



Power Culture and Employee Engagement of Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between corporate culture and employee engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The target population of this study was 250 employees drawn from (12) Twelve Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State. The sample size of 154 was determined using calculated using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The study findings revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between power culture and employee engagement in private secondary schools in Rivers State. The study recommends that Management should ensure that employees are delegated to work based on their specialization, interest and qualifications and have autonomy to deliver the best outcome for the organization.

Keywords: Power Culture, Affective, Cognitive, Physical engagement and Employee engagement and corporate communication.

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement occupies an important place in the list of human resource departments all over the world. Researchers link the determinants of engagement to leadership, organizational environment, organizational policies and procedures, organizational structure, rewards and recognition among others (Anitha, 2014). Employee engagement is noted for its positive outcomes (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009) such as increase profit (Piersol), high levels of performance, and a source of competitive advantage. This is because the employees see themselves as part of the organization and use their talents, skills, and also develop fruitful relations which would increase their efficiency. Taking into account the benefits of engaged employees, it is clear that engagement matters and therefore the need to identify how the acceptable ways of doing things in an organization, the culture affect the employees' level of engagement.

Base on the above disagreement among these researchers stating that more need to be done in the area of its roots, progression and consequences, these means that knowledge is not complete, leading to a Gap in literature or knowledge. This is the critical analysis of this study and the need to cover the gap. Most of the scholars and academics agree that corporate culture is important for organizations. There are differences when it comes to defining it because of the approaches that they take. Schein (2004) defines it as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group acquired them while solving problems during external adaptation and internal integration. Corporate culture is the set of shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence the way

employees think, feel, and behave in the workplace (Schein, 2011). Corporate culture has four functions: gives members a sense of identity, increases their commitment, reinforces organizational values, and serves as a control mechanism for shaping behavior (Nelson & Quick, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

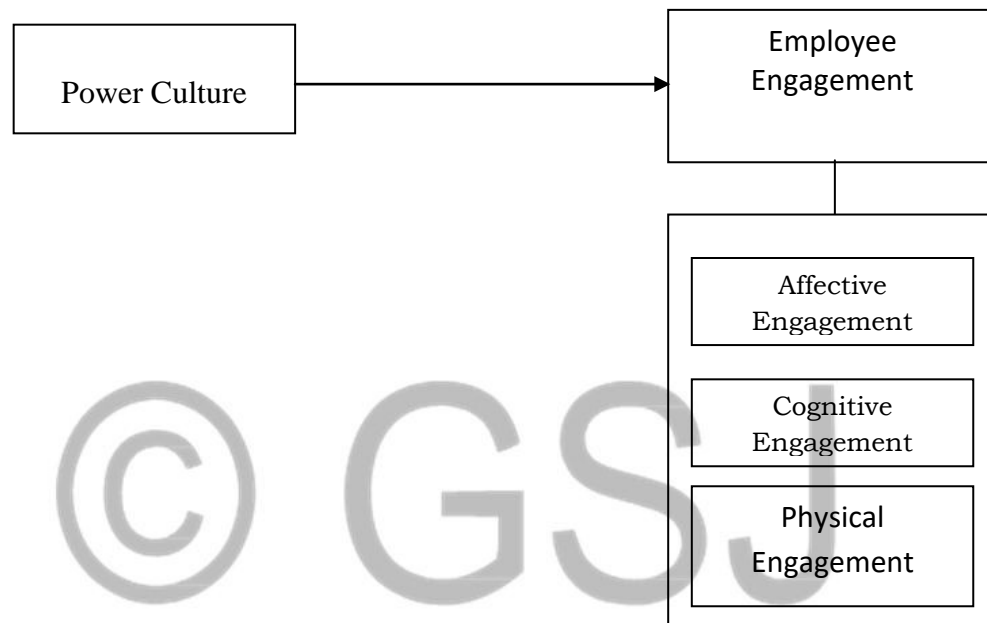


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework of Power Culture and Employee Engagement and Corporate communication.

In order to accomplish the aim of this study, some important questions need to be formulated by the researcher which includes:

- i. How does power culture influence affective engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State?
- ii. How does power culture influence cognitive engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State?

