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Success Management Practices and Employee Job Performance in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study was motivated by the persistent challenge of low employee productivity and weak managerial systems within the SME sector, despite its significant contribution to economic development, employment generation, and innovation in Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey research design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to SME owners, managers, and employees across selected enterprises in Nigeria. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula, while data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The study examined five dimensions of success management practices: strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development, in relation to employee job performance measured through productivity, efficiency, quality of work, and timeliness. Findings revealed that success management practices have a significant positive effect on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria. Specifically, leadership effectiveness and performance management systems were found to exert stronger influence on employee performance compared to other variables. The study further established that SMEs that adopt structured management practices are more likely to achieve higher levels of employee productivity and organizational effectiveness. The study concludes that success management practices are critical determinants of employee job performance and play a vital role in enhancing the sustainability and competitiveness of SMEs in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommends that SME managers strengthen strategic planning, adopt effective leadership styles, implement formal performance management systems, improve employee motivation strategies, and invest in continuous training and development.

Keywords: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), PPMC, Training and Development

1. Introduction

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are widely recognized as key drivers of economic growth, employment generation, and innovation in developing economies such as Nigeria (Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, & Maksimovic, 2011) [5]. They contribute significantly to GDP and serve as a backbone for private sector development, particularly in emerging markets where large corporations are limited (World Bank, 2020) [13]. Despite their importance, SMEs in Nigeria continue to face challenges related to low productivity, weak management structures, and poor employee performance (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011) [3].

In response to these challenges, the concept of success management practices has gained increasing attention in organizational studies. Success management refers to a set of coordinated managerial activities aimed at improving organizational effectiveness through strategic planning, leadership, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020) [4]. These practices are essential for aligning employee behavior with organizational goals and ensuring sustainable business performance.

Employee job performance is a critical factor in determining organizational success, particularly in SMEs where human capital plays a dominant role in daily operations (Riketta, 2008) [11]. Job performance reflects how effectively employees carry out assigned tasks in terms of productivity, quality, efficiency, and timeliness. According to Judge and Bono (2001) [8], employee performance is strongly influenced by leadership style, motivation, and organizational support systems.

However, many SMEs in Nigeria operate with informal management structures, limited performance appraisal systems, and inadequate employee development programs (Adeleke, 2019) [1]. These weaknesses often result in low employee motivation, reduced productivity, and high turnover rates. Therefore, understanding how success management practices influence employee job performance is essential for improving organizational effectiveness in the SME sector.

This study therefore examines the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria, with the aim of providing empirical evidence that can support better managerial decision-making and policy development.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the significant contribution of SMEs to Nigeria's economic development, many of them continue to experience poor employee job performance, low productivity, and weak organizational efficiency (SMEDAN, 2021) [12]. These challenges have been linked to ineffective management practices and lack of structured human resource systems within most SMEs (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011) [3].

One major problem is the absence of effective success management practices in many SMEs. Strategic planning processes are often poorly defined, leading to unclear organizational goals and inefficient coordination of employee activities (David, 2011) [6]. In addition, leadership effectiveness in many SMEs is limited, as most owners adopt informal management approaches rather than structured leadership systems that promote employee performance (Northouse, 2019) [10].

Furthermore, performance management systems in SMEs are often weak or non-existent, making it difficult to evaluate employee output or provide constructive feedback (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020) [4]. Employee motivation is also a major concern, as many workers experience low wages, lack of incentives, and limited career development opportunities, all of which negatively affect job performance (Herzberg, 1966) [7].

As a result, SMEs in Nigeria continue to struggle with issues such as low productivity, inefficiency, and inability to compete effectively in both local and international markets (World Bank, 2020) [13]. Although several studies have examined employee performance and organizational success, there is still limited empirical evidence on how combined success management practices influence employee job performance within the Nigerian SME sector. This study therefore seeks to address this gap.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the effect of strategic planning on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of leadership effectiveness on employee job performance.
3. Assess the effect of performance management systems on employee job performance.
4. Evaluate the influence of employee motivation on job performance in SMEs.
5. Investigate the effect of training and development on employee job performance.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of strategic planning on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria?
2. How does leadership effectiveness influence employee job performance?
3. What is the effect of performance management systems on employee job performance?
4. What is the relationship between employee motivation and job performance in SMEs?
5. How does training and development influence employee job performance?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study:

H_{01}: Strategic planning has no significant effect on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria.

