

Teamwork and Performance of Selected Transport Companies in Anambra State

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Abstract: *This study ascertained the nature of relationship between teamwork and organizational performance of selected transport companies in Anambra State. The specific objective is to determine the type of relationship that exists between team members' commitment and performance of the focused transport companies. To achieve these objectives, descriptive survey research design was employed. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze data from two hundred and nineteen respondents. The result revealed a positive significant relationship between commitment and revenue generation of the selected transport companies. It is therefore recommended that service industries such as the transport sector, should encourage and sustain the use of teamwork as part of their operational strategies. Managers and team leaders should offer and encourage sound team commitment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teamwork is an operational concept that describes one element of the many strategies of work organisation. Kleiman, quoted in Anujah(2013:51), identifies teamwork as “one of the sixteen Human Resource Management (HRM) practices that enhances competitive advantage of an organisation”. This notwithstanding, teamwork remains a cover term used to describe diverse aspects of working conditions such as job autonomy, job satisfaction, work intensity, members' commitment, members' orientation and learning environment. The process of team working involves the organisation of employees into cohesive group based on the need to accomplish a clearly defined task. Consequently, the management emphasize the need for teamwork and go to the extent of advertising for applicants with the ability to work in a team. Delarue, Hootegem, Procter and Burr ridge (2008:127) explain that “Teamwork has emerged ... as one of the most important ways in which work is being reorganized”. Recently, teamwork is no longer seen as individual hiding in the crowd but rather as a way of delegating responsibilities to work groups.

The adoption of the principle of teamwork is quite interesting in itself. This is because not until recently, the primordial focus of Human Resource Management (HRM) with regards to work organisations has been the pursuit of individual excellence (Courtney, Sherwood & Shomaker, 2012:1474). Individual task accomplishment either singularly or in group has for long been seen as a way of improving organisational functioning at acceptable levels of both operational costs and productivity. This practice has hardly changed in many organisations especially in the developing world where there is still a high preference for the use of competences at individual level.

Though the focus on individual-based task accomplishment is still considered quite necessary, today, it is being seen as insufficient for high-quality delivery. A number of maxims have been used to drive home the point. For instance:

- Two good heads are better than one.
- Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.
- Wearing the same shirt doesn't make you a team. Talent wins games; Teamwork and intelligence win championships (Jordan, in Bateman & Snell, 2007).

Since it is the desire of each organisation to perform to its full potentials, the current quest in human resource management is achieving interactive excellence through teamwork. To this end, the way and manners by which teamwork is incorporated into the overall organisational strategies as well as the positive and negative influences of teamwork on organisational performance have generated much

research interests in recent times especially in the manufacturing and training sectors. Gradually, this research attention is being extended to the service industry and it is beginning to gain momentum. This is due perhaps to the phenomenal growth in the service industry in almost every part of the world. According to Frimpong and Fan (2010:1216), service industry is “one of the major contributors in the economies of the world”.

In Nigeria, the notion of teamwork has a favourable appeal in most organisations. Its implementation however, has faced a number of constraints ranging from problem of team compositions to how a successful team is to be rewarded. Perhaps the issue of reward is the major one. With reference to rewards at team level, Idemobi (2010:220) observes that, “the modality for compensating workers at team level is quite daunting”. He stated that “*a recent team-based pay survey found that most managers believed in using teams (87) percent, but fewer were sure about how to pay them (4) percent*”. He opines therefore that team-based pay programs are not as effective or fully developed as managers would hope. Measuring and rewarding individual performance on teams while at the same time rewarding team performance can be tricky.

Outside reward determination palaver, task accomplishment based on individual excellence in work organization in Nigeria has also received ‘un coup de pousse’ based on the traditional reward pattern of the academic institutions from where most managers received their training. Academic programs have customarily been adaptive towards recognizing individual achievement. Even at the faculty level, promotions of staff are based on individual faculty member's accomplishment rather than collective efforts. This is the case because what you know is what you teach and what you learn is what you do.

