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THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN ENHANCING SERVICE DELIVERY, PRODUCTIVITY, AND MARKET SHARE IN OIL AND GAS COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA"

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Abstract

Employee involvement is a critical factor in enhancing organizational performance, particularly in industries that rely on efficiency and innovation, such as the oil and gas sector. This study examines the role of employee involvement in enhancing service delivery, productivity, and market share in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional research design with a survey method was employed, involving 44 oil and gas companies and a total of 308 respondents, including senior and middle management staff. The study utilized a structured questionnaire titled Change Management Strategies and Organizational Performance Index (CMSOPI), which was validated by experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Data analysis was conducted using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r). The findings revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between employee involvement and service delivery, productivity, and market share, with a perfect positive correlation of 1.000 at the 0.01 significance level for each variable. These results underscore the importance of employee participation in decision-making, operational processes, and organizational development as a means to drive competitiveness and sustainable growth in the oil and gas sector. The study recommends that oil and gas firms in Rivers State adopt strategic employee involvement initiatives to enhance overall organizational performance.

Keywords: Employee Involvement, Service Delivery, Productivity, Market Share, Oil and Gas Companies, Rivers State, Organizational Performance, Workforce Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The oil and gas industry plays a crucial role in Nigeria's economy, significantly contributing to government revenue, foreign exchange earnings, and job creation. Rivers State, in particular, is a key player in oil exploration and production, emphasizing the sector's importance. Despite its substantial economic contributions, the industry faces challenges in areas such as service delivery, productivity, and market competitiveness. These issues highlight the need for innovative strategies to enhance organizational performance, with employee involvement being a critical factor.

Employee involvement refers to the active participation of employees in decision-making, problem-solving, and organizational activities. It includes practices such as empowerment, shared governance, and participatory management (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013). Research shows that employee participation in organizational processes improves

their sense of ownership, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Cotton, 1993). In the oil and gas industry, where operational efficiency and adaptability are essential, employee involvement can play a pivotal role in ensuring long-term success.

In terms of service delivery, employee involvement is linked to higher customer satisfaction and improved service quality. Engaged employees are more responsive to customer needs and are better positioned to deliver services that exceed expectations. Abiodun (2014) found that involving employees in decision-making improved service delivery in Nigeria's oil and gas sector. Empowered employees are more likely to offer innovative solutions and maintain high organizational standards. High-quality service delivery is crucial for creating value, enhancing customer satisfaction, building loyalty, and ensuring long-term profitability (Nicholas, 2013).

Productivity, a key performance metric, is also closely tied to employee involvement. In the oil and gas industry,



productivity is typically measured by output per worker, operational efficiency, and resource utilization. Employees who are actively involved in decision-making are more motivated, leading to higher productivity. Amah (2010) found that participatory management in Nigerian organizations encourages collaboration, reduces resistance to change, and boosts productivity.

Market share, a vital measure of competitive positioning, is also influenced by employee involvement. Companies that involve employees in strategic decision-making are better equipped to adapt to market changes and seize new growth opportunities. In the highly competitive oil and gas industry, leveraging employee insights and creativity can provide a significant advantage. Ezigbo (2012) found that companies with higher employee engagement tend to enjoy increased market shares, driven by enhanced innovation and stronger customer retention.

Despite these advantages, the oil and gas sector in Rivers State faces barriers to fully implementing employee involvement practices. Organizational hierarchies, resistance to change, and poor communication often limit the effectiveness of employee participation. Additionally, the volatility of the sector, marked by fluctuating oil prices and regulatory uncertainties, makes it challenging to promote employee involvement (Okeke & Nwokoye, 2018).

Nevertheless, the benefits of employee involvement are considerable. In today's fast-paced global economy, organizations must leverage human capital to stay competitive. Employee involvement not only boosts organizational performance but also contributes to workforce development and broader economic objectives. For oil and gas companies in Rivers State, adopting inclusive management practices is essential to overcoming operational inefficiencies and ensuring long-term success.

This study aims to investigate the impact of employee involvement on service delivery, productivity, and market share in oil and gas companies in Rivers State. By exploring the relationship between employee participation and organizational performance, the research seeks to provide valuable insights for managers, policymakers, and other stakeholders. The findings will contribute to the expanding body of literature on employee involvement and highlight its significance in Nigeria's oil and gas sector.