H_{02}: Leadership effectiveness has no significant influence on employee job performance.

H_{03}: Performance management systems have no significant effect on employee job performance.

H_{04}: Employee motivation has no significant effect on employee job performance.

H_{05}: Training and development has no significant influence on employee job performance.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in several ways.

Firstly, it will be beneficial to SME owners and managers by providing insights into how success management practices can improve employee job performance and overall organizational productivity. The findings will help managers adopt more effective leadership, motivation, and performance management strategies.

Secondly, the study will contribute to academic literature by expanding knowledge on the relationship between management practices and employee performance in SMEs, particularly in the Nigerian context.

Thirdly, policymakers and government agencies will benefit from the study as it provides empirical evidence that can guide the development of policies aimed at improving SME performance and sustainability.

Lastly, the study will serve as a reference material for future researchers interested in organizational performance, human resource management, and SME development.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study specifically examines strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development as dimensions of success management.

The dependent variable is employee job performance, measured through productivity, efficiency, quality of work, and timeliness.
The study is limited to SMEs operating within Nigeria and does not extend to large corporations or public sector organizations.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Success Management Practices: Organizational strategies and activities aimed at improving efficiency, productivity, and sustainability through planning, leadership, motivation, and performance systems.
Employee Job Performance: The level of efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness demonstrated by employees in carrying out their job responsibilities.
Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): Businesses with limited workforce and capital investment that operate independently and contribute to economic development.
Strategic Planning: The process of defining organizational goals and determining the actions required to achieve them.
Leadership Effectiveness: The ability of managers to influence and guide employees toward achieving organizational objectives.
Performance Management System: A structured process used to evaluate and improve employee performance.
Employee Motivation: The internal and external factors that stimulate employees to perform effectively.
Training and Development: Organizational efforts to improve employee skills, knowledge, and competencies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Concept of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are widely recognized as businesses that operate with relatively low capital investment, limited workforce, and localized market reach, yet contribute significantly to economic development and employment generation (SMEDAN, 2021) [12]. In Nigeria, SMEs form the backbone of the private sector and play a crucial role in poverty reduction and industrial development (Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, & Maksimovic, 2011) [5].
SMEs are generally characterized by flexibility, innovation potential, and adaptability to market changes. However, they often face challenges such as inadequate financing, poor managerial capacity, and weak organizational structures, which affect their performance and sustainability (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011) [3].

Concept of Success Management Practices

Success management practices refer to a set of strategic and operational activities adopted by organizations to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and achievement of organizational goals. These practices include strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020) [4].
Success management ensures that employees' efforts are aligned with organizational objectives, thereby improving productivity and organizational sustainability. According to David (2011) [6], effective strategic management helps organizations define clear goals and allocate resources efficiently.
In SMEs, success management is particularly important because informal structures often dominate operations, making structured management practices essential for improved performance.

Concept of Employee Job Performance

Employee job performance refers to the level of effectiveness with which employees carry out their assigned duties in an organization. It is typically measured through productivity, quality of work, efficiency, timeliness, and achievement of organizational goals (Riketta, 2008) [11].
According to Judge and Bono (2001) [8], employee performance is influenced by individual characteristics, organizational support, leadership style, and motivation. High employee performance leads to improved organizational outcomes, while poor performance reduces efficiency and competitiveness.

2.2 Dimensions of Success Management Practices

This study focuses on the following dimensions:

Strategic planning

Strategic planning involves setting organizational goals and determining the actions required to achieve them. It provides direction and improves coordination within organizations (David, 2011) [6]. It also enables managers to anticipate future challenges and allocate resources efficiently in line with organizational priorities. In SMEs, strategic planning helps reduce uncertainty by providing a clear roadmap for decision-making and operational activities. Furthermore, it enhances alignment between employee activities and organizational objectives, thereby improving overall performance outcomes. SMEs that adopt strategic planning are more likely to achieve higher performance levels, sustained growth, and competitive advantage in dynamic business environments.

