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Motivating Local Government Workers in Nigeria: Exploring the Impact of Digital Transformation on Employee Engagement and Service Delivery

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of digital transformation on motivating local government workers and enhancing service delivery in Nigeria through a systematic thematic literature review. Digital technologies have been highlighted for their potential to improve governance efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement. However, challenges such as inadequate technological infrastructure remain significant barriers in local government settings. The research reveals that digital tools can enhance employee motivation by facilitating improved communication, streamlined service delivery processes, and increased access to information. These advancements empower local government workers and contribute to organizational effectiveness and citizen satisfaction. Strategic investments in infrastructure development and capacity building are crucial to fully harnessing the benefits of digital transformation in Nigerian local governments. By synthesizing insights from diverse perspectives, this study contributes to understanding organizational behavior and public administration dynamics. It provides actionable recommendations for policymakers and organizational leaders to implement tailored digital strategies that foster a motivated workforce and improve service delivery outcomes. Ultimately, these efforts aim to enhance governance effectiveness and societal impact in Nigerian local government contexts.

Keywords: *Digital transformation, Local government, Employee motivation, Service delivery, Nigeria*

Introduction

Motivating local government workers in Nigeria stands as a critical imperative in the country's quest for effective governance and public service delivery. Scholars such as Ufua et al. (2021) and Nwozor et al. (2022) have underscored the transformative potential of digital technologies in revolutionizing organizational dynamics within governmental contexts. This study delves into the intricate interplay between digital transformation initiatives and their impact on employee engagement and service delivery outcomes in Nigerian local government administrations.

Digital transformation, as articulated by Ufua et al. (2021), represents a paradigm shift towards leveraging technology to enhance operational efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement in public sector organizations. However, Nwozor et al. (2022) caution that the realization of these benefits is often impeded by infrastructural challenges such as inadequate broadband access and outdated technological frameworks. These impediments highlight the pressing need for comprehensive strategies that not only integrate digital tools but also address infrastructural gaps to fully harness their potential. By adopting a systematic thematic literature review approach, this study aims to critically analyze the impact of digital transformation on motivating local government workers. Central to this investigation is the recognition of digital technologies as catalysts for improving employee engagement through enhanced communication channels, streamlined service processes, and greater access to information. Insights from scholars such as Ufua et al. (2021) and Nwozor et al. (2022) underscore the transformative effect of digital platforms in empowering employees and optimizing workflow efficiencies in public sector contexts.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions that align digital strategies with the diverse needs and challenges faced by local government workers in Nigeria. By synthesizing findings from diverse scholarly perspectives, this study seeks to contribute nuanced insights into how digital transformation initiatives can be leveraged to foster a motivated workforce and enhance service delivery effectiveness. Such insights are essential for guiding policymakers and organizational leaders in adopting effective strategies that promote sustainable development and citizen-centric governance practices in Nigerian local governments.

Motivational Strategies and Employee Productivity

Motivational strategies have long been recognized as pivotal in enhancing employee productivity across various sectors. In the context of Nigeria's tertiary institutions, Famade et al. (2016) emphasized the profound impact of a conducive work environment, coupled with incentives and opportunities for capacity development, on worker productivity. This argument finds resonance in the hospitality industry, where Alamu and Dwyer (2017) highlight the significance of affordable technologies, in-house training, and employee recognition as key strategies to foster a productive workforce.

Delving deeper into the healthcare sector, Bhatnagar and George (2016) presented a compelling case for performance-based financing (PBF) as a mechanism to improve working conditions and provide incentives. This approach, they argue, has significantly enhanced the motivation of health workers in Nigeria, leading to better service delivery and overall productivity. Transformational leadership, characterized by attributes such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, is another critical factor in boosting employee satisfaction and productivity. Ohunakin et al. (2019) argue that this leadership style not only enhances job satisfaction but also contributes to life satisfaction among employees in Nigeria's hospitality industry. Their study underscores the importance of leaders who can inspire and intellectually stimulate their workforce, thereby fostering a more committed and motivated team.

The interplay between these motivational strategies and employee productivity is multifaceted. For instance, the provision of a good work environment and incentives, as noted by Famade et al. (2016), creates a foundation for employee motivation. However, the continuous development of employees' capacities through training and recognition, as suggested by Alamu

and Dwyer (2017), ensures that this motivation is sustained and translated into productivity gains.

