

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT TECHNIQUES AND PRODUCTIVITY OF TABLE WATER FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE.**Onunwor, Allwell Azubuike Ph.D****Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences****Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria**allwell.onunwor@iaue.edu.ng**ABSTRACT**

The study determined the relationship between employee performance enhancement techniques and productivity of Table Water Firms in Rivers State. The objective of the study was to determine the relationship between dimensions employee performance enhancement techniques in terms of training, time management, and constant feedback and measures of productivity such as cost reduction, improved product quality and productivity of Table Water Firms in Rivers State. Thus, the study was anchored on Diffusion of Innovation Theory as its theoretical foundation. The study adopted the exploratory survey research design. The population of the study consisted of forty-four (44) registered Table Water Manufacturing Firms operating in Rivers State, Nigeria. By convenient sampling technique, the sample size of the study therefore became ninety-six (96) management staff in twenty-four (24) selected Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. Test-retest method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the test of hypotheses was done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. In the study, it was found that: there is a significant relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State; there is a significant relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State; there is a significant relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. The study concluded that employee performance enhancement techniques such as training, time management and constant feedback are viable tools through which organizations such as Table Water Manufacturing Firms and others can increase their productivity. The study, amongst others, recommended that management of Table Water manufacturing Firms and other organizations should foot part or all of the bills for their staffs to go for on-the-job and off-the-job trainings, as these will impart positively on the performance and productivity of the organization.

INTRODUCTION

The value of water to human existence cannot be overemphasized. There is a saying that "Water is life", and it stands true all the time, as no human being can live without water. It therefore becomes pertinent that drinkable water gets delivered in its best quality. However, it takes a water manufacturing firm that is experiencing a boom in productivity to deliver the best quality of water in content and packaging. Such a firm will also be experience, amongst others, increased cost reduction, profitability, time minimization, and output level. But on the flipside, it appears that Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State are living in the opposite side of what a productive water manufacturing firm should. According to Anthony and Gerhard (2016), productivity is the measure of how specified resources are managed to accomplish timely objectives as stated in terms of quantity and quality. Productivity is a ratio to measure

how well an organization converts input resources (labor, materials, machines, money) into goods and services (Tokarcikova, 2013). This work defines productivity as the capacity of an organization or business to produce desired results with a minimum expenditure of energy, time, money, personnel, materiel, etc. Notwithstanding, this work measures productivity using cost reduction, improved product quality, and profitability. According to Cletus in Akpoyovwaire (2013), cost reduction is to be understood as the achievement of real and permanent reduction in the unit cost of goods manufactured or services rendered without impairing their suitability for the use intended or diminution in the quality of the product. Cost reduction aims at reducing the actual to the targets, cost reduction aims at reducing the targets themselves. In other words, the aim of cost reduction is to see whether there is any possibility in bringing about a saving in cost incurred material, labour, overheads, etc. Cost reduction is process of looking for, finding and removing unwarranted expenses from a business to increase profits without having a negative impact on product quality. Many business managers will engage in periodic cost reduction drives in order to make their company's operation more efficient and to boost profits. Howbeit, achieving cost reduction is what most Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State are currently battling with. This is a strong challenge, as it dwindles productivity.

Researcher's observation and experience has shown that most table water manufacturing firms in Rivers State have for a long time not improved on the quality of their product - poor content and packaging have dominated the market. Quality is a factor in a product that causes the product to be worth the purpose of what the product is producing (Juwita, *et al.*, 2019). Product quality denotes product's fitness for use, consistent, conformance to consumer's needs, or poor/inferior quality of raw material entering into the plant/enterprise or improper techniques/method and processes being followed in the plant (Minakshi, 2018). Improved product quality is operationally defined as the extent to which the product or service meets its prevailing specifications. The consistency of the quality of a product or service can contribute to the success of a company reviewed from customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and company profitability. The more product quality improvement is prioritized by management, the higher the services provided, the higher the customer satisfaction. All of these will unfailingly enhance productivity of the organization. Quality is a factor in a product that causes the product to be worth the purpose of what the product is producing (Juwita, *et al.*, 2019). When an organization keeps depreciating the quality of their products, productivity automatically drops as well. This issue needs to be fixed needs to be fixed in most of the table water manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

.Profitability is another challenge that these firms are facing. Profitability, according to this research work, is the extent to which a corporate organization keeps progressing in the generation of financial resources above its financial costs. This is the main target of every business organization, even if sometimes the main attention is not focused on making profit but on providing services. As they provide services, the long term goal is still to make enough profit that will cover for the period when no profit or perhaps loss was made. Profitability is a great determiner of the feasibility of a business idea. This is why it tells whether a business organization is still standing or not. No wonder Aljbiri (2016) posited that When the profitability of any business organization has been tested via its net interest margin, return on investment, and return on equity and it is found to amount to nothing serious, then such organization will be termed to be making little or no profit at all. Dealing with lack of profitability amongst most of these table water manufacturing firms in Rivers State is yet a big deal that begs for solution.

Statement of the Problem

Most Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State seem to be dropping in the quality of their products and as well as their ability to reduce cost of production. Researcher's observation and experience has also proved that timeliness in service delivery and product output are dwindling by the day. This ugly situation is currently telling negatively on their profitability to the point that some of them are surviving "one day at a time". This entire situation is a strongly signal that there is problem with the productivity status of these Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State, especially. It is in line with this situation that Nnadi and Nwonye (2020) stated that most manufacturing firms in the South-South geopolitical zone are declining in the quality of their products and services, thus causing customers to face so much confusion of which products to patronize. It appears these firms do not meet demands and expected ends as programmed within a given period of time, as it affects their growth and survival. It also appears customers do not get the desired satisfaction from the products and services that the firms offer to them. Among others, the missing link could be management's haphazard strategic capacity planning injected in the firms. More so, it could be that facilities, products/services, process, operations, humans, supply chain, and external environment forces are not strategically diagnosed to seek a better end on the side of the firms. Thus, permeating their inability to meet their strategic ends on shortterm, middle-term and long-term basis. However, the missing link is yet vague and begs for research attention.