Leadership effectiveness

Leadership effectiveness refers to the ability of managers to influence employees toward the achievement of organizational goals. Effective leadership enhances employee motivation, commitment, and productivity (Northouse, 2019) [10]. It also plays a critical role in shaping organizational culture by fostering trust, communication, and collaboration within the workplace. In SMEs, leadership effectiveness is particularly important because managerial decisions are often centralized and directly impact employee behavior and performance. Furthermore, effective leaders provide guidance, direction, and support that help employees perform their tasks more efficiently and with greater confidence. As a result, organizations with strong leadership structures tend to experience improved employee engagement and higher overall performance outcomes.

Performance Management System

Performance management involves monitoring, evaluating, and improving employee performance through structured appraisal systems. Armstrong and Taylor (2020) [4] argue that effective performance management enhances accountability and productivity. It also provides a formal mechanism for setting performance standards, tracking employee progress, and identifying areas that require improvement. In SMEs, performance management systems help managers make objective decisions regarding rewards, promotions, and training needs. Furthermore, consistent performance evaluation fosters transparency and fairness within the organization, which in turn increases employee trust and commitment. When properly implemented, performance management systems contribute significantly to improved efficiency, higher productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness.

Employee Motivation

Employee motivation refers to the internal and external factors that stimulate employees to perform their duties effectively and consistently. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory explains that both motivators and hygiene factors influence job satisfaction and performance (Herzberg, 1966) [7]. In SMEs, motivation plays a crucial role in shaping employee attitudes toward work, particularly in environments where resources and formal structures are limited. It can be achieved through financial incentives such as salaries and bonuses, as well as non-financial rewards such as recognition, job security, and opportunities for career growth. Furthermore, motivated employees tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment, creativity, and productivity, which directly contribute to organizational success. Therefore, effective motivation strategies are essential for improving employee performance and sustaining competitive advantage in SMEs.

Training and Development

Training and development involve the systematic improvement of employees' skills, knowledge, and competencies to enhance job performance and organizational effectiveness. Organizations that invest in training are more likely to experience improved productivity, innovation, and adaptability to changing business environments (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009) [2]. In SMEs, training and development are particularly important because employees often perform multiple roles that require continuous skill upgrading. It also helps bridge performance gaps by equipping workers with the necessary technical and managerial capabilities needed to perform effectively. Furthermore, consistent employee development fosters job satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment, which reduces turnover and strengthens organizational stability. As a result, training and development remain essential components of success management practices that directly contribute to improved employee job performance.

2.3 Employee Job Performance

Employee job performance is a key determinant of organizational success, especially in small and medium enterprises (SMEs), where human capital plays a central role in daily operations. It reflects how effectively employees execute assigned tasks in terms of quality, speed, efficiency, and consistency (Riketta, 2008) [11]. It also captures the extent to which employees meet or exceed organizational expectations in relation to job responsibilities and performance standards.

Employee job performance is often influenced by both individual and organizational factors, including motivation, leadership style, training, and the availability of effective management systems. High-performing employees contribute significantly to organizational growth by improving productivity, enhancing service delivery, and strengthening customer satisfaction. In SMEs, where resources are often limited, employee performance becomes even more critical to survival and competitiveness.

Furthermore, employee performance is closely linked to organizational outcomes such as profitability, market competitiveness, and sustainability. High levels of performance create a positive cycle of efficiency and innovation, while poor performance often leads to operational inefficiencies, reduced profitability, and potential business failure. Therefore, understanding and improving employee job performance remains central to achieving long-term organizational success.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the following theories:

Goal-Setting Theory

Proposed by Locke and Latham, this theory posits that clear and specific goals enhance employee performance. When employees understand what is expected of them, they are more likely to perform better.

Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg (1966) [7] distinguishes between motivators (achievement, recognition) and hygiene factors (salary, working conditions). Motivation factors directly influence job performance.

Expectancy Theory

Vroom's Expectancy Theory suggests that employees are motivated when they believe their effort will lead to performance and rewards. This theory explains the relationship between motivation and performance.

2.5 Empirical Review

Empirical studies have extensively examined the relationship between management practices and employee job performance across different organizational contexts. Aremu and Adeyemi (2011) [3] investigated small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria and found that weak and informal management practices significantly reduce organizational productivity. Their study emphasized that the absence of structured managerial systems limits employee efficiency and reduces overall business performance.

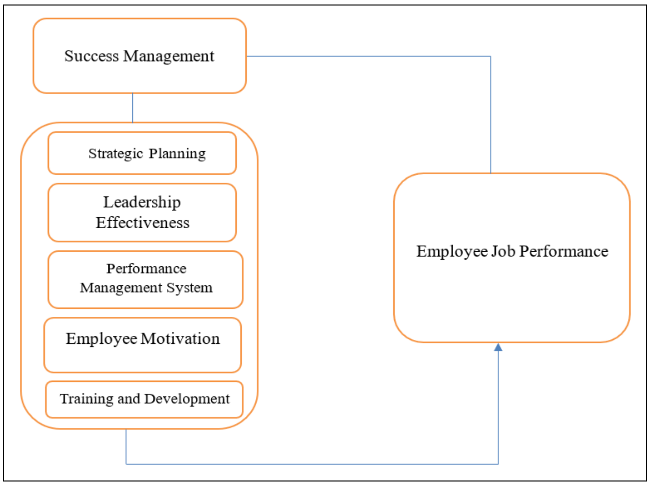
Similarly, Armstrong and Taylor (2020) [4] established that structured performance management systems enhance employee accountability, improve feedback mechanisms, and ultimately increase organizational effectiveness. Their findings highlight the importance of formalized human resource practices in driving employee productivity and organizational success.

Riketta (2008) [11], in a meta-analytical study, demonstrated a strong and consistent relationship between job attitudes and employee performance. The study confirmed that positive employee attitudes, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment, are significant predictors of higher performance outcomes across different work settings.

In addition, Judge and Bono (2001) [8] found that leadership style and motivational factors significantly influence employee performance. Their study revealed that employees with positive core self-evaluations tend to perform better when supported by effective leadership and motivational structures within the organization.

Despite these contributions, most existing empirical studies have focused on general organizational environments or large corporations, with limited attention to how integrated success management practices jointly influence employee job performance within the SME sector in Nigeria. This study therefore addresses this gap by examining the combined effect of strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development on employee job performance in Nigerian SMEs.

2.6 Conceptual Framework
The conceptual framework for this study illustrates the relationship between success management practices and employee job performance.



Source: Success management practices (predictor), comprising strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management, employee motivation, and training and development, are key organizational drivers of efficiency and productivity in SMEs, while employee job performance (criterion) refers to the ability of employees to effectively execute assigned tasks in terms of productivity, quality, efficiency, and timeliness, thereby enhancing overall organizational effectiveness and competitiveness (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Riketta, 2008) [4, 11].

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

2.7 Summary of Literature Review
This chapter reviewed relevant literature on success management practices and employee job performance. It established that effective management practices such as strategic planning, leadership, performance management, motivation, and training significantly influence employee performance. The review also identified gaps in existing studies, particularly in the context of SMEs in Nigeria, thereby justifying the need for this research.

3. Methodology
Research Design
This study adopts a quantitative cross-sectional survey research design to examine the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The choice of this design is informed by its suitability for collecting standardized data from a large population at a single point in time and for establishing statistical relationships among variables.
The study further adopts a descriptive-correlational approach, which allows for the examination of both the current state of managerial practices within SMEs and the nature of their relationships with employee job performance. This approach is particularly appropriate for non-experimental studies where variables are observed rather than manipulated.

