

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS IN SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

In a highly competitive business world, it is important for organizations to motivate their employees. This cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted to establish the correlation between organizational support and employee effectiveness. The study focused on management personnel, supervisors, and staff in different organizations in Delta State. A total of 200 respondents selected from retail/trading, manufacturing/processing, transportation/logistics, and hospitality/food-service companies were asked to participate in the study. The data were collected using a structured question sheet with a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment, and multiple linear regressions. The results revealed that the reliability scores for the five-construct items ranged between 0.747 and 0.778. It was found that management care and concern had a positive and significant relationship with employee effectiveness ($r = .714$, $p < .001$). In addition, positive and significant relationships were found between the valuation of employee contributions and effectiveness ($r = .767$, $p < .001$) and professional development consideration and effectiveness ($r = .766$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the study found that fair reward system consideration has a positive and significant relationship with employee effectiveness ($r = .748$, $p < .001$). The regression results were significant at a 0.001 level ($F(4,195) = 115.786$, $p < .001$) with an R^2 of .704 and an adjusted R^2 of .698. The study concluded that POS has a great impact on employee effectiveness. Therefore, the study recommended implementing a fair reward system, providing career development opportunities, applying supportive management styles, and providing appropriate working conditions.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, employee effectiveness, management care and concern, organizational rewards, professional development, Delta State

Introduction

Current studies in organizational behavior emphasize on human capital as the key differentiator for the sustainable competitive advantage, performance and survival of enterprises. Organizations operating in emerging economies face a myriad of challenges, shifting economic trends as well as evolving labor market trends in regional commercial hubs like Delta State, Nigeria (World Bank, 2023). Their effectiveness is largely attributed to the performance of individual workers to achieve set performance objectives, demonstrate organizational commitment, exhibit citizenship behavior as well as maintain high service delivery quality. However, for organizations to achieve high levels of employee effectiveness, they need to create a conducive work environment that encourages psychological safety, confidence building and perceived organizational support (Titus et al., 2024)

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) reflects the employee perception of the extent to which their employer values their contributions, expresses concern for their welfare and provides necessary resources for effective performance (Li et al., 2022). In times of economic fluctuations or organizational strain, the psychological agreement between employers and employees becomes of paramount essence. Employees that perceive strong support from top management and direct superiors report higher levels of employee commitment, absence of work absences, intentions to stay as well as overall job performance (Uçar & Kerse, 2022; World Bank, 2024).

Contrarily, the perception of organizational under-support reduces employee motivation leading to operational inefficiencies and poor organizational performance (Hasan et al., 2023). The phenomenon of perceived organizational support operates through distinct managerial and interpersonal conduits within a firm. This includes leadership care and concern, appreciation and valuing of employees' contributions,

provision of career development opportunities as well as fair reward allocation and recognition (Titus et al., 2024; Akinola et al., 2024). In Delta State, enterprises operating in commercial trading, small-scale manufacturing, distribution as well as the hospitality industry face the dual challenge of reducing operational costs while at the same time maintaining employee motivation. Workers in these firms often operate in highly stressful working environments making organizational support a critical psychological support that enables them to perform their jobs efficiently ((Collins et al., 2023). Organizations' investments in employees' welfare and development capabilities directly influence day-to-day work activities and performance outcomes. With the assurance that management values staff welfare, workers increase their effort, provide more thoroughness when performing their tasks as well as resolving organizational problems (Titus et al., 2024; World Bank, 2024).

Similarly, rewarding and recognition incentives enhance psychological agreement thus boosting employees' commitment to achieve organizational goals (Akinola et al., 2024).

In assessing the effectiveness of employees, it is critical to evaluate both quantitative aspects of their performance as well as qualitative behaviors and attitudes including achievement of objectives, work quality, satisfaction and overall job performance (Olubiyi, 2024). For instance, positive perceptions of support reduce employee stress, facilitates work adjustment as well as increases performance levels even amidst unfavorable working conditions (Ashiru et al., 2023). On the other hand, negative views of organizational support lead to reduced levels of morale, exhaustion as well as lower levels of organizational performance (World Bank, 2024). Organizations operating in Delta State exist in a specific local economy that comes with specific infrastructural, population and market considerations (Delta State Government, 2022). Commercial hubs in the 3 senatorial districts of the state offer distinct operational environments for enterprises and their employees. With the numerous challenges in the supply chain, production targets in processing firms, and service delivery expectations in the hotel and catering industry, the extent to which firms provide organizational support to their staff remains a key operational consideration (Delta State Government, 2022).

Uçar & Kerse (2022) agree that the achievement of operational goals by organizations in Delta State rely greatly on human resource strategies that protect employees from the economic storm. Leaders that demonstrate supportive structural policies such as flexible working schedules, performance evaluations, training opportunities, and attractive compensation rewards enable them to build their workforce capabilities efficiently (Ismail et al., 2021). As a result, it is important that managers understand the exact relationships between the individual aspects of perceived organizational support and employee performance to inform effective management decisions in the study area.