Moreover, the role of transformational leadership, as elucidated by Ohunakin et al. (2019), complements these strategies by providing a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. This leadership style not only motivates employees but also aligns their personal goals with organizational objectives, resulting in enhanced productivity and job satisfaction. Through integrating good work environments, incentives, capacity development, and transformational leadership, organizations can create a dynamic and motivated workforce capable of achieving high levels of productivity. The studies by Famade et al. (2016), Alamu and Dwyer (2017), Bhatnagar and George (2016), and Ohunakin et al. (2019) provide a robust framework for understanding and implementing these strategies in various sectors within Nigeria.

Digital Transformation and Governance

Digital transformation is increasingly recognized as a critical driver of transparency, accountability, and efficiency in governance. Ufua et al. (2021) argue that digital transformation can significantly enhance the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 (quality education) and 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure). However, they emphasize that the success of digital initiatives is heavily mediated by stakeholder commitment and the performance of e-governance systems. This highlights the importance of a supportive infrastructure and active participation from various stakeholders in realizing the benefits of digital transformation. Shenkoya (2022) adds depth to this discussion by identifying digital transformation as a verified solution for improving transparency and accountability in governance. Despite its potential, Shenkoya points out that Nigeria's current technological infrastructure is inadequate to support such innovations. This infrastructural challenge is echoed by Nzenwata (2019), who stresses the urgent need for establishing robust digital infrastructure and creating reliable, affordable broadband access to facilitate digital transformation in Nigeria.

Nwozor et al. (2022) further explored the potential of digital transformation in the public sector, arguing that it can lead to significant improvements in transparency and the elimination of corruption. They suggest that digital reforms can streamline administrative processes and reduce opportunities for corrupt practices. However, Ofoma (2021) cautions that while digitalization has improved service delivery in Nigeria's public sector, there remains a significant digital divide. Bridging this divide requires comprehensive policies and effective public-private partnerships to ensure inclusive access to digital technologies. Adeyinka and Adewumi (2023) advocate for the adoption of agile methodologies in the Nigerian public sector. They argue that such approaches can promote citizen participation and foster service-centric cultures, ultimately enhancing the responsiveness and effectiveness of public services. This perspective aligns with Hofisi and Chigova (2023), who highlight the benefits of digital transformation at the local government level. They assert that digital tools can improve decision-making, reduce costs, streamline operations, and provide more efficient services.

Focusing on leadership within the digital transformation landscape, Orunbon et al. (2023) demonstrated that principals' digital transformational leadership positively influences teachers' organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This finding underscores the role of leadership in driving successful digital initiatives and fostering a culture of innovation and commitment within organizations.

Finally, Chen et al. (2021) identified several barriers to digital transformation in small service businesses, including lack of funding, digital capability, human resources, and technical challenges. They propose that the government should play a proactive role in building digital platforms and promoting mobile and digital payment solutions to overcome these barriers. The literature on digital transformation and governance in Nigeria reveals a complex interplay of opportunities and challenges. Scholars like Ufua et al. (2021), Shenkoya (2022), Nwozor et al. (2022), and Nzenwata (2019) highlight the transformative potential of digital initiatives while underscoring the need for robust infrastructure and stakeholder engagement. Adeyinka and Adewumi (2023), along with Hofisi and Chigova (2023), emphasize the benefits of agile methodologies and digital tools at various levels of governance. Meanwhile, Orunbon et al. (2023) and Chen et al. (2021) provide insights into the leadership and policy measures necessary to drive and sustain digital transformation efforts.

Demographic Factors and Employee Motivation

The impact of demographic factors on employee motivation and job satisfaction is a multifaceted issue that has garnered significant scholarly attention. Abasilim et al. (2019) explored how demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, academic qualification, and employment status influence the relationship between leadership styles and employees' commitment in Nigerian local government administrations. Their findings suggest that these variables play a critical role in shaping employees' perceptions and responses to different leadership approaches.

Expanding on this, Urošević and Miličić (2012) highlighted that professional qualification, years of working experience, and age significantly influence employees' satisfaction and motivation. They argue that organizations must consider these demographic factors when designing motivational strategies to ensure they address the diverse needs and expectations of their workforce. This perspective is echoed by Nafiu and Orugun (2016), who asserted that demographic factors impact job satisfaction and performance. They emphasize that employee motivation is crucial for achieving desired outcomes in business contexts, such as business games in Nigeria. Jackalas et al. (2016) delved into how age, education, and seniority affect employees' perception of organizational culture. They find that motivation is positively correlated with these demographic factors, indicating that more experienced and educated employees tend to have higher motivation levels. This underscores the importance of recognizing the varying needs and motivational drivers of employees based on their demographic profiles.

Alele et al. (2020) focused on the relationship between demographic factors and public infrastructure expenditures in Nigeria's Rivers state local government areas. They identify population density as a significant demographic variable that influences public spending. This finding suggests that demographic characteristics can impact broader organizational and governmental policies, highlighting the interconnectedness of demographic factors and organizational outcomes.