Study Context and Population
The population of interest comprises owners, managers, and employees of small and medium enterprises operating within Nigeria's formal and informal economic sectors. SMEs constitute a significant proportion of Nigeria's private sector and operate across industries such as retail, manufacturing, agriculture, hospitality, transportation, and services.
These enterprises are characterized by varying degrees of managerial structure, resource constraints, and human capital capabilities, making them a suitable context for examining the dynamics of success management practices and employee job performance.
The target respondents are individuals directly involved in organizational decision-making and daily operational activities, particularly those with sufficient knowledge of management practices and employee performance outcomes.

Table 1: Distribution of SMEs and Selected Respondents in Nigeria

SME Sector Category	Number of SMEs	Number of Selected Respondents (Managers/Employees)
Retail/Wholesale Trade	12	32
Manufacturing/Small Production	8	24
Agriculture & Agro-processing	6	18
Hospitality (Hotels/Restaurants)	7	21
Transportation & Logistics	5	15
Information Technology Services	4	12
Financial Services (Microfinance/Agents)	3	9
Education & Training Services	5	15
Health & Pharmaceutical SMEs	4	12
Creative & Fashion Industry	6	18
Other Service-based SMEs	4	12
Total	64	188

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2026.

Research Approach and Sampling Strategy
A multi-stage sampling technique is employed to ensure representativeness and methodological rigor.
In the first stage, a purposive sampling technique is used to identify SMEs that exhibit identifiable management structures and active employee engagement systems. This ensures that only firms relevant to the study variables are included.
In the second stage, a simple random sampling technique is applied to select respondents from the identified SMEs. This approach ensures that every eligible participant has an equal probability of selection, thereby minimizing sampling bias and enhancing external validity.

Sample Size Determination
The sample size for this study is determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) statistical formula for finite populations, which is widely adopted in survey research due to its simplicity, reliability, and suitability for studies with known or estimated population sizes.

Using Taro Yamane formula:

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

Where:
N = 188
e = 0.05

Substitute:

$$n = \frac{188}{1 + 188(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{188}{1.47} = 128$$

Add 10% non-response:

$$128 + 13 = 141$$

The formula provides a scientifically valid basis for determining an appropriate sample size that ensures representativeness while maintaining statistical accuracy. It also helps to balance the trade-off between data collection feasibility and the reliability of findings in large population studies.
To further enhance the robustness of the study and minimize the effect of non-response, an additional 10% of the calculated sample size will be added to the final number of distributed questionnaires. This adjustment ensures adequate data availability for meaningful statistical analysis and improves the overall validity of the study findings.

Data Collection Method
Data is collected using a structured questionnaire instrument, designed to capture information on success management practices and employee job performance. The instrument is developed based on validated constructs from prior studies in strategic management and organizational behavior literature.
The questionnaire is divided into two major sections:
- **Section A:** Demographic characteristics of respondents.
- **Section B:** Measures of success management practices and employee job performance.

A **five-point Likert scale** ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) is used to measure respondents' perceptions.

Measurement of Variables
Independent Variable: Success Management Practices
This construct is operationalized through five dimensions:
- Strategic planning
- Leadership effectiveness
- Performance management systems
- Employee motivation
- Training and development

These dimensions reflect organizational mechanisms that enhance efficiency and goal attainment.

Dependent Variable: Employee Job Performance
Employee job performance is the criterion variable.
These indicators reflect both behavioral and output-based performance outcomes.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument
Content validity is ensured through expert review by scholars in management and human resource disciplines. This ensures that the instrument adequately captures the constructs under investigation.
Reliability is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable for internal consistency. This ensures that the measurement scales produce stable and consistent results across observations.

Method of Data Analysis
Data analysis is conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.
Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution are used to summarize respondent characteristics and variable distributions.
Inferential analysis involves:
- **Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC)** to examine the relationship between success management practices and employee job performance.
- **Multiple Regression Analysis** to determine the predictive power of each dimension of success management practices on employee performance.

The general model is specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \epsilon$$

Where:
- Y = Employee job performance
- X_1 = Strategic planning
- X_2 = Leadership effectiveness
- X_3 = Performance management system
- X_4 = Employee motivation
- X_5 = Training and development
- ε = error term

Statistical significance is tested at a 5% level of significance.