As a result, this study examines the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee effectiveness in the various organizations in Delta State, Nigeria. The study evaluates the combined and individual influences of organizational support indicators including managerial care and concern, valuing of employee contributions, career development and reward/ recognition schemes. Using information collected from enterprises in Delta Central, Delta North and Delta South, the article provides insights into the factors that influence employee effectiveness in the selected study area (World Bank, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

In today's business world, motivating employees to higher performance levels is proving to be increasingly difficult for many firms given the changing economic conditions and the limited resources at their disposal. According to the World Bank (2024), businesses in emerging markets face significant structural and operational challenges in the workplace which can adversely affect employee morale and overall performance. Enterprises in commercial, processing, transport and hospitality industries in the Delta State are under constant pressure to improve performance while dealing with limited financial resources

(Titus et al., 2024). Where firms respond to the challenges of operating in a market economy by simply cutting costs and raising performance standards without offering much needed support, employees are likely to be frustrated, demotivated and disengaged with no obligation to increase productivity.

Ozuma (2024) reports that shortcomings in organizational support systems are significantly linked to lower employee participation, poor quality of work and higher attrition rates as staff members feel that their efforts and welfare are not valued. Where employees feel that they are not adequately compensated, that their health is not a priority and that rewards at the workplace are not distributed equitably, they are unlikely to put in extra effort at the workplace. Lack of investment in improving employee skills also undermines their capacity to add value to processes and perform their duties efficiently with little or no training in modern technology and procedures. In Delta State, the absence of key organizational support systems leads to poor work performance, increased absences, poor customer service and generally lower productivity levels for enterprises in diverse industries (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2021).

Furthermore, there appear to be wide variations in the approaches and attitudes of managers in different industries and senatorial districts. While some firms make concerted effort to create a positive work environment by engaging employees in decision making, recognizing achievements and providing career guidance, many managers employ autocratic styles devoid of any consideration for employee needs (Sanmocte, 2020). Past studies have attempted to explore general aspects of the organizational atmosphere or broader aspects of human resource management.

However, there is still limited information on the relationship between elements of managerial concern, recognition of contributions, career guidance and reward inequity and work performance. This study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the role of organizational support systems on employee motivation in selected commercial enterprises in Delta State.

Objective of the Study

This paper seeks to:

- i. Examine the effect of management care and concern on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.
- ii. Determine the relationship between the valuation of employee contributions and employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.
- iii. Assess the effect of professional development support on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.
- iv. Determine the effect of fair reward systems on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.

Research Hypotheses

H_{0 1}: Management care and concern has no significant effect on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.

H_{0 2}: Valuation of employee contributions has no significant effect on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.

H_{0 3}: Professional development support has no significant effect on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.

H_{0 4}: Fair reward systems have no significant effect on employee effectiveness in selected organizations in Delta State.

Literature Review

Concept of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support (POS), as proposed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), captures employees' perceptions of the reciprocal relationship in which the organization acknowledges employees'

efforts and is concerned with their welfare. Developed through the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), the concept of perceived organizational support is a situational judgment of employees' belief that the organization rewards their performance or displays aloofness in cases of underperformance. Literature review by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) and the World Bank (2024) reveals that the psychological concept has become a significant intervening variable in organizational studies. Gamette and Oteng (2024) explain that with adequate structural support, employees develop trust in the organization and endeavor to go the extra mile to achieve organizational goals.

According to Filipova (2023), employees working in unstable environments use perceived organizational support to cushion the identified stressors. This occurs when managers show a high level of caring for their subordinates and address arising issues in a timely manner. On the contrary, employees who do not feel that they are getting enough organizational support or see it being implemented in bad faith are more likely to become disengaged and resort to counterproductive work behaviors. Titus et al. (2024) and Akinola et al. (2024) argue that organizational support has multiple aspects including managers' concern, rewards for performance, developmental opportunities, and recognition. The current study used these aspects to identify the type of perceived organizational support extended to employees in commercial organizations in Delta State.

Organizations in Delta State

Delta state has three senatorial districts, namely, the Delta Central, Delta North, and Delta South. Commercial organizations operating in the region include retail shops, trading firms, processing plants, transport networks, and hotels among others. Inegbedion et al. (2024) reveal that these businesses play a critical role in providing employment opportunities and facilitating the sustenance of commercial activities in the region. However, the identified organizations experience difficulties in operating due to rising costs, poor infrastructure, and stiff competition in most cases (Agbomire & Ayo, 2024). According to Akinola et al. (2024), the performance of employees in most organizations is closely tied to the leadership quality and support structures that exist within the organizations.

Unlike multinational corporations, many businesses in the region operate with weak human resource departments. This implies that managers have a greater role in determining the extent to which employees adopt positive attitudes towards their jobs. Sarwar et al. (2023) demonstrate that leadership behavior is the key determinant of organizational support. World Bank (2023) indicates that it is essential for businesses in different parts of Delta state to boost the support structure if they are to maximize productivity and profit.

