



## Effect of Career Fulfillment on Employee Performance in Federal Civil Service Commission, Abuja-Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The study on the effect of career fulfillment practices on employee performance is still scanty in the human resource management domain. The main objective of this paper is to investigate the effect of career fulfillment practices on the employee performance in the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC), Abuja-Nigeria.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The paper is a cross-sectional survey. Hence, researchers adopted the primary data approach of data collection. The population of the study is 400 (FCSC, 2021). Using Krijcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size is 196. The researchers increased the sample size by 50% based on Sal kind's (1997) suggestion. Thus, the final sample size of the study is 294 using the stratified random sampling technique. The study administered 294 copies of the questionnaires and was used for the analysis. The returned questionnaires were inputted, coded, and screened with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 22 software. Analysis was carried out using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

**Findings:** The findings showed that career fulfillment practices have a positive and significant effect on employee performance in FCSC, Abuja-Nigeria.

**Implications/Originality/Value:** The paper recommended that FCSC, government, labor Unions and policymakers should promote career fulfillment practices that will improve employee performance in FCSC, Abuja.



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## **Introduction**

The issue of employee performance is both paramount and contention both in public and private sectors in a developing economy like Nigeria. Hiring good employees in this covid-19 pandemic era has become very expensive both in terms of logical, logistics, time, money and processes carried out to effectively and efficiently in the appoint every employee who fits the right job (Nuhu, Rogo & Mohammed, 2018). Many firms exist in their operations not because of their wish to be benevolent, but to also achieve the employee and firm goals (Nuhu & Ahmed, 2017). Therefore, it has become necessary to plan strategically both in terms of the short-term, medium-term and long-term strategies for the growth of every employee and organization at large.

Employees is individuals who possess their own competencies, perspectives, skills, values and characteristics that benefit organizations. In return, it's very important for every organization to fulfill employee dreams. The development of every staff, their skills, competencies, education and the process of career fulfillment have become the main concern of human resource management department (Mullins, 2012; Nuhu & Hussaini, 2017).

Thus, it is very important that firms are encouraged to fulfill individuals with the qualities essential for continued accomplishment in this competitive global village. Several previous studies have argued that employee goals are undertaken in other to reduce a direct employee costs and to improve effectiveness and efficiency by implementing compliance with the specific rules, principles, procedures, process and rewards on measurable output (Mullins, 2012).

Several empirical studies done in the area of human resources to fulfill employee performance locally and globally have focused on analyzing either the indirect effect of personnel practices on the performance, or the correlation between employee motivation and firm performance (Arthur, 1994; Rodriquez & Ventura, 2003; Nuhu & Ahmed, 2017). Other studies debated direct effects of human resource on the organizational performance with a view to explain the process through which systems of human resource practices lead to firm performance, but the results are incomplete with several mixed findings (Gorondutse & Nuhu, 2019).

Although studies on career fulfillment in both the public and private sectors in Nigeria have been seldom undertaken, it is important to note that the neglected variable could a veritable icon of employees' performance. More so, considering that the research mixed findings obtained in the public and private sector locally and globally has limited generalizability. Hence, this study investigates the effect of career fulfillment practices on employee performance in federal civil service commission, Abuja.

## **Literature Review**

Human resource management practice is considered as the growth and development of every employee. Career fulfillment practices as a proxy in this study, is treated as only one way route for firms penetrating for prospective and employee satisfaction (Chang et al, 2012). Every successful employee begins with proper human resource department, training, planning and forecasting (Chang et al, 2012). Thus, the success of a human resource department process is the strategy every firm is prepared to employ identify and select the best applicants for its developing pool to satisfy employee goals (Ifill & Moreland, 2014; Mulabe, 2013). The employee performance is vital to the survival of every firm been it private or public sectors. Hence, the next sub-section is a review of employee performance.

