactive managers continue to devise various means of relatively satisfying the needs of employees such that the goal of the organization is achieved as well as individual employee's goal and aspirations, ensuring the achievement of goal congruence between individual and organizational goal. One of the ways managers do this is to group employees into work team where their individual capabilities can be tasked and properly harnessed; everyone in our workplace has an important part to play in organizational performance. Good organizational performance is the result of high-quality functioning by the individuals within it (Australian Government Reform Commission, ND). Corporate survival is essentially hinged on their performance and productivity which is measured through various factors depending upon which is important for the sector in which the firm operates

LITERATURE REVIEW

A major highlight of developing economies, as in the case of Nigeria is that organizations begin to find new models and methods of performance management and measurement, which in turn gives rise to new initiatives on developing managerial competencies and leadership skills of employees. One of such prominent development is the use of work group; also known as team to manage task performance, instill certain work related behaviour and characteristics as well as develop employees. This model became even more pronounced in the telecom industry resulting from the revolution

experienced in that sector of the economy upon licensing of telecommunication firms to operate in the country. Early and Mosakowski (2000) noted that many management challenges arise from the intersection of two recent organizational trends; a growing preference for group work and increased diversity in the work place. Nigeria prior to the 2001 had abysmally low telephone coverage of about 400,000 subscriptions in fixed lines and mobile lines, the advent of Global System of Mobile communication (GSM) in 2001 raised telephone line in Nigeria to a phenomenal height in just the period of 12 years, as noted in a recent press briefing by former Minister of Communication, Mrs. Omobola Johnson "As at 2001, when GSM services were rolled out in the country, total teledensity was at 0.4 per cent, with a total of 400,000 subscriptions in fixed lines and mobile lines. Today, the country's total number of subscriptions for fixed lines and mobile lines is put at 117 million, with a teledensity of 83 per cent, and it is expected to reach 98 per cent by 2015," Johnson said. She however lamented the slow growth rate of fixed line telephony in the country, which she puts at 0.5 per cent in 2011, 1.5 per cent in 2012, 1.8 per cent in 2013, and predicted it would reach 10 per cent by 2015. Tuff and Johnson (2014) observed that a team is any group that works together toward a common goal. Reaching the goal requires teamwork and a clear shared vision, while in the view of Robbins (2001) a work team consists of a group whose individual efforts result in a performance that is greater than the sum of the individual input. As Robbins noted further, work teams generate positive synergy through coordinated effort. He however introduced a caution, "merely calling a *group* a *team* doesn't automatically increase its performance", noting that if management hopes to gain increase in organizational performance through the use of teams, it need to ensure that its team possess certain characteristics that makes team effective, and they include:

Work Design: issues here include the team autonomy, the skill variety of team members, task identity, how much each member identify with the task, and task significance, of how much importance is the task to the overall performance of the organization. The team needs to work together and be responsible collectively.

Composition: the ability of each team members, their personality, as this has the capacity to influence disposition to decision making process, their roles and diversity, team size, flexibility and individual preference for teamwork as this can influence their contribution to the team.

Context: he observed that the three contextual factors that most significantly relate to team performance are resource availability, effective leadership and a performance evaluation and reward system that reflect team contribution.

Process: the process identify the degree of each members commitment to a common purpose, identification of specific, measurable and time bound goals, team efficacy, the process of conflict management to enhance better outcome and how to effectively handle and deal with social loafing; the tendency for a team member to hide under other people's achievement without making any significant contribution. Neck et al (1996) argued that the goal in designing an effective work team should be to achieve a balance between individual and group autonomy. In assessing condition and providing evidence for managers on how to achieve higher level of performance through effective management of diverse work group, Jehn and Bezrukove (2004) concluded that managers may capitalize on certain types of demographic diversity in groups if they take into account the appropriate work group environment, stating for instance that "an ideal workgroup environment for groups that are diverse in functional background should emphasize a sense of group identity and common fate, and foster good relationships". Task interdependence is a crucial aspect of team effectiveness, on this note, Saavedra, Earley and Van Dyne, 1993) held that task interdependence is considered one of the most important structural variables that influence team performance, which refers to the degree to which the interaction and coordination of team members are required to complete tasks. In addition, it has been pointed out that task interdependence often indirectly influences performance by moderating the effects of other variables on performance (Langfred & Shanley, 2001). At the team level, it is expected that the documented performance benefits of autonomy depend on the level of task interdependence in the team. Given the coordination and effort required for a team to implement team-level autonomy and decision making, teams that perform highly interdependent tasks, and thus have substantial interaction and coordination already in place are well positioned

to take advantage of the benefits of team autonomy without incurring extra coordination costs. (Langfred, 2005)

