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HARCOURT**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between organizational link and employee self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary source of data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population for the study was two hundred and fifty-three (253) employees, of the seven (7) selected manufacturing companies. The sample size of 155 was determined 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 Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. Results from analysis of data revealed that organizational link positively and significantly influences employee self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The study recommended that management of manufacturing firms should encourage the organizational links among the employee's channels that provide links in the social, psychological and financial networks including the physical environment and society, work and off-work friends and groups of an employee and his or her family

Keywords: *Organizational Links, Employee Self-Efficacy, Cognitive Self-Efficacy, Emotional Self-Efficacy, Social Self-Efficacy*

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INTRODUCTION

Cherian & Jacob (2013) maintains that a strong self-efficacy exercised by employees, enhances their level of job accomplishment as well as their personal achievements in numerous ways. Thus, workers that possess a strong sense of personal competence in their particular areas of professionalism, usually tackle challenging tasks in these areas and sees such as a challenge to be conquered rather than seeing such as a danger to be avoided. Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua, (2012) also asserts that workers with strong or high self-efficacy usually possess great intrinsic interest in their job-related activities, set challenging goals and also maintain strong commitment to such set goals. High self-efficacy is instrumental in the creation of confidence as well as the feelings of serenity in confronting difficult tasks/activities.

Lunenburg (2011) on the other hand asserts that workers who exhibit a level of low self-efficacy usually believe that things are ordinarily more difficult than they are and such beliefs often encourages stress, depression, as well narrows the employees vision on how best to resolve a persisting problem. Hax (2010) believes that the individual's level of self-efficacy is a critical determinant and predictor of the quantum of personal accomplishment which an individual eventually attain. Bandura (2007) argued that beliefs of personal efficacy make-up the components of human agency, while self-efficacy generally expressed an individual's confidence in carrying out a set of action in the course of managing a wide range of associated situations. Employee self-efficacy is most often domain specific as there are different domains or dimensions of self-efficacy in literature (Bandura, 1997). Thus, social, emotional and cognitive dimension of self-efficacy has not been extensively investigated.

Encouraging commitment and engagement at work and limiting the turnover of highly skilled employees

are crucial aspects of human resource management contributing to the overall success of organizations. Organizational embeddedness by way of organizational links, the totality of forces that keep employees in their current organizations (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, & Erez, 2001), helps build this commitment and engagement at work and further reduce turnover. Based on Mitchell *et al.*'s (2001) framework, organizational embeddedness has been shown to increase organizational commitment (Allen & Shanock, 2013) and job satisfaction (Lee, Mitchell, Sablynski, Burton, & Holtom, 2004), and to reduce both turnover intentions and turnover behavior (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001).

The organizational embeddedness construct has three dimensions: links, fit and sacrifice (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). Links refer to formal or informal connections of an employee with co-workers, work groups, or the entire organization. The more links an employee has in the organization, the more an employee is bound to the organization. Fit refers to the extent to which an employee perceives compatibility or comfort with the values and norms of the organization. Employees' personal values, career goals, or their plan for the future should fit with the larger corporate culture and the demands of the job, such as knowledge, skills, and abilities. The better the fit, the more likely they will feel tied to the organization. Finally, sacrifice refers to employees' perceived cost of material or psychological benefits that may be forfeited by leaving an organization. Employees take into consideration what they will lose if they decide to leave, which could be financial (i.e., a retirement plan) or non-financial (i.e., collegial work environment). The more they perceive they have to give up, the more difficult it will be for them to leave. The focus of this study is on organizational links.

According to Harman *et al* (2007), traditional research on employee commitment have maintained that employees leave organisations as a result of negative job attitudes and stay because of positive job

attitudes. Organizational links attempts, firstly, to expand the scope of variables that may be used to understand why employees stay by including factors that are non-affective (structural links to other people). Because the concept of organizational links was developed in the literature on retention and turnover, one would expect the concept to have a strong relationship with the employee self- efficacy (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008). The purpose of the study therefore was to examine the relationship organizational links and employee self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

This study was guided by the following research question:

- What is the relationship between organizational link and employee social self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between organizational link and employee emotional self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between organizational link and employee cognitive self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?



Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the relationship between organizational link and employee self-efficacy

Source: Author’s Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation for this study was derived from Lewin’s (1951) embedded figures and field theory. According to Mitchell and Lee (2001), embedded figures are immersed in this theory’s background. As these images are attached to their background in various ways, they become hard to separate causing the embedded figures to become part of the surrounding model. Allen (2006) postulates that in field theory (Lewin, 1951), behaviour is a function of the field or life space of the individual, including the person and the psychological environment as it exists for that individual. Hence,

some aspects of the individual’s life are embedded and connected in this field and the effects of a given stimulus are dependent on the nature of this field (Mitchell et al., 2001b).