## **Employee Performance**

For the purpose of this study, employee performance refers to the ability of a firm to attain goals and objectives through effectiveness, efficiency, profits, quality, market share, and financial viability. Even though in the literature, performance has been severally used by the researchers as

dependent variable, but again, several studies pay attention on identifying the factors that upset performance results which is still an unclear and ‘inaccurately defined’ variable and ignored employee performance (Saridakis, Lai, & Cooper, 2017; Nuhu & Ahmed, 2017a; Nuhu & Ahmed, 2017b; Van Esch, Wei, & Chiang, 2018). Mullins (2012) contended that organizational performance encompasses three areas: financial performance, product market performance and shareholder return. The efficiency and effectiveness of an employee are simply referred to as employee performance (Mullins, 2012; Kehoe, & Collins, 2017).

Other studies argued that, organizational performance is measured through financial and non-financial performance (Chang et al, 2012; Mullins, 2012). While financial measures are Profit before Tax (PBT), turnover or revenue and that of non-financial measures are customers’ satisfaction, transfer period and employee result. Furthermore, non-financial performance in some cases is vital indicators for the financial performance measurements (Kaplan Nolan, & Norton 2018; Yalico, Ortíz, Larco, Gallegos, & Antonini, 2020). Hence, this study focused on actual employee performance against standard, responsibility, commitment, time management, effectiveness and efficiency. The next sub-head are the reviews of career fulfillment as an independent variable.

### **Career Fulfillment**

For the purpose of this study, career fulfillment refers to employee outcomes. Career fulfillment is the immediate goal and future objective of every employee to attain. The study conceives that whereas HRM practices serve to attract, retain, motivate, develop and use HR in a firm in a way to strategically configured and effectively employed or combine the appropriate organizational factor(s) that generate and sustain the employee fulfillment (Becker & Gerhart, 2016). Thus, studies of the workplace have identified satisfaction and commitment as intermediate outcomes of HRM systems, most public firms continue to experience increased dissatisfaction and low levels of commitment, which impact negatively on firm performance (Kamoche, 2012; Guest & Conway, 1997).

Huselid (2005) argued that employees are the most important asset for every firm performance, be it public or private sector. Hence, appropriate mechanisms that affect employee job fulfillment through the skills, motivation, training, structures and programmers must be put in place. The next sub-section is the review of previous empirical studies on the link between career fulfillment and employee performance.

### **Career Fulfillment and Employee Performance**

Based on the researchers’ knowledge on previous studies on the link between career fulfillment and employee performance is too scanty. Hence, many prior studies (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2006; Guest, 1987; Lee, Liu, Rousseau, Hui, & Chen, 2011) relying majorly on the connection between human resource and organization performance and ignored other sensitive human resource proxies that affect employee directly (Mohammed & Nuhu, 2021).

Prior researchers, allied to the human relations school of thought, job satisfaction is a collection of immediate perceptions that employees hold towards specific aspects of their job, which allows the fulfillment of one’s important job values. Job satisfaction is the primary goal of organizations (Lee et al, 2011). Employees are satisfied when their abilities and competencies are put to use and reward is perceived to be fair and based on abilities and competencies. The satisfied employees have more or better mental, physical health, stable memories, productive, spirit to learn a new job or related tasks, and have fewer on-the-job accidents (Bernal, Castel, Navarro & Torres, 2015; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2006).

Conversely, dissatisfied employees may search for other opportunities, ease where and quit. But

when these opportunities are not forthcoming, they can emotionally or mentally withdraw from the organization, or engage in undesirable behaviours such as absenteeism, picketing and turnovers. The costs of replacing and training new employees range from 70 to 200 percent of employees' annual compensation and unscheduled absenteeism (Greenberg & Baron, 2007; Ihsani & Wijayanto, 2020).

