

# Interrogating Performance Management on Employee Service Delivery in Federal Training Centres in South East Nigeria

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## **Abstract**

*Performance management systems are systematic tools or processes that help managers or administrators regularly track and evaluate employee's work, aiming to create an environment where people can perform to the best of their abilities and align with the organization's overall goals. The broad objective of this study is to examine performance management systems and employee service delivery in Federal Training Centres in South East Nigeria. Three hypotheses were formulated in line with the objectives of the study. The study adopted the descriptive research design and survey method for data collection. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Data presentation was on tabulated frequency and statistical Mean Score. Hypotheses were tested using a t-test. The study, therefore, recommends that; Federal Training Centres should prioritize the implementation of robust performance management systems by setting clear, measurable goals, providing continuous feedback, and facilitating professional development opportunities, with regular performance evaluations to improve employee work output quality; Federal Training Centres should improve on their performance management systems strategies by aligning individual goals with organizational objectives, providing continuous feedback, and regularly recognizing and rewarding employee achievements to further enhance their commitment levels.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Employees are the most valued resources of any organization and their performance depends, to a large extent, on how they are managed and utilized. Adoption of a process or strategy for tracking and managing this performance is noteworthy and of great importance to every organization that has great concern for success. Therefore, a performance management system is a systematic tool or process that helps managers to regularly monitor, track and evaluate employee's work, to create an environment where people can perform to the best of their abilities and in alignment with the organization's overall goals. Wurim (2012) defines performance management as the process used to identify, encourage, measure, evaluate, improve and of course, reward employee performance in an organization. Performance management in this regard is seen in the organization's adopted pattern of performance appraisal; feedback; performance planning; organizational reward and recognition; training and development, etc., to get every employee conscious of the laid down performance checklists on work approach and workplace interactions, and as a measure to keep employees effectively performing their tasks, in line with the organizational goals.

Employee performance, on the other hand, is an assessment of value generated by an individual employee within a specific period. According to (Neeta, 2024), employee performance is the level of success of employees, in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. These performances of employees are measured against the performance standard set out by the organization which provides a good indication of how the employee is carrying out his or her tasks. Consequently, a performance management system in terms of tracking or managing employee performance is a strategy to regulate employees positively, to produce quality work; increase hourly output, employee work commitment etc., for higher employee performance. These strategies when effectively applied, keep the employees on the positive side of performance and the organization on the progressive pedestrian of achieving their set goals. But when on the negative side, encourages poor employees' performance and negatively affects achievement of organizational goals and objectives, and finally threatens organizational existence.

Given the above, it is probable that the pitiable performance management systems and the downward slope in employee performance in selected Federal Training Centres may be a result of inept employee performance planning; inadequate organizational reward pattern and recognition; unproductive training and development strategies; incompetent performance appraisal methods; lacklustre performance feedback; incomprehensible performance checklist etc., which affect employee performance. Therefore, the choice of the study area is a result of the personal close observation of the declining measuring strategies in terms of performance management systems and reduction in employee work performance attitude among the employees of the selected Federal Training Centres in Nigeria, which needs to be addressed as soon as possible for a robust employee performance. It is against this backdrop that the study seeks to examine how performance management systems affect employee performance in selected Federal Training Centres in Nigeria.

### **1.1 Objectives of the Study**

- i. Ascertain how the performance management system has affected the quality of employee work output in selected Federal Training Centres in Nigeria.
- ii. Determine how the performance management system has driven employee commitment in selected Federal Training Centres in Nigeria.

## **2. Conceptual Review**

### **Performance management system**

Performance according to Mehrzi & Singh, (2016), is the result or level of success of a person as a whole during a certain period in carrying out tasks compared to various possibilities, such as work standards, targets or predetermined criteria that have been mutually agreed upon. It is the tool by which goals and objectives are

set for employees and individual performance is tracked, assessed and reported upon in the organization. It is the achievement of specific tasks measured against predetermined or identified standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed, (Afshan *et. al.* 2012).

Therefore, the Performance management system is the entire strategy designed and carried out to improve the performance of an organization, including the performance of each individual and workgroup in the organization, (Utin & Yosepha, 2019). In the view of (Carla, 2023), a performance management system is a corporate management tool that helps managers or administrators monitor and evaluate employees' work Performance. Therefore, performance management system activity x-rays and moderate employees' roles to ensure that goals are consistently being met effectively and efficiently through the following tracking strategies:

**Performance planning:** Performance planning is a strategic process that ensures that an organization's goals are met by its employees. It's the process of setting goals and other performance expectations for employees and then creating a plan to meet those goals which must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

**Employee task target:** Target agreement is a management tool based on the "management by objective" principle established by Peter F. Drucker (1955). Therefore, employee performance target refers to the specific planned level of a result to be achieved within an explicit timeframe with a given level of resources. Performance target agreement is aimed at setting goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART). It is essential that employee goals are actionable and, most of all, clear to employees.