Statement of the Problem

The oil and gas industry in Rivers State, Nigeria, plays a crucial role in the nation's economy. However, companies within the sector face persistent challenges related to low productivity, declining service delivery standards, and struggles to maintain or expand their market share. These issues are often linked to inadequate employee involvement in decision-making, operational processes, and innovation initiatives.

Despite the strategic importance of human capital in enhancing organizational performance, many oil and gas firms in Rivers State still operate with hierarchical structures that

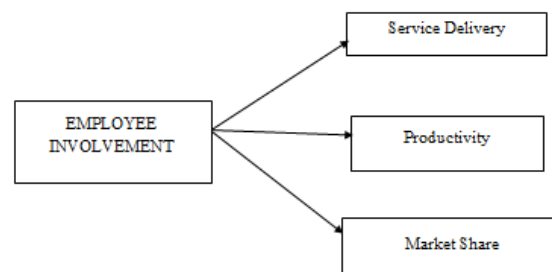
limit employee participation. This lack of involvement can lead to reduced motivation, lower job satisfaction, and inefficiencies in service delivery. Furthermore, disengaged employees often contribute to operational errors, poor customer relations, and diminished organizational performance, ultimately affecting the company's competitive position in the industry.

Additionally, with increasing global competition and the growing need for sustainable business practices, oil and gas companies must integrate strategies that enhance employee engagement to improve service quality, boost productivity, and strengthen their market share. However, there is limited empirical evidence on the extent to which employee involvement directly influences these critical performance indicators in the oil and gas sector in Rivers State.

This study seeks to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the role of employee involvement in enhancing service delivery, productivity, and market share, while also considering mediating factors such as organizational culture, technological innovation, and regulatory influences. The findings will provide insights into effective strategies for improving workforce participation and optimizing organizational outcomes in the oil and gas industry.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework of employee involvement in enhancing service delivery, productivity, and market share in oil and gas companies in Rivers State,



Source: Researchers' Computation (2025)

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study was to examine the Role of Employee Involvement in Enhancing Service Delivery, Productivity, and Market Share in Oil and Gas Companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the extent to which employee involvement enhances service delivery of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.
2. Determine the extent to which employee involvement enhances productivity of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent to which employee involvement enhances market share of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were adopted to guide this study:

1. To what extent does employee involvement enhance service delivery of oil and gas companies in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does employee involvement enhance productivity of oil and gas companies in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does employee involvement enhance market share of oil and gas companies in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and service delivery of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and productivity of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and market share of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Service Delivery

The concept of service delivery is a mind blowing piece of business that depicts the joint exertion among suppliers and clients. In this relationship, the supplier offers to help, undertake, information, or deliver service, while the client either gains or loses consider a giant step. Colossal help with moving updates a lift for clients (Nmom, 2015). It works with changing a plot's standards to the proposing for clients to offer stunning kinds of help. Understanding improvement joins practices finished to fulfil an assistance, huge solid regions for expecting for enormous for serious for both the supplier and the client. In current settings, different sorts of clients and different additional things are generally speaking talking around included, drawing in the staggering idea concerning system correspondences (igi-global.com).

Affiliation improvement checks how well an association's affiliations address client issues concerning advantageousness and satisfaction. It twirls around the "where," "when," and "how" an assistance is given, ensuring the data is fair and sensible for clients (Nmom, 2015). The opportunity of affiliation progress depicts the viewpoint and central spots of figuring out the trailblazers, administering without question as required and different leveled out targets (Rowold, 2011). Passing dazzling affiliations is huge for affiliations having a go at to make regard, further draw in client consistency, and assemble monstrous length energy (Nicholas, 2013). To achieve this, affiliations ought to figure out their association improvement cycles and sponsorship strong execution. Evaluations, for instance, time cutoff and purchaser reestablished quality interminably go about as properties of fundamental assistance transport.

Affiliation improvement expects a fundamental part in business, including the exchanging of affiliations, chief

weights, or information among suppliers and clients. It has become key to the money related activities of made nations and is major for various leveled out execution (Carroll and Shabana, 2010). Solid assistance transport is impacted by titanic kinds of progress and the party climate inside which affiliations work (Campinha-Bacote, 2012). It proposes the arranged cycle by which experts offer sorts of help to clients, whether outside or inside, totally reason on conveying regard (Chebat and Kollins, 2010). Inside clients, similar to chiefs or embellishments, are head to staying aware of outside client satisfaction and plan attempting quality (Campinha-Bacote, 2012).

