

Factors Motivating Employee Participation in Decision-Making Process on Organisational Performance: Evidence From Osun State University, Nigeria

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Abstract

Employees play a vital role in the development of an organisation's growth and continuous existence. Employees who are incorporated in the decisionmaking process see themselves as an imperative member of the organisation and as such commit their skills, ideas, initiatives, and expertise to the realisation of organisational set goals and objectives. However, in most organisations today, adequate attention has not been given to the participation of personnel in critical organisational decision-making process. Therefore, this study examined factors motivating personnel participation in decisionmaking process using Osun State University Nigeria. The study utilised primary and secondary data and adopted a descriptive research design. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The population of the study (422) comprised academic staff, non-teaching staff and management team while 20% of the population 84 respondents were used as sample size for questionnaire administration. The findings of the study revealed that decentralisation of decision-making process, adequate feedback mechanisms, transparency, and accountability in the management of the institution, and proper clarification of procedures and rules regarding the administration of the institution among others were factors deployed for personnel involvement in decision-making process of the institution. The study concluded that employee

contributions to the development of institutions cannot be undermined in today's contemporary society. The study recommends among other bottom-to-top approaches to the implementation of the institution's decision-making processes.

Key words: Employee participation; Decision making; Organisational performance

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, employee participation in decision-making process is a key and core aspect of the growth, development and realisation of the organisational set goals and objectives. Giving employees a voice in organisational decision-making within an institution is referred to as employee involvement in decision-making. It also refers to the extent to which employees engage with or express their ideas in the actions and inactions of an institution. Making a decision entails weighing your options and settling on a particular course of action among alternatives. Decision-making, according to Timming (2015), entails balancing the relative importance of various elements, analysing the probable outcomes of options, and deciding on the best course of action.

Employee participation in decision-making processes addresses human development needs such as selfactualization and fulfilment, increasing employee motivation and enabling them to cultivate positive attitudes to duties (Obembe *et al.*, 2019). Employee participation in the management of an institution has

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been the topic of much research in recent years. It has become a key concern due to employees' increased desires for job satisfaction and recognition of their role within an organisation's structure. This is especially true in academic settings where people from various backgrounds and interests come together to have stimulating discussions. Conflicts of interest are typical in settings like this one, where staff members are visibly alienated from the institution's decision-making process, removing them from events and creating a vacuum that could lead to conflict. According to Chummun and Nleya (2023), employees in an academic institution should have unfettered access to strategic decision-making processes that affect their ability to survive and thrive. This belief is founded on the idea that an institution is similar to a system or a state and that a democratic process should be introduced within the institutions through decentralisation. Employers and employees equally can benefit when an organisation implements mechanisms that encourage employees to be committed to the organisation's goals (Obembe et al., 2022). This improves organisational efficiency, which is boosted further by critical knowledge sharing in the workplace.

Decentralisation of function and engagement of employees in decision-making are the two most essential institutional traits that influence employees' productivity, job satisfaction, and motivation, as well as commitment to institutional set goals and objectives (Kesting *et al.*, 2016). According Eze *et al.* (2022), employee involvement in decision-making process provides several benefits to organisations. These advantages include encouraging creativity, changing workplace behaviours, increasing employee commitment, and allowing employees to participate in decision-making processes. In order to increase employee commitment, institutions are frequently advised to allow for a high level of employee participation and autonomy in decision-making.

The leadership style of a leader has a significant impact on the decisions made by an organisation, for example, democratic leaders encourage group decisionmaking, and orders are issued only after lengthy deliberations and explanations which value employees' creativity and initiative. An autocratic leadership style, on the other hand, is extremely rigid and dogmatic, fervently believes that a particular course of action should be taken and is thus unwilling to accept input from the employees. Institutional management can improve their chances of actualising organisational set goals and objectives by allowing workers to participate in the organisational decision-making process thereby increasing employee trust in the management of the institution in tandem with improved performance. As a result, this study utilises Osun State University as a case study to investigate the factors that encourage employees to participate in decision-making process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Participation in Decision Making

According to Kuye and Sulaimon (2011), personnel involvement in decision-making implies that authority is shared in an institutional setting between subordination and superiority; decisions are made here with input from staff members who will be affected. It also shares decision-making authority with subordinates to achieve organisational goals that constitute personnel involvement in decision-making. Personnel involvement in organisational course of action is expected to enable the achievement of goals that would be impossible to achieve in a hierarchical structure (Shaed et al., 2015). It is also claimed that in today's highly competitive environment, it is critical for an organisation's survival. This is due to the belief that participation in decision-making within an organisation serves to protect the interests of individuals and groups who participate in the decision-making process within such organisations.