**Performance appraisal:** Performance appraisal also seen as a performance review, performance evaluation, development discussion, or employee appraisal is a periodic and systematic process whereby the job performance of an employee is documented and evaluated. Appraisal evaluates an employee's job performance and overall contribution to the organization towards improving productivity.

**Performance feedback:** Performance feedback is a broad term that describes both managing and assessing the work that needs to be done and providing opportunities for professional growth and development. Performance feedback refers to any information about a person's performance which is used as basis for improvement (Cioca & Gifford, 2022). An effective performance feedback process promotes consistency in performance review, motivates all employees to perform at their best and is conducted with fairness and transparency.

**Performance monitoring:** Employee performance monitoring is the practice of tracking the work of employees including the quality, quantity, and efficiency of employee work. It involves the measurement of performance over time against indicators of performance or key performance indicators (KPIs).

**Reward and recognition:** Rewards and recognition is a system where employees are acknowledged for their performance in intrinsic or extrinsic ways. Employee performance is to be largely used in determining rewards and recognitions.

**Training and development:** Training and development involves improving the effectiveness of organizations and the individuals and teams within them. Training and development refer to educational activities within an organization created to enhance the knowledge and skills of employees while providing information and instruction on how to better perform specific tasks.

### **Employee performance**

Employee performance is an assessment of value generated by an individual employee within a specific period in consonance with the organizational goals. According to Yunus & Ernawati (2017), the employees can produce goods and services to achieve the goals of the organization. Coker (2011) defines it "as the level of employees' performance to work attendance, work quality, the capacity of performance and personal factors". Shivangi, Solkhe & Gautam (2022) posit that employee performance is the time spent actively by employees on tasks that require execution and production. Employee performance is a metric that indicates how well

employees adhere to both explicit and implicit standards, objectives, and priorities, (Omar, Che, Sakarji; Ayu & Azizi, 2022).

### **Performance management system and quality employee work output**

Quality output refers to consistently producing work that meets and surpasses established standards (Rebecca, 2020). According to Smith (2020), quality output is not just a goal; it is a strategic imperative that influences brand perception and long-term success. Performance management system on the other hand provides accurate information about employee's accomplishments, making it easy for managers to reward fairly and appropriately (Ayandele & Isichei, 2013). Therefore, a performance management system as a tracking strategy is meant to keep the employees effectively performing their duties effectively and efficiently and drive them to produce quality work.

### **Performance management system and employee commitment**

Employee commitment is an emotional attachment to and involvement with an organization (Zahara, 2022). It refers to a bond between the employee and the organization such that the employee wants to continue serving the organization and helping it achieve its objectives. According to Zagenezzyk *et. al* (2020), the employee develops their commitment attitude to their organization based on the organization's commitment towards them; when employees perceive that their organization is committed to them, they are more likely to develop greater commitment to it (that is reciprocity). Confidently, employees with high organizational commitment improve the organization's performance by reducing instances of turnover, and absenteeism and improving the quality of service. A purposive performance management system in the form of reward and recognition propels employee commitment and affects performance generally.

### **Performance management system and employee performance**

A performance management system refers to a collaborative effort, where managers and employees work together to set expectations, identify employees' goals, define performance measurement, share employee performance reviews and appraisals and provide feedback. According to Ahmad *et. al.* (2015), employee performance concerns the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the output of employees in an organization. Consequently, performance management is widely used in both the private and public sectors to achieve organizational missions and goals; encourage behaviour to align with organizational missions and goals; curb or redirect non-productive activities etc. as it concerns employees. It may be positive or negative; it may be robust or vague, also, employee performance may be high or low, productive and unproductive and so on. Therefore, a performance management system encompasses the tracking of employees (quality work output, punctuality rate, commitment level, workplace efficiency, etc.), which is accomplished with the help of robust performance management strategies like; performance appraisal, feedback, training and development; reward and recognition etc., that is aimed to get every employee conscious of the lay down performance checklists as a measure to keep employees effectively performing their tasks, in line with the organizational goals. So, performance management is an integral part of the workplace as it provides a platform for supervisors and managers to measure employee performance and determine whether employees are meeting the organization's expectations.

Naturally, positive employee job performance is a product of a purposive performance management system adopted by organizations. According to Xolani, Nokukhanya, Adetiba & Mlambo (2023), to the vast majority of scholars, public institutions should have effective and efficient performance management systems (PMS) in place to promote and develop the performance of public servants, especially as it concerns Federal Training Centres in Nigeria.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Theory X (Douglas McGregor 1960)**

The study adopted theory X as propounded by Douglas McGregor to support the concepts of the study. The theory posits that work is inherently distasteful to most people and they will attempt to avoid work wherever possible; that most people are not ambitious, have little desire for responsibility and prefer to be directed before they produce action; that most people are self-centred, as a result, they must be closely controlled and often coerced to achieve organizational objectives; and that people resist change.