These constraints explain why the incorporation and development of teamwork as part of overall organisational strategies has thus far been brief. It also explains why the implementation of teamwork as a form of work organisation strategy, more of ad hoc measure at individual company level in many Nigerian organisations.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The transport industry in Nigeria exceptionally stands out as a place where teamwork is an endearing operational strategy. The industry sees itself as a big team often organised into four sub-teams (management, operation, maintenance and accounting) to ensure effective performance. Operating in a transforming environment with serious competitions and diverse challenges yet expecting to break-even, the transport companies culturally orient their employees to work in team and show commitment to team tasks in order to ensure patronage and profit maximization. Work groups in the transport industry appear to imbibe team spirit and commitment to group tasks in order to ensure success. But the transport industry seems to show trends of rising and falling that are experienced by other Nigerian business enterprises. This makes it imperative to determine the relationship between teamwork and performance of selected companies in the transport industry.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The major objective of this study is to determine the nature of relationship between teamwork and the performance of selected transport companies in Anambra State. The specific objective of the study is to ascertain the type of relationship that exists between members’ commitment and increment in revenue generations of the selected transport companies in Anambra State.

1.3. Research Questions

Based on the objective stated above, the following research question has been formulated: What is the type of relationship that exists between members’ commitment and increment in revenue generations of the selected transport companies?

1.4. Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that there is no significant type of relationship that exists between members’ commitment and increment in revenue of the selected transport companies.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study covered four transport companies in Anambra State. These are Transport Company of Anambra State (TRACAS), Anambra Integrated Development Strategies (ANIDS), ABC Transport and Peace Transport.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Meaning of Teamwork

There is rarely any semantic unanimity in the use of the term team. It is not uncommon to hear of production teams, service teams, management teams or even the whole enterprise being referred to as a team. Nnabuike (2009:139) provides a number of lexical collocates left and right of the term team such as teamwork, command team, team structure or team-based structure, team building, team spirit, team leadership, team players, team norms and team management. She explains that the meaning attached to the notion of team and the reasons why a team is formed can at times, be deduced from these collocations. In her circular definition of teamwork, Nnabuike states that “teamwork ... is a process of using teams in accomplishing tasks within organisations” (139). To avoid the circular nature of this definition, a descriptive definition of teamwork refers to the virtues of cooperation and the need to make use of the diverse strengths of the employees. Teamwork is often made up of a minimum of two people working together to achieve shared goals.

2.2. Types of Teams

Team typology varies in organisations and each team is created to perform a defined task. Six types of teams were identified by Bateman and Snell (2007:462). These are: work teams, project and development teams, parallel teams, management teams, transnational teams, and visual team. Huszecz cited in Judeh (2011:204) provides another typology of team namely: committees, taskforces, quality circles, employee participation groups, joint union-management teams, action committees, project teams, supervisory councils and autonomous or self-directed work teams. A close study of these two typologies indicates that teams can be identified by their composition, cohesiveness and their motivations.

2.3. Team Effectiveness

Judeh(2011:205) quoting Belbin supports strongly the view that team roles are very crucial to the success of any team. Belbin asserts that organisational team has eight specific roles namely: coordination or chairman, shaper, plant, monitor-evaluator, implementer or company worker, resource investigator, team worker and finisher. Bateman and Snell (2007:467) state on the contrary that, team performance does not so much depend on role but on three critical criteria:

- The productive output of the team exceeding or meeting the standard quantity and quality as well as the acceptability of team outputs by customers who uses the team products or services.
- The realization and satisfaction of personal needs by team members.
- The retention of the willingness and commitment to working together again without the team burning out after a grueling project.

Hackman quoted in Judeh (2011:204), observes that the effectiveness of the team depends on the degree to which a team outputs meet organisational requirements in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness (performance); the extent to which the team experience improves members’ ability to work as a team in future (behavior), and the extent to which the team experience contributes to individual satisfaction (attitude). Delarue, Hootegem, & Burrige(2008:127) suggest that a team could be considered effective, if it satisfies diverse aspects of working conditions such as job autonomy, job satisfaction, work intensity, team members’ commitment and learning environment.