Employee participation refers to a process in which individuals who are hierarchically unequal share influence (Ike *et al.*, 2017). When participatory management techniques are used, a balance is struck between managers' and their subordinates' involvement in information processing, decision-making, and problemsolving processes (Dede, 2019). According to Daniel (2019), worker participation is the distribution and use of authority between employers and employees in all of its forms. It explains how individuals participate in decisions affecting their immediate work organisations as well as those made indirectly by representatives of the organisations.

Decision-making, according to Farooq et al. (2019), can be formal or informal, and it requires not only physical participation but also mental and emotional engagement. According to Ezeanolue and Ezeanyim (2020), this procedure implies that employees will be consulted before decisions are made, have access to sufficient information to support those decisions and negotiate with management regarding the implementation of those decisions. Individuals or groups can take part in the process (Keller & Werner, 2012). Individual participation techniques involve an employee having some say in a manager's decision-making. Democracy and consultation are two strategies for encouraging group participation. In a democratic setting, every member of the group participates fully, and decisions are made by consensus or the majority rather than by any single individual. However, in a consultative setting, a manager solicits employee feedback while maintaining final authority over the situation (Oyebamiji, 2018).

The actual range of decision-making participation ranges from full participation, which involves all parties affected by or involved in the decision, to one extreme, in which the manager decides without consulting anyone else. In reality, the degree of participation is determined by several factors, including the nature of the task and the individual's or group's experience. Participation tends to increase with experience and the amount of unstructured task completion (Uribetxebarria *et al.*, 2021). According to Kuye and Sulaimon (2011), there are two distinct levels of personnel involvement in decision-making in the literature. The first is high involvement, also known as complete decentralisation in which nearly all employees are involved in all decision-making processes. In the second, decision-making is restricted to top management personnel and is either entirely or partially centralised.

BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

Personnel involvement in organisation's course of action at all institutional levels has several advantages. According to James and Helen (2019), decisions can be successfully implemented when decision-making authority involves both superiors and subordinates. In the view of Lammers (2019), participation in decision-making promotes institutional harmony and increases employee support and morale. Personnel who contribute to organisation's course of action are more motivated to work harder to achieve their goals and are more proud of their work. Employees who participate in institutional decision-making feel more valuable and creatively fulfilled, and they also feel like they are part of a team working towards a common goal (Philip & Arrowsmith, 2021).

Philip and Arrowsmith (2021), stated that giving employees a voice makes them more open to change. When employees participate in decision-making and express their opinions, changes are more likely to be implemented successfully. Employee participation ensures that they are kept up to date on upcoming events and potential changes. When institutional management can quickly identify areas of concern and ask employees for solutions, the institution will shift from a reactive to a proactive state (Shaed *et al.*, 2018).

Personnel involvement in organisational course of action broadens their understanding of the organisation. Workers can gain the cognitive abilities required for success in management or senior executive roles through development opportunities, training, and information exchange. It also increases employee commitment to the institution and the decisions that are made (Usman *et al.*, 2021). Creativity and innovation are two important advantages of participatory management. Promoting participation in decision-making among a diverse workforce fosters the synergy that results from having more options. When employees, not just managers or executives, are allowed to contribute, the likelihood of a good and unique idea being proposed increases.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Moshen and Sharif (2020) investigated employee participation in decision-making and its effect on job performance in the banking sector. The study utilised primary and secondary data and adopted a descriptive research design. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study revealed that employee involvement in decision-making process has a significant positive effect on job performance and the realisation of organisational set goals and objectives. The findings of the study also revealed that leadership style, organisational structure, employee commitment and decentralisation of function were the factors that produced a positive impact on employees' participation in decisionmaking process. The study concluded that the ideas and initiative of employees in organisational development cannot be undermined.

Dede (2019) investigated employee participation in decision-making and its effect on organisational productivity. The study utilised primary and secondary data. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as tables, frequency and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that employee involvement in decision-making process creates an enabling environment for teamwork and facilitates employee commitment to duties and responsibilities. The study also revealed that adequate feedback mechanism, and decentralisation of function increases employees' morale leading to high level performance. The study concluded that employees should be given adequate training needed to be creative and innovative in decision making process of an organisation.