Theoretical Framework

For centuries, sages and scholars have been fascinated by groups—by the way they form, change over time, dissipate unexpectedly, achieve great goals, and sometimes commit great wrongs (Forsyth 2006). Robbins (2001) contends that one of the reasons why process is important in understanding work group behaviour is that 1+1+1 doesn't necessarily add up to 3, noting that in group task, if the 3 individuals maximize their effort and up their performance, the principle of synergy takes precedence; in which case, the group can create an output that is greater than the sum of individual inputs. There are numerous examples of impactful social behavior that cannot always easily be explained by referring to the personal self or individual identity maintenance concerns, instead, such observations are more compatible with the notion that there are situations in which people's collective selves and social identities may guide their perceptual, affective, and behavioral responses in important ways (Ellemers et al, 2002) thus diversity in groups and teams is often portrayed as a positive force leading to effective functioning of the team. (Knight, 1999). In understanding work group behaviour model, we need to know the communication pattern used by the group members for information exchange, group decision process, leaders behaviour, power dynamics, conflict interactions and the likes (Robbins, 2001), these factors in fact, serves to moderate individuals character display in the group, which could serve as a tool to build and empower team members for maximum performance and skill development i.e. their capacity to handle and resolve conflict, communicate effectively, make and implement sound decision, all in the interest of the members, group and the organization at large. Over the years, certain conditions have been proven o favor groups versus individuals, which include diversity of skill among team members, free and open communication of ideas, and complexity of task (Libby, Trotman & Zimmer, 1987). Group members get into arguments, talk over issues, and make decisions. They upset each other, give one another help and support, and take advantage of each other's weaknesses. They rally together to accomplish difficult tasks, but they sometimes slack off when they think others will not notice (Forsyth,2006), these and many other characterize group process.

Managing Team for Effective Performance

Nonaka (1994) held that the theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation builds upon the idea of organizational level behaviors with regard to knowledge exchange, positing that socialization, combination, internalization, and externalization activities among individuals generate organizational knowledge, Bray and Konsynski (2007) however argued that such knowledge creation occurs via a continual cycle spurred by team dialogue, documentation, metaphors, interactions, learning by doing, and experimentation. This spiral process elevates knowledge from an individual level to group and organizational levels, and potentially to the inter-organizational level. Knowledge is crucial for effective and efficient work-related behaviour. The above depicts an ingredient in team effectiveness, which has to do with how the team shares knowledge which may help promote effective integration and shared responsibility among the team members. In response to globalization, rapid changes in external environments, and a desire by organizations to remain competitive, organizations have continued to flatten, decentralize, re-engineer their business processes, downsize, and empower their employees (Maeliae & Baltazar, 2005).

The essence of this new orientation is to enhance change and the capacity of the organization through her employees to respond to competitive challenge in the business environment, to make this change possible therefore, facilitate these changes and gain a competitive edge, managers are increasingly turning to team structures." The actual team design used to support organizational goals may include such structures as cross functional teams, functional work teams, project teams, self-managed teams, intact work teams, employee participation teams, problem-solving teams, maintenance or support teams, and management teams. Cohen and Baily (1997) indicate that in the United States, 82 percent of companies employing more than 100 employees have turned to the use of groups to support organizational goals.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Whether an individual employee perception of team management style influences their work behaviour and performance outcome?

To examine the nature of relationship between individual team members' performance and the propensity for self-development, in term of building self-confidence and taking up more challenging role in future engagement? If work team management style and individual interaction have any impact on the development of individual skill for self-development and leadership potentials?