2.4. Team Members’ Commitment

Akintayo (2010) defines employee commitment as the degree to which an employee feels to his or her organization. In this sense, employee commitment reflects the attitude of an employee towards an organization (Zhen, 2010). Team members’ commitment generally described as a working condition that if achieved can sustained team effectiveness and contribute to high organisational performance. Three kinds of commitment are identified by Klan (2010) namely affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. A number of variables associated with commitment are: attachment to team, eagerness to make positive changes, reluctance to quit team, likeness for the team, willingness to remain with team, team pride, positive perception of team and keeping to time.

2.5. Organisational Performance

It is not easy to stipulate what exactly is meant by organisational performance. A performance organization is generally understood to be one with higher operational and financial effectiveness, as well as higher level of satisfaction among employees. It is an organisation that can respond rapidly to

its customers' demands, offer good quality services and products, and continue to improve its competitive ability (Robertson, Callinan & Bartram, 2002).

2.6. Measuring Revenue Generations as Part of Organisational Performance

According to Denison and Fey (2003), organisational performance can be measured by such subjective criteria as overall performance, market share, sales growth, profitability, and employee satisfaction, quality of products and services, and new product development. The claims of companies that have reorganized their workforce into teams is that teamwork promotes competitiveness by improving productivity, improving quality and encouraging innovation, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by technological advances and improving employee motivation and commitment.

A sum-up of these is that teamwork is capable of bringing about a substantial improvement in employees' morale, job satisfaction and productivity. By organisational productivity, it is meant the performance outputs in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness. With regards to the transport industry, this could be measured in terms of cost effectiveness, increment in revenue generations as well as increment in the level of customers' patronage. It is believed that teamwork can make effective and efficient use of labour thereby improving productivity and consequently increment in revenue.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

This study adopted a team performance theory developed by Paris (2000:1054). Team performance theory is a descriptive framework that has evolved towards incorporating a general input-process-output approach, whereby independent and dependent variables can feed into analytical system. For example, environmental variables, organizational variables, individual input variables, team input variables and team processes variables (orientation, communication, adaptation & commitment) can all be analyzed with team output (productivity).

According to Paris (2000:1056), using team performance theory that measures behavioural and attitudinal processes of team versus team outcome can shed light on task accomplishment and performance diagnosis. Support for this theory of organizational analysis has received impetus from various theoretical underpinnings in Human resource management (HRM), business process re-engineering, lean production and modern sociotechnical theory (Delarue et al. 2008:128). In this study, commitment and orientation are both behavioural and attitudinal issues and hence adaptable to team performance framework.

2.8. Empirical Review of the Relationship between Teamwork and Performance

In Nigeria, Irefer (2014) examined the effect of employee commitment on organizational performance in Coca Cola Nigeria Limited. The focus of the study was on the influence of employee commitment on organizational performance and employee turnover. Using both descriptive and explanatory research methodologies, a five point numerically likert-type questionnaire was designed and administered among selected staff of Coca Cola. The study hypothesis was tested with Pearson Correlation Coefficient. The outcome of the analysis showed that the level of employee commitment was very high. It also revealed a very high positive relationship between employee commitment, organizational performance and employee turnover.

Judeh (2011) explored the level of employee involvement and extent of teamwork effectiveness in the Jordanian glass and ceramic industry. Using descriptive statistics (one sample t-test and independent sample t-test, linear regression and ANOVA) for analysis of questionnaire data collected from 176 participants, it was shown that there is a significant effect of employee involvement on team effectiveness. It was therefore, recommended that teamwork atmosphere ought to be enhanced in the organization.

Frimpong and Fan (2010) examined the relationship between employee motivation and team performance within the banking sector of Ghana and China. A questionnaire-based approach was used to survey five banks in Ghana and five in China. Results of their analysis indicate a variation in individual motivation compared to motivational level of individual in a team. The study also shows that team motivation has a positive impact on subsequent team performance. In Ghana, the strongest motivator is recognition while in China, the strongest motivator is wages. For Ghana respondents, understanding among members affect team performance the most while in China, commitment affect team performance the most.