- iii. How does power culture influence physical engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The baseline theories for this study were drawn from the social exchange theory and the Role theory. Social exchange theory can be used to demonstrate the connection between power culture and employee engagement. Such a connection is a two-way relationship between the organization and its Employees (Robinson, Perryman & Hayday, 2004). When employees feel they are deriving benefit from their employer, they feel a responsibility to return the favors through their work ethic. The Social exchange theory implies this when it notes that a longstanding and mutually beneficial relationship will result in loyalty, trust and commitment over time (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

The term engagement acquires its roots from the role theory proposed by Goffman (1961). Role theory studies the various roles individuals occupy in society, as well as the social expectations and behavioral boundaries attributed to such roles (Bailey & Yost, 2007). According to Goffman (1961) engagement is the spontaneous involvement in the role and a visible investment of attention and muscular effort. Later Kahn (1990) drawing from the earlier works of Goffman (1961) defines personal engagement as the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances. From

the above explanation and contribution given by the various researchers, it clear that this theories are relevant to corporate culture and employee engagement in an organization.

Power culture

Power culture is a type of culture which is characterized by control and power emanating from the central leader and usually operates informally with few rules and procedures. Handy (1987) noted that this type of power suits the figurehead and can result in what Cooper (1983) identified as power distance where there is high willingness on the part of less powerful individuals in a group to accept the unequal distribution of power without question and to regard it as normal. Handy (1999) concept builds on his earlier work and that of Harrison (1972) to develop four culture profiles. The power culture is where a few people in the organization hold the authority and delegate responsible that is clearly outlined leaving little ability for innovation.

Employee Engagement

Thus, employee engagement is more than just the investment of a single aspect of the self; it represents an investment of multiple dimensions like physical, emotional, and cognitive (Vigoda-Gadot, Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) on their part explained employee engagement as 'a positive fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption'. Vigour reflects the drive to expend effort in the work one does, ability to remain steadfast in the wake of job related obstacles and a demonstration of high levels of energy. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Absorption is characterized by being deeply engrossed and fully concentrates and in the work one does in a way that time passes swiftly, and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. Indeed, an engaged, positive workforce can make or break an organization (Lockwood, 2007). Employee engagement is noted for its positive outcomes such as increase profit (Piersol), high levels of performance, and a source of competitive advantage.

Affective Engagement

Emotional engagement as identified by Shuck & Reio (2013) revolves around the broadening and investment of the emotional resources employees have within their influence. When employees are emotionally engaged with their work, they invest personal resources such as pride, trust, and knowledge. The investment of such resources may seem trivial at first glance; however, consider the work of prideful employees who fully trust their work environment. The positive emotions of pride and trust stem from appraisals made about the environment during the previous stage (such as cognitive engagement, this work is meaningful, it is safe for me here at work, and I have the resources to complete my tasks). Crabb (2011) states that the driver 'Managing emotions' relates to intrapersonal intelligence: the ability to be self-aware, acknowledge and understand our own thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Cognitive Engagement

The levels of cognitive engagement originate from an employee's appraisal of whether their work is meaningful, safe (physically, emotionally, and psychologically), and if they have sufficient levels of resources to complete their work (Shuck & Reio, 2013). In this regard, Shuck & Reio (2013) lists research (Brown & Leigh, 1996, Fredrickson, 1998) that suggest that this psychological interpretation of work reflects: A level of engagement, or movement, toward their work; Paralleling the broadening of resources as proposed by; and that those who believe their work matters embrace and engage it. On the other hand, employees who experience negative work circumstances (such as a negative workplace climate or corporate culture) develop a downward spiral of emotions resulting in a narrowing of resources that end in feelings of loneliness, ostracism, and burnout (Shuck & Reio, 2013).

Physical Engagement

Behavioral engagement Shuck & Reio (2013) reason that behavioral engagement is the most overt form of the employee engagement process. It is often what we can see someone does. Understood as the physical manifestation of the cognitive and emotional engagement combination, behavioral engagement can be understood as increased levels of effort directed toward organizational goals. Resultantly, behavioral engagement can be described as the broadening of an employee's available resources displayed overtly. Related to this is the "intention to turnover" as identified as an organizational outcome associated with the degree of employee engagement from a study conducted by (Shuck, Reio & Rocco, 2011). It is referred to as an employees' intention to engage in a certain type of behavior, which is a powerful predictor of that employee's future behavior.