Organizational commitment is a psychological, mental and emotional attitude, that slowly affect the employees over time (Fidyah & Setiawati, 2020). Committed employees have more zeal, share common values, focus, beliefs and goals oriented. The employees have strong desire to work, if their fulfillment is met by the employer (Guest, 1987). Long-term commitment between the employer and employees, may give rise to accumulation of firm-specific knowledge and skills, which enhance employee retention and high job performance (Lin & Chang, 2005; Guthrie, 2011).

This study conceives job satisfaction and organizational commitment as desirable work attitudes and behaviors that accrue from employer-employee exchange relationship, via appropriate systems of HRM practices (Lin & Huang, 2020). These desirable employee behaviors and work attitudes can be acquired directly from HRM practices or indirectly from the HRM practices given the influencing role of 'appropriate' culture and/or leadership. High levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment is expected influence the employees to perform. That is to say, employees who are happy and feel that the work and the working environment is meaningful; that they have the skills necessary to do the work; that they have a voice that impacts on firm decisions; that their jobs have security of tenure; that they are rewarded fairly are expected to project higher levels of effectiveness, efficiency and reliability, which explains corporate performance.

Thus, the literature show that employee performance are intermediate product of HR practices (Akbari, Bagheri, Fathollahi, & Darvish, 2020; Dziuba, Ingaldi, & Zhuravskaya, 2020), other stream of scholars allude that employee fulfilment resulted to other HR practices and other mediating/moderating variables that affect the entire firm performance (Dziuba, Ingaldi, & Zhuravskaya, 2020; Kidombo & Dean, 2018). More importantly, most of the recent researchers argued that the study on employee outcomes have been carried out in the many private firms with a mixed results (Kidombo&Dean, 2018; Haddad, Sanders, & Bausch, 2019). The subsequent chapter reviews literature on the link between each of these two factors of employee outcomes namely job satisfaction and organizational commitment and firm performance.

Researchers on job satisfaction and firm performance have established that if the employee are satisfied the better they become more productive (Dziuba et al., 2020). This results in positive cumulative outcomes for the firm.

Forthcoming, they may emotionally or mentally "withdraw" from the organization and/or even engage in destructive and undesirable work-related behaviors such as absenteeism, picketing, and grievances, which can be costly to the firm (Kidombo & Dean, 2018). Akbari et al (2020) found strong correlations between job satisfactions with turnover. Greenberg, Warier, Allison, and Baron-Cohen, (2018) estimated the costs of replacing and training new employees to range from 70 to 200 percent of employee annual compensation and unscheduled absenteeism. This can impact negatively on firm performance. Perhaps this is the reason why some psychologists, especially those aligned to the 'human relation' school of thought see job satisfaction as the primary goal of organizations (Akbari et al, 2020; Mohammed & Nuhu, 2021).

Superior performance can therefore be attributed to satisfied employees given the immediate outcomes of satisfaction enumerated above. Similarly, individuals who feel satisfied are driven

by the need to remain so and would therefore not want to engage in behaviors that can jeopardize their satisfaction. Dziuba et al., (2020) found that individuals engage in a consistent line of activity, based on the recognition of the lost side bets with a discontinuity of the activity, therefore enhancing their performance behavior. Although dissatisfied employees may be a cost center, which can impact negatively on overall firm performance (Greenberg et al, 2018) posit that it has never been proven that satisfied workers are necessarily more productive.

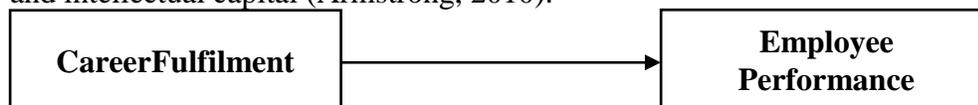
From the above critiques, the empirical review shows conflicting findings. In line with the recommendations by KP & Murthy (2015) & Hunt & Jones (2015) that the future studies should focus their attention on other HRM processes of recruitment and selection in an emerging economy particularly African. They further stated that the firm should direct their attention employees fulfillment. The firm should use new technologies to hire competitiveness approach to employ competent employees (Mohammed & Nuhu, 2021).