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any relationship between team management style and group performance outcome?

Is there any significant relationship between individual members' performance and the propensity for self-development?

What is the relationship between group management style and building employee leadership skills and personal development?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H₀₁ there is no significant relationship between team leaders' management style and individual team members' productivity and performance

H₀₂ there is no significant relationship between individual members' performance and the propensity for self-development.

H₀₃ group management style does not impact the process of building employees leadership skills and personal development

RESEARCH METHOD

Setting

Primary data were collected from two call centers of one of Nigeria's leading telecommunication outfit in the commercial nerve centre of Lagos. The data collection took place across randomly selected teams in the two facilities; the vast majority of team members surveyed were in customer care relations, and a few others from administrations and HR, majority of who performed technical and other related tasks.

Respondents and Procedure

120 questionnaires were served on randomly selected teams, with team members in each of the teams providing responses based on the structure of the questionnaire which was put on a 5-point Likert-type scales, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In measuring team performance

which is usually the sum of individual performance, the researcher were able to access the organizations performance measurement yardstick which inculcate both quantitative and qualitative measures in terms of number of customers attended to, punctuality of team members, absenteeism from work, Quality Assurance report on each team members and other attitudinal measures, these factor are put on a scale of 100 with each members rated and the scores averaged to determine members periodic productivity and performance.

Analytical Procedure

The researchers employ the use of statistical analysis tool like Regression and correlation analysis and Chi square to test the hypotheses; the analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents			
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Distribution of Respondent by Sex			
Sex	Male	67	61
	Female	43	39
Total		110	100
Distribution of Respondent by Age			
Age	20-29yrs	54	49
	30-39yrs	53	48
	40-49yrs	3	3
Total		110	100
Distribution of Respondent by Marital Status			
Marital Status	Single	71	64
	Married	35	32
	Divorced	4	4
Total		110	100
Distribution of Respondent by Educational qualification			
Education	B.Sc/BA/HND	90	82
	M.Sc/MA/MBA	20	18
Total		110	100
Distribution of Respondent by years of service			
Years of Service	1-2yrs	71	65

	3-4yrs	30	27
	5-6yrs	9	8
Total		110	100

Source: Survey Data 2014

The demographic data presented in the table indicates that 61% respondent are male while 39% are female, according to age distribution, 20-29 years are 49%, ages 30-39 years are 48%, those aged 40-49 years are 3% while 61 years old and above are 3%. According to data on marital status 64% are single, 32% are married while 4% are divorced and educational qualification shows that 82% have Bachelor degree or its equivalent and 18% have a Master degree on how long they have served in the organization, 65% have spent between 1-2 years, 27% have between 3-4 years while 8% have been there for up to 6-7 years.

RESULTS

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between team leaders' management style and individual team members' productivity and performance

Regression Analysis

Table 2: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Leaders' management style ^b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Individual team members' productivity and performance

b. All requested variables entered.

Table 3: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.914 ^a	.835	.833	1.27770	.200

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leaders' management style

b. Dependent Variable: Individual team members' productivity and performance

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	890.560	1	890.560	545.511	.000 ^b
	Residual	176.313	108	1.633		
	Total	1066.873	109			

- a. Dependent Variable: Individual team members' productivity and performance
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Leaders' management style

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.775	.610		2.908	.004
Leaders' management style	1.836	.079	.914	23.356	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Individual team members' productivity and performance

Table 6: Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	9.1192	20.1352	15.7455	2.85837	110
Residual	-2.11916	2.53684	.00000	1.27183	110
Std. Predicted Value	-2.318	1.536	.000	1.000	110
Std. Residual	-1.659	1.985	.000	.995	110