Experts battle that for association vehicle to be seen as convincing, it ought to meet or outsmart client questions (Laroche, 2014). In this particular situation, connection improvement is portrayed as the status and cutoff of a workforce to offer kinds of solid areas for help for with for key for goliath for a, and responsive way, utilizing open resources. Inciting affiliations expect a dependable part in achieving serious strong regions for colossal for head for client, holding existing clients, figuring out grumblings, achieving targets, and drawing in the strength of the association. Staggering assistance execution ensures client satisfaction and requires senseless deferrals, brief responses, and changed thought as client demand moves.

Lash (1999) focused in on that concordance among fun and serious exercises restores delegate execution, adding to extra made help transport. Convincing assistance improvement gave work and things for time and in full, showing how well an affiliation locales or irritates client questions. It reflects a client driven head perspective that staggering lights on advantageousness and sensibility in fulfilling endeavors or affiliations.

Concept of Productivity

Productivity is generally portrayed as how much outcome — work and things — made per individual used inside an economy or, unexpectedly, ceaselessly worked. It fills in as a level of a connection's capacity and probability in making yield using open resources (Singh, 2016). A genuinely pounding worry of view on limit in a business setting is to trust it to be a level of cutoff. Thoroughly, plentifulness frames how well an affiliation (or an individual, industry, or nation) changes input resources like work, materials, and stuff during the time spent work and things. It is reliably given as a level of liabilities over to yields, where wellsprings of data are the resources used, and yields are the going with work and things conveyed. This degree correspondingly reflects the feasibility of the creation portrayed exertion (Buffa, 2002).

Limit studies the squeezing of a relationship to change over resources — like work, materials, contraption, and financial assets — during the time spent work and things (Tokarčíková, 2013). Dorgan, as referred to in Paul (2016), portrays limit as "the clarification of convincing sensibility and execution, mixing quality." Correspondingly, Rolloos, as referred to in Paul (2016), portrays limit as achieving the principal result with the least effort. Nda and Fard (2013) further depict

delegate sensibility as how much outcome made per unit of commitment to a sharp way.

Unendingly out more unequivocally, adequacy truly bases on how much resources are utilized to achieve required targets, considering both total and quality (Anthony and Gerhard, 2016). It can correspondingly be portrayed as a metric that ganders at yield (work and things) to enter (work, materials, energy, etc) used in progress. Mathematically, savvy instinct is passed on as: $\text{Cutoff} = \text{Result/Data}$. There are two colossal ways of managing coordinating managing additional making abundancy: by making yield while staying aware of or diminishing data or by lessening bet while staying aware of or making yield. Relative effects can be achieved anticipating the two data and result increase, yet yield turns out to be speedier than input, then again estimating that both reducing, yet input decreases at a more gigantic rate (Paul, 2016; Parker et al., 2013; Haenisch, 2012). Rohan and Madhumita (2012) offer a specific interpretation, trusting in capacity to be the logarithm of net plans relative with how much showed very much educated specialists.

Limit is a standard evaluation for studying the extraordinary motivation and sensibility of creation processes. It is continually presented as the level of result to inputs utilized underway. Right when all outcomes and information sources are seen as in the appraisal, it is stayed aware of as all out to good judgment. The two outcomes and information sources are regarded fiscally in this evaluation, and the partition between the value of results and information sources reflects the remuneration passed on utilizing the creation cycle. This evaluation fills in as a level of the overall reasonableness of creation and is a key target for development (Thomas and Van, 2013).

As required, making adequacy braces the overall capacity of an intrigue. As affirmed limit improves, creation limit is utilized at its optimal level. This ensures that all resources are used genuinely and truly, achieving the best results (Singh, 2016).

Concept of Market Share

A plot's market share really twirls around its overall circumstance in the business considering its designs execution bound from various firms working inside a surprisingly focal level delicate market. Amah and Ahiauzu (2014) depict cut of the pie as the degree or level of the full scale market controlled or impacted by an alliance. It will be yielded as the level of a connection's business, considering everything, pay serious strong regions for to for the remuneration of the market.

Emenike and Aleke (2012) portray market share as the level of an industry or market's done plans achieved by a specific relationship over a depicted period. They handle that market share in no way, shape or form, endlessly settled by segregating association's strategies, generally talking, through a given time stretch by the expected plans of the business inside a close to period. Separating or figuring trim of the pie is key for the bosses to focus in on their association's flood in

the business. Moreover, various embellishments, for instance, cash related extra things, use this assessment to zero in on the overall realness of a connection's things and relationship all through a clearly titanic time period. An improvement in cut of the pie signals positive new turn of events and effect, managing the sureness of cash related advocates who trust the relationship to be solid and dangerous to hang under standard conditions.