Therefore, this study filled the existing gaps pointed out by KP & Murthy (2015) & Hunt & Jones (2015) that the researchers should focus their attention to determine how other HRM processes influence recruitment and selection practices that affect the organizational performance. From the above, empirical literature reviews show many mixed findings. Therefore, this paper filled the existing gaps recommended by Gahlawat & Kundu, (2019); Nuhu, Mohammed & Ahmed, (2018) and Lai et al (2017). Hence, this study determines the effect of career fulfillment on employee performance in FCSC, Abuja which is the first of its kind going by the literatures reviewed. Hence, the following hypothesis was developed:

There is no significant effect of career fulfillment on employee performance in Federal Civil Service Commission, Abuja-Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The rooted theory of this research is Human Capital Theory. Thus, Human capital theory emphasizes that people possess dip innate abilities, personal energy and behaviors (Armstrong, 2012). Hence, it is the knowledge, competencies, skills, education and abilities of individual employees that create value. The focus on attracting, hiring, retaining and developing employees is part of the human capital. Individual employees generates, attract and retain knowledge, skills and intellectual capital (Armstrong, 2010).



*Figure: Research Framework*

### **Materials and Methods**

The Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) has 400 total employees across all of its locations (FCSC, 2021). The population for this study consist of all the employees of FCSC, Abuja-Nigeria. Hence, the total population of employees as of February 2021 stood at 400 (FCSC, 2021). The study sample size is 196 using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table. Though, an additional of 50% of the sample result was added to the original sample size to avoid a low response rate as suggested by Salkind (1997). Thus, the higher the respondents' response rate, the better the results (Salkind, 1997). Therefore, 50% of 196 is 98 added to the original sample size of 196 which gives 294 as the final sample size.

The study adopted a stratified sampling technique. The unit of analysis for this study is the individual employees. This study adopted seven (7)Point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Fairly Agree 4 = Neutral; 5 = Fairly Disagree; 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly Disagree).The employee performance was measured using six (6) items as adapted from the

studies of Nuhu and Ahmed (2017); Nuhu and Mohammed (2021). While carrier fulfillment were measured using eight (8) items (i.e. job satisfaction, salaries and wages, training and development, healthcare, housing, transportation, workshop and retirement benefits). The study adopted the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for the analysis.

### Analysis and Results

The total of 294 copies of questionnaires was administered to the employees of the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC), Abuja-Nigeria. Therefore, the study adopted self-administered approach to distribute the questionnaire to the respondents. Interestingly, the study response rate yielded an outcome of 100%, which is a good response rate as supported by prior studies (Jobber, 1989; Nuhu & Mohammed, 2018). Nasiru, Keat, & Bhatti, (2015), a response rate of 30% and above is sufficient for the survey. Thus, the study response rate of 100% is good enough to continue to run the data for the analysis.

From the respondent's demographic variables, the FCSC top level was 51(17.35%), while the middle level was 87 (29.59%), and the lower level was 156 (53.06%). This study adopted the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hence, this study adopted a two-step process to evaluate and report the results using PLS-SEM path, as recommended by Henseler, (2012) and Hair (2014). Thus, these two-step processes are: the measurement model, and the structural model (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2012; Henseler, 2012). The justification for adopting Smart PLS for this study is because PLS-SEM is capable of modeling and expressing in line with the theoretical concepts via constructs by connecting these constructs through a structural model to the study relationships (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Henseler, 2012).

### Analysis of Measurement Model

The assessment of the measurement model consists of loading, composite reliability and the average variance extracted (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2011; Henseler, 2012).