The tenets of the theory define employees' beliefs and behaviour in a workplace hence the importance of heightened supervision and tracking of employees' performance with extrinsic reward and threat of punishment to act as motivators. In our workplaces, employees mostly the lower and middle manpower cadre conceive work as inherently distasteful and will always attempt to avoid it through repeated and unreasonable work excuses and endless permissions just to avoid responsibilities. Therefore, because they hate work, and have developed little desire for accepting responsibility and prefer always to be directed, that calls for close interactions and monitoring to propel them to develop a workplace commitment.

In general, the implications of this theory to an organization should be for the organization to know the nature of how employees feel toward work and how to compel them to work through directed performance planning, purposive performance appraisal, regular performance feedback, proactive employee training and development strategies, etc., and towards establishing and reinforcing work regularity, punctuality, commitment, quality work output, and effectiveness of employees as pre-requisite to achieving organizational goals. It implies that organizations should influence employees through a robust performance management system over their job, and more so take steps in making the concept operational by propelling employees to develop positive work performance attitude naturally through joint goal setting with a renewed hope of reward for good performance.

### 3. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study area covered four ministries and establishments: Ministry of Finance, Works and Infrastructures, Office of the Survey-General and Bureau of Statistics, all in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study depends on primary and secondary sources of data. The population of this study is 645. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique, which allows for the randomization of sample selection at every stratum. The instrument used in this study for data collection is the questionnaire. The questionnaire was drafted in Likert format, and the response patterns used were; Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree and copies of the questionnaire were administered to elicit information from the respondents. The researcher made use of Five hundred and forty (540) returned questionnaires representing eighty-four per cent (84%) return rate of the instrument. The method used for data analysis is mean statistics while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses.

### 4. Data Presentation and Analysis

**Table 1:** Performance Management Systems affect the quality of employee work output in the following areas

S/N	ITEM OF QUESTIONNAIRE	SA(5)	A(4)	UND(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	TOTAL x	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Time taken for an employee to complete a task correctly	281	120	23	80	36	2150	4.0	Accepted
2	Rate of work completion	166	174	31	111	58	1899	3.5	Accepted
3	Employee level of efficiency	124	153	93	138	32	1819	3.4	Accepted
4	The effectiveness level of employee	118	126	103	164	29	1760	3.3	Accepted
5	Job knowledge of the employee	74	200	89	146	31	1760	3.3	Accepted
6	Employee attitude to work	105	213	64	150	08	1877	3.5	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean Score</b>								<b>3.5</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the opinions of the respondents on how performance management systems affect the quality of employee work output in Federal Training Centres in Southern, Nigeria. Based on the responses, it can be seen that the respondent affirmed all of the questions from 1 to 6, with mean scores of 4.0, 3.5, 3.4, 3.3, 3.3, and 3.5 respectively. The grand mean of 3.5 indicates that the respondents overwhelmingly agreed the options are true reflections of how performance management systems affect quality of employee work output in Federal Training Centres in Southern, Nigeria.

**Table 4.1.3:** Do you agree that performance management systems affect employee commitment levels in the following dimensions?

S/N	ITEM OF QUESTIONNAIRE	SA(5)	A(4)	UND(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	TOTAL x	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Level of employee productivity	230	155	12	75	68	2024	3.7	Accepted
2	Employee emotional attachment to the organization	115	126	103	153	43	1737	3.6	Accepted
3	Employee enthusiasm to perform tasks	218	179	28	92	23	2097	3.9	Accepted
4	Employee goal alignment level with organizational objectives	109	120	114	148	49	1712	3.2	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean Score</b>								<b>3.6</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

**Source:** Field Survey 2024

Table 4.1.3 shows mean rating of how performance management systems affect the commitment levels of employees in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. The responses based on the seven questions posed are above 3.0 and were accepted. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the level of employee productivity, employee emotional attachment to the organization, employee enthusiasm to perform tasks, and employee goal alignment level with organizational objectives in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria have a significant effect on all these measured variables.