Employee Effectiveness

Employee effectiveness is a concept that captures the extent to which employees perform their duties, meet the requirements of a specific profession, and contribute towards organizational objectives. Effectiveness in this case refers to the ability of employees to combine their efforts, skills, and time, as well as available resources to achieve desired goals. Otoo (2024) demonstrate that employee effectiveness is determined by the extent to which individual workers carry out their activities in a manner that meets the requirements of a business and achieves its objectives. Employee effectiveness is therefore a combination of quantitative and qualitative performance dimensions. The former entails the number of duties performed by workers, the attainment of organizational goals, and the rate at which they are completed. The latter comprises accuracy and reliability of tasks and duties as well as customer relations, teamwork, innovation, and problem-solving skills (Iyadi & Etomi, 2024).

According to Olubiyi (2024), the concept of employee effectiveness should not be confused with being merely busy at the workplace. An effective employee is one who makes a positive impact through their work on what an organization wants to achieve. It is therefore critical for organizations to understand

that employee effectiveness cannot be attained by just encouraging workers to be busier with their tasks. In the current study, employee effectiveness was evaluated based on a worker's ability to ensure consistent performance while also maintaining competence as well as high-quality results. Employee effectiveness is often dictated by the working conditions employees operate in as well as the level of encouragement and appreciation they receive from managers. Ashiru et al. (2023) explicate that the working environment has a significant impact on employees' ability to resolve issues and perform their duties accurately and efficiently. With a positive atmosphere at the workplace, employees are likely to boost individual performance levels since they feel encouraged and motivated to achieve set targets.

Similarly, Akinsola et al. (2022) reveal that worker resilience as well as organizational adaptability can be attained in environments where employees are respected and their efforts appreciated. As a result, the current study made the assumption that employee effectiveness is not only dependent on the skills, efforts, and abilities of individual workers but also the organizational factors that influence worker performance.

Management care, concern and employee effectiveness

Management care and concern refer to the extent to which managers are concerned with employees' welfare, safety, working conditions, needs, and interests. It entails managers' behavior as they listen to employees' concerns, respond to a rising issues in a reasonable manner, create a conducive working environment, and show empathy and consideration for them. Titus et al. (2024) explain that management care is an essential aspect of employee-oriented leadership in which the manager creates a feeling of being valued in an organization. Usman et al. (2024) argue that employees tend to develop positive attitudes towards their employers when they realize that managers are concerned with their welfare. Management care can therefore be manifested in such areas as workload, working conditions, welfare, responsibility, communication, flexibility, and response to employees' complaints and concerns. By addressing such aspects, managers can help improve employees' perception of the organization and in turn boost morale and motivation. Employees can then be encouraged to put more effort into their duties while also sustaining a positive attitude towards the workplace. Management care and concern can therefore affect employee effectiveness as workers may respond positively to the support provided by managers. This is particularly evident in the employees' psyche as they acknowledge the efforts of managers while also being motivated to comply with organizational regulations and meet professional standards. Titus et al. (2024) and Ismail et al. (2021) observe that management concern can help reduce tension in the workplace while also encouraging employees to perform their duties to the top of their ability.

In cases where managers respond to employees' concerns in a positive manner, workers are likely to increase their contributions to organizational processes and offer their input on arising issues. The interaction between managers and employees can further help the former understand the challenges experienced by workers and come up with solutions to eliminate or address them. Management care can also help improve the psychological connection between employees and the organization as workers offer their best in accomplishing tasks.

Valuation of Employee Contributions and Effectiveness

Valuation of employee contributions is the extent to which an organization responds to employees by acknowledging, appreciating and rewarding their efforts, achievements, ideas and commitment. Employee contributions can be formally or informally recognized. Formal recognition includes awards, commendations, promotions, token rewards, reward schemes and participation in organizational decision-making while informal appreciation takes the form of praises, criticisms, acknowledgment of good performance and celebration of achievements. Akinsola et al. (2023), there is a need for organizations to recognize employees' efforts through rewards as a strategy for motivating them to achieve organizational objectives. Employees who feel that their efforts are valued are likely to develop a sense of self-worth and

self-confidence. Employees' feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence encourage positive attitudes and perceptions towards their work and ability to perform their tasks successfully (Olubiye, 2024; Akinsola et al., 2023). Thus, recognizing employees' contributions is beneficial to the organization as it motivates workers to continue doing what is beneficial to the organization. In addition, it makes employees feel valued and appreciated for what they do. Lack of appreciation for employees' efforts can negatively affect their effectiveness as employees can feel demoralized, especially when their extra efforts do not result in any form of individual reward or encouragement.

According to Kpurunee and Nwibaedee (2023), continuous appreciation of individual and group efforts can motivate employees to achieve organizational goals through improved performance and provision of quality service. Effective worker recognition can increase employees' willingness to perform their tasks well and meet organizational expectations. It can also encourage employees to develop ideas, collaborate with others, and show greater commitment to organizational tasks. For worker recognition to be effective, it must be sincere and fair so that employees can internalize it, leading to improved self-concept and positivity. Thus, workers' contributions must be valued to encourage them to continue doing what is useful to the organization.