In Sri Lanka, Anuja and Arulrajah (2013) observed an empirical knowledge gap with regards to team working practices and team orientation in the banking sector and decided to carry out a comparative study. In their study, they seek to explain team working practices in the selected banks, explore the level of team orientation of both state and private bank employees and investigate the differences in team orientation of employees according to gender, age, education, grade, working section and experiences. Both secondary and primary data were gathered from 115 employees. Questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Using univariate descriptive measures such as mean and standard deviation, a cross tabulation analysis was carried out. Their unit of analysis was the bank employees. Findings revealed that various team working practices are present in both the state and the private banks. It was also discovered that there is a high level of team orientation in all the banks (mean value is ≥ 3.5) with slight variations across banks. Differences were also noticed in the explanation of the concept of teamwork in the banks studied.

3. METHODS

3.1. Research Design

This study used descriptive survey research design. This is to solicit information from four selected transport companies' employees on their perceptions of aspects of teamwork and their significant influence on the performance of the transport companies. A six- item measure questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. Four (4) items were meant to solicit information on employees' commitment to team while two (2) items were meant to solicit information on organizational performance.

3.2. The Population of the Study

The research population comprised the employees of four transport companies (two public and two private) selected from ten notable transport companies having offices in Awka and Onitsha in Anambra State. The two public transport companies selected were Transport Company of Anambra State (TRACAS) and Anambra Integrated Development Strategies (ANIDS) while ABC Transport and PEACE Transport were the private transport companies used. The total population of the companies 682 at the time of data gathering.

3.3. Sample size and Sampling Technique

Taro Yamane's (1967:258) formula was used to determine the sample size from a finite population. The formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where,

n = the sample size

N = the total population

e = limit of tolerable error (0.05 or 5%)

1 = A constant (Unity)

Using this Yamane formula, a sample size of 252 was obtained. The distribution of sample for each of the transport companies were 84 for TRACAS, 36 for ANIDS, 32 for ABC and 94 for PEACE.

3.4. Method of Data Collection

The data used for analysis was collected from all cadres of staff except the lowest cadre. A total of two hundred and fifty two (252) copies of questionnaire were distributed, but two hundred and thirty four (234) representing 92.8% were returned. Out of these, fifteen (15) representing 5.9% were invalid because they were partially completed. The total valid copies of questionnaire analyzed were 219 representing 86.9%. The questionnaire administered (see Appendix IV) contains three sections, the biographical section, a section for teamwork and a section for company performance. The responses to the questions were scaled using a five-point Likert rating scale with items ranging from one to five.

3.5. Reliability of Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient was used to assess the level of reliability of the questionnaire. The calculated Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for teamwork – commitment

and two performance indices- revenue generation and overall performance using SPSS programme (see Appendix I) suggest positive item-homogeneity in the questionnaire proving that there was no item that requires deletion. This is taken to be a strong indication of instrument reliability.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis and hypothesis testing, respectively. Percentages and arithmetic means were the descriptives used. The Percentages were used to reflect survey respondents' job position. To gauge the central tendency and reflects the arithmetic average of frequency distributions, the means of different aspects of the independent variable of teamwork and two organizational performance variables were calculated. Mean score range extended from "0" to "5" with "0" indicating the lowest score and "5" indicating the highest score. These mean scores facilitated the identification of strength or weakness in the different aspects of teamwork and organizational performance. Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used to calculate the level of significance of the relationship between teamwork and performance of the transport companies. In order to do all these, statistical package for the social sciences (IBM SPSS, Statistics version 16) computer software was used.

4. FINDINGS

As shown in appendix II, a total of twelve (12) correlation coefficients were calculated for both teamwork and the transport companies' performance. The results indicated that all were positive and statistically significant except 'keeping to time'.

To find out the nature of relationship that exists between team members' commitment and increment in revenue generation of the selected transport companies, it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between members' commitment and increment in revenue generations of the selected transport companies. The outcome of Pearson Correlation Coefficient calculations (Appendix II) indicated a significant relationship between members' commitment as an aspect of teamwork and increment in revenue generation of the selected transport companies. Specific commitment indices like reluctance to quit team ($r=0.87$, p -value 0.02), willingness to remain with team ($r=0.61$ p -value 0.00) and positive team perception ($r=0.91$, p -value 0.03), all correlated positively with increment in revenue generations of the selected transport companies. But keeping to time ($r=0.73$, p -value 0.31) did not show any significant correlations with increment in revenue generations. This notwithstanding, overall performance measures (appendix III) showed that there is a significant relationship between teamwork and performance of the selected transport companies ($r=0.67$, p -value 0.03).