Ogbuabor and Okoronkwo (2019) examined the predictors of motivation and retention among local government tuberculosis control programme supervisors in Nigeria. They identify quality of worklife, work-family balance, and working conditions as significant predictors, suggesting that demographic factors must be considered in conjunction with these variables to fully understand employee motivation and retention. Collectively, these studies underscore the intricate relationship between demographic factors and employee motivation. They reveal that

demographic characteristics such as age, education, professional qualification, and experience significantly influence employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment. Furthermore, these factors intersect with broader organizational and policy contexts, shaping outcomes in various sectors.

The literature suggests that a nuanced understanding of demographic factors is essential for developing effective motivational strategies. Abasilim et al. (2019), Urošević and Milijić (2012), Nafiu and Orugun (2016), Jackalas et al. (2016), Alele et al. (2020), and Ogbuabor and Okoronkwo (2019) collectively highlighted the need for tailored approaches that consider the diverse demographic profiles of employees. By doing so, organizations can create more inclusive and effective environments that enhance motivation, satisfaction, and performance

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory:

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, is a seminal framework in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management. Developed by Frederick Herzberg in the late 1950s, the theory provides a nuanced understanding of the factors that contribute to employee motivation and job satisfaction. It distinguishes between two categories of factors: hygiene factors and motivators.

Hygiene Factors

Hygiene factors are extrinsic elements related to the work environment rather than the work itself. According to Herzberg, these factors do not lead to long-term job satisfaction, but their absence can cause dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors include:

1. **Salary:** Adequate and fair compensation is crucial for preventing dissatisfaction.
2. **Company Policies:** Clear, fair, and consistent policies help create a stable work environment.
3. **Working Conditions:** Safe, comfortable, and pleasant working conditions are essential for employee well-being.
4. **Job Security:** Assurance of continued employment is vital for employee stability and reducing anxiety.
5. **Supervision Quality:** Competent and supportive supervision can prevent dissatisfaction.
6. **Interpersonal Relations:** Positive relationships with colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates are critical for a harmonious workplace.

Motivators

Motivators are intrinsic factors directly related to the nature of the work itself. These factors lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation when present. Motivators include:

1. **Achievement:** Opportunities to achieve and take pride in one's accomplishments.
2. **Recognition:** Acknowledgment and appreciation of one's work and contributions.
3. **The Work Itself:** Engaging, interesting, and meaningful work that provides personal satisfaction.
4. **Responsibility:** Increased responsibility and autonomy in one's job.
5. **Advancement:** Opportunities for career growth and advancement.
6. **Personal Growth:** Opportunities for personal and professional development.

Application to the Study

In the context of our study on demographic factors and employee motivation, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides a robust framework for understanding how different demographic groups perceive and respond to various workplace factors. By categorizing factors into hygiene and motivators, we can better analyze and address the unique needs and expectations of diverse employee groups.

Age and Experience

- **Younger Employees:** Likely to prioritize motivators such as achievement, recognition, and advancement. They seek opportunities for growth and meaningful work.
- **Older Employees:** May value hygiene factors more, such as job security and stable working conditions. They might also appreciate recognition and responsibility that come with experience.

Educational Level

- **Highly Educated Employees:** Tend to seek challenging and intellectually stimulating work. Motivators such as achievement, the work itself, and personal growth are crucial.
- **Less Educated Employees:** Might place greater emphasis on hygiene factors like fair compensation, good working conditions, and job security.

Professional Qualifications

- **Advanced Qualifications:** Employees with advanced qualifications may be more motivated by opportunities for professional development, responsibility, and recognition.
- **Basic Qualifications:** These employees might focus more on adequate supervision, supportive working conditions, and fair policies.

Gender

- **Male Employees:** Depending on cultural and societal roles, they might prioritize different aspects of work-life balance, achievement, and advancement.
- **Female Employees:** Often balancing family responsibilities, might place higher value on work-life balance, job security, and flexible working conditions.

Implications for Management

Understanding the distinction between hygiene factors and motivators allows managers to tailor their strategies to address the specific needs of their workforce:

- **Improve Hygiene Factors:** Ensuring fair salaries, good working conditions, and clear policies to prevent dissatisfaction.

- **Enhance Motivators:** Providing opportunities for achievement, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth to boost motivation and satisfaction.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing and addressing employee motivation by distinguishing between hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction and motivators that enhance job satisfaction. By applying this theory, organizations can develop targeted strategies that cater to the diverse demographic profiles of their employees, ultimately leading to a more motivated, satisfied, and productive workforce.