Professional Development Support and Effectiveness

Professional development support is providing employees with the resources and services they need to support their career growth, broaden their skills, and prepare them to meet workplace challenges. It includes staff training, mentoring and coaching, seminars and workshops, career counseling, further studies, job enrichment, and promotion. Gamette and Oteng (2024) and Akinola et al. (2024) argue that employee development enables an organization to build its human capital while at the same time preparing its staff for more complex tasks. In addition, professional development support is critical for contemporary organizations as it helps workers acquire new skills and competencies needed in the changing business environment created by new trends and technologies, shifting consumer needs, and increased competition among firms.

According to Titus et al. (2024), professional training and development can increase workers' performance levels by enabling them to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively. In addition, professional development can raise employees' confidence levels as the skills and competencies acquired enable them to handle difficult tasks and meet the organization's changing needs. Therefore, providing professional development support to employees can be a winning strategy for organizations with regards to boosting workers' performance. Professional development support can also increase employee effectiveness through its association with organizational commitment and career prospects. According to Abubakar (2022), professional development support enhances workers' abilities to handle a dynamic organizational environment.

Thus, employees who are assured of continuous learning opportunities are likely to develop greater organizational commitment, leading to improved performance levels. Similarly, Okorie and Wesseh (2024) argue that the availability of career development support is associated with increased employee organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions. This suggests that professional development support can increase employees' motivation to grow both personally and professionally while at the same time being committed to the organization. In addition, the availability of career advancement opportunities encourages employees to update their skills and knowledge, take on more responsibilities, and perform their tasks to the top of their abilities. From an organizational perspective, professional development support can also lead to higher employee effectiveness as it empowers workers to handle more challenging tasks and take on more critical roles when needed. Therefore, professional development support is an effective way of increasing workers' performance levels as well as their commitment to the organization, leading to improved organizational effectiveness.

Equitable Compensation Structures and Their Influence on Employee Performance

Equitable compensation structures are reward systems based on well-articulated principles and policies that guide compensation practices in an organization. Compensation practices include wage and salary payment policies, reward and recognition schemes, career progression, benefits packages, stipends, and other forms of rewards. Collins et al. (2023) note that equitable compensation practices are important in organizations as workers compare various aspects of compensation to determine whether the rewards they receive are adequate or not. Reward equity refers to the benefits that employees receive as rewards for their performance. It also refers to the procedures used by firms to determine employees' entitlements. Bashir et al. (2022) note that workers' perception of equity in the reward process affects their motivation levels and behaviors. Therefore, if employees understand the rationale behind various aspects of compensation packages and feel that the procedures used to determine compensation are fair, they are likely to be motivated to do what is required for the organization to achieve its goals. Thus, an equitable reward structure encourages employees to align their efforts with organizational goals. The concept of equity in compensation practices means that workers' efforts and performance levels must be considered when determining their reward packages. In other words, the reward employees receive must be in proportion to their efforts and performance. As a result, employers can develop a reward structure that enables it to achieve its objectives as employees will be motivated to offer their best in accomplishing their tasks. Therefore, an equitable reward structure can lead to increased worker motivation and performance. However, a feeling of inequity can reduce workers' motivation and affect their attitudes towards the employer or work in general.

According to Shkoler et al. (2021), workers' perception of unfairness in the reward process discourages them from putting in their best efforts. They can also develop negative attitudes towards the employer resulting in poor worker–management relationships. Workers who feel that rewards are distributed unequally are unlikely to be motivated to perform their tasks as they do not believe that additional effort will be rewarded, regardless of their performance. In other words, if workers perceive favoritism during the reward distribution process, they will not put extra effort into their work since such an attitude will not be rewarded or recognized. On the other hand, an open reward structure that recognizes employees' performance and encourages them to demonstrate exemplary performance will motivate employees to offer their best in accomplishing their tasks. Thus, organizations can increase the likelihood of achieving their goals through the development of equitable reward structures that motivate employees towards enhanced performance. In addition, the implementation of reward structures based on merit can reduce the occurrence of undesirable and unnecessary worker–management conflicts.

In other words, a reward structure based on merit enables workers to accept management decisions without questioning their validity. Therefore, an organization can increase its performance levels by developing a reward structure based on merit as it motivates workers to align their efforts with organizational goals.

Empirical Review

Titus et al. (2024) examined the influence of organizational support on worker loyalty, using small business enterprises. The authors employed the survey design in their study, which was conducted among small business enterprises across Nigeria. The study evaluated workers' attitudes towards the work environment, as well as the influence of managerial supervision on their performance. The findings revealed that managerial supervision and supportive work environments were significantly and positively related to worker loyalty and performance levels. The study provides evidence for the role of managerial support in influencing workers' attitudes and behaviors, which in turn affect their performance. The findings are relevant to the current study as they indicate the importance of managerial supervision in impacting workers' performance through increased organizational commitment. However, the study did not focus on

specific aspects of employees' perceived organizational support. In addition, the study was conducted among small business enterprises, which is different from the organizations selected for the current study. In addition, while the study demonstrated the role of perceived organizational support, it did not focus on organizations located in Delta State. Therefore, the current study can add to the existing body of knowledge by focusing on specific aspects of organizational support and examining their influence on workers' performance in Delta State.