Another issue that has triggered this research urge into the relationship between employee performance enhancement techniques and productivity of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State is the deficiency on empirical work hitting on it. To authenticate this claim, Ogohi (2018) investigated the effects of training on organizational performance in Nigeria, and the study found that employee skill, knowledge and ability gained from training has significant effect on organization productivity. Ibrahim (2016) investigated the impact of training and development on organizational performance at United Bottling Company in Mogadishu-Somalia. Research shows that there is a strong positive correlation between training and development and organization performance. In another study, Berger and Ricardo (2019) analyzed the relationships between learning orientation, organizational innovativeness, and organizational performance in hotels and lodging establishments in Santa Catarina, Brazil, where it was found that: (1) learning orientation has a positive and direct influence on organizational innovativeness; (2) organizational innovativeness does not significantly affect organizational performance; and (3) learning orientation does not have a positive relationship with organizational performance. Additionally, Harahsheh (2019) identified the effects of time management strategies on employee performance in Yarmouk Water company in Jordan. The study found that all five factors - fulfillment obligations strategy, time planning strategy, utilization of the resources, time organizing strategy and priorities status strategy of resources positively influence employee performance.

However, none of the above studies was hinged on the relationship between employee performance enhancement techniques and productivity of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. More so, none of the studies was bent on finding the relationships between the dimensions of employee performance enhancement techniques such as training, time management, and constant feedback and the measures of productivity such as cost reduction, improved product quality and profitability of Table Water manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. This implies that this aspect of research effort is seriously begging for consideration. There is need therefore to find empirical evidence on how the dimensions of employee performance enhancement techniques such as training, time management, and constant feedback interact with productivity measuring on cost reduction, improved product quality and profitability of

Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. This is the knowledge gap that needs to be closed.

Objective of Study

The objective of the study was to determine the relationship between employee performance enhancement techniques and productivity of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State. The study exclusively sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To ascertain the relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.
2. To establish the relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.
3. To determine the relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Hypotheses

Base on the research questions, the following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Concept of Employee Performance Enhancement Techniques

Employee performance enhancement techniques or performance improvement plans (PIPs) are monitored, structured, and result-based activities wherein employees who are performing below the average demanded by the organization are expected to do better under the performance improvement plans, which is when the line managers in conjunction with the Human Resource managers monitor the performance of the employees (John, 2021). Though this is an undesirable situation for the employees to find themselves in a performance improvement plan (PIP), it is a fact of life that organizations implement these PIPs for employees at all levels.

The placement of the employee in a PIP takes place after due consultation between the employee, the manager, and the HR manager. In many cases, employees are placed on watch without the PIP if their performance is deemed unsatisfactory. Often, employees are observed for two consecutive performance cycles and if their performance does not improve or worsens, then the decision to place the employee under PIP are taken. Many line managers are reluctant to go for PIPs straightway as once the employee is placed in a PIP; his or her performance is monitored not only by the line manager but also by the HR manager. This means that each deliverable that the employee completes is checked for compliance with the performance standards by both the line manager and the HR manager who though does not get involved in the technicalities and subject matter, nonetheless asks for status reports from the manager and the employee. Indeed, many organizations view the PIPs as a waste of time of all stakeholders as dramatic improvements in performance are unlikely going by the statistics. On the other

hand, organizations need a valid reason to terminate the services of employees and hence, the PIPs are designed to motivate the employee and set stern conditions for him or her so that their performance improves.

From the employee's perspective, performance enhancement techniques are like an insult as the very basis of their work is being challenged. Many employees usually take the hint when placed on performance enhancement techniques or if the manager indicates such a course of action to them and resign so that the embarrassment is saved for everybody. Indeed, it is a rather sad state of affairs if even after the PIP the employee does not ramp up on his or her performance. Of course, not all performance enhancement techniques end up this way and there are many success stories shared by managers about how employees did improve their performance after being placed in the PIP. Whatever be the outcome, the mere mention of the PIP is by itself an indication that the organization has lost trust in the employee. Further, the issue of personal bias enters the scene as well as some managers would like to settle scores with the employees whom they do not like for whatever reason and hence, they insist on PIPs for those employees. It needs to be remembered that this is not a common occurrence as there are many checks and balances in the organizational structure that are explicitly designed to prevent such an occurrence.

From the forgoing, this work defines employee performance enhancement techniques as well-thought-out work-improvement activities in which employees performing below average are placed to help them enhance their performance. Organizations most at times find it necessary to school their employees in one form of performance enhancement technique or the other. Well-structured organizations always assume each time they hire a new employee that they do not know enough to perform to their expectations. This motivates them to school their employees in areas such as trainings, time management, emotional intelligence, constant feedback, etc. In the same vein, organizations also find the need to enhance the performance of their employees while they are already working for the organization.

