

## EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE ON AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE IN THE INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING, IBADAN, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

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*This study was conducted to determine the effect of managerial competence on employees' performance in the Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T), Ibadan, Nigeria. Data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire administered on seventy three (73) respondents through simple random sampling techniques. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Results revealed that the mean age of respondents in the study area was 38 years and majority (63.0%) were males. Also majority (82.2%) of the employees' perceived that the managerial competence is high in the studied organization. Reason adduced for this was high accountability ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ) and good example on the side of the management ( $\bar{x} = 4.04$ ). Major performance indicators were: ability to take on new tasks ( $\bar{x} = 4.39$ ) and make a difference on their colleagues ( $\bar{x} = 4.33$ ). The results also shows that level of managerial competence with coefficient value of (0.113), age (0.639), year of experience (1.24) and marital status were variable influencing employee's job performance. The study concluded that employees' are accountable, open and have ability to take new task.*

**Keywords:** *Managerial competence, job performance, agricultural employees and research institute*

### INTRODUCTION

Many studies have tried to identify and establish competencies which are required for better performance among the employees (Clardy, 2008). Some keys factors that will determine extent of successes and satisfactory completion of assignments in an organization have been identified. These according to Kavita, (2014) include inherent ability, personality, experience, personnel management, leadership, team working ability. Many organizations have adopted a competency-based approach to deal with the dynamic nature of business and address a variety of factors, including the need to change and adapt to a changing business environment (Boyatzis, 2008). The need for greater empowerment of employees, and the desire for more engagement in work and organization will go a long way for better job performance among the employees in a particular setting (Pereira and Gomes, 2012).

Employee's activities in their work place could be more interesting and engaging, if manager's skill were developed for better job performance. The implication is that for organization to thrive in a dynamic environment there is need for competent manager (Wang *et al.*, 2011). It therefore became expedients for business organization to identify, develop and retain talented employees who will make the vision of the organization come to reality (Abiona, 2015). Every successful and effective manager possesses several competencies that enable them to perform efficiently and effectively at different managerial levels. Competency essentially is a combination of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness. In other word is a set of knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes that a person needs acquired to be effective in a wide range of positions and various types of organizations (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2005).

Hence for an organization to ensure survival and sustain their growth, constant observation and assessment of behaviours that will make managers effective in their job and also perform optimally must be ensured (Cardona and Garcia, 2005). The study focused specifically on effect of managerial competence on employee's job performance in Agricultural Research Institute in Southwest, Nigeria. The objectives were to: ascertain the personal characteristics of the respondents, determine the employees' perception of managerial competence, determine the level of employees' performance, and identify the challenges faced by employee in performing their job in the study area.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Study area

The study was conducted in Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T) Ibadan, Oyo State, Southwest, Nigeria. Institute of Agricultural Research and Training was established in 1956 and was fully integrated in 1973. In 1975, the Institute was given a national mandate and was later funded by the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology and then the Federal Ministry of Agriculture. The Institute's mandate was to conducts research on various cereals and legumes such as maize, jute, kenaf and sisal hemp, soil and also on various fertilizers for farming systems.

#### Data collection and analyses

The population of this study comprised agricultural employees in the Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T) Ibadan. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select 74 respondents out of seven hundred and ten employees in the study area. Data were obtained using a questionnaire structured into sections to generate information about personal characteristics, constraints, managerial competence, and its effect on employee's job performance. These were measured using 5 points Likert scale including strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree rated 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Regression analysis was used to determine effect of managerial competence on employee's job performance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Personal characteristics of respondents

Table 1 reveals the mean age of respondents in the study area was 35 years which implied that the respondents in the study area were vibrant, active and energetic people. This result agrees with the findings of Isaac (2011) who reported that agricultural employees in the South Western part of Nigeria were in the age range of 30-40 years and also further supported by Oso (2010) who reported that most (55.0%) of the researchers in Oyo State were in the age range of 31 - 40 years. Also, majority (63.0%) of the respondents were male while 37.0% were female indicating that male staff was more than the female staff in the study area. This result agrees with the findings of Julie (2013) who reported that men are more employed than women in almost every organization especially agricultural research institutes. Finding showed that majority (76.7%) of the respondents were Christians while 23.3% were Muslims. This results is supported by the report of Ajayi, (2003) which was of the opinion that Christianity is the major religion practice in south western part of Nigeria.

More so, the results discovered that most (76.7%) of the respondents were married which agrees with the finding of Banmeke and Oose (2012) who opined that there was more married researcher in research institutes especially in the south west of Nigeria.

