



Research Paper

Employee Job Engagement and Corporate Sustainability of Manufacturing Firms in South - East, Nigeria

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Abstract

As global competition increases, accomplishing competitive advantage through an engaged workforce is the desire of every corporate manager. The convenience sampling technique was used to determine a sample size of 100 from a population of 192. The study adopted a descriptive statistic of mean and standard deviation, Spearman's co-relational study and simple linear regression analysis to examine the inter-relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement in Coca-Cola bottling Company, Imo State, Nigeria. Reliability statistics was conducted to ascertain the reliability of the test instrument. The scale proved reliable .823 ($\alpha \geq .70$). Result shows that employee job engagement has a very significant impact on Coca Cola global businesses with a correlation coefficient of -.503 and P- value of .309 at 0.01 level of significance. The study recommend that organization managers should create a satisfied work environment for employees with a view to encourage employees and promote performance. The study concludes that Employee Job Engagement correlates with Corporate Sustainability in Imo State South East, Nigeria which consequently implies that Coca-Cola has stimulated Corporate Sustainability activities in Imo State South East, Nigeria.

Keywords: Engagement, Employee, Sustainability, Corporate, Environment

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I. Introduction

As global competition increases, employees are expected to do more with less. Companies claim that employee layoffs are necessary to save the business and retain jobs for at least some engaged people (Wankel,2018). The onset and spread of COVID-19 have left few people, if any, unaffected, however in today's competitive business environment, high employee performance resulting from employee engagement is the key objective of most organizations (Obialor, 2020a). However, performance does not just happen in workplaces. It is motivated by series of factors such as employee engagement and loyalty (Preko&Adjetej, 2013).

Employee engagement is an important tool in performance management, thus when employees are recruited and are not provided with the necessary task, facilities and ergonomic working environment, they have not been engaged and may not adequately develop the right loyalty towards the organization (Obialor 2020b). According to Loehr& Schwartz(2003) cited in Preko&Adjetej(2013), fully engaged employees are those who are physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused and feel aligned with the purpose of the organization.

Employee engagement has been found to have significance to employee and business level outcomes. The outcome of employee engagement is however valuable to organizations because of its value to bottom line outcomes (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). Employee engagement as defined by Kahn (1990) is the harnessing of organization member selves to their work roles. In engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance. Corporate Sustainability is often used interchangeably with corporate social responsibility which is defined as "context specific organizational

actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance" (Obialor, 2020c).

However, Corporate Sustainability is described as "a company that seek to create long- term value to stakeholders by embracing the opportunities and managing risks that result from balancing economic, environmental, and social responsibility (Lazlo & Zhexembayeva, 2011). Arguably, most organizations are highly driven by social and ethical responsibilities, and as such majority of the studies on Corporate Sustainability examined its macro impact on the organization (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Employee all over the world lack a deeper meaning in what they are doing and consequently job-related engagement is alarmingly low, yet organizations claim that employees are the most critical asset for an organization. Looking at today's employee, engagement and attachment present a bleak picture as job satisfaction steadily is decreasing. However, Glavas & Piderit (2009); Aguinis & Glavas (2012) posit that employee's moral identity and desire to find meaningfulness in their work may contribute to their engagement.

Considering the above and the fact that not much have been done on this area and the less empirical evidence on the relationship between employee job engagement and corporate sustainability, the study is conducted to examine the effect of the relationship between corporate sustainability and employee job engagement in Organizations.

Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is to examine the inter-relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement in Organizations.

Research question

What is the relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement in Organizations?

Research hypothesis

There is no significant linear relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement in Organizations.

II. Review of literature

Looking at today's employee, engagement and attachment present a bleak picture. Job satisfaction in employee employment is decreasing. Besides this, very few employees feel a strong emotional affiliation with their place of work (Wissmann, 2013). Engagement according to Gallup Institute, (2013) connotes a continuous emotional involvement and a focus on creating value for the employer and the company as a whole. Kahn (1990) first explained the framework of engagement as has become an emotional and psychological construct in previous literature.

Similarly, Bakker & Demerouti (2008) proved that job-demand-resource model helps in understanding the causes of employee engagement. Thus, the service environment is positively linked with employee engagement. Furthermore, Rafferty, Maben, West and Robinson (2005) explain the employee engagement to have originated from two theories and has been the theme of commitment and organization citizenship behaviour. Mutual coordination among employers and employees affects quality of connection and reporting relationships. Hence, it was recommended that employee engagement is the association with enthusiasm for work process in an organization.

Employee engagement is a unique concept in business firms and consists of emotional and cognitive components related to work performance (Saks, 2006). Engagement according to Bhatla (2011) is a state in which employees are not only intellectually devoted but also emotionally committed with goals of organization. Kahn (1990) is credited with conceptualizing the major components of employee engagement. Kahn's model proposes that engagement differs from basic job involvement, in that it focuses not only on worker skill, but rather on how one commits him/herself during the performance of the job.