Dimensions of Employee Performance Enhancement Techniques

Training

In the concept of this study, training is an organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the efficient execution of the functions for which he was hired. This implies that training is an organizational vigorous attempt which has become of necessity that ease the impartation of ability and knowledge on employee required for the efficient execution of the functions for which he was hired. Training is a sort of program through which an organization implants proficiency on employees to enable them do their work better. According to Gordon (2012) and Beardwell (2014), training as one of the major functions within Human Resource Management, has for long been recognized and thus attracted great research attention by academic writers. This has yielded into a variety of definitions of training. For instance, Abiodun (2013) defined training as a systematic development of the knowledge, skills and attitude required by employees to perform adequately on a given task or job. Simply, training means acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competence as a result of the teaching of vocation or practical skills and knowledge that are related to specific useful competence. Jack (2013) sees training as an involvement of an expert working with learners to transfer to them certain areas of knowledge or skills to improve in their current job.

Robert and Associate (2014) submitted that training usually refers to some kind of organized event such as a seminar, workshop that has a specific beginning date and end date. As an example, some organizations have up to three different methods used in training different

cadres of their staff which includes: On-the-job trainings seminar and workshop. Training is not only to enhance cognitive performance, but also to result in connective disposition that is in conformity with organizational expectations. Connective disposition in training is seen as development of specific skills and attitudes needed to perform a particular job or Series of job to maximize the productivity of individual and improve organizational efficiency.

Oguntimilehin (2010) and Akintayo (2010) identified the function of training as the following: i) Training Brings about increase in productivity: when the staff are trained the productivity will increase, in Water Corporation, more water will be supplied to the communities that meant to benefit from them, ii) It will improve the quality of work: Being that new ideas have been learnt, the quality of their service they render will increase, iii) It improves knowledge, understanding and attitude: That is, the trained staff knowledge about his/her job will improve, his understanding about the job will equally improve and his attitude towards his duties will change, iv) It reduces waste, mistake, lateness, absenteeism, and turnover: after training staff may be promoted to higher position and the staff involved will be conscious of avoiding the aforementioned weak points above (v) Staff training prepares the staff towards achieving organizational efficiency, (vi) Staff training ensures the survival of organization: for instance, if staff of Water Corporation is trained the organizational stands to survive any challenge, vii) It improves manpower development, as supported in Akintayo (2010) position that when the organizational staff is trained the development of manpower will surface.

Time Management

The supply of time is very limited, while the demand for it is limitless. Time is life. To waste your time therefore is to have wasted one's life. Time management refers to the conscious effort made by a person to be effective and efficient and managing the tasks at hand (Ahmed, 2012). According to I[^]jagi and Malel (2012), organizations these days are focusing more on time management because of the fact that performance and effectiveness of the organization as a whole is dependent upon the effective utilization of time; fundamental to job performance is the issue of not using time effectively or mismanaging it. Effective time management includes keeping a timetable of the undertakings and exercises that have been esteemed essential. Keeping a date-book or day by day organizer is useful to remain focused, however self-discipline is likewise required.

Claessens (2005) defines time management as the product of fast paced world that is growing smaller in terms of distance and time taken to communicate or work; time therefore according to them is of visible importance to any and most people in the world. An imperative part of time management is effective planning for the future. Once in a while, effective time management includes investing more effort at the beginning keeping in mind the end goal to revamp the organization.

Time management, operationally, is the efficient and effective scheduling of employee's work activities in a timely manner to ensure result achievement. It will be difficult for an employee to achieve so much without them properly planning their schedules. The saying that "He who fails to plan is planning to fail" is always true. This applies so much to time management, as a person or employee who knows how to management their time will always perform more than another who does not. Time management does not mean to do most stuff rather it means to do what is deemed important. It also emphasizes to eliminate the inessentials. Better time management results quality work, quality social life and an organized personality but constant planning, review and revision is required until it become a habit (Hisrich & Peters, 2012). Time management can be learned by planning and to stay with it (Steven, 2019). An important part

of planning is prioritizing. Prioritizing means list out the tasks you have to do and classify them according to their priority, and then spend most of time to the important and urgent tasks (Tavakoli *et al.*, 2013).

Constant Feedback

Constant feedback is a Human Resource strategy that seeks to encourage and empower the exchange of feedback on a regular basis between managers and employees, as well as peer-to-peer (Tansey, 2021). A good supervisor is open to feedback and criticisms. Allow your employees to speak up about issues concerning them. Some of these issues may never have crossed your mind, so it is important to take note of what your employees have to say. It can be difficult to get an accurate picture of what is happening in a workplace. However, with the 360-degree feedback feature in Profit, performance module, performance reviews become ways to determine not only how employees feel they are doing personally, but also how their peers feel about their performance. The 360-degree feedback feature collects assessments from an employee, their peers, as well as their manager- giving a full view of every perspective. With this information, managers can get a clear sense of how certain employees are performing and interacting with others. If there's a miscommunication or an issue, this review process will reveal it.

Constant Feedback is defined as a mechanism or a process where an employee receives ongoing feedback and is guided in a systematic manner by openly discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the employee (Jackson, 2019). Do not just criticize, condemn or complain, give a constructive feedback instead (Dale, 2009). Human capital is an asset to any organization, and this asset should be taken care of. Thus, organizations need a mechanism where the employees are made aware of the things they are doing really well and also the scope of improvement to be able to perform their tasks well. The motive of feedback is for it to be continuous. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to make continuous feedback a regular practice. Feedback is a cyclic process and not a linear process. The cycle makes sure that the content is absorbed, implemented and repeated. This process is not only restricted to the corporate world but is also highly appreciated in the field of sports. Athletes are open to the continuous feedback mechanism, and why not? Each time they are on the field it is a new challenge for them, but they do remember the previous challenges they have faced and the winning tactics that they applied. Thus continuous feedback in sports is quite evident.