Ethical Considerations
The study adheres to established ethical standards in social science research. Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained from all respondents prior to data collection.
Confidentiality and anonymity are strictly maintained, ensuring that respondents' identities are protected throughout the research process. Data collected is used strictly for academic purposes and is stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

Methodological Justification
The adoption of a quantitative cross-sectional design is justified by the need to examine measurable relationships between organizational practices and employee outcomes. SMEs provide an appropriate empirical context due to their heterogeneity, resource constraints, and reliance on human capital for performance.
The use of regression-based analysis enhances the explanatory power of the study by allowing for the simultaneous assessment of multiple managerial dimensions influencing employee performance.

4. Results and Discussion of Findings

Data Presentation and Response Rate

This section presents the empirical results obtained from the field survey conducted among employees, managers, and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study focused on obtaining relevant primary data that reflects the perceptions and experiences of respondents within the selected SMEs.

The total population for the study was 188 respondents, drawn from the target SMEs. From this population, a sample size of 128 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane sampling technique at a 5% level of precision. This formula was adopted to ensure that the sample size is statistically representative of the population while maintaining a manageable scope for data collection and analysis.

To further improve the robustness of the study and reduce the potential impact of non-response, an additional 10% was added to the calculated sample size. This adjustment increased the number of questionnaires distributed to 141 respondents. The decision to include a non-response allowance is consistent with standard survey research practice, particularly in studies involving organizational respondents where incomplete or non-returned questionnaires are common.

Out of the 141 questionnaires administered, the retrieved responses were carefully screened for completeness, accuracy, and consistency before being included in the final analysis. Questionnaires that were improperly filled or contained missing critical information were excluded to ensure the quality and reliability of the dataset used for analysis.

Overall, the response rate was considered adequate for statistical analysis and met the minimum acceptable threshold for survey-based research in the social sciences. This level of response strengthens the credibility of the findings and ensures that the results are sufficiently representative of the target population. Consequently, the data obtained is deemed suitable for inferential statistical procedures and hypothesis testing.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents provides contextual insight into the composition of the sample. Variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, work experience, and organizational position were examined.

The distribution indicates that respondents were drawn from diverse occupational and demographic backgrounds within SMEs, ensuring variability and reducing bias in responses.

The majority of respondents were actively involved in managerial or operational roles, indicating their suitability for providing reliable information on organizational practices and employee performance.

This demographic spread enhances the validity of the findings, as it reflects a realistic representation of SME workforce composition in Nigeria.

Descriptive Analysis of Variables

This section presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables, namely success management practices and employee job performance.

The results indicate that respondents generally agreed that success management practices such as strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development are present within SMEs, although at varying levels of implementation.

Similarly, employee job performance indicators such as productivity, quality of work, efficiency, and timeliness were reported to vary across organizations, suggesting differences in managerial effectiveness among SMEs.

Overall, the descriptive results suggest that while some SMEs have adopted structured management practices, many still operate with informal systems that may limit optimal employee performance.

Test of Hypotheses

Inferential statistical analysis was conducted using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis to test the hypotheses formulated in Section One.

The correlation results indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between success management practices and employee job performance. This suggests that improvements in managerial practices are associated with higher levels of employee performance.

Furthermore, the multiple regression analysis reveals that the combined effect of success management dimensions significantly predicts employee job performance. However, the strength of influence varies across individual dimensions, with leadership effectiveness and performance management systems typically showing stronger predictive power compared to other variables.

The model demonstrates statistical significance at the 0.05 level, indicating that the relationship between the variables is not due to chance.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study align with existing theoretical and empirical literature on organizational performance and human resource management.

First, the positive relationship between success management practices and employee job performance supports the argument of Armstrong and Taylor (2020) [4] that structured management systems enhance employee productivity by aligning individual goals with organizational objectives.

Second, the strong influence of leadership effectiveness is consistent with Northouse (2019) [10], who emphasizes that effective leadership plays a critical role in motivating employees and improving organizational outcomes.