Based on Lewin’s (1951) ideas, Mitchell, Holtom and Lee (2001b) described job embeddedness as a net or web in which an individual can become entangled. Thus, an employee who is highly embedded has many links that are close together. According to Holtom, Mitchell and Lee (2006), a person who is highly embedded (e.g. has close friends, whose employer provides day care and is a lead manager of a critical project) would experience more disruption in the web if he or she were to sever ties at the central

intersection in the web. Conversely, a person who has a job that is relatively isolated, (e.g. few friends or connections to a project or people) will experience less disruption in his or her web should he or she decides to leave Holtom *et al.*, 2006). Mitchell and Lee (2001) identified the critical aspects of job embeddedness as the extent to which people have links to people on the job or their community; the extent to which they fit or are a good match with their job and community; and the ease with which they would have to give up or sacrifice things if they were to leave their job.

Organizational Links

Organizational links are characterized as formal or informal connections between a person and institutions or other people that are formed as a result of working for an organization (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). These links can include social relationships, such as coworkers, supervisors, and the number of teams or work committees of which one is a part. In this theory, the more links an employee has to his or her organization, the more likely he or she will be reluctant to sever ties from the organization. Community links are the social ties one has with those who live in one's geographical region. For example, a person may have a group of friends he or she gets together with on a weekly basis or may have numerous family members within a short distance of his or her home. The theory states that the more links one has in his or her community, the harder it will be to give up those links and leave the community.

Links are classified as the formal or non-formal links between a person and institutions or other people. Embeddedness refers to the number of channels that provide links in the social, psychological and financial networks including the physical environment and society, work and off-work friends and groups of an employee and his or her family. The greater the number of links between the person and the network are, the commitment that the person shows to his or her job or organization will be more (Mitchell,

Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, 2001) and the possibility of making the decision to quit will be low (Allen, 2006: 240). Links which are the first dimension of job embeddedness are based on the links appearing with society and organization. Links to community cover the extent of the relationship with close friends and family members, marital status, having a child that must have cared, hobbies and religious activities and home ownership. Conversely, organizational links cover tenure in the current title, tenure in the current organization, tenure in the current sector, the degree of interaction with colleagues and participation in the organizational committees.

Employee Self- efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. It is concerned not with the skills one has but with judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses" (Bandura, 1986). This description shows that people's self-efficacy is not of a general nature but related to specific situations. Individuals can judge themselves to be very competent in a specific field and less competent in another field. For instance, a person can be convinced that he/she is able to run ten kilometres but be quite certain not to be able to run a marathon. This means that self-efficacy is related to specific situations and tasks, which is not the case for related concepts like self-esteem, self-confidence and locus of control (Maibach & Murphy, 1995). Contrary to self-efficacy these are personal characteristics of individuals which have a certain, stable influence on people's behaviour. In other words, for individual to establish whether he or she has much or little self-confidence, but not whether this individual generally has a high or low measure of self-efficacy. No global sense of self-efficacy exists. Thus, self-efficacy is not a personality trait, but a temporary and easy to influence characteristic, and is strictly situation- and task-related. Bandura, (1994) describes self-efficacy as an

individual's personal judgments of his ability to accomplish a task and this usually supports the importance of a determinant for behaviour performance. There is a general view that people with high level of self-efficacy usually mould their perception about others based on their personal evaluation of their individual level of self-efficacy.

Measures of Self-Efficacy

Social Self-Efficacy

Social self-efficacy is a definite application of self-efficacy theory. Perceived self-efficacy is the trust individual possess in his abilities to organize and execute the required courses of action to achieve set goals (Bandura, 1997; Wood & Olivier, 2006). Perceived social self-efficacy also mean such confidence individual has in his capability to initiate and engage in the necessary social interactional tasks needed to maintain interpersonal relationships (Smith and Betz, 2000). This covers attributes such as ability to negotiate interpersonal conflict, meet new people, display assertiveness in needed social situations, develop friendships, cultivate romantic relationships, and interact in a group setting. (Sherer, Maddox, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers 1982) describes social self-efficacy as the ability to show personal efficacy in social situations. Social self-efficacy typifies individuals' beliefs of being able to initiate social contact and develop new friendships (Gecas, 1989). Interpersonal competence is an important factor of personal success. Individuals perceive their ability to successfully interact with others in social situations differently.