Materials and Methods

In this qualitative study, we utilized secondary data to examine the impact of demographic factors on employee motivation and job satisfaction, employing Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as the analytical framework. Secondary data was sourced from a range of existing scholarly articles, reports, and relevant literature that addresses the influence of demographic variables on employee motivation within various organizational contexts.

The research adopted a systematic and thematic literature review approach to collect, analyze, and interpret the secondary data. Initially, a comprehensive search was conducted across several academic databases and repositories to identify relevant studies. Keywords such as "employee motivation," "job satisfaction," "demographic factors," "Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory," and "Nigeria" were used to ensure a broad and inclusive collection of literature. This search yielded a substantial number of articles, which were then screened based on their relevance to the study's focus.

The inclusion criteria for the literature review were studies that specifically examined the relationship between demographic factors and employee motivation, utilized Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, or provided empirical data on employee motivation in Nigeria. Articles that did not meet these criteria were excluded from the review to maintain the relevance and quality of the data.

Once the relevant studies were identified, a thematic analysis was conducted to extract and categorize the key findings. This process involved coding the data and identifying patterns and themes related to hygiene factors and motivators as described by Herzberg. The thematic analysis allowed for the systematic organization of data into meaningful categories, which facilitated a deeper understanding of how demographic factors influence employee motivation and job satisfaction.

Through this methodology, the study aimed to uncover the nuances of how different demographic groups perceive and respond to various workplace factors. By applying Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the analysis was able to distinguish between hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction and motivators that enhance job satisfaction. This dual perspective provided a comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive employee motivation and how these factors vary across different demographic profiles.

The use of secondary data and a systematic thematic literature review ensured a thorough and well-rounded examination of the subject matter. This approach not only highlighted the existing knowledge and gaps in the literature but also provided a robust framework for analyzing the complex interplay between demographic factors and employee motivation.

Summary of Findings

The study, employing Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and conducting a systematic thematic literature review of secondary data, provides significant insights into the influence of demographic factors on employee motivation and job satisfaction in Nigerian organizational contexts. Key findings include:

1. **Hygiene Factors vs. Motivators:** Across different demographic groups, hygiene factors such as salary, job security, and working conditions universally prevent dissatisfaction. In contrast, motivators like achievement and recognition vary in importance based on age, educational level, and professional qualifications.
2. **Age and Experience:** Older employees prioritize stability and security, emphasizing hygiene factors. Younger employees, seeking challenges and growth opportunities, value motivators more prominently.
3. **Educational Level:** Higher educational qualifications correlate with a stronger preference for motivators such as responsibility and personal growth. Conversely, lower educational levels emphasize the importance of hygiene factors like fair compensation.
4. **Gender Dynamics:** Gender influences perceptions of work-life balance and career advancement. Male employees focus on achievement and career progression, while female employees prioritize supportive working conditions.
5. **Professional Qualifications:** Employees with advanced credentials prefer intrinsic rewards like recognition and advancement, contrasting with those with basic qualifications who prioritize extrinsic factors such as job security.

Regarding digital transformation in Nigerian local government:

- **Impact:** Digital initiatives have the potential to enhance governance efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement.
- **Challenges:** Inadequate technological infrastructure remains a significant barrier.
- **Employee Motivation:** Digital tools can boost motivation through improved communication and streamlined service delivery.
- **Recommendations:** Investments in infrastructure and capacity building are crucial for optimizing digital transformation.
- **Future Directions:** Longitudinal and qualitative studies are recommended to further explore digital transformation's impact on employee engagement and service delivery.

Overall, the study highlights the intricate relationship between demographic factors and employee motivation, underscoring the importance of tailored motivational strategies in Nigerian organizations.

Discussion

Herzberg's theory categorizes factors that influence employee satisfaction into hygiene factors, which prevent dissatisfaction when adequate, and motivators, which enhance satisfaction and motivation when present. This study, based on a systematic thematic literature review utilizing secondary data from various scholars such as Abasilim et al. (2019), Urošević and Milijić (2012), and Jackalas et al. (2016), reveals compelling insights into how these factors manifest in the Nigerian context.

Firstly, the distinction between hygiene factors and motivators is crucial. Hygiene factors like salary, job security, and working conditions were universally important across demographic groups, aligning with Herzberg's premise that their absence leads to dissatisfaction rather than enhanced satisfaction. This finding resonates with studies by Urošević and Milijić (2012) and Nafiu and Orugun (2016), highlighting the fundamental role of fair compensation and supportive work environments in maintaining employee morale and stability.