The conceptual framework developed in this study is based on Kahn's model of employee engagement. The first element is the state of meaningfulness in which workers feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable, and that they make a difference and are appreciated for the work they do. The second element according to Kahn (1990) is safety which is described as an environment in which people feel an ability to act as what would be normal for the individual employee without fear of negative consequences and a climate to be one of openness and supportiveness. The third element is availability which is defined by Kahn (1990) as the sense of having the personal physical, emotional, and psychological means with which to engage employees with their job tasks at any particular moment.

Contributing, Saks (2006) further differentiated job engagement from organization engagement and maintained that organizational engagement is a person's attitude and attachment to his/her organization, whereas

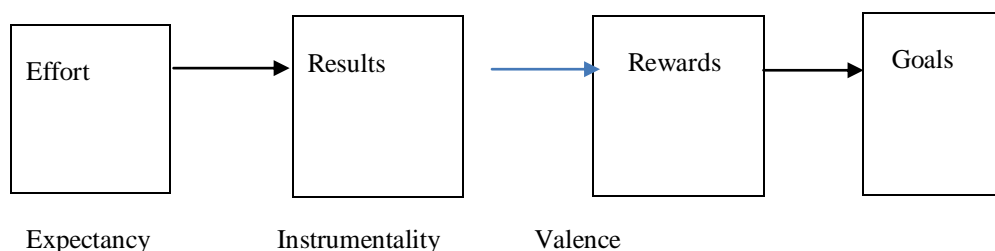
employee engagement is the degree to which an employee is actually absorbed in the performance of his/her own individual job role.

Theoretical Review on the Relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory of Vroom (1964) indicates that it is not necessary for the behaviour and working motivation of employees to determine the reality, but conversely, depended on what people expect in the future. Different from Maslow (1943), Vroom involves three basic concepts, including: Expectancy, Instrumentality and Valence. It is said that if workers' perception about these three concepts is positive, their motivation would increase (Vroom, 1964). In other words, it is believed that employees' effort will get better results.

Consequently, this will lead to a significant and suitable achievements for employees personal and organizational goals. Applying this theory into the study, it is obvious that employees have a motivation toward a certain aim, and this aim must connect closely to organization's objectives, hence creating an awareness to employees that their efforts will definitely bring the rewards as they desire. Hence, organization managers need to create the satisfied work environment for employees with a view to encourage employees and promote performance.

Fig.1



Expectancy Theory of Vroom

Smith (2011) opines that Corporate Sustainability is similar to Corporate Social Responsibility, though certain aspects of the concept have theoretical overlap and present diffusion in conceptualization. However, Corporate Sustainability is conceptually different from Corporate Social Responsibility. Notwithstanding the diffusion, the outcome of both concepts has great significance to business outcomes (Lazlo and Zhexembayeva, 2011). Bansal and Song, (2017) cited in Simon and Zhou (2018) insists that due to the multi-dimensional aspect of the construct, it is often challenged by a theoretical basis.

However, most past research has used the social identity theory like the work of Hogg and Terry, (2000), Aguinis and Glavas, (2012), Glavas and Piderit, (2009) as the theoretical framework for sustainability. They opine that employee's moral identity and desire to find meaningfulness in their work may contribute to their engagement. Social identity theory implies that the more an employee perceive their organization to be involved in sustainability, the more likely they will feel a positive attitude towards the organization which may influence their behaviour (Rupp, shao, thornton, and Skarlicki, 2013). Similarly, it was also found that employees' attribute different motives of their organization's sustainability efforts and these motives influence employee performance. Hence, when employees perceive that their organizations' investment in a sustainability initiative or practices that are both intrinsic and extrinsic, they too will be prone to employing their discretionary effort to work.

Implications for practice

Business longevity is the desire of every organization, thus understanding the role and impact of engagement on the overall organizational success is important. Organizations would use corporate sustainability as a Strategic HRM tool for engagement if corporate sustainability can be positively linked to employee engagement and other positive organizational outcomes. Glavas and Godwin (2016) posit that both corporate sustainability and employee engagement can contribute to profitability and increased shareholder value.

Implications for theory

The argument put forward in this paper is significant to theory by providing an enhanced framework for the existing literature on these constructs. Understanding the relationship between corporate sustainability and employee engagement would add significant knowledge to academic and industry literature, and also provide greater elucidation on advancing the theory and addressing the existing gaps.

III. Methodology

The study adopts a survey research design. The population of the study consists of the staff of Coca Cola bottling company, Imo State, South-East Nigeria. The convenience sampling method was used to determine a sample size of 100 samples. The study adopted a descriptive statistic of mean and standard deviation, Spearman's co-relational study and simple linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between employee job engagement and corporate sustainability of Coca Cola bottling company in Imo State, Nigeria.