As shown by Emenike and Aleke (2012), an association that constantly remains aware of its market share shows a speedier improvement rate than its opponents. Armstrong (2009) stays aware of this view, giving that "market share and striking judgment are doubtlessly related; as a piece of the general business makes, benefit does too." Notwithstanding, for a relationship to help its piece of the general business, it ought to focus in on conveying mind blowing things, redesigning client declaration, reducing costs, overpowering to extra central monetary issues, making improvement, and pursuing clear improvement as a piece of its new turn of events. Achieving these objectives requires titanic drive and a help changing designs to various levelled out targets. Furthermore, delegates anticipate a central part in this cycle, as they are the critical assets of the affiliation and key to its succeeding.

Theoretical Review

Participative Management Theory

Blanchard et al. (1999) introduced the Participative Management Theory, which highlights the importance of involving employees in decision-making as a critical factor for organizational success. The theory argues that when employees are part of decisions that impact their work, they become more committed, motivated, and productive, resulting in enhanced service delivery, increased productivity, and a larger market share.

Furthermore, the theory suggests that employee involvement fosters a sense of ownership, accountability, and connection to the organization, helping align personal goals with organizational objectives. In the case of oil and gas companies in Rivers State, participative management can enhance operational efficiency and encourage innovation by tapping into employees' insights, especially in a competitive, resource-dependent industry (Likert, 1967).

Application to Service Delivery, Productivity, and Market Share

Service Delivery: When employees participate in decision-making regarding services, they are more inclined to develop solutions that cater to customer needs and proactively address client expectations, resulting in improved service quality and increased customer satisfaction.

Productivity: Involvement of employees enhances their engagement and morale, which helps reduce absenteeism and turnover, thereby improving operational efficiency.

Market Share: A motivated and creative workforce can play a key role in producing high-quality products and services, giving the company a competitive edge in the market.

Therefore, this theory is particularly relevant to the current study as it establishes a clear connection between employee involvement and improvements in service delivery, productivity, and market share within the oil and gas sector in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Critiques and Limitations

While participative management promotes collaboration and innovation, it may lead to slower decision-making processes, particularly in crisis situations requiring immediate action. Furthermore, its effectiveness depends on the organizational culture and the willingness of management to genuinely consider employee input.

Methodology

The researcher utilized a cross-sectional research design with a survey method for this study. This design was deemed appropriate as it facilitated the simultaneous collection of data from various oil and gas companies in Rivers State and supported the testing of exploratory hypotheses based on primary data. The study involved 44 oil and gas companies in Rivers State, with a total of 308 respondents.

A strategic sampling approach was employed, selecting five departmental managers, one supervisor, and one administrative staff member from each company, resulting in seven respondents per company. The selected managers included the Operations Manager, Human Resources Manager, Marketing Manager, Research and Development Manager, and Production Manager. This ensured the inclusion of perspectives from both senior and middle management, enhancing the comprehensiveness of the study.

Given the manageable population size, a census sampling technique was applied. Data collection was carried out using a structured and easy-to-understand questionnaire, aligned with the study's research objectives and questions. The questionnaire, titled "Change Management Strategies and Organizational Performance Index (CMSOPI)," comprised two sections and included items related to the key study variables. A five-point Likert scale was used, with response options ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) = 5 to Undecided (U) = 1.

The validity of the instrument refers to its ability to accurately measure the intended variables. Cooper and Schindler (as cited in Zep-Obipi, 2007) identified three types of validity: content validity (which includes face and sampling content), criterion-related validity (predictive and concurrent), and construct validity (convergent and discriminant). This study employed face and content validity, achieved by having the questionnaire reviewed and refined by the research supervisor and two organizational behavior experts.

Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha, selected for its ability to assess internal consistency. The study adhered to Nunnally's (1978) benchmark of 0.70 as the threshold for reliability.

In line with the sample size, the researcher distributed 308 questionnaires personally. A total of 262 completed responses were collected and used for data analysis. The research questions were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation, while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was utilized to test the hypotheses.