Also, Akinola et al. (2024) evaluated the influence of reward systems and managerial empathy on staff performance, using a qualitative design. The study was conducted among staff members of commercial organizations and examined how workers perceive reward systems and managerial empathy and how these factors influence their performance. The findings revealed that staff members appreciated managerial empathy and reward systems, implying that they had a positive influence on their performance. As a result, the findings confirm the importance of effective managerial behavior in influencing workers' attitudes and subsequent performance. The findings are relevant to the current study in that they demonstrate the influence of managerial support on workers' performance. However, the qualitative design limits the study's ability to demonstrate how closely the influence of these factors is related to workers' performance. The current study uses a quantitative design, which enables it to demonstrate the extent to which organizational support influences worker performance.

Furthermore, Onoriode and Agbele (2023) investigated organizational climate and employee performance in select manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria. The authors employed a total of 81 respondents. The study adopted Pearson's correlation and simple linear regression analysis. The results of the study revealed that leadership and job satisfaction had a positive influence on employee performance whereas communication did not significantly predict performance. The authors' findings emphasized the role of organizational climate, particularly leadership and job satisfaction, in improving employees' performance. The relevance of the study's findings to my research is evident in its focus on organizational climate. The study conducted in Delta State is also pertinent to my research, as my study will also involve firms in Nigeria. However, Onoriode and Agbele (2023) focused on organizational climate and employee performance in general with limited focus on the dimensions of perceived organizational support that influence employee performance. My study will focus on aspects of organizational support, hence filling the research gap identified in the previous study.

However, previous research has several limitations, which create the need for additional studies on the topic. First, while previous studies have examined aspects of organizational support such as leadership, rewards, organizational climate, and career growth, most of them have focused on organizational support as a whole. In addition, previous studies have not focused on workers' effectiveness. However, the current study focuses on workers' effectiveness as the outcome variable. Therefore, the current study adds to the existing body of knowledge on organizational support by examining its role.

Specifically, the current study focuses on the influence of certain aspects of organizational support on workers' performance within Delta State. Another limitation of previous studies is the inconsistent use of designs, data collection and analysis procedures as well as different dependent variables. The current study utilizes a quantitative design and examines the role of organizational support in influencing workers' effectiveness. As a result, this study will help fill the research gap created by the inconsistencies in previous studies.

Theoretical Framework: Organizational Support Theory

The current research is based upon Organizational Support Theory (OST) initially proposed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986). The theory postulates that workers' generalized beliefs about organizations' reciprocation of their inputs and degree of concern influence their socio-emotional outcomes as well as expectations about the organization's willingness to recognize and reward

them. The said beliefs drive employees' attitudes toward the organization, as well as their level of loyalty and willingness to put extra effort into work. OST is deeply intertwined with the reciprocity principle described by Blau (1964). The theory of reciprocity implies that one's positive actions and attitudes inspire similar responses in others' behaviors. In other words, if an organization demonstrates support and recognition of employees' contributions, it is likely to increase workers' loyalty, dedication, and performance levels, as they feel obligated to reciprocate the organizations' positive actions. Recent studies employ OST to explore the link between workers' perception of organizational support and their attitudes, involvement, loyalty, and overall performance (Promgird et al., 2023). OST's applicability to the current research stems from the theory's ability to establish the connection between particular managerial practices and worker efficacy. The commercial and industrial organizations in the Delta State operate under the constant pressure to meet performance goals, which makes workers' performance levels, engagement, and loyalty particularly susceptible to organizational changes. If managed correctly, the organization can boost the employees' sense of value and demonstrate that their inputs are valued and reciprocated. The management's displays of concern, such as providing opportunities for growth, advancing workers' interests, rewarding their contributions, and acknowledging their ideas, will most likely be positively reciprocated by the staff, thus increasing their organizational commitment and effort (Promgird et al., 2023).

However, if the organization fails to deliver on its managerial responsibilities and support the employees, the said employees are likely to be demotivated and withdraw their efforts. Therefore, OST is a useful theoretical framework for this study, as it helps to establish the mediating role between the independent variables and workers' efficacy. The theory suggests that the management's concern will be perceived as appreciation, support, and recognition by the employees, which, in turn, will drive their increased motivation, commitment, and efficacy levels. Acknowledging the value of their contributions will make the workers confident in their impact on the organization, thus fueling their desire to prove their efficacy by delivering on the organization's expectations. Similarly, the chance to develop their careers and improve their skills will motivate them to seek higher performance levels.