Table.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Corporate Sustainability	5.56	1.15
Employee Job Engagement	5.02	1.22

Table.1 shows the mean values for the variables. On a seven-point scale, the mean score for Corporate Sustainability is 5.56 (Std. Dev = 1.15). The mean score for employee job engagement is 5.02 (Std. Dev = 1.22). The above calculation shows the neutral score of 4, which implies that respondents' overall attitude towards Employees Job Engagement is positive. Reliability Statistics Internal reliability test was conducted to ascertain the stability and dependability of the research instrument (Malhotra, 2010). A reliability statistic (Cronbach's alpha) has been performed to test the reliability and internal consistency of each of the attributes measured. The scale proved to be internally reliable (alpha = .823). This alpha has exceeded the minimum standard ($\alpha \geq .70$). The average inter-item correlation is 0.167, falling within the acceptable range of 0.15 – 0.50 (Clark and Watson, 1995).

Table.2: Reliability Statistics

Variable	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Corporate Sustainability	13	0.79
Employee Job Engagement	05	0.75

From Table.2, the dependent variable, corporate sustainability is 0.79 and for the independent variable, Employees Job Engagement is 0.75. Both alpha's exceeded the minimum standard.

Table.3: Normality statistics

Variable	Skewness Statistics	Kurtosis Statistics
Corporate Sustainability	- 0.193	0.000
Employee Job Engagement	0.021	0.250

Table.3 shows the normality analysis of the data. Skewness and kurtosis were calculated to ascertain the normality of the data. The data does not depict significant departures from normality as Skewness and Kurtosis values for the composite indicators are within the range of ± 1.96 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham, 1998). So the data is normally distributed.

Correlation Analysis

Table.4: Correlation Matrix

	Corporate Sustainability	Employee Job Engagement
Corporate Sustainability	-----	.658**
Employee Job Engagement		

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 significant level (2 tailed test). From table.4, the result shows that Corporate Sustainability is significantly correlated with Employee Job Engagement, where ($r = .658, P < 0.01$). The correlation analysis provides full support to research hypotheses. That is (H_1): There is no significant linear relationship between Corporate Sustainability and Employee Job Engagement in Organizations.

Regression Analysis

In order to examine the impact of the relationship between the dependent and independent variable, regression analysis is used (Khan, 2016). The basic difference between regression and correlation analysis is that regression assumes that the independent variable is a cause or a predictor of the dependent variable (Malhotra, 2010). Regression analysis is normally used to find how much independent variable can explain dependent variable. The P-value is calculated to establish the significance of the result. In order to show and

prove that the results are significant by at least 95% and the P-value should be lower than 0.05, which shows that the result is significant. Similarly, the P-value of lower than 0.01 will indicate that the result significance is at least 99% (Nolan and Heinzen, 2011).

Table.5: Regression statistics

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Beta	F	Sig.
1	.658a	.433	.417	.658	85.352	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Global Business

From the Table.5, R-Square value = 0.433 which means independent variable, Employee Job Engagement can explain 43.3% of the dependent variable – Corporate Sustainability. Also, it depicts that in global business environments, Employee Job Engagement is statistically and significantly related with Corporate Sustainability (B = 0.658, P< .001) which according to Cohen (1998) is a large effect. So, the result provided a full support for the hypothesis. Therefore, the regression result demonstrate that Employee Job Engagement have significant relationship with Corporate Sustainability of Coca Cola Bottling Company in Imo State South East, Nigeria.

IV. Results and Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that Employee Job Engagement have a significant impact relationship with corporate sustainability having a correlation coefficient of -. 503 and p-value of .309 at 0.01 significant level. The result obtained from the findings indicated that Employee Job Engagement correlates with Corporate Sustainability in Imo State, Nigeria. This implies that Employee Job Engagement has stimulated Corporate Sustainability activities in the region studied.

V. Policy Implications

Global businesses that fails to keep to the rules of job engagement stands to lose to some extent the potential benefits of corporate sustainability. The result with a correlation coefficient of -. 503 and p-value of .309 at 0.01 significant level indicated that Employee Job Engagement correlates with Corporate Sustainability in Imo State, implies that Coca-Cola has stimulated Corporate Sustainability activities in Imo State. The study provides a response to the necessity for this analysis that arises from the effects of Corporate Sustainability actions in Global business like Coca Cola.

VI. Recommendations

- i. Organizations should create an awareness to employees that their efforts will definitely bring the rewards as they desire.
- ii. Organization managers should create a satisfied work environment for employees with a view to encourage employees and promote performance.

VII. Conclusion

The study concludes that Corporate Sustainability promotes a vision for the accountability of businesses in a wide range of stakeholders beyond shareholders and investors. Employee Job Engagement stimulated Corporate Sustainability activities by reviewing Coca-Cola business models. The results show that Employee Job Engagement have significant impact relationship on corporate sustainability with a correlation coefficient of -. 503 and p-value of .309 at 0.01 significant level. The result obtained from the findings indicated that Employee Job Engagement correlates with Corporate Sustainability in Imo State South East, Nigeria which consequently implies that Coca-Cola has stimulated Corporate Sustainability activities in Imo State South East, Nigeria.

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