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EFFECT OF JOB ENRICHMENT ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE: A STUDY OF CAREER MANAGEMENT OFFICE, OFFICE OF HEAD OF SERVICE, JALINGO, TARABA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes how job enrichment affects employee performance for those employed in the Career Management Office, Office of Head of Service, Taraba State, Jalingo. Specifically, the study centres on task variety and skill variety as job enrichment dimensions and the performance outcomes of employees. A survey research design was utilized. The sample population consisted of 222 employees of the Career Management Office data were collected using the questionnaires. Out of the questionnaire distributed 202 questionnaires were considered valid and used to test the stated research hypotheses using multiple regression Analysis. The study found that employee performance is positively influenced by both task variety and skill variety, with task variety ($\beta = 0.241$, $p < 0.05$) having a greater effect than skill variety ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$). It was suggested that structured job enrichment programs that include both task variety and skill variety be introduced. The study suggested the introduction of rotation programs with task durations of 12-24 months per job position, and the establishment of a comprehensive skills inventory pertaining to employees. These recommendations are necessary for establishing a flexible workforce, improving the organizational performance of Taraba State, and assuring improved public service.

Keywords: Job Enrichment, Task Variety, Skill Variety, Employee Performance, Public Service, Taraba State

INTRODUCTION

Job enrichment focuses on altering roles within HRM to include a range of tasks and skills. In response to a constantly evolving public sector, new HRM strategies aim to develop the skills and competencies of employees to provide better public services. Job enrichment provides numerous ways to improve workforce effectiveness. Task variety and skill variety are the two constructs most widely adopted. Task variety refers to the range of responsibilities and duties an employee has, while skill variety refers to the number of skills an employee has the opportunity to learn and use. Both of these constructs are positively related to productivity, satisfaction, flexibility, and commitment of employees in the majority of organizations.

The Nigerian public service is not immune to the general constraints on service delivery such as skill and morale stagnation and unnecessary bureaucracy. Job rotation within the Career Management Office of Taraba State provides an opportunity to explore the effects of task and skill variety on employee performance. Ineffective public service within Taraba State illustrates the challenges that are faced, and the absence of research regarding the effects of job rotation on employee performance within the Career Management Office illustrates the potential that job rotation can provide.

It is documented that in many organizations where job rotation is common, integrating task variety and skill variety to rotation programs influences the efficacy of such programs in enhancing employee performance (Campion et al., 2020). For public sector organizations like the Career Management Office in Taraba State, the challenge is twofold: implementing job rotation programs as well as demonstrating that the programs are enhancing the positive performance indicators of productivity, satisfaction, adaptability, and commitment.

Job rotation has numerous positive effects, but there is a pertinent gap between its theory and its actual effects on job performance in areas like Taraba State, (O'Neill, 2019). This research aims to address this gap by exploring task variety and skill variety as the two main dimensions of job rotation and analyzing their actual effects on employee performance in the Career Management Office, Taraba State.

The broad objective of the study is to determine the effect of job enrichment on employees' performance in the Career Management Office, Taraba State. Specifically, the following specific objectives of the study include:

i. To determine the effect of task variety on employees' performance in the Career Management Office, Taraba State.

ii. To examine the effect of skill variety on employees' performance in the Career Management Office, Taraba State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Job Enrichment

Job enrichment practices actively expand employee roles to provide purpose, stimulation, and fulfilment in the work an employee appreciates doing. While job rotation simply reshuffles employee positions, job enrichment increases the breadth and depth of employees' positions by adding more tasks, responsibilities, and autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Job enrichment, as describe by Robbins and Judge (2018), allows for a vertical expansion of the job scope, where employees gain the ability and control to make strategic decisions about what, when, and how they wish to perform their job. Campion et al., (2020) and Arasanmi and Krishna, (2019) show that job enrichment ultimately emptying employees of boredom, provides work of higher quality, more efficient work, and fosters a greater sense of satisfaction for the employee by increasing the level of autonomy and responsibility of the employee. For the purpose of this study, two of the primary dimensions of job enrichment, task variety and skill variety, are the focus.