Table 1  
Results of Measurement Model

| Constructs and Indicators   | Loading | Composite Reliability | Cronbachs Alpha | AVE   |
|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| <b>Career Fulfilment</b>    |         | 0.960                 | 0.945           | 0.858 |
| CF1                         | 0.900   |                       |                 |       |
| CF2                         | 0.943   |                       |                 |       |
| CF3                         | 0.963   |                       |                 |       |
| CF4                         | 0.898   |                       |                 |       |
| <b>Employee Performance</b> |         | 0.955                 | 0.941           | 0.809 |
| FP2                         | 0.633   |                       |                 |       |
| FP3                         | 0.636   |                       |                 |       |
| FP4                         | 0.726   |                       |                 |       |
| FP5                         | 0.695   |                       |                 |       |
| FP6                         | 0.724   |                       |                 |       |

From table 1 above, the value of the average variance extracted range from 0.858 to 0.809. All the loading is above 0.5 thresholds. The Composite Reliability and Cronach's Alpha are also above 0.7 which are all acceptable values (Hair 2014).

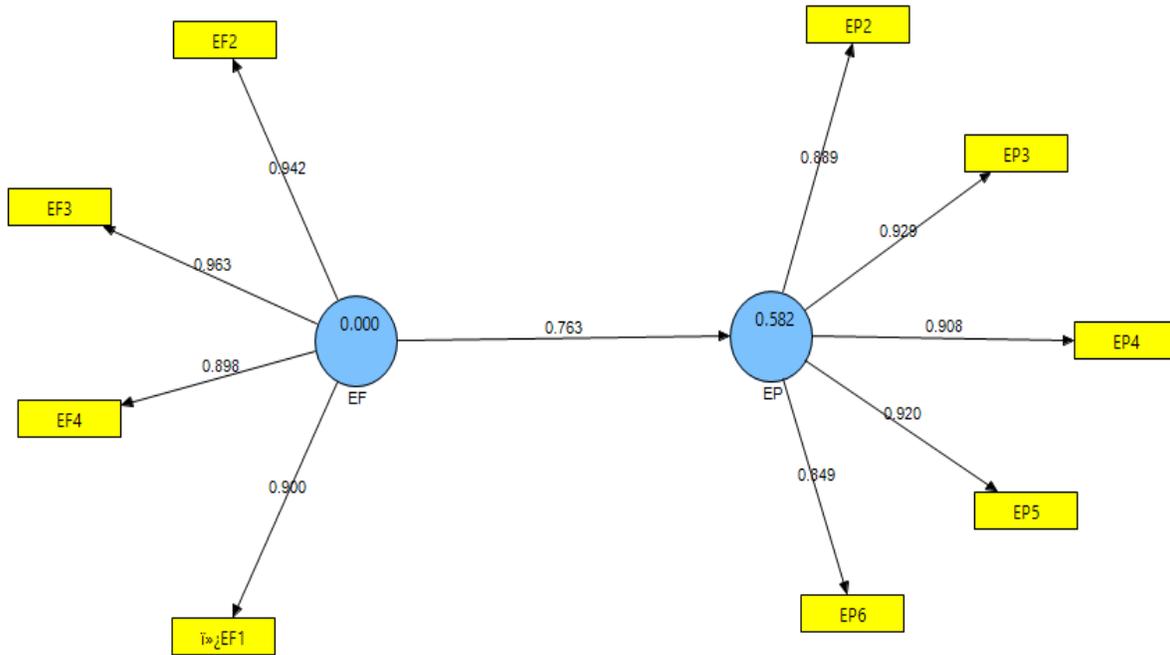


Figure 1: Measurement Model

**Analysis of Structural Model**

As recommended, this study applied 5000 bootstrapping standard procedure to examine the significance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2014).