Ezeanolue and Ezeanyim (2020) investigated employee participation in decision making process and its impact on organisational productivity. The study utilised primary and secondary data and adopted a descriptive research design. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study revealed that employee involvement, employee delegation and employee consultation have significant positive effects on organisational productivity. The study also revealed that role clarification, adequate and timely feedback mechanisms, and employee consultation influenced participation in decision making process. The study concluded that employee participation in organisational action and inaction had a positive impact on organisational development.

Oyebamiji (2018) examined how employee involvement in decision-making affected the effectiveness of the organisation at the Ladoke Akintola University Teaching Hospital in Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria. The research design used in the study was descriptive. For the study, both primary and secondary data were used. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data that were gathered. The study's findings demonstrated that both direct and representative participation improves organisational performance. The study also showed that a significant lack of employee participation occurs in the institution's decision-making process because the management team is unable to involve employees in decision-making. The study concluded that an alternative paradigm to organisational performance is involvement in the decision-making process.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is hinged on McGregor's Theory X and Y. McGregor (1960) introduced the Theory X and Theory Y management styles in his book. He presented and discussed the key ideas and differing assumptions about the nature of people in organisations that underpin the theories of X and Y management approaches. Theory X postulated that people are naturally controlphobic, apathetic, and lack ambition, based on a set of assumptions he called classical management. Managers were opposed to providing facilitating conditions for personnel involvement in the organisation's course of action due to the assumption that men are lazy. McGregor concluded that the traditional management style was antiquated and hindered the achievement of organisational goals and objectives due to the lack of subordinate involvement in the decision-making process. However, this study emphasised theory Y.

The Theory Y leadership style is an alternative set of managerial assumptions. Theory Y encourages selfdiscipline, self-reliance, involvement of personnel in the organisational course of action and commitment to the success of the organisation. It also promotes an involved and participatory management style. Theory Y leaders believe that employees have an innate desire to work, which is why they prefer to move authority down the hierarchy. Supervisors give their subordinates personal freedom, and workplaces are purposefully designed to provide ample opportunities for innovation and creativity. Furthermore, Theory Y-embracing managers foster a work environment in which employees' individual goals are linked to the overall goals of the organisation, increasing productivity and innovation.

According to McGregor's theory Y, leadership places a high value on the creation of connections that support the employer-employee dynamic, the creation of an atmosphere that facilitates the involvement of personnel initiative during action, encourages organisation loyalty, and the ability of staff members to act independently, creatively, and with initiative. One notable connection between Theory Y and this research is that it encourages employee involvement because managers who use it typically involve employees in decision-making and prioritise relationships over results. As a result, organisations that want to see employee involvement must prioritise creating a supportive, encouraging, and favourable work environment for the adoption of a participatory management style.

METHODOLOGY

For the study, both primary and secondary data were used. Secondary data were gathered from published journal articles, textbooks, research projects, conference proceedings, and institutional materials; primary data came from a self-structured questionnaire and interview guide. The results of this investigation were analysed using descriptive statistics. Population of the study 422 comprised (268) academic staff, (127) non-teaching staff and (27) management team. Multi-stage sampling technique was utilised for the study. A stratified sampling technique was used in the first stage, to categorise the University along the administrative zones of the State, Osogbo/Okuku, Ifetedo/Ipetu Ijesha, and Ikire/Egibgo. Random sampling technique was utilised in the second stage, to select Osogbo, Ikire and Ipetu Ijesha campuses of the institution representing 50% of the institution's campuses. Random sampling technique was utilised in the third stage, to select two departments each from the selected campuses amounting to six departments. This is to ensure that each administrative zones of the State are represented. In addition, a proportionate-to-size sampling technique was utilised to select 84 respondents for questionnaire administration. In order to supplement the data gathered from the distribution of questionnaires, an interview session was also held with the Registrar, Bursar, and a few department heads of the institution.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF RESPONDENTS

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents revealed that 51 (69.9%) of the respondents were male, while 22 (30.1%) of the respondents were female. It was also shown that 25 (34.2%) of the respondents were single, and 48 (65.8%) were married. With respect to age, 14 (19.2%) respondents fell into the age group of 18-25, 53 (72.6%) respondents belonged to the age group of 26-45 years while the age group of 46-55 years had 8 (8.2%). Academic qualification of the respondents revealed that 43 (58.9%) had HND/First Degree qualification while 30(41.1%) of the respondents had Masters and above.