Task Variety

Task Variety pertains to the range of activities and responsibilities offered to employees as a result of job enrichment. Task variety as a design element of a job was first introduced in Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristic Model (1976). This design element helps stimulate job enrichment to enhance motivation and performance through the avoidance of boredom. Campion et al. (2020) build on the former definition of task variety. They define task variety as a cross-training practice wherein employees are purposefully assigned different duties across many departments to develop their skills and broaden their perspective within the organization. Employees performing a variety of duties develop skills beyond that of their primary function. Arasanmi and Krishna (2019) opine that exposure to diverse duties and especially cross- departmental duties, progressively develop employees' technical and social skills and deepen their realizations about the entity's functioning. There exists an empirical research-based nexus between task variety and performance outcomes. Ugwu and Okoro (2023) undertook a case study of civil servants in Enugu State, Nigeria, and found that job enrichment that explicitly integrated task variety led to a marked increase in employee productivity and efficiency.

Skill Variety

Skill Variety is the extent to which job roles allow employees to utilize and develop a range of skills. According to Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, skill variety is a motivational element of job roles, as employees engaged in work requiring multiple skills are more likely to be satisfied with their job role compared to employees whose job roles are highly specialized. As described by Arasanmi and Krishna (2019), job enrichment allows employees to gain new skills and knowledge, and helps employees understand the challenges of the organization at a deeper level. From Nafei's (2016) perspective, skill variety is a dimension of talent spotting, as it provides managers with insight on how employees utilize various skills in different situations. Musa and Danladi (2023) studied the Kaduna State public service and found a strong positive relationship between job enrichment and the development of both technical and soft skills of employees. They noted that civil servants who experienced skill variety adapted to new technologies and changes in policies easily.

Employee Performance

The term "employee performance" describes the level of effectiveness and efficiency individuals use to complete the duties and responsibilities associated with their job. It pertains to quality as well. Robbins and Judge (2018) characterize employee performance as the measurable results of an employee's work that further the goals of

the organization. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), performance is the extent to which individuals carry out their assigned responsibilities in an economically optimal manner (i.e., high productivity and quality, low variance, and efficient use of resources and time). This study assesses employee performance on the basis of four factors: employee productivity, job satisfaction, adaptability, and commitment. Productivity refers to the efficiency with which an employee completes work assignments. Job satisfaction describes the employee's positive feelings with regard to his/her employment. Adaptability relates to an employee's flexibility with regard to the changing of work demands and/or conditions. Finally, commitment describes the employee's psychological attachment to the organization and/or the work that he/she does.

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory (Anchor Theory)

Theodore Schultz (1961) was the first to formally describe the Human Capital Theory, with refinements provided by Gary Becker (1964). This theory transformed labor economics by recognizing education and training as investments that appreciate and provide economic benefits. Human Capital Theory assumes that individuals enhance their productive capabilities through education, training, and work experience. It also assumes that the knowledge and skills of employees (human capital) enhance their productivity and the economic worth of the employee to the organization. It further assumes that organizations invest in human capital (e.g., through job rotation) with the belief that future gains will outweigh the initial costs in terms of enhanced organizational performance and efficiency.

Within the current research, Human Capital Theory is appropriate in explaining how employees of the Career Management Office will react to job rotation through varied tasks and skill level. If employees believe job rotation offers them opportunities to not only perform different tasks, but also develop different skills, they will perceive job rotation as an augmentation to their daily work and hence, improve performance. The theory assumes that the job rotation investment will appreciate in the self-worth of the employees, and also in their productivity, satisfaction, flexibility, and loyalty. This is consistent with other research showing that organizations that focus on employee development - especially through exposure to different tasks - are more productive and have more satisfied employees (Nguyen et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2022).

Empirical Review

Many studies have explored job rotation's influence on employee performance in various organizations.

In their studies, Abdullahi and Bello (2024) analyzed job rotation and its impact on employee efficiency using civil service commissions in Northern Nigeria. Using a mixed-method approach, researchers surveyed 300 civil servants and interviewed 30 departmental heads. Introducing variety into tasks using job rotation improved efficiency in working across functions by 15% and decreased the error rate in tasks completed over the period of 12 months.