Finally, the management's decision to reward workers' contributions in a fair and just manner will increase the employees' sense of value and recognition, thus positively influencing their efficacy.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The design was selected because it allows the study to collect quantitative data that measures the relationships between independent and dependent variables. It is an appropriate research design because it does not necessitate the researcher to manipulate the environment in order to establish the relationships between the key variables. This study used a cross-sectional survey design because it seeks to investigate the relationship between organizational support and employee effectiveness.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study consisted of employees and managers in selected organizations in the retail/trading, manufacturing/processing, transportation/logistics, and hospitality/food service industries in Delta State. A sample of two hundred (200) respondents was selected from the target population using a multi-stage sampling procedure. The sampling procedure followed the stratified sampling procedure where the sample was stratified based on business types (retail/trading, manufacturing/processing, transportation/logistics, and hospitality/food service) because the study seeks to make statistical inferences about the entire population in the state. Similarly, the samples were stratified based on senatorial districts (Delta Central, Delta North, and Delta South) in the state. Using the stratified sampling procedure, this study selected an equal number of respondents from owners, managers, supervisors, and staffs in each selected business.

Research Instrument

The study used a structured questionnaire to collect the quantitative data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two (2) major sections. The first section collected the demography of the respondents including gender, age, level of education, position, business category, and senatorial district. The second section of the questionnaire consisted of thirty –five (35) items that measured the following key constructs:

Management care and concern

Valuation of contributions

Professional development support

Fair reward systems

Employee effectiveness (7 items for each construct)

Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Validity and Reliability

The items in the questionnaire were subjected to face and content validity tests by a panel of senior lecturers in Business Administration. In the process, the items were evaluated to ensure that they are not ambiguous, concise, and relevant to the study based on the participants' perspectives. The instrument was pilot tested; thus, the internal consistency reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha analysis. From the analysis, all the constructs had values higher than the > 0.7 recommended threshold (Hair et al., 2019).

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Management Care & Concern	B1–B7	.747	Acceptable
Valuation of Contributions	C1–C7	.778	Acceptable
Professional Development Support	D1–D7	.771	Acceptable
Fair Reward Systems	E1–E7	.765	Acceptable
Employee Effectiveness	F1–F7	.768	Acceptable

Data Collection and Analysis

The process of gathering information from the sample took six weeks. Questionnaires were administered directly to the participants. The analysis process was done using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27). Firstly, descriptive statistics (Frequencies, percentages, Mean, and Standard Deviation) were generated to represent the demography of the study sample and item responses. Secondly, the relationship between each of the POS dimensions and employee effectiveness was established using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis. The combined effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable was modeled using Multiple Linear Regression analysis at the 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) level of significance.

The empirical regression model is specified as follows:

Where: $EE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MC + \beta_2 VC + \beta_3 PD + \beta_4 FR + \varepsilon$

EE = Employee Effectiveness

MC = Management Care and Concern

VC = Valuation of Contributions

PD = Professional Development Support

FR = Fair Reward Systems

β_0 = Constant intercept

β_1 – β_4 = Regression slope coefficients

ε = Stochastic error term

Results

Demographic and Business Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 presents the detailed demographic and organizational profile of the 200 study participants across Delta State.

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	124	62.0
	Female	76	38.0
Age	Below 25 years	20	10.0
	25–34 years	67	33.5
	35–44 years	53	26.5
	45–54 years	40	20.0
	55 years and above	20	10.0
Educational Qualification	Secondary School	27	13.5
	ND/NCE	50	25.0
	HND/Bachelor's Degree	98	49.0
	Postgraduate	25	12.5
Organisational Position	Owner/Proprietor	93	46.5
	Manager	46	23.0
	Supervisor	16	8.0
	Employee	45	22.5
Business Type	Retail/Trading	80	40.0
	Manufacturing/Processing	44	22.0
	Transportation/Logistics	38	19.0
	Hospitality/Food Services	38	19.0
Senatorial District	Delta Central	80	40.0
	Delta North	69	34.5
	Delta South	51	25.5
	Total	200	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The statistics of the respondents' data on the demographic characteristics indicate that 124 participants (62.0%) were male, while 76 (38.0%) were female. The highest representation was within the age range of 25–34 years (67, 33.5%) and 35–44 years (53, 26.5%). In relation to the respondents' educational background, 98 (49.0%) participants had HND or Bachelor's degrees, while 25 (12.5%) had postgraduate qualifications. As observed in the data, the highest proportion of participants fell under the category of company owners (93, 46.5%), followed by managers (46, 23.0%), supervisors (16, 8.0%), and employees (45, 22.5%). In terms of the participants' sectors, retail and trading accounted for 80 (40.0%) respondents, while manufacturing and processing employed 44 (22.0%). Transportation and logistics and hospitality and food were each represented by 38 (19.0%) participants. In relation to the respondents' local government origin, Delta Central had the largest proportion (80, 40.0%), followed by Delta North (69, 34.5%) and Delta South (51, 25.5%).