In the idea of this study, constant feedback represents the act of sharing feedback on a regular basis and where employers and/or supervisors receive regular feedback from employees. Regular feedback is not just about employees to managers and supervisors, but also from managers and supervisors to employees. Regular and timely feedback helps establish a two-way communication channel between the employee and their manager (Wale, 2021). It is simply feedback that is intended to help and refine, as opposed to just giving an opinion. Previously, managers would meet their employees once a year for their performance reviews.

Concept of Productivity

Productivity is an overall measure of the ability to produce a good or service. More specifically, productivity is the measure of how specified resources are managed to accomplish timely objectives as stated in terms of quantity and quality (Anthony & Gerhard, 2016). Productivity may also be defined as an index that measures output (goods and services) relative to the input (labor, materials, energy, etc., used to produce the output). As such, it can be expressed as: $\text{productivity} = \text{output}/\text{input}$. Hence, there are two major ways to increase productivity: increase

the numerator (output) or decrease the denominator (input). Of course, a similar effect would be seen if both input, and output increased, but output increased faster than input; or if input and output decreased, but input decreased faster than output (Paul, 2016; Parker et al., 2013; Haenisch, 2012). Rohan and Madhumita (2012) adopt a different view and see productivity as the log of net sales over total employees.

Productivity is a ratio to measure how well an organization converts input resources (labor, materials, machines, money) into goods and services (Tokarcikova, 2013). Dorgan in Paul (2016) defines productivity as "the increased functional and organizational performance, including quality", and Rolloos in Paul (2016) claims that "productivity is that which people can produce with the least effort". Nda and Fard (2013) describe employee productivity as the measure of output per unit of input economically.

Conversely, Table Water Firms have many options for use of this formula, labor productivity, machine productivity, capital productivity, energy productivity, and so on. A productivity ratio may be computed for a single operation, a department, a facility, an organization, or even an entire country. Productivity is an objective concept. As an objective concept it can be measured, ideally against a universal standard. As such, organizations can monitor productivity for strategic reasons such as corporate planning, organization improvement, or comparison to competitors. It can also be used for tactical reasons such as project control or controlling performance to budget (Anthony & Gerhard, 2016).

Science also comes into play in the concept of productivity, and hence productivity can be logically defined and empirically observed. It can also be measured in quantitative terms, which qualifies it as a variable. Therefore, it can be defined and measured in absolute or relative terms. However, an absolute definition of productivity is not very useful; it is much more useful as a concept dealing with relative productivity or as a productivity factor. Productivity is useful as a relative measure of actual output of production compared to the actual input of resources, measured across time or against common entities. As output increases for a level of input, or as the amount of input decreases for a constant level of output, an increase in productivity occurs (Paul, 2016; Shaidi, 2013).

Measures of Productivity Cost Reduction

Before exploring the cost reduction, cost is referred to as the amount incurred for the production of goods and services. Resources must be sacrificed for any organization to achieve its objectives. To an accountant, cost is defined as a resource forgone to achieve a specific goal. This can be expressed as the monetary amount which must be paid to acquire goods and services. ACCA (2012) defines cost as the amount of expenditure incurred on, or attribute to a specific thing or activity cost of anything ordinarily is money spent to acquire those things. Thus, cost reduction in this study refers to as the possible ways in which employees of a firm efficiently work to curtail the expenses of its organization. This is one of the fundamental instruments in maximizing productivity. Cost reduction aims at reducing the actual to the targets, cost reduction aims at reducing the targets themselves. In other words, the aim of cost reduction is to see whether there is any possibility in bringing about a saving in cost incurred material, labour, overheads, etc. According to the Terminology of Cost Accountancy of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants London, Cost reduction is to be understood as the success of real and unchanging reduction in the unit costs of goods manufactured without impairing their suitability for the use intended. Thus, the term cost reduction denotes real or genuine saving in production, administration, selling and sharing costs resulting to the elimination of wasteful

and inessential elements from the design of the product and from the techniques and practices carried out in connection therewith. The necessity for cost reduction arises when the profit margin has to be increased without (Lawal et al., 2010).

Conceptually, cost reduction is an organizational effort made to minimize the cost of production in order to boost profitability. Cost reduction is a planned positive approach to reduce expenditure. It is a corrective function by continuous process of analysis of costs, functions, etc. for further economy in application of factors of production. An increase in the sales turnover i.e. for the same volume of sales, the cost should be reduced. According to Business Dictionary "The process of looking for, finding and removing unwarranted expenses from a business to increase profits without having a negative impact on product quality. Many business managers will engage in periodic cost reduction drives in order to make their company's operation more efficient and to boost profits. Akpoyovwaire (2013) averred that cost reduction increases competitive strength to the industry stimulates more exports. Thus, profit is increased by reducing the costs, it can be Utilised for expansion of the organisation which will create more employment and overall industrial prosperity. Cost reduction is essential of a product has to withstand its global market. Brand loyalty is fading away fast. Nowadays consumers have become price and quality conscious. Hence cost reduction is the key for global competitiveness (Aroosiya in Akpoyovwaire, 2013).

Improved Product Quality

Kotler and Armstrong (2012) described product as anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. They assumed that product quality is the characteristic of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer needs. Quality is a complex and multifaceted concept. In its broadest sense, product quality is the ability of a product to meet or exceed customer's expectations (Waters & Waters, 2018). The most common operational definition posits quality as the customer's perception of product and service excellence. In today's competitive environment, quality is the key to an organization's success and survival. Intense global competition has highlighted the increasing importance of quality. Superior quality no longer differentiates competitors; instead, it validates the worthiness of a company to compete (Ling & Shaheen, 2018).