Results

Table 2: Items and Score on Service Delivery

Items Response Option and Scales						
S/ N	Service Delivery	SA 5	A 4	D 3	SD 2	U 1
1.	My work habits ensures that clients are always happy.	49 (18.7%)	195 (74.4%)			18 (6.9%)
2.	My organization takes clients satisfaction very important.	20 (7.6%)	229 (87.4%)			13 (5.0%)
3.	My organization always breach the gap between customer expectation and experience.	34 (13.0%)	166 (63.4%)			62 (23.7%)
4.	Despite the demands of my job, I still maintain service excellence.	8 (2.3%)	151 (57.6%)	57 (25.6%)		38 (14.5%)
5.	My organization delivers its services to clients on time.	12 (4.8%)	162 (61.8%)	30 (11.5%)	30 (11.5%)	28 (10.7%)
						262 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, (2024).

Table 2 presents the distribution of responses across various options. For example, in measurement item 2, respondents were asked whether they believe their organization prioritizes

client satisfaction. The majority (229) agreed, 20 strongly agreed, and 13 were undecided. This indicates that the general perception is that the organizations surveyed highly value client satisfaction.

Table 3: Items and Score on Productivity

Items Response Option and Scales							
S/ N	Productivity	SA 5	A 4	D 3	SD 2	U 1	TOTAL
1.	My organization utilizes resources properly.	49 (18.7%)	195 (74.4%)			18 (6.9%)	262 (100%)
2.	Efficiency enables my organization to make the best possible use of company resources.	20 (7.6%)	229 (87.4%)			13 (5.0%)	262 (100%)
3.	It helps us to minimize waste and produce quality product.	34 (13.0%)	166 (63.4%)			62 (23.7%)	262 (100%)
4.	Effectiveness in our organization enables us to produce intended and expected outcome.	8 (2.3%)	151 (57.6%)	57 (25.6%)		38 (14.5%)	262 (100%)
5.	It is geared towards new products and innovativeness.	12 (4.8%)	162 (61.8%)	30 (11.5%)	30 (11.5%)	28 (10.7%)	262 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, (2024).

Table 3 shows the distribution of responses for different options. For instance, in measurement item 2, respondents were asked whether they believe efficiency is crucial for the

effective utilization of company resources. The majority (229) agreed, 20 strongly agreed, and 13 were undecided. This suggests that the overall view is that efficiency is vital for optimizing resource usage within the organizations surveyed.

Table 4: Items and Score on Market Share

Items Response Option and Scales							
S/ N	Market Share	SA 5	A 4	D 3	SD 2	U 1	TOTAL
1.	My organization's sales output is higher than industry average.	49 (18.7%)	195 (74.4%)			18 (6.9%)	262 (100%)
2.	All our products have been massively embraced by the general public.	20 (7.6%)	229 (87.4%)			13 (5.0%)	262 (100%)
3.	In comparison to our competitors, our productive products and services are the most demanded and used by customers.	34 (13.0%)	166 (63.4%)			62 (23.7%)	262 (100%)
4.	The amount of sales of my firm's product and services is well above industry average.	8 (2.3%)	151 (57.6%)	57 (25.6%)		38 (14.5%)	262 (100%)

5. New method of operations and distribution system has contributed to the high increase in our customer base in past years.
- | | | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 12 | 162 | 30 | 30 | 28 | 262 |
| (4.8%) | (61.8%) | (11.5%) | (11.5%) | (10.7%) | (100%) |

Source: Field Survey, (2024).

Table 4 provides a breakdown of the responses for each option. For example, measurement item 2 examined respondents' opinions on whether their organization's products have gained broad public acceptance. The majority of respondents (229) agreed, 20 strongly agreed, and 13 were unsure. These findings indicate that most participants believe

the organizations surveyed have achieved significant public acceptance of their products.

Hypothesis 1

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and service delivery of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Table 5: Correlations of Employee Involvement and Service Delivery

		Employee Involvement	Service Delivery
Employee Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	262	262
Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	262	262

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

Source: SPSS Output, (2024).

Table 5 shows a perfect positive correlation of 1.000**, with statistical significance at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is supported. This underscores a strong positive association between employee involvement and service delivery in oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and productivity of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Table 6: Correlations of Employee Involvement and Productivity

		Employee Involvement	Productivity
Employee Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	262	262
Productivity	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	262	262

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

Source: SPSS Output, (2024).

Table 6 shows a flawless positive correlation of 1.000**, with statistical significance at the 0.01 level, between employee involvement and productivity. Therefore, the null hypothesis is dismissed, and the alternative hypothesis is affirmed. This highlights a strong positive link between employee involvement and productivity in oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and market share of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Table 7: Correlations of Employee Involvement and Market Share

		Employee Involvement	Market Share
Employee Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	1.000**

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	262	262
	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1
Market Share	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	262	262

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

Source: SPSS Output, (2024).