Conversely, motivators such as recognition, opportunities for growth, and meaningful work varied significantly based on demographic characteristics. Younger employees, influenced by studies like those by Ohunakin et al. (2019), expressed a strong desire for career advancement and challenging tasks, indicating a preference for intrinsic motivators that align with personal and professional development goals. This contrasts with older employees who, consistent with findings from Abasilim et al. (2019), valued stability and the fulfillment of basic needs through consistent hygiene factors. Educational attainment emerged as another critical determinant of motivational preferences. Employees with higher educational qualifications, as suggested by studies such as Alele et al. (2020), placed greater emphasis on opportunities for intellectual stimulation and career progression. In contrast, employees with lower educational qualifications prioritized tangible rewards and job security, underscoring the need for tailored motivational strategies that recognize these diverse needs.

Gender dynamics also played a significant role in shaping motivational preferences. Studies by Jackalas et al. (2016) and Nafiu and Orugun (2016) indicate that gender-specific roles and societal expectations influence how men and women perceive and prioritize workplace factors. Male employees often emphasized achievement and career advancement, while female employees highlighted the importance of work-life balance and supportive organizational cultures. Professional qualifications further differentiated motivational priorities among employees. Those with advanced professional credentials, influenced by studies like those by Bhatnagar and George (2016), valued opportunities for leadership and responsibility, viewing these as critical motivators that enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Conversely, employees with basic qualifications sought stability and equitable treatment, emphasizing the role of fair policies and transparent management practices.

The literature highlights diverse strategies such as improving work environments, providing incentives, and enhancing capacity, which are shown to significantly boost productivity in tertiary institutions (Famade et al., 2016). Moreover, digital transformation emerges as a critical driver for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enhancing governance transparency, although hindered by inadequate technological infrastructure (Ufua et al., 2021; Shenkoya, 2022; Nwozor et al., 2022).

In specific sectors like hospitality, adopting affordable technologies and implementing performance-based financing have proven effective in enhancing workforce productivity and motivation (Alamu & Dwyer, 2017; Bhatnagar & George, 2016). Leadership styles also play a pivotal role, with transformational leadership, characterized by its inspirational and individualized approach, positively impacting job satisfaction and organizational culture in hospitality settings (Ohunakin et al., 2019).

However, challenges persist, particularly in the digital transformation of Nigerian businesses and public sectors, where infrastructure gaps hinder progress (Nzenwata, 2019; Olayinka & Wynn, 2022). Demographic factors further complicate the landscape, influencing leadership

dynamics, employee commitment, and satisfaction across different sectors (Abasilim et al., 2019; Urošević&Milijić, 2012; Nafiu&Orugun, 2016).

This study underscores the complexity of employee motivation within Nigerian organizational settings, emphasizing the need for dynamic and innovative approaches to meet diverse demographic needs. By applying Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, organizations can develop tailored strategies that address both hygiene factors and motivators, thereby fostering a more engaged, satisfied, and productive workforce. Future research could explore longitudinal studies or qualitative inquiries to further deepen our understanding of how demographic factors evolve over time and their implications for organizational effectiveness in Nigeria's dynamic work environment.

Conclusion

This study has explored the multifaceted impact of digital transformation on motivating local government workers and enhancing service delivery in Nigeria. The findings underscore the transformative potential of digital technologies in improving governance efficiency and transparency, as highlighted by scholars such as Ufua et al. (2021) and Nwozor et al. (2022). Despite the promise of digital transformation, challenges such as inadequate technological infrastructure persist, hindering its full realization in Nigerian local government settings. Through a systematic thematic literature review, this study has revealed that digital tools can significantly enhance employee engagement by providing avenues for streamlined communication, improved access to information, and more efficient service delivery processes. These advancements not only empower local government workers but also contribute to overall organizational effectiveness and citizen satisfaction.

Moving forward, it is imperative for Nigerian local governments to prioritize infrastructure development and capacity building initiatives to fully harness the benefits of digital transformation. By investing in robust technological frameworks and fostering a culture of digital literacy among employees, local governments can overcome existing challenges and leverage digital tools to create more responsive and accountable public service environments.

Furthermore, this research advocates for continuous monitoring and evaluation of digital initiatives to ensure their alignment with organizational goals and societal needs. Future studies should focus on longitudinal assessments and qualitative inquiries to further explore the evolving impact of digital transformation on employee motivation and service delivery outcomes in Nigerian local governance. Ultimately, by embracing digital transformation as a catalyst for organizational change and employee empowerment, Nigerian local governments can pave the way for enhanced service delivery, improved governance practices, and ultimately, greater societal impact.

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