Quality is the performance of the product as per the commitment made by the producer to the consumer. Such commitment may be explicit or implicit i.e. in terms of written contract or in terms to the quality management expectation of the average consumer of the product. The performance of the product is concerned with the ultimate function and service which the product must provide to the final; consumer. A product is known as a quality product only when it satisfies various criteria for its functioning for the consumer. In addition to the physical criteria, there is also a service and time factor to quality. The same quality of physical performance should be available over a reasonable length of time. Hence time is also unnecessary aspect of quality (Minakshi, 2018). Product quality is the life- support of quality control and it ensures that consumers are able to buy high quality products or services with long-lasting reliability. Product quality attains improved processes that produce a safe uniform output of products. Product quality denotes product's fitness for use, consistent, conformance to consumer's needs, or poor/inferior quality of raw material entering into the plant/enterprise or improper techniques/method and processes being followed in the plant (Minakshi, 2018).

Improved product quality is operationally defined as the extent to which the product or service meets its prevailing specifications. The consistency of the quality of a product or service can

contribute to the success of a company reviewed from customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and company profitability. The more product quality improvement is prioritized by management, the higher the services provided, the higher the customer satisfaction. When customer satisfaction is higher, it can generate profit for the business entity.

Profitability

By definition, profit is the excess of revenues over outlays-and expenses in a business enterprise over a given period of time, usually an accounting* period or a year (Baer & Sonnentag, 2015). It is the economic value (money) accrued to a business as a return on investment. Conventionally, it is virtually quantified in monetary terms. Richard et al. (2017) illustrated that when \$50 is invested in a business and after transactional and commercial activities are carried out, \$80 :ime back in return, it is presumed that, profit has been attained which is \$30 Profit = Return - Investment). One of the most common indices, for example, is from on assets (Khandekar & Sharma, 2016). Return on assets is the annual profit :: net income divided by the average assets over the year. Thus, profitability as a -easure of organizational performance is a measure of the capacity or level of higher financial gains that an organization makes from its business transaction. This implies the height of financial gains organizations attain over a certain period of time (mostly a year) from all their business transactions. Profitability is an indisputable measure of corporate performance as far as organizations are concerned because their primary aim is to maximize profit. Thus, their ability to generate more revenue over and above expenses (costs) can be, used to determine their performance.

Many researchers utilize traditional accounting measures of profit. Roughly, return on assets is the annual profit or net income divided by the average assets over the year. More precisely, to compute the numerator, researchers usually subtract the interest expense and the interest tax savings from the annual profit. As Baer and Sonnentag (2015) highlighted, return on assets is a measure of operating efficiency, reflecting the long term financial strength of organizations. An organization that is having liquidity issue or recording losses cannot be said to be performing very well. Although a ubiquitous measure, return on assets is not always an optimal measure. For example, return on assets should not be used to compare organizations in different industries. The peculiarities of any industry will bias this index. Because of the massive reserves in the insurance and banking industries, for example, return on assets will tend to underestimate the profitability of these organizations. Richard et al. (2017) evaluated that the management of working capital is essential as it has a direct impact on profitability as well on liquidity of the firm.

Further, profit and profitability are two different terms (Nimalathan, 2017). Profit means an absolute measure of earning capacity, while profitability is relative measure of earning capacity. Profit is also defined by Nimalathan (2017) as excess of return over outlay while profitability is defined¹ as the ability of given investment to earn a return from its use. The word profitability is composed of two words profit and ability. The word profit has already been defined but the meaning of profit differs according to the use and purpose of the enterprise to earn the profits. Profitability is the primary measure of the overall success of an enterprise (Velampy & Nimalathan, 2016). The analysis of profitability ratios is important for the shareholders, creditors, prospective investors, bankers and government alike. Velampy and Nimalathan (2016) pointed out that sales are positively associated with profitability ratios except return on investment, and numbers of depositors are negatively correlated with the profitability ratios except return equity, likewise number of advances to the return on investment, and return on average assets. Sexton and Kasarda (2018) found that firm profitability was correlated with

sustainable growth, while Chandler and Jensen (2014) found that sales growth and profitability were not correlated.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on Diffusion of Innovation Theory by Roger in 1962.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Diffusion of Innovation Theory was propounded to explain how people accept new technologies and innovative skills set as cited in Amadi-George (2018). The theory assumes that:

1. In a social system, there will always be a disparity in the level and time at which individuals within a given social system adopt-, new ideas, techniques, and technology.
2. Individuals and arms of institutions that adopt innovations early will naturally outperform late adopters and the laggards (Rogers cited in Amadi-George, 2018).

The implication of this theory is that as some Table Water Manufacturing Firms find the need for improvement by enhancing the performance techniques of their employees through training, time management and constant feedback, there will obviously be a discrepancy on the mode of adoption - some will quickly adopt while others will be reluctant about it. The reluctant ones (the doubting Thomases) wants to first of all see how it benefits the early adopters before the make the decision whether to toll the same line or not. The fact is that management of Table Water Manufacturing Firms who fail to adopt employee performance enhancement techniques (e.g through training, time management, constant feedback, etc.) early enough are likely going to experience untold difficulties, slow operations, high level inefficiency, and negative stress arising majorly from guests' complaints (Odu, 2018) while those who embrace and adopt these enhancement techniques on time enjoy speed, efficiency and high level effectiveness. This means that there will be a significant gap in the productivity of early and late adopters.