Cognitive Self-Efficacy

Cognitive self-efficacy is associated with an individual's ability to learn, process, apply knowledge, analyse, reason, evaluate and decide (Sims, 2007). They are generally based on abilities that seem to be in-born, in that some people can develop abilities that others cannot, at least not with similar effort. And yet cognitive skills must be developed and

practiced to reach their full potential. In other words, it is possible to become more skilled, with a little work (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). According to Harder, Rash & Wagner, (2014) Cognitive self-efficacy refers to an individual's basic capabilities in a variety of important areas. McDaniel and Banks (2010) defined general cognitive self-efficacy as the ability that consistently differentiates individuals on mental abilities regardless of the cognitive task or test. Cognition is the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses (Hersen, 2004).

Organizational Links and Employee Self-Efficacy

Employees' job embeddedness represents the collective, generally non-affective reasons why they would not leave a job or organization. Job embeddedness presumes person environment correspondence and relates to how well an employee perceives himself or herself to be a good job fit in his or her current job or with the organization, the ties (links) they have with people at work and what benefits they would have to sacrifice should they decide to leave the organisation. Seen through the theoretical lens of person-environment correspondence, job embeddedness represents employees' psychological attachment to personally valued job characteristics and working conditions that influence their satisfaction levels. The more connections the employee has, for example, with individuals at the workplace, the more the employee is bound to the job and the organization.

Wageeh (2015) carried out a research work on the relationship among job embeddedness, organizational cynicism and employee performance in Sedat City University, Egypt. A total of 400 copies of questionnaires were returned representing 58% response rate for the study and hypothesis tested. The study adopted regression analysis. The findings revealed that fit, links and sacrifice significantly relate with organization cynicism and employee performance Van Dyk et al. (2013) conducted a study

on satisfaction with retention factors as predictors of the job embeddedness of medical and information technology services in South Africa. Primary method of data was used and quantitative cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Sample size of 206 was used; Multiple Regression Analysis was adopted for the study. The findings revealed that retention factors were shown to be predictors of the participant's sense of job embeddedness.

This study thus hypothesizes that:

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between organizational links and employee social efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between organizational links and employee emotional self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₃:** There is no significant relationship between organizational link and employee cognitive self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary source of data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population for the study is two hundred and fifty-three (253) employees, of the seven (7) selected manufacturing companies. The sample size of 155 was determined 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 Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

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 between Organizational link and measures of Employee Self efficacy

			Organizational Link	Social Self Efficacy	Emotional Self Efficacy	Cognitive Self Efficacy
Spearman's rho	Organizational Link	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.743**	.798**	.737**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	138	138	138	138
	Social Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.743**	1.000	.729**	.915**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	138	138	138	138
	Emotional Self Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.798**	.729**	1.000	.831**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	138	138	138	138
	Cognitive Self Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.737**	.915**	.831**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	138	138	138	138

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

Source: Research Data 2019 and SPSS output version 23.0

Table 1: illustrated the test for the three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between organizational links and employee social self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational links and employee social efficacy. The *rho* value 0.743 indicated this relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate held. Thus, there is a significant relationship between organizational links and employee social efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between organizational links and employee emotional self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational links and employee emotional self-efficacy. The *rho* value 0.798 indicated this relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between organizational links and employee emotional self - efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between organizational link and employee cognitive self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational link and employee cognitive self-efficacy. The *rho* value 0.737 indicated this relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between organizational link and employee cognitive self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The hypotheses tested the relationship between organizational link and employee self-efficacy. Hence it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between organizational link and employee self-efficacy. These hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Moment correlation technique. The study findings revealed that there is strong positive relationship between organizational link and employee self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The P-value (0.00) is less than the level of significance at (0.05). This finding agrees Oyler (2007) who specified that organizational links are based on the previous empirical studies conducted on normative influences (Hom & Hulin, 1981) and kinship obligations (Turban, Campion & Eyring, 1992). Therefore, individuals have many links at various points in their lives. A separation of job or home for an employee may require the re-arrangement or lead to completely cutting some of these links (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, 2001).

The effective acquisition of cognitive self-efficacy by employees within an organization would give room for increased and deeper investment on the part of the employees and in the activities of their employing organizations which creates a stronger commitment to task completion by these employees. Zhao, (2012)

argues that an employee within the work environment, who has not completely established a sense of cognitive self-efficacy, is more likely to give up on official tasks/responsibilities when they are faced with critical challenges. Cognitive self-efficacy equips the individual with the skills of mastery over tasks and responsibilities at the workplace.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concluded that organizational links is a significant predictor of employee self-efficacy of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This implied that employees have formal and informal connections with other entities on the job

and, as the number of those links increases, embeddedness is higher. The more connected an individual and/or his or her family is with the organization and the community, the more difficult leaving is and the more embedded the person is (Felbs, Hekman, Mitchell, Lee, Harman & Holtom, 2009).

The study recommended that management of manufacturing firms should encourage organizational links among the employees, channels that provide links in the social, psychological and financial networks including the physical work environment and society, work and off-work friends groups of an employee and his or her family.

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