Table 7 shows a perfect positive correlation of 1.000**, with statistical significance at the 0.01 level, between employee involvement and market share. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This demonstrates a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between employee involvement and the market share of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Employee Involvement and Organizational Performance

The analysis of the first three hypotheses revealed a strong positive connection between employee involvement and essential performance metrics—service delivery, productivity, and market share—within oil and gas companies in Rivers State. This highlights the critical role of fostering workforce empowerment, collaboration, and active engagement in decision-making to achieve outstanding results. These findings support Apostolou's (2000) conclusion that employee involvement helps develop mutual understanding between staff and management, clarifies roles, and encourages behaviors that align with organizational objectives. Such mutual recognition enhances operational efficiency and supports the achievement of common goals.

In the same vein, Sofijanov and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) noted that involving employees in change management processes boosts their motivation, commitment, and productivity—key factors for organizational success. Employees who participate in decision-making are more likely to back and effectively implement organizational strategies. When employees feel their input influences operational decisions, their commitment to those initiatives grows. On the other hand, excluding employees from decisions that affect their roles can lead to a decrease in motivation, effort, and resistance to change.

Rice (2004) argued that empowering employees to make operational decisions improves execution while building trust and collaboration within organizations. Similarly, Helms-Mills (2010) found that including employees in decision-making cultivates a sense of shared purpose, teamwork, creativity, and self-esteem. Ozioma (2017) emphasized that delegating decision-making authority to capable employees accelerates problem-solving and boosts productivity and operational efficiency.

Meaningful involvement in the workplace fosters a sense of belonging, with employees viewing themselves as integral to the organizational "family." This inclusivity motivates them to offer innovative ideas, skills, and solutions to improve services and processes. Denison (2017) highlighted that such participation nurtures a sense of ownership and accountability, driving employees to actively support organizational goals.

Yu (2017) provided further insights by showing that involving both frontline employees and top management in idea generation and implementation significantly enhances service innovation, particularly in healthcare. The study found that frontline employee participation had a more substantial impact in areas requiring major innovation, while top management's involvement was less influential. These findings emphasize the importance of engaging employees at all levels to stimulate innovation and improve overall organizational performance.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes the critical role of employee involvement in improving organizational performance within the oil and gas sector in Rivers State. The findings reveal a strong positive connection between employee involvement and service delivery, illustrating how engaged employees help enhance customer satisfaction and maintain consistent service quality. Additionally, the study highlights a notable positive relationship between employee involvement and productivity, showing that participatory approaches can enhance operational efficiency and boost employee motivation. The close link between employee involvement and market share further underlines the value of leveraging employee input to drive innovation and maintain a competitive edge.

These results highlight the importance for oil and gas companies in Rivers State to incorporate employee involvement into their management strategies. By fostering a culture of inclusion and collaboration, companies can achieve long-term growth, improve service quality, and strengthen their competitive standing.

Recommendations

1. **Enhance Communication Channels:** Oil and gas companies in Rivers State should establish clear and effective communication channels to facilitate employee involvement. Regular meetings, feedback mechanisms, and open forums can ensure that employees' voices are heard and their contributions valued.

2. **Implement Training and Development Programs:** To maximize the benefits of employee involvement, organizations should invest in training programs that equip employees with the skills needed for active participation in decision-making processes. These programs can also focus on leadership and problem-solving skills.
3. **Promote Participatory Management Practices:** Management should adopt participatory approaches by involving employees in strategic planning and operational decision-making. Creating committees or task forces that include employee representatives can enhance inclusivity.
4. **Foster a Culture of Empowerment:** Organizations should empower employees by delegating authority and responsibility, thereby creating a sense of ownership and accountability. This can be achieved through initiatives such as job enrichment and employee-led projects.
5. **Measure and Reward Employee Contributions:** Implementing performance measurement systems that recognize and reward employees' contributions to service delivery, productivity, and market share can motivate further involvement. Incentives such as bonuses, promotions, and public recognition can reinforce positive behaviors.
6. **Address Structural Barriers:** Organizations should identify and address structural barriers that hinder employee involvement, such as rigid hierarchies and resistance to change. Adopting a more flexible and adaptive organizational structure can facilitate participation.
7. **Engage in Continuous Improvement:** Regularly reviewing and refining employee involvement practices based on feedback and performance outcomes can help organizations stay aligned with their strategic goals. Continuous improvement initiatives should be integrated into the organizational culture.

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