Corporate Communication

Corporate communication has been defined as the process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behavior (Daft, 1997). It is important to notice that this definition of communication stresses its intent -a purpose that may go beyond just transferring information.

Relationship between Power Culture and Employee Engagement

For the phenomenon of corporate culture and its effect on the three measures of engagement to be studied empirically, this study put together the relationship between the corporate culture and the three measures of employee engagement. Research has shown that creating a culture that values the sharing of ideas is essential for increasing employee engagement (Namrita &Yoginder, 2017; Brenyah & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017; & Denison, 2010). This study assumed that an improve mentor reduction in an employee's cognitive, affective and physical engagement could be as a result of the culture of an organization.

Based on the discussion above, the study thus hypothesized that:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between power culture and Affective engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between power culture and cognitive engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between power culture and physical engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers state.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in terms of data generation. The population was drawn from twelve private secondary schools with a target figure of (250) two hundred and fifty employees of Private Secondary School in Rivers State, Nigeria. According to Rivers State Ministry of Education through the Education Management Information system, there are four hundred and Eighty (480) approved private secondary schools in Rivers State. Rivers State is made up of 23 Local Government Areas. But only 15 Local Government Areas have Government approved secondary schools for now and the study was conducted in three Local Government Area which are Obio-Apor, Port-Harcourt City and Oyigbo Local Government Area. The Taro Yamane (1973) was used to determine the sample size of 154. The structured questionnaire which was the primary source of data was used to obtain relevant information from the employees. The study also adopted the content validity under supervisors vetting and the reliability test for the instrument was done using the Cronbach Alpha co-efficient and all the items were equal to 0.7. The researcher made use of the descriptive statistics to analyze the demographics while the Spearman Rank Order Correlation co-efficient was used to determine the strength and direction of relationship between the study variables.

Table: 3.1 Reliability Coefficients of variable measures

S/No	Dimensions/Measures of the study variable	Number of items	Number of cases	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Power Culture	4	121	0.796
2	Affective Engagement	4	121	0.714
3	Cognitive Engagement	4	121	0.724
4	Physical Engagement	4	121	0.798
5	Corporate Communication	4	121	0.711

Source: Research data output, 2019

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The level of significance 0.05 was adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in ($p > 0.05$) or rejecting the null hypothesis in ($p < 0.05$).

Table 1: Correlations Matrix for Power Culture and Employee Engagement

			Power Culture	Affective Engagement	Cognitive Engagement	Physical Engagement
Spearman's Rho	Power Culture	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.615**	.737**	.685**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Affective Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.615**	1.000	.725**	.783**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Cognitive Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.737**	.725**	1.000	.585**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Physical Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.685**	.783**	.585**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	121	121	121	121

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

Source: Research Data 2019 and SPSS output version 23.0

Table 1 illustrates the test for the first three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements. The results show that for

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between power culture and Affective engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between power culture and Affective engagement. The *rho* value 0.615 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between power culture and Affective engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between power culture and cognitive engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between power culture and cognitive engagement. The *rho* value 0.737 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between power culture and cognitive engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between power culture and physical engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers state.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between power culture and physical engagement. The ρ value 0.685 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between power culture and physical engagement of private secondary schools in Rivers state.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first, second and third hypotheses sought to examine the relationship power culture and Employee Engagement. Hence it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between power culture and Employee Engagement. These hypotheses were tested using the Spearman rank order correlation technique. Data analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between power culture and the measures of employee engagement. This finding is in disagree with earlier findings according that of Cooke, Laffery&Enz(2007) which establish a significant but negative relationship between power culture an employee engagement. They find that in a higher culture environment, lower level employees usually feel intimidated and as such show a higher intension to quit the organization at the initial stage. They added that the few employees who may wish to stay in such rigid environment only do so because they do not perceive any job opportunities elsewhere. As a result, such employees exhibit low level of commitment which consequently affects their level of engagement to their jobs and the organization within which they work.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the data generated and analyzed, it was empirically discovered that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between power culture and Employee Engagement in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Based on results and the findings of the present study, our study revealed that power culture affects employee engagement in private secondary schools in Rivers State. The study recommends that Management should ensure that employees are delegated to work based on their specialization, interest and qualifications and have autonomy to deliver the best outcome for the organization.

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