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result revealed a positive significant relationship between members' commitment and increment in revenue generations of the selected transport companies. This finding is consistent with findings of researchers such as Irefin (2014), Anuja and Anulrajah (2013) and Judeh (2011). Finding on one aspect of commitment that was inconsistent with other previous findings was 'keeping to time'. This failed to correlate positively with performance. However, the overall outcome of this study showed that employee team commitment was very vital in attaining success in an organization. Mowday quoted in Irefin (2014:36), found that commitment that showed positive impacts were characteristics of a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Perhaps, the most crucial factor might be what Becker called the "contract" of economic exchange behavior, whereby well committed employees are said to have totally hidden or somewhat hidden investment and hence will not want the companies they are working with to fail since such failure will jeopardized their own anticipated benefits.

6. CONCLUSION

Following this finding, it is therefore concluded that members' commitment positively correlates significantly with increment in revenue generations of the selected companies in Anambra State.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- Management of organizations should employ people who can work in team and capable of showing loyalty to team leadership.

- Teamwork should be seen as an effective operational strategy and adopted not as an ad hoc strategy but one that should be sustained.
- Employees should be encouraged to exhibit a high level of commitment towards organizational tasks and goals in order to ensure organizational performance.

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APPENDIX I

Calculated Cronbach's Alpha Reliability coefficient for the two variables studied

Items	Calculated Cronbach's Alpha Reliability coefficient
Teamwork (Commitment)	
Reluctance to quit team	0.829
Willingness to remain with team	0.837
Positive perception of team	0.828
Keeping to time	0.821
Performance	
Increment in revenue generation	0.806
Increment in customers patronage	0.818

APPENDIX II

Pearson Correlations between Teamwork indices and overall performance

Commitment		Increment in revenue generation	Overall performance
Reluctance to quit team	Pearson r	0.87*	0.59*
	P-value	0.02	0.04
Willing to remain with team	Pearson r	0.61*	0.65
	P-value	0.00	0.08
Positive perception of team	Pearson r	0.91*	0.10
	P-value	0.03	0.09
Keeping to time	Pearson r	0.73	-0.08
	P-value	0.31	0.88

**Correlation is significant when P-value is less than 0.05*

APPENDIX III

Correlations between teamwork dimensions and organizational overall performance

		Increment in revenue generation	Overall performance
Teamwork	Pearson r	0.67	1.25
	P-value	0.03	0.04

**Correlation is significant when P-value is less than 0.05 (2 tailed)*

APPENDIX IV - QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Respondent's brief profile

Kindly take out a few minutes to give us your profile.

1. Name of Company _____
2. Position _____ (e.g., Admin (Personnel) manager, Operation manager, Accountant, supervisor, cashier, Ticketing clerk, Driver, etc.)
3. Sex _____

B. Teamwork and Performance Rating Instruction

Upon completion of section A, give us your perceptions on the set of items and areas that describe different aspects of teamwork and performance in your company. To give your perceptions on each item presented below, think of your company and the way things are usually done then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements by marking the appropriate block 1-5 with a cross.

Teamwork and Performance of Selected Transport Companies in Anambra State

C. How will you rate your position with regards to teamwork in your company?						
<i>Please, use the scale 1 - 5 to rate your perception of the items indicated in the 2nd column below</i>						
Teamwork items		1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all	To a very little extent	To a little extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
a. 1	Reluctance to quit team					
b. 2	Willingness to remain with team					
c. 3	Positive perception of team					
d. 4	Keeping to time					
D. How do you see teamwork as described above as being responsible for items a and b below?						
<i>Use the scale below to rate your Company's performance in the areas indicated in the 2nd column</i>						
Performance areas		1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all	To a very little extent	To a little extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
a. 1	Increment in revenue generation					

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