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Table 3 presents the summary descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and interpretations) for the main study variables evaluated on the 5-point Likert scale.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Management Care and Concern	3.265	.719	Agree
Valuation of Contributions	3.313	.779	Agree
Professional Development Support	3.301	.719	Agree
Fair Reward Systems	3.327	.687	Agree
Employee Effectiveness	3.333	.757	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The given descriptive statistics demonstrate that the mean scores of all constructs were above the neutral point of 3.00. Indeed, Employee Effectiveness emerged as the construct with the highest average score ($M = 3.333$, $SD = .757$), followed by such factors as Fair Reward Systems ($M = 3.327$, $SD = .687$), Valuation of Contributions ($M = 3.313$, $SD = .779$), Professional Development Support ($M = 3.301$, $SD = .719$), and Management Care and Concern ($M = 3.265$, $SD = .719$). This outcome reflects positively on the organization since the majority of surveyed employees agreed that organizational support is recognized and has a beneficial effect on their effectiveness.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlation analysis was executed to determine the direction and strength of linear associations between POS constructs and employee effectiveness.

Variable	Employee Effectiveness (r)	p-value	Decision
Management Care and Concern	.714	< .001	Significant
Valuation of Contributions	.767	< .001	Significant
Professional Development Support	.766	< .001	Significant
Fair Reward Systems	.748	< .001	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The results of the correlation analysis reveal that each of the four aspects of perceived organizational support (POS) is strongly and positively related to employee effectiveness. Indeed, the analysis found that the recognition of employee effectiveness has the highest positive correlation ($r=.767$, $p<.001$) among all aspects of POS. This result indicates that the higher the sense of recognition of employees regarding their contributions and performance, the higher tends to be their effectiveness. Another POS area strongly correlated with employee effectiveness is professional development, which positively predicted employee effectiveness ($r=.766$, $p<.001$). It suggests that the provision of resources for professional growth, training opportunities, and mentoring programs positively affects employees' effectiveness.

Next, fair and just reward systems also positively predicted employee effectiveness ($r=.748$, $p<.001$). It indicates that employees who are confident that they are rewarded appropriately for their performance tend to demonstrate higher effectiveness than those who are not. The management care aspect of POS also positively predicted employee effectiveness ($r=.714$, $p<.001$). It indicates that employees who feel more cared for and supported by their managers are more likely to be effective in their work. All aspects of POS were positively correlated with employee effectiveness at a statistically significant level ($p<.001$).

Therefore, it can be concluded that management should pay particular attention to ensuring employee recognition, providing professional development resources, and implementing fair reward systems, as well as providing care for employees.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to assess the combined explanatory power of the four organizational support dimensions on employee effectiveness.

Predictor	B	Std. Error	t	p-value	Decision
(Constant)	2.992	.399	7.506	< .001	Significant
Management Care & Concern	.153	.071	2.155	.023	Significant
Valuation of Contributions	.229	.069	3.319	.001	Significant
Professional Development	.304	.070	4.343	< .001	Significant
Fair Reward Systems	.292	.070	4.171	< .001	Significant
R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	df	Sig.
.839	.704	.698	115.786	4, 195	< .001

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The regression model developed was significant overall, $F(4, 195) = 115.786$, $p < .001$, with an R^2 of .704. This indicates that 70.4% of the variance in employee effectiveness is explained by the four predictors. The adjusted R^2 was at .698. The professional development support had the highest relative influence on employee effectiveness, $B = .304$, $p < .001$, followed by fair reward, $B = .292$, $p < .001$, valuation of contributions, $B = .229$, $p = .001$, and management care and concern, $B = .153$, $p = .023$.

Regression Equation: Employee Effectiveness = $2.992 + 0.153\text{Management Care} + 0.229\text{Valuation of Contributions} + 0.304\text{Professional Development} + 0.292\text{Fair Rewards}$

Hypotheses Testing

Table 6 summarizes the decisions reached regarding the four null research hypotheses based on regression t-test p-values at the 5% significance level.

Hypothesis	Statistical Result	Decision
H_{01} : Management care and concern has no significant effect on employee effectiveness.	$B = .153$, $p = .023$	Reject H_{01}
H_{02} : Valuation of contributions has no significant effect on employee effectiveness.	$B = .229$, $p = .001$	Reject H_{02}
H_{03} : Professional development support has no significant effect on employee effectiveness.	$B = .304$, $p < .001$	Reject H_{03}
H_{04} : Fair reward systems have no significant effect on employee effectiveness.	$B = .292$, $p < .001$	Reject H_{04}

Since all the p-values that were obtained were below the level of significance, namely 0.05, the four null hypotheses were rejected. The research therefore provides sufficient evidence to support the claim that each of the measured aspects of employees' perception of organizational support significantly contributes to employees' effectiveness in the selected enterprises in Delta State.