- a. Dependent Variable: Individual team members' productivity and performance

The result of the regression results in output tables above shows the existence of an optimistic, that is positive connection between team leaders' management style and individual team members' productivity and performance of 0.914 percent. The coefficient of determination (r^2) which is the percentage of the total variations in team leaders' management style explained by the individual team members' productivity and performance reveals an average performance score of 83.5 percent in team leaders' management style from the contribution of individual team members' productivity and performance. The adjusted R squared demonstrates the actual variations in team leaders' management style attributable to the variations in individual team members' productivity and performance shows the actual difference 0.833 as against the 0.835 recommended by R Square (r^2). The standard error of 1.27770 advocates that the independent variable (team leaders' management style) is statistically important in explaining the variation in individual team members' productivity and performance. The Durbin-Watson revealed that there is autocorrelation between the variables. The t-test of significance (23.356) shows that the existing relationship between team leaders' management style and individual team members' productivity and performance is a true evidence each other. The F-statistic reveals the overall significance of the model and goodness of fit of model

states that the model has a good fit because the calculated F-ratio of 545.511 is greater than the table value of 1.3519 at 5% level of significance. The independent variable is a good predictor of the dependent variable. Therefore, the researcher revealed that there is a positive statistical significant relationship between team leaders' management style and individual team members' productivity and performance.

H₀₂ There is no significant relationship between individual members' performance and the propensity for self-development

Table 7: Correlations

		Individual team members' productivity and performance	Propensity for self-development
Individual team members' productivity and performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.940**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	110	110
Propensity for self-development	Pearson Correlation	.940**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	110	110

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

In the hypothesis two above, the results of the study has been shown in the table, it shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables respectively. However, the relationships that exist between the variables using Pearson correlation coefficient indicate each proposed hypotheses. The hypothesis which shows that there is no significant relationship between individual members' performance and the propensity for self-development was tested. Using Pearson correlation coefficient, the result indicates a significant positive correlation relationship between individual team members' productivity and performance and propensity for self-development ($r=0.940$, $P < 0.05$) which implies that there is a positive statistical significant relationship between individual members' performance and the propensity for self-development. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted.

H₀₃ Group management style does not impact the process of building employees leadership skills and personal development

NPar Tests

Chi-Square Test

Table 8: Distribution to Team has Propensity of Building Individual Leadership Skills

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
VL	4	22.0	-18.0
L	13	22.0	-9.0
M	24	22.0	2.0
H	49	22.0	27.0
VH	20	22.0	-2.0
Total	110		

Table 9: Test Statistics

	Distribution to team has propensity of building individual leadership skills
Chi-Square	51.909 ^a
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 22.0.

DECISION RULE

The above last hypothesis was tested using chi-square non parametric tests. Thus, since calculated value of X² (51.900) is greater than the tabulated critical value (9.49) required for 5% level of significance of 4 degree of freedom. Based on the above analysis, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis (H₀) and accepts the alternative (H₁) we therefore conclude that group management style impact the process of building employees leadership skills and personal development.

CONCLUSION

In examining the significance of work group management in respect of performance management and employee development orientation, this research findings indicate that leaders' management style can effectively predict employee productivity and performance with regression result indicating the existence of positive correlation between leaders management

style and members productivity and performance of 0.914. Indicating that it is necessary for team leaders to secure the understanding and cooperation of team members on how they prefer to be led, thus ensuring that decision making, team governance process and others is fully supported by the team. Adhering to this model will help members to focus on improved performance management and productivity. The performance of individual was statistically proven to be significant in their quest for self-development; the process of self development is very crucial in organization because this places individuals in position where they can be assessed and determined fit for more challenging role and responsibility in organizations, therefore performance which is usually a measure of the quality and quantity of individual output as well as capacity to manage customers effectively and make sound decisions and judgment in the course of work is a fundamental predicator of self-development with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.940.

The process of building employees leadership skills and personal development is impacted greatly by group management style, according to our result, the implication of this is that organizational management must examine and develop an appropriate model that suits the demand of the organization and promote its core values and business strategy, and ensure that such is inculcated into employees through the teams, thus breeding a crop of potential leaders for the organization who not only are understand how to manage people, but also how to effectively manage the organization in emerging business environment. In an effort to build an effective and efficient organization, adopting team management model has proven to be important, however adequate support should be given to team management process to ensure teams' proper and effective functioning and a degree of independence with strong monitoring should be enforced, such that teams can work within the limit of organizational values and serve as platform for effective performance management and a pool for developing future leaders and managers.

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