Furthermore, 8 (10.95%) respondents are from the Department of Social Science Education, 8 (10.95%) respondents are from the Department of Science, Mathematics & Technology Education, 10 (13.7%) respondents are from Language & Linguistic, 7(9.6%) respondents are from History and International Studies, 10 (13.7%) respondents are from Bursary Department, 10 (13.7%) respondents are from Security Department, 9 (12.3%) respondents are from Biological Sciences while 11 (15.1%) respondents are from Mechanical Engineering. Also, 25 (34.2%) of the respondents had served for 1-5 years, 40 (54.8%) respondents had served for 6-10 years and 8 (11.0%) had served for 11-15 years.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Male	51	69.9	69.9		
Female	22	30.1	100.0		
Total	73	100.0			
Marital Status					
Married	48	65.8	65.8		
Single	25	34.2	100.0		
Total	73	100.0			
Age Group					
18-25	14	19.2	19.2		
26-45	53	72.6	91.8		
45-55	6	8.2	100.0		
Total	73	100.0			
Academic Qualification					
HND/First Degree	43	58.9	58.9		
Master's and above	30	41.1	100.0		
Total	73	100.0			
Departments					
Arts and Social Science Education	8	10.95	10.95		
Mathematics and Technology Education	8	10.95	21.9		
Language and Linguistic	10	13.7	35.6		
History and International Studies	7	9.6	45.2		
Biological Science	9	12.3	57.5		
Mechanical Engineering	11	15.1	72.6		
Bursary	10	13.7	86.3		
Security	0	13.7	100.0		
Total	73	100.0			
Length of Service					
1-5	25	34.2	34.2		
6-10	40	54.8	89		
11 and above	8	11.0	100.0		
Total	3	100.0			

Source: Field Survey, 2024

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Evidence from Osun State University in Nigeria was used in this section to discuss the factors that motivate employee participation in decision-making processes and their implications for organisational performance. To achieve the study's goal, the participants were asked to indicate which six indicated variables they agreed or disagreed with. Likert scale measurement was used in the questionnaire's design, and tables, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to report the results. To support the quantitative data collected, data from the interview section with chosen respondents were also qualitatively analysed using the content analysis method.

The respondents were first asked about the decentralisation of decision-making process as a motivating factor to enhance employees' participation in the institution's decision-making. Reacting to this assertion, 22 (30.1%) respondents strongly agreed with the variable; it was also agreed to by 32 (43.8%) respondents; about 12 (16.4%) respondents did not decide about the variable. Conversely, it was opposed to the opinion of 5 (6.8%) respondents who disagreed with the variable while 2 (2.7%) respondents strongly disagreed with the variable. The standard deviation (SD = .966) and mean value $(\chi$ = 3.92) supported this. According to this data, 73.9% of participants, or the majority, agreed that employee participation in the institution's decision-making process is enhanced by the decentralisation of the decision-making process.

The respondents were asked to respond to proper feedback mechanisms as motivating factor that enhance personnel involvement in the institution's decision-making process. Reacting to the second variable, 19 (26.0%) respondents strongly agreed with this variable; 34 (46.6%) respondents agreed to it; 9 (12.3%) were undecided; 7 (9.6%) respondents disagreed while 4 (5.5%) respondents strongly disagreed with the variable. The mean value and standard deviation for the variable were $\bar{\chi} = 3.78$, SD = 1.109). This means that a proper feedback mechanism is an indicator motivating employees of the institution to participate in the decision-making process.

With respect to the third variable, transparency and accountability in the management of the institution as factor motivating employee participation in decision-making process. In their responses, 24 (33.3%) respondents strongly agreed with the variable; this was supported by 28 (38.4%) respondents who agreed with the variable; while 10 (13.7%) respondents were undecided about the variable; 4 (5.5%) respondents disagreed with the variable. The degree of accountability and transparency in the institution's management is demonstrated by this data representation, which increases staff involvement in the decision-making process. For this variable, the mean value was ($\chi = 3.78$), and the standard deviation was (SD =1.236).

In line with the fourth variable, the level of improved consultation and collaboration process facilitates employee participation in decision-making process. Reacting to this, 16 (21.9%) respondents strongly agreed, 28 (38.4%) respondents agreed; 14 (19.2%) respondents were undecided; 10 (13.7%) disagreed and 5 (6.8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the variable. With a mean value and standard deviation of $\hat{\chi} = 3.55$, SD =

1.179), the analytical interpretation of the data verified that increased consultation and collaboration function as a motivating factor that enhances worker participation in the university's decision-making process.