Table1: Socio economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area

Variables	Frequency	Percentages	Mean
Sex			
Male	46	63.0	
Female	27	37.0	
Age(Years)			
≤30	15	20.5	
31-35	9	12.5	35years
36-40	14	19	
>40	28	38.4	
Marital Status			
Single	15	20.5	
Married	58	79.4	
Religion			
Christianity	56	76.7	
Islam	17	23.3	
Years of experience			
≤5years	34	46.6	
6-10years	12	16.4	10years
11-15years	4	5.5	
>15years	21	28.8	
Income(Naira)			
<30,000-49,000	35	47.9	
50,000-69,000	13	17.8	₦22,740.00
70,000-89,000	4	5.5	
90,000-110,000	12	16.4	
>120,000	9	12.3	

### Levels of managerial competence

The perception of employees' on managerial competence was explored. Based on this most managerial competence indicators identified were: that employees were held accountable for the work they do ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ), openness to their supervisor when they encounter problem relating to their job ( $\bar{x} = 4.16$ ) and they are assured of being helped ( $\bar{x} = 4.09$ ). Also, superiors laid pattern of good example for their subordinate ( $\bar{x} = 4.04$ ). This results is in line with the finding of Boyatzis, (2008) who said that superior must clamor for need to change and adapt to a changing business environment through good examples. It is worthy to note that employees were well informed on organization issues ( $\bar{x} = 4.04$ ) and the objective of their job are well communicated ( $\bar{x} = 4.03$ ). This results is supported by Kavita, (2014) who was of the opinion that working ability and customer focus as key competencies

that would define and lead the way to successful completion of assignments by managers. Other notable indicators identified were employees spirit of team work ( $\bar{x} = 4.03$ ) and a good channel for adequate feedback ( $\bar{x} = 4.01$ ), job expectation is well spelt out among the employees ( $\bar{x} = 4.00$ ), fairness and respect are shown during interaction ( $\bar{x} = 3.99$ ). Conflict and labor issues are given prompt attention ( $\bar{x} = 3.90$ ). This results agrees with the finding of (Woodruffe, 1993) who assert that proactive organization gives prompt attention to any issues that can affect their image. In addition, this result implied that majority (82.2%) of the employees' perceived that the managerial competence is high while 17.8% perceived that the managerial competence in the studied organization is low.

Table 2: Distribution of employees' perception of managerial competence

Managerial competence statements	Mean	SD
My manager holds me accountable for the work that I do	4.19	0.88
I can go to my supervisor if I have a problem relating to my job	4.16	0.85
My manager is available to me when I have question or need help	4.10	0.84
My manager set a good example	4.04	0.89
My supervisor communicate clear objectives for the institution to achieve	4.02	0.93
Managers create a sense of teamwork and company spirit	4.02	0.76
My manager provides me with adequate feedback	4.01	0.82
I know what is expected of me in my job	4.00	0.83
My managers show fairness and respect in their interactions with employees	3.99	0.96
My supervisor is willing to listen to my ideas	3.96	1.09
I feel managers value honest and candid feed back	3.97	1.04
My manager helps me to get ahead at my job	3.91	0.98
The relationship between management and employees are good	3.96	0.87
I receive enough recognition for work that I do	3.94	0.98
The managers involve us in decision affecting our work	3.58	1.24
My manager implement ideas and suggestions	3.94	0.91
I am recognized when I do a good job	3.94	1.07
I generally feel informed about changes that affect me within the company	3.94	0.83
I can see the link between my work and objectives	3.90	1.00
Managers empowers employees to make effective decisions	3.82	1.10
I can go to my manager if I have a problem	3.89	0.84
My manager encourages initiative	3.89	0.91
Management is able to adjust rapidly to new situations	3.80	1.04
If I do a good job I have better chance of getting ahead	3.79	1.04
Direction from management is clear and unambiguous	3.72	0.85
My supervisor effectively resolves employee problems and labour issues	3.90	0.93
Conflicts are resolved in a positive and constructive manner	3.86	0.82
My supervisor keeps me informed about important issues	3.82	1.00
My managers work to obtain win-win resolution	3.01	1.00