Empirical Review

Ogohi (2018) investigated the effects of training on organizational performance in Nigeria. The research attempts to find out the impact which training has employee performance bearing in mind that the aggregate of individual performance will culminate to organizational performance. The study considered the microfinance bank sub-sector from which three banks were selected. Data was collected from 304 respondents who were drawn using Taro Yamane sample size determination technique through structured questionnaire. The data collected was subjected to both descriptive and inferential techniques were used to test formulated hypotheses. The study showed that employee skill, knowledge and ability gained from training has significant effect on organization productivity. Further findings reveal that training has effect on employee commitment to the organization which helps to improve the quality of the organizational products.

Ibrahim (2016) investigated the impact of training and development on organizational performance at United Bottling Company in Mogadishu-Somalia. Accordingly, data was collected using a questionnaire. The study was limited to employees of UBC. The data was collected from 63 respondents subsequently. The results of the survey showed that working conditions and lack of resources affected staff training and development. Research shows that there is a strong, positive correlation between training and development and organization performance.

Berger and Ricardo (2019) analyzed the relationships between learning orientation, organizational innovativeness, and organizational performance in hotels and lodging establishments in Santa Catarina, Brazil. The methodological procedures employed to achieve

this objective are grounded in the survey method and the study is of a descriptive nature. Structural equations modeling techniques were used to assess relationships between constructs and the final sample comprised 162 managers of hotels and lodging establishments in Santa Catarina. The main findings are as follows: (1) learning orientation has a positive and direct influence on organizational innovativeness; (2) organizational innovativeness does not significantly affect organizational performance; and (3) learning orientation does not have a positive relationship with organizational performance. It is therefore concluded that management of hotels and lodging establishments should take a proactive approach to their human resources, to raise employee awareness about actions that improve organizational learning and innovativeness, so they can have a positive impact on organizational performance. Ekundayo (2015) assessed the impact of training and development on performance and productivity in selected oil service companies in Port Harcourt. The paper examines the training and development practices of selected oil service companies in Port Harcourt to determine their impact on workers' productivity. As can be seen from the study, most organizations are random and occasionally meet their training needs, while others are building their training needs, then designing training activities reasonably and finally evaluating the training outcomes. The paper concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between training and development and worker productivity. There is also a significant positive correlation between training and development and employee safety.

Harahsheh (2019) identified the effects of time management strategies on employee performance in Yarmouk Water Company in Jordan. The study population consisted of 66 directors and heads of departments working for Yarmouk Water Company in Jordan. The study sends a designed questionnaire in Likert scale to all the population, manages to receive 62 and by excluding incomplete questionnaires 57 questionnaires are analyzed representing approximately 86% of the survey. Using some statistical tests, the study indicates that all five factors; namely fulfillment obligations strategy, time planning strategy, utilization of the resources, time organizing strategy and priorities status strategy of resources positively influence on employee performance. There is also a positive attitude from study sample towards time management strategies. As recommendation, the employees must distinguish between important and unimportant tasks, the employees should determine the goals before starting the work, the managers must delegate some tasks to subordinates, and the employees pay attention to complete their work on time, The researcher recommends conducting further studies about the impact of time management strategy on employees' performance efficiency from the view of customers perspective.

Ogohi and Santeli (2020) assessed effective time management on organizational performance of Northern Nigeria Noodle Company Ltd.- Survey Research design was adopted for the study. The main objective of the study is to examine the effects of time management on employees' performance. The specific objectives' are to: Determine the impact of effective time management on employee's performance in NNNC and identify the factors that influence effective time management on employee's performance in NNNC. This research therefore covers one selected manufacturing company in Kaduna namely Northern Nigeria Noodle Company Ltd. (NNNC). Secondary data were obtained through books, journals, and internet. Empirical works of other scholars were consulted. A sample size of 102 was obtained from the population of 137 at 5% error tolerance and 95% degree of freedom using Yamane's statistical formula 102(100%) of the questionnaires distributed 90(88.2%) were returned and 12(11.8%) were not returned. The findings of the study reveal that there is a positive relationship between the organizational performance and effective time management. Based on the findings, it is

recommended that an increase in proper time management will bring about a corresponding increase in the organization performance, all things been equal and in order to create a time-conscious organization that one will have to become more time efficient, the organization itself must streamlines its time management process.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted the exploratory survey research design. This research design was deemed suitable and most appropriate for the study because of two reasons: (i) the study was conducted in the Construction Companies at the same time; (ii) it involved the test of hypotheses which is exploratory in nature.

Research Population

The population of the study consisted of forty-four (44) registered Table Water Manufacturing Firms operating in Rivers State, Nigeria. They are listed overleaf:

Table 1: Study Population

S/N Table Water Manufacturing Firm

1. CWAY Food And Beverages Company Ltd. 1 Shell Location Road, KM 17, Aba Express Road, Port Harcourt, Rivers Nigeria.
2. La Sien Bottling Company. 75c Ordinance Road, Industrial Layout, Trans-Amadi, Port Harcourt.
- 2 Binomak Nigeria Limited. Rumugunuma New Layout, Eneka, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- 3 Classic Royal Table Water. 1 Elohor Drive off Danjuma Street, Trans-Amadi Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria. Cfe-
- 4 Delight Table Water, Ahoada-Port Harcourt Road, Ahoada, Rivers State.
- 5 Iceland Table Water. 4 Ihunwo Street, Woji town Port Harcourt, Rivers Nigeria.
- 6 Junac Table Water. 150A East West Road, Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria.
- 7 Rufina Premium Table Water. Akpa Rumoudor, opp Community Secondary School, Ogbogoro Road, Port harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria.
- 8 Gempek Table Water, 14 Chief Dainel Street, Rumugbo 500272, Port Harcourt.
- 9 Beini Table Water. Plot 76 ogunka eruwa road, Rumu_Oparala 500102, Port Harcourt.
- 10 Granpa Table Water Factory HQ. 78 Aggrey Rd, Port Harcourt Port Harcourt
- 11 Rabs Table Water, R3C8+X6M, Emmanuel Eke St, Trans Amadi Port Harcourt
- 12 Neat Zim Table Water, 16 E - W Rd, 500102, Rumuekini
- 13 Ozone table water, 19 Kesiolu Sti, Rumuigbo 500272, Port Harcourt
- 14 De Revive Table Water, KM 10, Port Harcourt International Airport Road, 500001, Port Harcourt.
- 15 Delight Table Water, 74 Rumuosi Rd, 500102, Port Harcourt
- 16 CELIK Premium Table Water, CELIK Oil filling station, Atali P.H, Port Harcourt.
- 17 Czasty water, Egelege St, Elechi 500101, Port Harcourt
- 18 Tamadec Table Water, Edmund Close, off Elizabeth Alfred road, off. Okuru road, Port Harcourt.
- 19 P.A TABLE WATER COMPANY, KM 3 Stadium Rd, Rumuola 500102.

