EFFECTS OF CAREER SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEES’ PERFORMANCE IN INDIGENOUS CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN ABUJA

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Abstract
This study assesses the effects of career support in indigenous construction companies in Abuja and their effects on employees’ performance. The study followed a survey research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population of the study was from the indigenous construction industry in Abuja. Responses from three hundred and sixty-seven construction employees were analysed. The data collected was analysed using Pearson correlation coefficient statistics technique. The findings of the study reveal that career support has effects on employees’ performance. This research concluded that performance among employees was based on the degree of career support program put in place by the organisation. As career support have a significant positive relationship with employee performance. The study recommends that for indigenous construction business to maintain better employees performance they should encourage career support program for their organization.

Keywords: career support, coaching, employees’ performance

Introduction
Career support is among one the most useful instruments for preparing tomorrows’ managers and is also used to strengthen organizational intelligence, build sustainable communities knowledge and sustain the organization competitive advantage (Adeyemi, 2013). Career support is one of the activities often designed and encouraged by management to improve employees’ performances and ensure that they retain their competitive advantage (Okurame, 2013).

In most organisation human beings serve as one of the vital resources and the indigenous construction businesses are no exception. The indigenous construction businesses rely on individuals from the bottom to the top as all are important in order to achieve better employees’ performance (Ofobruku, and Nwakoby, 2016). The contribution of the construction industry to Nigeria economic necessitates improved efficiency in the industry. About 69% of Nigeria’s fixed capital formation is produced by the construction industry (Federal Office of Statistics, 1998). This showed the significance of the industry within the economy because the percentage above represents nearly 70% of the capital base of the national economy. In the 1980s, the construction industry was one of the major contributors to Nigeria gross domestic product (GDP) (Federal Office of Statistics, 1996) while in 2007 its contribution dropped to 1.72% of the GDP (National Bureau of Statistics, 2007). This is an unsteady development and an indication of an ailing industry which demand prompt and adequate attention.

Statement of the problem
Career support for workers has also been found to be an area of contention in employees’ performance. This has been corroborated by Rothwell (2010) who stated that career support is a large part of employees’ performance and the lack of career guide reduces the likelihood for better employees’ performance. Currently business in Nigeria is presently confronted with issues of employees’ performance (Ofobruku and Yusuf, 2016). This depicts how the business world is also confronted with issues of employees’ performance. Furthermore, small and medium businesses in Abuja are
presently experiencing dwindling productivity fortune of in these past years (Ofobruku, Obi-Anike and Okafor, 2017). This is mostly attributed to poor employees’ performance or inappropriate employees’ performance. It is against this background that the research work examined the effects of career support on employees’ performance of indigenous construction business in Nigeria. Based on the above problem the hypothesis tested was:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between coaching and employees’ performance in construction companies in Abuja, Nigeria.

Conceptualizing Concepts

Concept of Career Support

Career support can be viewed as an element of administrative support (Kraimer and Wayne 2004). Organizational support theory states that employees personify the organization and from the way they perceive the organization is treating them, they infer the extent to which the organization values their efforts and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa 1986). Employees in turn reciprocate such perceived support with increased commitment, loyalty, and performance. In a review of over 70 studies, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found that perceived organizational support indeed is related to increased affective commitment to the organization, increased performance, and reduced withdrawal behaviours.

Career support is usually measured by asking employees to indicate whether several career support practices are present in the organization. Examples of these practices are pre-departure career development planning programs (Handler and Lane 1997; Riusala and Suutari 2000) and the appointment of career coaches who assist with examining and managing their career options (Selmer et al. 2000). However, which and how many practices are relevant may differ from study to study. As a consequence, there is no consensus on a general definition of the construct or its operationalization.

Employees’ Performance

The survival of an organization in a competitive business environment depends on how effectively the organization learns to adapt itself to the environment and capitalize on its resources fully (Lee, 2006). Successful entrepreneurial firms move from start-up, through expansion and growth, to maturity (Poza, 1988). Long term survival of a firm not financial performance should be utilized to ultimately judge the success of an organization (De Gues, 1997; Brenneman, Keys & Fulmer, 1998). Firm survival depends on the ability to adapt successfully to a changing environment. To ensure survival, organizations formulate appropriate strategies, and devise ways to achieve these strategies (Eisenhardt and Zbaracki, 1992). Successful companies tend to be tolerant of new and innovative ideas. Instead of fearing the unknown, these companies thrive on uncertainty and realize that opportunity is often the twin sister of change (De Gues,1997). Even though the environment is constantly changing around them, these firms maintain flexible strategies that allow them to change with the environment. A living company recognizes that it cannot control its environment, rather it must learn to continuously adapt to it (Kelly, 1997).