Source: Field survey, 2016

### Level of employees' job performance

The results in Table 3 present employee's job performance in the study area. Major employee's job performances identified were ability to take on new tasks ( $\bar{x} = 4.39$ ). This results is supported by Werner (2000) who said that taking up new task or activities is a critical catalyst for employee's performance. Also, employees make a difference on others ( $\bar{x} = 4.33$ ). Finding also revealed that employees helped co-workers when the need arises ( $\bar{x} = 4.27$ ) and encouraged them to put in their best ( $\bar{x} = 4.21$ ). In addition, employees spent productive time on assigned tasks ( $\bar{x} = 4.16$ ). This result is in line with the assertion of Armstrong (2006) who opine that managers and those whom they manage act as partners within a framework that sets out how they can best work together to achieve the required results. Personal growth through updating of skills and learning different jobs ( $\bar{x} = 4.15$ ) better quality of service at maximum level ( $\bar{x} = 4.12$ ) were also identified. These results corroborate the finding of Motowidlo *et al.* (1997) who asserted that task performance consists of activities that transform materials into the goods and services produced by the organization or to allow for efficient functioning of the organization. This result implies that majority (87.7%) of the employees had high level of job performance while few (12.3%) had low level of job performance as indicated in Fig. 1.

### Determinants of managerial competency and employee's job performance

The result of regression in Table 5 showed that age of the employees had coefficient of 0.042 and significant at 5% level of probability. The implication of this result is in line with the assertion of Abiona *et al.*, (2014) who assert that the lesser the age of workforce in organization the better the performance. Years of experience was found to have a positive coefficient of 0.003 and significant at 5% level of probability. This result also corroborates the assertion of Chiliya and Roberts-Lombard (2012) that experience has a prominent role to play in any manager's life. Managerial competence had a positive coefficient of 0.002 with employee's job performance

and was statically significant at 5% level of probability. Competency of the superior officers can be a proxy for job performance thus it is expected that management must be able to handle technical issues relating to staff in other to increase employee's performance and thus reduce indulgency among workers. This result is in line with Lyles *et al.* (2004) and Hormiga *et al.* (2011) who evaluated the impact of managerial competencies as a measured by which education of the entrepreneurs-specific human capital contributes significantly to the performance of an organization.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on employees' performance

Job performance	Mean	SD
Employees are able to take on new tasks	4.40	0.62
The kind job employees does makes a difference in the lives of others	4.32	0.71
Spirit of team building exited among co-workers	4.27	0.77
Supervisors encourage me to put my best in any given task	4.20	0.76
There is productive time spent working on the tasks assigned to me	4.16	0.88
Employees experience personal growth such as updating skills and learning different jobs	4.15	0.91
The overall quality of service that employees provide is at its maximum	4.12	0.85

Source: Survey, 2016

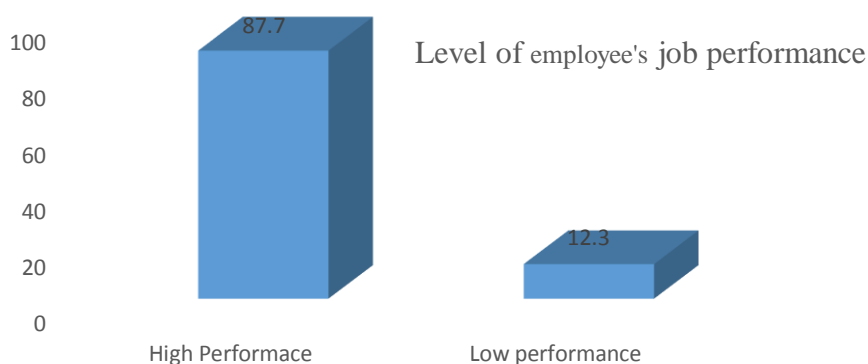


Fig 1: Level of employee's performance

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that employees are competent in their job due to openness exhibited by the organization. It was also discovered in this study that employees performed very well due to innovation sharing and interrelationship that existed among them. Increase mutual trust will also help them to rely on each other's opinion relating to task at hand. This study also revealed that managerial competence was high in the study location. It is expedient that managers should endeavor to minimize the challenges affecting job performance of employees to the lowest minimum by ensuring that there is sufficient fund for training. In addition, managers should reward employees suitably through the use of cash, award of excellence and certificate of merit to further boost employee's performance.

Table 5: Managerial competence indicators on employee's job performance

Variables	Coefficient	Standard error	T	P-value
(Constant)	10.324	5.151	2.004	0.000
Managerial competence	0.113	0.023	4.924	0.002*
Challenges	0.048	0.063	.756	0.452
Sex	1.430	0.824	1.735	0.051
Age	-0.639	0.374	-1.708	0.042*
Marital status	-0.725	0.881	-.823	0.414
Religion	0.051	0.976	.052	0.959
Educational status	0.492	0.328	1.502	0.138
Years of experience	1.241	0.403	3.078	0.003*
Income	-0.315	0.281	-1.121	0.031*
R <sup>2</sup>	0.643			
R	0.413			
F ratio	4.393			

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