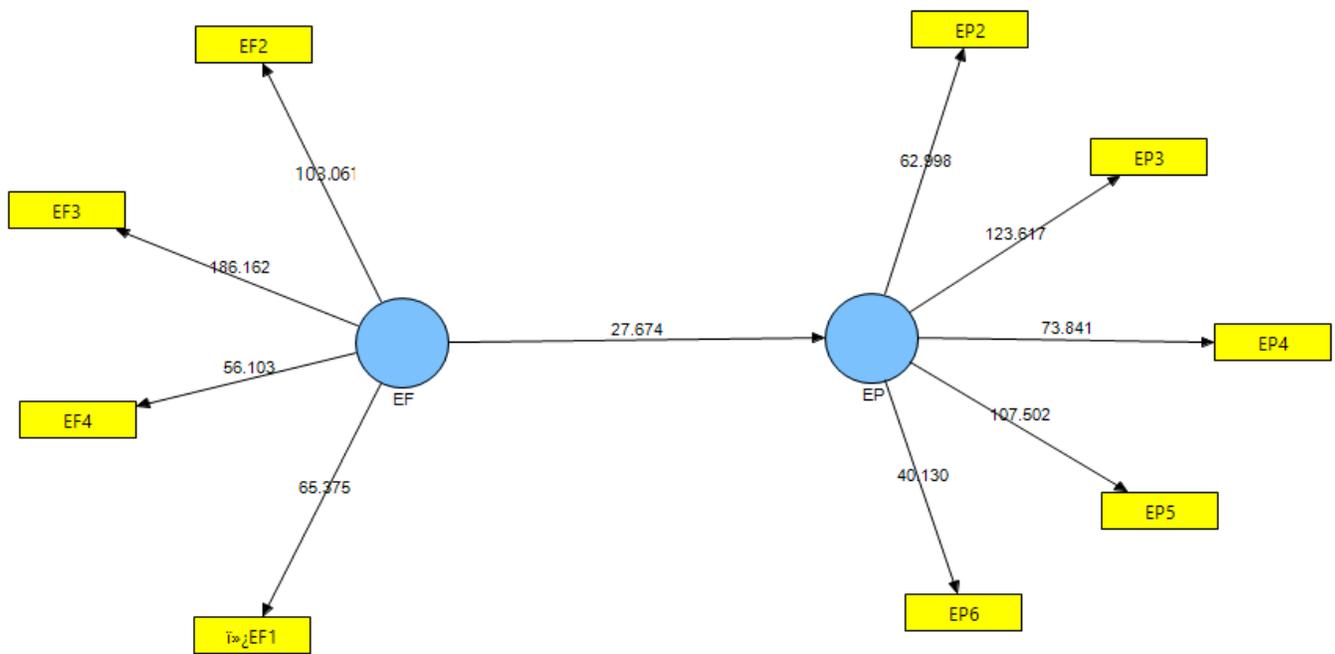


Figure 2: Structural Model

Table 2  
Results of Structural Model

| Hypotheses | Relationship | Beta  | SE    | t-value | p-value | Finding   |
|------------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Hypothesis | CF> EP       | 0.763 | 0.028 | 27.674  | 0.000** | Supported |

P. value significant at 1% \*\* (one tailed)  
 CR = Career Fulfilment  
 EP = Employee Performance

### Discussion and Recommendations

In line with the objectives of the study, the results showed that the study hypothesis raised is line with the expected findings. The study hypothesis was supported. The result showed that there is a positive and significant effect of career fulfillment on employee performance in FCSC, Abuja-Nigeria ( $\beta = 0.763$ ;  $t = 27.674$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). Hence, the R square is 0.582. This result is consistent with the findings of prior studies (Nuhu & Mohammed, 2021; Mullins, 2012; Nuhu, Mohammed & Ahmed, 2018; Papa et al, 2018).

Thus, this study recommends that FCSC, Abuja-Nigeria, government, labor Unions and policy makers should promote career fulfillment that will improve employee performance in FCSC, Abuja. The study also recommends the future researchers should adopt or adapt other dimensions of human resource management. The study further recommends that, the future studies should adopt or adapt the use of a moderator and mediated variables which African and Nigerian researchers avoid.

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