Career support and Employee Performance

Johannes, Heijden, Marloes. van Engen and Paauwe (2009) investigated ‘Expatriate career support: predicting expatriate turnover and performance’. The study was aimed at explaining why multinational companies have difficulty retaining their repatriates as well as how multinational companies can improve in- and expatriate performance. Career support is professed career prospects within the establishment and expatriate performance. Bearing in mind the views of others numerous researchers, Avery (2008), states that, during the past four decades, the effect of career support on employee performance has been a topic of interest among scholars and professional working in the area of mentoring. I agreed with the above positions as in the construction industry, skills are characterised as ‘hands on’, which provides stress, intervention, and control of operations and interactions between members at all levels in the organisation. This according to Mullins (1998) is due largely to the widespread believed that mentorship can affect the performance of the employee and more so mentorship is considered by some researchers to be particularly important in achieving organisational goals, and in working performance among subordinates. Several reasons indicate that, there is a relationship between mentorship and employees performance. The first reason, relates to today’s intensive, dynamic markets feature innovation based competition, price performance, rivalry, decreasing returns, and the creative destruction of existing competence, scholars and practitioners view are of the opinion that effective mentorship can facilitate the improvement of employees performance when organisations face these new challenges (Avery 2008).
Understanding the effects of mentorship on employees’ performance (Zhu et al, 2005 in Avery 2008) posit that, it is also important because leaders are viewed by researchers as mentors with key driving forces for improving employees’ performance (Ofobru and Yusuf, 2016); Effective mentorship to them is seen as a potent source for management development and sustained competitive advantage for organisational performance improvement. Agreeing to Mehra et al (2006) in Avery 2008 while some establishments pursue effective ways to empower their employees to outperform others, a long’ standing approach is to focus on the effects of career support. This is because career support is believed to play an essential role in influencing collective norms, aiding teams to deal with their environs and coordinating cooperative actions (Ofobru and Yusuf, 2016).

**Theoretical framework**

Theories are important for the practitioner and the scientist because they provide a rational and explicit framework in which to organize information and to guide research (Miller, 1989; Lunsford, 2007). Knowledge is advanced with researchers collect data to prove or disprove theories (Kukla, 1989). The social learning theory and career support are synonymous. Bandura’s (1976) social learning theory is a popular approach for explaining skills acquisition in individuals. The theorist emphasized the part played by models in transmitting specific behaviour, attitudes and emotional responses in different circumstances, indicating that there is much more to learn through role modelling than classical or operant conditioning.

It explains that people learn new behaviour through observational learning, suggesting that if and individual observes pleasant, favourable outcome consequences in the observed behaviour, they are likely to imitate, and adopt the behaviour themselves. Every individual has at one time or the other watched and tried to imitate actions of others in the performance of a task. Bandura proposed that we observe others perform an action and then rehearse them until we become comfortable performing them when there is a need for it. The application of the social learning principles to the training and development of individuals were labelled a long time ago as behavioural modelling technique (Goldstein & Sorcher, 1974). Career support is a training strategy that is especially consistent with the tenets of the social learning theory (Ross-Gordon, 1998). The role modelling aspect of the psychosocial functions of career support particularly reinforces the theorist’s argument that modelling is a social learning technique that guides peoples’ actions and makes learning less laborious.

**Methodology**

The research process was guided by many factors acting independently or in combination with others. Predicated on this, the study utilized survey research design. The population targeted all the 9 dually registered indigenous construction companies operating in Abuja, to represent the total population, reasons is that they were registered consistently from 2007-2016 with the council for registration of builders in Abuja.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Company</th>
<th>Numbers of employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZEBERCED LIMITED</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HABIBU ENGINEERING</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNL AND CONSTRUCTION LIMITED</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGETO NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISION NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETEH AROSUKU NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESTINY NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFAL AND SONS NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S AND M NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3685</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SOURCE: Field Survey, 2017*

Based on the above population, the sample size for this research study was determined using Taro Yamane formula (1967). This formula is used where the population size for the study is known. Thus it is stated, as shown below:

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

Where,
\[n = \text{sample size};\]
N = population size;
e = Level of precision required;
1 = constant

The sample size was determined by the following variables:
Confidence interval = 95 %
e = Margin of error = 0.05

Substituting into the formula, therefore:

\[ n = \frac{3685}{1 + 3685 (0.05)^2} \]
\[ n = 361 \]

A stratified sampling method was adopted so as to give a fair representation to the designated organizations using the proportionality formula thus:

\[ Q = \frac{A}{N} \times \frac{n}{1} \]

Where:
Q = the number of questionnaires to be allocated to each segment
A = the proportion of each segment
N = the total population of all the segments
n = the estimated sample size used in the study

Table 1.0: Breakdown of the sample size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>INDIGENOUS CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN ABUJA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ZEBERCED LIMITED</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HABIBU ENGINEERING</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BNL AND CONSTRUCTION LIMITED</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SAGETO NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>VISION NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ETEH AROSUKU NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DESTINY NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>OFFAL AND SONS NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>S AND M NIGERIA LIMITED</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3685</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey 2017

Though three hundred and sixty one is statistically right for the study, three hundred and sixty seven questionnaires were distributed and collected from respondent for the study.

Data Collection

The method applied in gathering the data used for the answering the perceived problem identified in this study was primary and secondary methods, the primary method was the use of questionnaire; the questionnaire items were raised from the literature review. The reliability of responses to the items of the instruments was analysed using Cronbach alpha Coefficient aided with the use of spss 17. The reliability result from the questionnaire yield 0.75, which indicates that the instrument is reliable. The model specified for the test of the hypothesis was: Pearson Product-moment Correlation coefficient:

\[
r = \frac{n \Sigma xy - \Sigma x \Sigma y}{\sqrt{[n \Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2][n \Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma y)^2]}}
\]

Where:

r = correlation coefficient
n = Sample size
x = Average response of the first test
y = Average response of the second test
All the distributed copies of the questionnaire were returned

**Result of analysis**

**Ho:** There is no significant relationship between career support (coaching) and employee performance.

**Table 2: Show result of analysis of hypothesis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Employees performance</th>
<th>Career support (coaching)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.946**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 above indicates that when Career support (coaching) was correlated with employees’ performance the significance value produced was 0.000. The significance value of 0.000 was lesser than 0.05.

**Discussion of Findings**

The result of the analysis in table 2, show strong positive correlations between Career support (coaching) and employee performance at r = .946**. Based on the result shown we reject the null hypothesis and accept that there is a significant relationship between Career support (coaching) and employee performance, where Career support (coaching) have a significant positive relationship with employees’ performance. The findings of this study agree with some of earlier studies. The current results are consistent with previous findings (Ofovwe & Eghafona, 2013; Okediji, Nndum & Enwongo, 2013).

**Conclusion**

The objective of this research study was to examine the effects of Career support (coaching) on employees’ performance in indigenous construction firm, in Abuja, Nigeria. The empirical findings and result show that Career support (coaching) has positive effects on employees’ performance. Career support could be used as an instrument to enhance employees’ performance to their organisation as confirmed by the result of the tested hypotheses. The study provides an insight into the relevance of Career support (coaching) on employees’ performance in the workplaces. Career support (coaching) has strongly positive relationship with employees’ performance in an indigenous construction firm in Abuja, Nigeria. The above implies that improve employees performance is necessary for business success, organization therefore need to understand the use of Career support (coaching) as instruments to positive affects employees performance, the ability of the leaders and management to effectively improve employees performance in today’s business organizational is traceable to effective career support (coaching) programs. The extents at which organizations are able to imbibe the culture of mentoring as a key to employees’ performance will to a large extent determine their sustainability in the competitive market and improve employees’ performance.

**Recommendation**
The recommendation put forward based on and conclusions: In order to achieve better employees’ performance in organizations and for indigenous construction firms in particular to take competitive advantages in the ever challenging business environment, leaders and managers in this industry should adopt the Career support (coaching) as an instrument to improve employees’ performance, so as to achieve the organization objectives. The indigenous construction business should continue to take the issue of career support (coaching) very sacrosanct so as to improve employees’ performance in their various organisations. The need to also institutionalized Career support (coaching) programs in business and organizations will go a long way in achieving the much needed better and oriented employees’ performance that will enable the organisation to achieve her objective.

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