The distribution in Table 2 variable 5, adequate involvement and representation of staff in management meetings propel personnel involvement in decision-making process of the institution with 20 (27.4%) respondents strongly agreeing to the variable; it was also agreed to by 24 (32.9%) respondents; 15 (20.5%) respondents did not decide about the variable; 8 (11.0%) respondents disagreed with the variable while 6 (8.2%) respondents strongly disagreed with the variable. The standard deviation (SD = 1.233) and mean value $\bar{\chi} = 3.60$) supported this. The result of this data showed that the majority of the respondents 60.3% stated that staff representation and appropriate involvement in institution management meetings improve employee participation in decision-making.

With respect to the sixth variable, proper clarification of procedures and rules regarding the administration of the institution facilitate personnel participation in decision making process, 19 (26.0%) respondents strongly agreed with this variable; 28 (34.4%) respondents agreed to it; 6 (8.2%) were undecided. Nevertheless, it was contrary to the opinion of 12 (16.4%) respondents who disagreed while 8 (11.0%) respondents strongly disagreed with the variable. The variable's mean and standard deviation were ($\chi = 3.52$, SD = 1.334). This indicates that there is proper clarification of procedures and rules regarding the administration of the institution which enhances employee participation in decision-making process of the institution.

Table 2

Factors Motivating Employee Participation in Decision-Making Process on Organisational Performance: Evidence from Osun State University, Nigeria

Variables	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed	Descriptive statistics N=73	
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
1. Decentralisation of decision making process	22 (30.1%)	32 (43.8%)	12 (16.4%)	5 (6.8%)	2 (2.7%)	3.91	.997
2. Proper feedback mechanism	19 (26.0%)	34 (46.6%)	9 (12.3%)	7 (9.6%)	4 (5.5%)	3.78	1.109
3. Transparency and accountability in the management of the institution	24 (33.3%)	28 (38.4%)	10 (13.7%)	4 (5.5%)	7 (9.6%)	3.78	1.236
4. Improved consultation and collaboration process	16 (21.9%)	28 (38.4%)	14 (19.2%)	10 (13.7%)	5 (6.8%)	3.55	1.179
5. Adequate involvement and representation of staff in management meetings	20 (27.4%)	24 (32.9%)	15 (20.5%)	8 (11.0%)	6 (8.2%)	3.60	1.233
6. Proper clarification of procedures and rules regarding the administration of the institution	19 (26.0%)	28 (38.4%)	6 (8.2%)	12 (16.4%)	8 (11.0%)	3.52	1.334

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Summary of the Interview Analysis

An interview session was held with the institution's Registrar, Bursar, and a few department heads to supplement the information obtained through the administration of a questionnaire in the study area. Surprisingly, most of the interviewees revealed that the institution provides an enabling environment for the staff of the institution to participate in decision-making process. It was also noted by one of the heads of department that decentralisation of decision-making takes place at the institution in the institution and for quick decision-making process. He also noted that decision-making process in the institution cuts across various departments and faculties.

The Registrar of the institution noted that the institution is structured in a manner that facilitates employees' contribution to the decision-making process. He further noted that the management of the institution does not take solitary decisions, however, it gives room for adequate involvement and representation of staff in management meetings across the faculties of the institution. In the opinion of the Bursar of the institution, he revealed that the management of the institution ensures transparency and accountability in their decision-making process based on joint consultation.

A head of a department stated that the institution provides an adequate feedback mechanism to various faculties of the institution regarding any matter presented before the management of the institution through the deans which is also channelled to various departments for deliberation. In summary, the institution provides a flexible means for the employees of the institution to participate in the decision-making process.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the ideas, initiative, and expertise of employees of the institution cannot be undermined in decision-making process as it guides the management in the day-to-day running of the institution to realise the set goals and objectives of the institution. It also, goes a long way in helping to ensure peaceful coexistence among the institution's employees in conflict management and resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Employees should be given the opportunity and enabling environment to contribute their ideas and initiatives to the institution's policies because they are critical to its implementation. This will go a long way to increase organisational productivity through employee delegation.

There is a need for the institution's management to include in its standard policy the evaluation of all employee opinions, suggestions, and views based on their merit and, if applicable, after employee consultation, the implementation of such ideas to boost employee morale.

It is critical to ensure that employee engagement stems from management's ability to recognise their contributions. This will significantly increase employees' commitment to the institution's growth and efficiency.

A good working relationship between the institution's management and its employees will facilitate easy communication and an open exchange of information within the organisation. This will go a long way to facilitate teamwork.

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