- 20 TiZ Premium Drinking Water, 8 Woke Avenue Along, Haruk Estate Link Road, Rumuigbo, Port Harcourt
- 21 Multi Drops Water, 21 Jesus Avenue, 512101, Igwuruta
- 22 Fons Vitae Alkaline Table Water Company, R352+PHP, Azubie Street, Trans Amadi 500101, Port Harcourt
- 23 Almond Table Water, WWXP+HFX, 511101, Port Harcourt.
- 24 Sylcharis Table Water, 20 FOURTH DRIVE, Ogbatai Road, Woji 500001, Port Harcourt
- 25 Ripples Potable Water, Plot 127 Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout Rd, opposite Halliburton, Port Harcourt
- 26 Nene Table Water Company, 102D Azikiwe St, Woji 500101, Port Harcourt.
- 27 Nava Table Water, No 11 Omututua new layout, imuogu, 500001, Port Harcourt
- 28 Teekay Table Water, 128 Abuloma Rd, Rivers 500101, Port Harcourt.
- 29 360 Optimal Table Water Factory, 1 Wakoma St, Diobu 500101 Port Harcourt
- 30 Maas Water plant, First Mechanic, East-West Rd, 500102, Alakahia
- 31 Sunville Premium Table Water, R2QJ+HJX, Owuru Cl, Rumuola 500102, Port Harcourt.
- 32 Lotten. B. Table water, Elekahia Housing Estate, 14B 1st Avenue, opposite Amy Travels ltd, Rumuola 500101, Port Harcourt
- 33 Joshua waters, 21 Nkpolu Road, Rumugbo 500272, Port Harcourt
- 34 Uniport Table Water Company, WW4C+VQV, 500102, Aluu
- 35 Zeke Table Water, zeke street umualipo farm road, 512101, Igbo- Ekhe
- 36 Karon Table Water, V3FH+35J, 500102, Port Harcourt.
- 37 Ibiso Water, QXRR+PRW, Woji 500101, Port Harcourt.
- 38 Vidharp Table Water, No 5 iwu street, 452115, Oyigbo.
- 39 La Voltic Table Water, #1 shell manifold rukpokwu pipeline, Airport Rd, Rukpokwu 234084, Port Harcourt. ,
- 40 Christine Table Water, Plot 1 Jehovah witness road off Umuchi Road, 450121, Aba.
- 41 TBK Production Nigeria Limited, Plot 2, Christ The King Close, Okilton Road, Off Ada-George Road, opposite Toronto Bakery, 500102, Port Harcourt
43. Kitab Table Water, WXXW+993, 511101, Igwuruta
44. Joshco Table Water, 26C6+49R, Unnamed Road, 512102, Egbelu Source: Rivers State Yellow Page

Instrumentation and Measurement

Structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for the collection of primary data. The instrument was titled "Employee Performance Enhancement Techniques Questionnaire Index (EPETQI). The questionnaire design was prepared in four (4) point rating scale format of likert with the following response options: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), and Low Extent (LE). The questionnaire was structured by the researcher with a letter of introduction describing the purpose of the questionnaire.

Validity of Instrument

To establish the validity of the instrument, copies of the questionnaire were submitted to the experts in test and measurement. Their comments and adjustments were used to validate the final copy of the instrument that was administered.

Reliability of Instrument

Reliability of instrument refers to consistency of the measuring instrument. Test- retest method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The response obtained from the respondents on the two occasions was correlated using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient which yielded a coefficient of 0.81. This indicates an acceptable level of reliability.

Administration of Instrument

A total of ninety-six (96) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the targeted respondents. However, the researcher was able to retrieve 90 copies of the distributed questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the test of hypotheses was done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The formula is stated overleaf:

$$r = \frac{n\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{[n\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2] [n\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where;

n = number of pairs of data

x = independent variable

y = dependent variable

$\sum xy$ = sum of the products of independent and dependent variable

$\sum x$ = sum of independent variable

$\sum y$ = sum of dependent variable

Σ = Summation

Decision Rule: The null hypothesis is accepted when the calculated r value is greater than the r critical value obtained, otherwise, it is rejected

Tests of Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Table 1: Relationship between Training and Cost Reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms

S/N	X	Y	XY	X ²	Y ²
1.	17	15	255	289	225
2.	14	12	168	196	144
3.	10	8	80	100	64
4.	8	6	48	64	36
5.	14	13	182	196	169
6.	12	9	108	144	81
7.	11	9	99	121	81
8.	10	9	90	100	81
9.	20	18	360	400	324
10.	15	12	180	225	144
11.	9	7	63	81	49