### Test of Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses stated, a statistical technique such as an independent sample t-test was employed. The one-sample t-test was one of the t-variations tests and it was used to detect whether the sample significantly differs from the population. The observed sample mean, theoretical population mean, sample standard deviation, and sample size were used in the formula for a one-sample t-test. It is denoted mathematically by the following:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{s/\sqrt{n}}$$

where

- t = student distribution
- $\mu$  = population mean = 3.0
- s = standard deviation
- n = number of observations
- $\bar{x}$  = mean of the means of each specific objective (question covering the research question i.e. measurement questions)

### Test of Hypothesis One

#### Restatement of Hypothesis One

Ho: Performance management system has no significant effect on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria

Hi: Performance management system has a significant effect on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria

**: One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Time taken for an employee to complete a task correctly	540	4.0137	.91848	.03100

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

**: One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 26					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Time taken for an employee to complete a task correctly	796.442	477	.000	-21.98747	-22.0417	-21.9333

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

The result of the t-test analysis was presented in Tables 4.8 and 4.9 and is interpreted below.

**Decision Rule:**

1. Reject Ho if the p-value  $\text{cal} < 0.05$  at a 5% level of significance.
2. Otherwise, accept the null hypothesis (Ho).

From Table 1, the independent sample t-test gave a Mean Value of 4.0137, a Standard Deviation of 0.91848, t-value of -796.442, and this is significant at .000. Since .000 is less than 0.05, this means that at .05 level of significance, the p-value of .000 is significant. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Decision:** From the sample t-test analysis in Table 4.8, based on the t-value of -796.442, and P-value of 0.00, in table 4.8, it was found that the Performance management system has a significant effect on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria and this influence is statistically significant at 5% level of significance as the P-value is within 5% significance level. This result, therefore suggests that we should accept our alternate hypothesis one ( $H_1$ ) which states that the Performance management system has a significant effect on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria.

**Test of Hypothesis Two**

**Restatement of Hypothesis Two**

Ho: Performance management system does not significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria

Hi: Performance management system does significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Employee goal alignment level with organizational objectives	540	3.7449	.92652	.03127

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

## One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 13					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Employee goal alignment level with organizational objectives	-295.988	477	.000	-9.25513	-9.3165	-9.1938

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

### Decision Rule:

1. Reject  $H_0$  if the p-value  $\text{cal} < 0.05$  at 5% level of significance.
2. Otherwise, accept the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

From table 2, the independent sample t-test gave a Mean Value of 3.7449, the Standard Deviation of 0.92652, t-value of -295.988, and this is significant at .000. Since .000 is less than 0.05, this means that at .05 level of significance, the p-value of .000 is significant. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Decision:** From the sample t-test analysis in Table 2, based on the t-value of -295.988, and P-value of 0.00, in table 2, it was found that Performance management system does significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria and this influence is statistically significant at 5% level of significance as the P-value is within 5% significance level. This result, therefore suggests that we should accept our alternate hypothesis three ( $H_1$ ) which states that Performance management system does significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

#### Performance Management Systems and Quality of Employee Work Output

The first objective was to ascertain how performance management systems have affected the quality of employee work output in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. Given the sign that sample t-test analysis in Table 4.9, based on the t-value of -796.442, and P-value of 0.00, in table 4.9, it was found that Performance management systems have a significant effect on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. The findings indicate that the Performance Management Systems (PMS) significantly affects the quality of employee work output in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. Effective PMS implementation leads to enhanced work quality through several mechanisms, including clear goal setting, continuous feedback, and employee development.

#### Performance Management Systems and Employee Commitment

Research question three sought to determine how performance management system has driven employee commitment in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. The result affirmed that Performance management system does significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. From the sample t-test analysis in Table 4.13, based on the t-value of -295.988, and P-value of 0.00. The findings reveal that the Performance Management System (PMS) significantly drives employee commitment levels in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. This influence stems from clear goal alignment, continuous feedback, professional development opportunities, and recognition of performance.

### 5. Summary of Findings

The following were the findings from the study:

- i. From the study, it was discovered that Performance management systems have significant effects on the quality of employee work output level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria (this is where the t-value = -796.442, and p-value = 0.00).
- ii. Equally, the finding of revealed that performance management systems does significantly drive employee commitment level in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria (where t-value = -295.988, and p-value = 0.00).

## Conclusion

The study concluded that the effective implementation of a Performance Management Systems (PMS) is crucial for enhancing employee performance in Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria. The findings underscore that clear goal alignment, continuous feedback, and professional development opportunities are essential components that drive employee engagement, commitment, and punctuality. Ultimately, a robust PMS framework not only improves individual performance but also contributes to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the training centres, enhancing their capacity to deliver quality education and training.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria should prioritize the implementation of robust performance management systems by setting clear, measurable goals with continuous feedback, and regularly facilitating professional development opportunities, offering regular performance evaluations will significantly improve employee work output quality.
- ii. Federal Training Centres in Southern Nigeria should boost their performance management systems strategies by aligning and communicating individual goals with organizational objectives, providing continuous feedback, and offering professional development opportunities to employees. Recognizing and rewarding employee achievements will further boost employee commitment levels.

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