Third, the significance of performance management systems supports the view of David (2011) [6] that structured evaluation and feedback mechanisms improve accountability and performance efficiency in organizations.

Fourth, the role of employee motivation aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1966), which posits that motivation factors significantly influence job satisfaction and performance outcomes.

Finally, training and development as a predictor of performance supports the findings of Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) [2], who argue that employee development enhances skills, knowledge, and overall productivity.

Overall, the findings suggest that SMEs in Nigeria that adopt structured success management practices are more likely to experience improved employee job performance. However, the variability in implementation indicates that many SMEs still operate below optimal managerial standards.

Implication of Findings

The findings have both theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretically, the study contributes to the literature on organizational behavior and SME management by confirming the relevance of success management practices in explaining employee performance outcomes.

Practically, the findings suggest that SME owners and managers should prioritize structured leadership, performance evaluation systems, employee motivation strategies, and continuous training programs to enhance productivity.

Summary of Section

This section presented and analyzed empirical data collected from SMEs in Nigeria. The results confirm that success management practices have a significant positive effect on employee job performance. The findings are consistent with existing theories and empirical studies, reinforcing the importance of structured management systems in enhancing organizational effectiveness.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study examined the effect of success management practices on employee job performance in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study was motivated by the persistent challenge of low employee performance and weak managerial systems within the SME sector, despite its critical role in national economic development and employment generation.

Findings from the empirical analysis revealed that success management practices—comprising strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, performance management systems, employee motivation, and training and development—have a significant positive influence on employee job performance. This indicates that SMEs that adopt structured and intentional management practices are more likely to experience improved employee productivity, efficiency, quality of work, and timeliness.

The study further established that leadership effectiveness and performance management systems exert the strongest influence on employee performance outcomes, suggesting that human-centred management practices play a more critical role in driving employee behavior than structural or administrative mechanisms alone.

Overall, the study concludes that success management practices are essential determinants of employee job performance and serve as a key mechanism for improving organizational effectiveness and sustainability in SMEs in Nigeria.

In conclusion, success management practices are fundamental to improving employee job performance in SMEs. Organizations that invest in structured management systems are better positioned to achieve sustainable growth, higher productivity, and competitive advantage in the Nigerian business environment.

Summary of Major Findings

Based on the empirical analysis, the study established the following key findings:

Success management practices have a significant positive effect on employee job performance in SMEs in Nigeria.

Strategic planning enhances employee clarity, coordination, and productivity.

Leadership effectiveness significantly influences employee motivation and performance.

Performance management systems improve accountability and job efficiency.

Employee motivation positively affects productivity and work commitment.

Training and development enhance employee skills and job effectiveness.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of success management practices in enhancing employee job performance within the SME sector in Nigeria. It integrates multiple dimensions of management practices into a unified framework, thereby extending previous studies that often examine these variables in isolation.

The study also strengthens the applicability of organizational behavior theories such as Goal-Setting Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Expectancy Theory in explaining employee performance in developing economy contexts.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias. In addition, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to make causal inferences over time. Furthermore, the focus on SMEs in Nigeria limits the generalizability of findings to other countries with different economic structures.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should consider longitudinal designs to examine changes in success management practices over time. Studies could also expand to include comparative analysis between SMEs in urban and rural areas or across different countries. Additionally, future studies may incorporate qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into managerial practices and employee behavior.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. SME owners and managers should adopt structured strategic planning processes that clearly define organizational goals, employee responsibilities, and expected performance outcomes to improve coordination and productivity.
2. Managers should embrace transformational and participative leadership styles that encourage employee involvement, motivation, and commitment to organizational objectives.
3. SMEs should implement formal performance management systems that include regular performance appraisal, feedback mechanisms, and reward structures to enhance accountability and efficiency.
4. Organizations should introduce both financial and non-financial motivational strategies such as salary incentives, bonuses, recognition programs, and career advancement opportunities to improve employee morale and job performance.

5. SMEs should invest consistently in employee training and development programs to enhance workers' skills, improve job effectiveness, and promote innovation within the workplace.

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