Musa and Danladi (2023) analyzed the impact of job rotation on the development of skills of 280 public sector employees in Kaduna State of Nigeria. Using a quantitative survey, correlation, and regression analysis, a strong association was found ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.001$) in job rotation and the development of technical skills, soft skills, and skills in data analysis, policy analysis, and communication across departments.

In their studies, Ugwu and Okoro (2023) analysed the relationship between job rotation and productivity of employees in the Enugu State Civil Service. Using a quantitative survey on 250 civil servants, data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and correlation and regression analyses were conducted. The results revealed a positive significant relationship ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) between job rotation programs and employee productivity.

Adebola and Isiaka (2019) focused on job rotation and its role in skill development and flexibility in the public sector in Southwestern Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, tailored questionnaires were sent to employees across various ministries. The data were analysed using regression. It was found that job rotation improves technical skills and enhances interpersonal skills, such as teamwork, and boosts problem-solving abilities.

These studies advocate for the implementation of formal job rotation schemes and the establishment of initiatives to develop and diversify tasks and skills Programs, as these have the potential to enhance positive outcomes on performance for public sector employees.

Methodology

Research Design

A survey research design was the cornerstone of this research. This study used questionnaires to gather data from respondents to determine the impact of task and skill variety on employee performance in the Career Management Office, Taraba State. With this approach, the study was able to determine the causal relationship and draw necessary conclusions on the current role of job rotation in the organization.

Population of the Study

The study population consisted of employees in the Career Management Office. The total reachable employee population was 500, according to Taraba State Civil Service Commission 2026. The participants were the employees who had either participated in job rotation schemes or had experienced task and skill variety in the office. The selection criteria of the participants ensured that the participants were long-term employees and that they had the potential to provide important information on the impact of task and skill variety on employee performance.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Taro Yamane's formula was used to estimate the sample size with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of sample error (Tejada & Punzalan, 2012). Using the formula:

$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$

where N = 500, the sample size was:

$n = 500 / (1 + 500(0.05)^2) = 500 / (1 + 1.25) = 500 / 2.25 = 222$

From the selected departments, a simple random sampling technique was used to pick the respondents.

Data Source and Data Collection Method

Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires to measure the research variables. Perception's data were measured using a 4-point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaires were adapted from Musa and Danladi (2023) and customized to fit the current study. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the respondents by the researcher and the trained enumerators.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

To establish validity, opinions of both the academicians and practitioners were sought to evaluate the face and content validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was improved based on their feedback. Reliability was assessed by a pilot test of 30 respondents and Cronbach's alpha. The results showed adequate internal consistency for task variety ($\alpha = 0.78$), skill variety ($\alpha = 0.81$), and employee performance ($\alpha = 0.79$).

Data Analytical Technique

The hypotheses were tested and the relationships between task variety, skill variety, and employee performance were established using multiple regression analysis. The regression model is specified as:

$$\mathbf{EMPPERF = a + \beta_1 TV + \beta_2 SV + e}$$

Where:

a = Intercept (constant)

β_1TV = Coefficient of Task Variety

β_2SV = Coefficient of Skill Variety

e = Error term (5% significance level)

Decision Rule: If $p < 0.05$, reject the null hypothesis. If $p > 0.05$, fail to reject the null hypothesis. This approach made it possible to conduct credible analysis and draw appropriate conclusions concerning the effects of task variety and skill variety on employee performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study assessed the data collected from 202 of the 222 distributed questionnaires. An adequate response threshold for results analysis is considered to be 70%, meaning the response rate of this study was well above the threshold, thus, the findings of this study are based on a strong data collection effort. The findings address the study objectives, which include evaluating how task variety and skill variety affect employee performance at the Career Management Office, Taraba State.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.542	0.294	0.287	0.389

Note: Predictors: (Constant), Task Variety, Skill Variety
Source: SPSS Output, 2026

Table 1 provides a model summary that describes the relationship in quality between the predictors and the dependent variable. With a correlation coefficient R of 0.542, it can say that the independent variables task variety and skill variety have a moderate positive relationship with the dependent variable employee performance. It can also be said that the predictors mentioned here account for approximately 29.4% of the variance in employee performance as shown by the R-Square value of 0.294. The adjusted R-Square of 0.287 indicates the number of predictors in this model.