In other words, management care and concern, recognition of employees' contributions, and provision of professional development and rewards had a positive effect on employees in terms of their doing their work properly. The results of the study also suggest that employees have better performance when they are cared for by their managers, when their contributions are recognized, and when they are rewarded and given a chance to develop professionally. For instance, management's concern and care can make employees more committed to the company and to their work. Acknowledging employees'

contributions can motivate them to be more motivated and to put in more effort. Developing professional skills can equip them with new knowledge and abilities that are necessary to do their work better. And finally, rewarding effort and performance can make them feel that their rewards match their inputs and outcomes. Thus, the study implies the importance of developing positive perceptions of organizational support to ensure that employees have higher effectiveness in doing their work properly.

Discussion of Findings

A summary of the results of this study shows that perceived organizational support significantly predicts employee effectiveness in an organization in Delta State. First, it was found that managerial care and concern significantly predicted employee effectiveness ($B = .153$, $p = .023$; $r = .714$). The results of this study are consistent with those of Titus et al. (2024), who found that empathetic leadership and administrative concern have a significant influence on employee commitment and performance in Nigerian small businesses. Similarly, Collins et al. (2023) found that leadership support buffers the impact of stress in the workplace.

According to the Organizational Support Theory, when employees view their managers' actions as intended to serve or benefit them, it increases feelings of obligation, which then leads to higher levels of organizational commitment and performance. The theory explains the results of this study since it was found that employees showed higher levels of performance when they knew that their management was concerned about their welfare.

Second, acknowledgment of contributions significantly predicted employee effectiveness ($B = .229$, $p = .001$; $r = .767$). Acknowledgement of contributions includes recognizing employees' efforts and making them feel that their input towards organizational goals is valued and that they play an integral role in achieving organizational goals. The result of this study supports the findings of Akinsola et al. (2023), who found that employees in commercial organizations in Delta State responded positively to non-monetary rewards. Giving recognition to employees increases their motivation, which raises their chances of meeting organizational objectives. Employees will feel appreciated when management publicly acknowledges their hard work and skills, resulting in better (Kpurunee & Nwibaedee, 2023).

In addition, the support for professional development significantly predicted employee effectiveness ($B = .304$, $p < .001$; $r = .766$). This study found that supporting employees' professional growth promotes organizational commitment and performance. Like in the case of Akinsola et al. (2023), providing employees with the resources they need to acquire new skills and advance their careers improves their ability to handle specialized tasks. Therefore, in organizations in Delta State, employees who have received training are better equipped to achieve organizational goals than those who have not received training.

Finally, appropriate reward for performance significantly predicted employee effectiveness ($B = .292$, $p < .001$; $r = .748$). The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Bashir et al. (2022) and Collins et al. (2023), who found that employees are likely to respond positively to rewards and punishments administered fairly. Employees are likely to feel valued and show higher commitment and performance when they know they will be fairly rewarded for their performance (Akinsola et al., 2023). The results of this study indicate that the model explained approximately 70.4% of the variance in employee effectiveness ($R^2 = .704$, $F = 115.786$).

Based on the results, it can be concluded that organizational effectiveness is a critical factor in organizational growth in Delta State.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken to determine the relationship between the sense of organizational backing and staff efficacy in select enterprises in Delta State, Nigeria. It was established that managerial attention and solicitude, acknowledgment of employee contributions, assistance in professional growth and equitable compensation systems each have beneficial and significant effects on employee efficacy. These

four aspects of organizational support account for 70.4% of the variation in employees' performance indicators in the retail, manufacturing, logistics and hospitality sectors. Of the predictors, assistance in professional growth and equitable compensation systems had the greatest impact on efficacy. The study concludes that organizational backing is not just a kind gesture but rather an important strategy that enhances human capital productivity, staff commitment and organizational attainment. Executives and organizational leaders who enhance supportive working environments, recognize employee's achievements, assist with career advancement and uphold compensation systems reap competitive advantages and long-term viability.

Recommendations

Recommendations based on the study results

- i. It is recommended that management in organizations in the state come up with reward and recognition policies that are public and that promote fairness to ensure that employees are motivated appropriately using both intangible and tangible rewards.
- ii. Managements should provide proper training resources to help the employees further improve on their skills, knowledge, and competencies continuously. The managements should also provide resources for conducting workshops and seminars to help the employees acquire new skills, which will then lead to increased productivity.
- iii. Managements should come up with management care policies that will enable them to take a caring approach, provide safe working environments, and offer assistance services to the employees to help improve their wellbeing.
- iv. The organization should develop reward and recognition programs such as rewarding the best employee of the month, recognizing employees who demonstrate exemplary performance publicly, and coming up with ideas for motivating employees.
- v. Managers should involve workers in decision-making processes by letting them participate in setting targets and objectives and helping them solve problems. This will make employees feel that the organization cares about them and that their efforts contribute to the organization's success.
- vi. Managers should provide training to develop leadership skills in management and supervisory personnel so that they can acquire appropriate attitudes, communication skills, and other interpersonal skills needed to be effective leaders. They can also provide training on how to handle problems that may arise in the workplace.
- vii. Business organizations and government officials in the state should consider developing strategies for providing support services to the employees according to the needs of the different industries and senatorial districts.

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