12.	5	4	20	25	16
13	18	16	288	324	256
14	13	11	143	169	121
15	10	9	90	100	81
16	7	6	42	49	36
<hr/>					
$\Sigma x=193 \quad \Sigma Y=164 \quad \Sigma XY=2216 \quad \Sigma X^2=2583 \quad \Sigma Y^2= 1908$					

Source: Survey 2024.

$$r = \frac{n\Sigma xy - \Sigma x\Sigma y}{\sqrt{[n\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2] [n\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]}} = \frac{16 \times 2216 - 193 \times 164}{\sqrt{(16 \times 2583 - (193)^2)(16 \times 1908)}}$$

$$r = \frac{35456 - 31652}{\sqrt{(41328 - 37249)(30528 - 26896)}}$$

$$\frac{3804}{\sqrt{(4079)(3632)}} = \frac{3804}{\sqrt{4079 \times 3632}}$$

$$\frac{3804}{\sqrt{14814928}} = \frac{3804}{\sqrt{3849.0164}} = 0.9883$$

$\therefore r = 0.9883$

Table 1 shows that the calculated r value is 0.9883. Since the calculated r value of 0.9883 is greater than the critical r value 0.441, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

H02: There is no significant relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Table 2: Relationship between Time Management and Improved Product Quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms

S/N	X	Y	XY	X ²	Y ²
1.	19	15	285	361	225
2.	13	11	143	169	121
3.	10	9	90	100	81
4.	7	6	42	49	36
5.	20	17	340	400	289
6.	13	10	130	169	100
7.	9	7	63	81	49
8.	8	6	48	64	36
9.	19	15	285	361	225
10.	13	11	143	169	121
11.	10	9	90	100	81
12.	7	6	42	49	36
13	18	14	252	324	196

14	13	11	143	169	121
15	10	9	90	100	81
16	8	7	56	64	49
<hr/>					
$\Sigma X=197$		$\Sigma Y=163$		$\Sigma XY=2242$	
				$\Sigma X^2=2729$	
				$\Sigma Y^2=1847$	

Source: Survey 2024.

$$r = \frac{n\Sigma xy - \Sigma x\Sigma y}{\sqrt{[n\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2] [n\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]}} = \frac{16 \times 2242 - 197 \times 163}{\sqrt{((16 \times 2729) - (197)^2)(16 \times 1847)}}$$

$$r = \frac{35872 - 32111}{\sqrt{(43664 - 38809)(29552 - 26569)}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{3761}{(4855)(2983)}} = \frac{3761}{4855 \times 2983}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{3761}{14482465}} = \sqrt{\frac{3804}{3805.5833}} = 0.9882$$

$\therefore r = 0.9882$

Table 2 shows that the calculated r value is 0.9882. Since the calculated r value of 0.9882 is greater than the critical r value 0.441, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

H03: There is no significant relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Table 3: Relationship between Constant Feedback and Profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms

S/N	X	Y	XY	X ²	Y ²
1.	18	14	252	324	196
2.	13	11	143	169	121
3.	10	9	90	100	81
4.	8	7	56	64	49
5.	25	23	575	625	529
6.	13	10	130	169	100
7.	7	5	35	49	25
8.	4	3	12	16	9
9.	17	16	272	289	256
10.	13	10	130	169	100
11.	10	9	90	100	81
12.	8	7	56	64	49
13.	20	16	320	400	256
14.	13	11	143	169	121
15.	10	7	70	100	49
16.	8	5	40	64	25

$$\Sigma X=197 \quad \Sigma Y=163 \quad \Sigma XY=2414 \quad \Sigma X^2=2871 \quad \Sigma Y^2=2047$$

Source: Survey 2024.

$$r = \frac{n\Sigma xy - \Sigma x \Sigma y}{\sqrt{[n\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2] [n\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]}} = \frac{16 \times 2242 - 197 \times 163}{\sqrt{((16 \times 2871 - (197)^2)(16 \times 2047 - (163)^2))}}$$

$$r = \frac{35872 - 32111}{\sqrt{(45936 - 38809) (32752 - 26569)}}$$

$$\frac{6513}{\sqrt{(7127 \times 6183)}} = \frac{6513}{\sqrt{7127 \times 6183}}$$

$$\frac{6513}{\sqrt{44066241}} = \frac{6513}{\sqrt{6638.2408}} = 0.9811$$

$\therefore r = 0.9811$

Table 3 shows that the calculated r value is 0.9811. Since the calculated r value of 0.9811 is greater than the critical r value 0.441, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of data, the following findings were made:

1. There is a significant relationship between training and cost reduction of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.
2. There is a significant relationship between time management and improved product quality of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.
3. There is a significant relationship between constant feedback and profitability of Table Water Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State.

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this work so far, the study therefore concluded that employee performance enhancement techniques such as training, time management and constant feedback are viable tools through which organizations such as Table Water Manufacturing Firms and others can increase their productivity. This farther means that organizations can enhance cost reduction, improved product quality and profit by the application of employee performance enhancement techniques. This in turn implies that organizations going through poor cost reduction, low product quality and profitability can work on them by taking their employees through training, time management and constant feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Management of Table Water manufacturing Firms and other organizations should foot part or all of the bills for their staffs to go for on-the-job and off-the-job trainings, as these will impart positively on the performance and productivity of the organization.
2. Management of Table Water Manufacturing Firms should ensure that they school their employees on proper time management, in order to ensure that employees devote

quality time to their work such that will bring about improvement in quality of their products.

3. Table Water Manufacturing Firms and sister organizations should keep a clear channel for constant feedback that will improve on their productivity through profitability and other concerned variables.

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