Table 2: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	12.518	2	6.259	41.352	0.000
Residual	30.062	199	0.151		
Total	42.580	201			

Note: Dependent Variable: Employee Performance. Predictors: (Constant), Task Variety, Skill Variety
Source: SPSS Output, 2026

The overall significance of the regression model is tested by the analysis of variance (ANOVA), which is presented in Table 2. With an F-value of 41.352 and a significance level of 0.000, the results confirm that the proposed model is statistically significant. This implies that the independent variables used in the study have a positive influence on employee performance.

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.892	0.156		5.718	0.000
Task Variety	0.234	0.056	0.241	4.179	0.000
Skill Variety	0.187	0.051	0.196	3.667	0.000

Note: Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Source: SPSS Output, 2026

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis, and the results are summarized below:

$H0_1$: Task variety has no significant effect on employee performance.

The results indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between task variety and employee performance ($B = 0.234$, $\beta = 0.241$, $t = 4.179$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This leads to the rejection of $H0_1$, suggesting that task variety positively influences employee performance.

$H0_2$: Skill variety has no significant effect on employee performance.

A statistically significant positive relationship was found between skill variety and employee performance ($B = 0.187$, $\beta = 0.196$, $t = 3.667$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This leads to the rejection of $H0_2$, affirming that skill variety enhances employee performance.

Discussion of Findings

Effect of Task Variety on Employee Performance

The data shows that task variety positively influences employee performance ($\beta = 0.241$, $p < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with the studies of Ugwu and Okoro (2023), who reported a positive correlation between varied tasks through structured job rotation programs and employee productivity in the Enugu State Civil Service. This finding is also consistent with Abdullahi and Bello (2024), who reported that the introduction of task variety through job rotation increased efficiency and task error rates within the Northern Nigeria Civil Service Commission. Task variety allows staff at the Career Management Office to perform efficiently, learn new skills, and become more adaptable and flexible. The review also shows that task variety has the potential to create a positive outcome on the staff, and through a culture of continual learning and development, task variety also positively influences the outcome of the organization.

Skill Variety and Employee Performance

Skill variety also positively impacted employee performance ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$). This was also noted in the study of Musa and Danladi (2023), who reported a strong positive association between job rotation and the

development of technical and soft skills among public sector employees in Kaduna State, and the research of Adebola and Isiaka (2019), who revealed that job rotation positively impacts public sector organizations in Southwestern Nigeria on technical skills, and social skills, and on enhanced skills to work as a team and solve problems. The Career Management Office enhances employees' skills in various areas through the introduction of skill variety, and employees' skills to solve problems and communicate, and their skills to make decisions, and their potential for leadership. This results in enhanced operational efficiency and greater goal alignment between employees and the organization.

The results corroborate what many studies postulate—that variation in skills and tasks fundamentally drives better performance. In the words of Arasanmi and Krishna (2019), rotation promotes learning as employees experience the challenges and best practices of different units. For the Taraba State Career Management Office, the results emphasize strategically integrating task and skill variety through rotational structures on a continuum in order to change and improve employee performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study shows task and skill variety positively and significantly affect employee performance in the Career Management Office in Taraba State. Both elements of job rotation positively affect employee productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment and increase adaptability. Task variety has a greater effect than skill variety, which shows that performance is better when employees experience more diverse tasks. The study supports a more integrated and planned job rotation structure to bring about the sustainable desired outcomes for employees and the organization in Taraba State public service.

Recommendations

i. The Career Management Office should maintain a more integrated and planned job rotation structure with set schedules for clear time frames of 12-24 months for each role to ensure more systematic employee rotation across job departments with diverse tasks. Supervisors should hold planned rotational meetings and post clear and comprehensive outlines of what employees should do to ensure that employees gain exposure to different tasks that fulfill the needs of the office and the overall organization.

ii. The Ministry should create a full skills inventory, as well as mentorship programs, to monitor staff skills, and to aid development through rotation. This will require the Ministry to invest in new ways to monitor skills, as well as periodic skills assessments. Supervisors will use the tools to better align employee development programs with the goals of the Ministry.

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