



THE MODERATING ROLE OF GENDER IN THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATION ON JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG EMPLOYEES OF CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

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Abstract

The importance of job performance for the employees and the organization demands intensive and comprehensive search for the precursors. Within this concern, this study examined the relationship between motivation and job performance among correctional centre employees in South-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It also examined whether gender moderates the relationship. This study design was cross-sectional quantitative as data were collected at a point in time and numerical data were analyzed. The employees of correctional centres constitute the sampling frame for the study. The sample consists of 345 (87%) males and 53 (23%) females with age mean of 36 years. Data were collected with self-reported questionnaires that contained two scales adopted from the extant literature. The statistical tool used for data analysis was regression (complemented with Hayes Process Macro). Two hypotheses were tested and analysis of the data provided confirmation for all the tested hypotheses. In specific, motivation positively and significantly predicted job performance, and gender moderates the relationship between motivation and job performance. The findings indicate that motivating correctional centres employees would enhance their performance and that the positive effect of motivation reflects more in females than males. Therefore, it is recommended that management of correctional centres ensures that their employees are rewarded, recognition and design job accordingly to build motivated workforce and enhance their performance.

Keywords: Gender, employee motivation, job performance, correctional centres, moderation and Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Organizational effectiveness, defined as an organization ability to accomplish its desired goals efficiently and successfully represents the accumulation of the employees' job performance. Job performance is the degree to which the employees perform their job within the rules determined by the institution and shows the behaviors expected from him or her. Broadly, job performance describes the contribution of an individual to the overall success of an organization. It is among the most researched variables in management science literature. Job performance has implication for the employee and the organization. It justifies employee membership to the organization as employee not performing to the requirement of their organization are likely to be sanctioned to the extent of losing membership of the organization. More so, job performance has implication for the employee happiness as performing employees are more likely to experience psychological well-being. On the other side, job performance is the sustaining bedrock of any organization. This is obvious as the aggregation of job performance of individual employee in any given organization represents the performance of that organization. This largely accounts for the widely held position that employees are the most valuable resources of any organization.

Job performance is widely presented as two factor variable that covered task performance and contextual performance (Çalışkan, & Köroğlu, 2022). Task performance describes the core job responsibilities of an employee. It is the behavior that contributes to the achievement of the goals set in the job descriptions of the employees or the fulfillment of the requirements of the job on a personal level. It is also called "in-role prescribed behaviour. On the other hand, contextual performance indicates the behaviors of the employee that contribute to the effective functioning of the organization in addition to the task performance and is expressed as the positive behaviors of the employees that are not in the job descriptions but supported by the institution. Contextual performance is also called organizational citizenship behaviour or extra-role behaviour. Contextual performance is reflected in activities such as coaching coworkers, strengthening social networks within an organization, and going the extra mile for the organization (Ramos1, & Ellitan, 2023).

The literature on the antecedents of job performance is huge and still growing. Obvious in the literature is the identification of several variables that play the role of antecedent to job performance. And among the variables that have been empirically implicated as antecedent of job performance is employee motivation. For instance, Ayofe, and Akinbo, (2021) observed that both monetary motivational incentive such as good salary, and bonuses and non-monetary motivational incentive such as job security, training and development and benefits on retirement have significant and positive association with employee job performance. Similarly, Albalushi,

and Devesh (2023) reported that financial motivating factors that include salary, allowances for health and rent for house and non-financial motivating factors that covered gratefulness, life - work balance and working hours significantly influence job performance of employees. These researchers argued that motivation is among the most central factors in enhancing job performance and realizing organizational goals.

Motivation is any influencing factor that depicts, leads, or keeps goal-directed behaviors of individuals. It is the inner, steering force which makes a person behaves in a particular way. Motivation is a factor that prompted an individual to expend effort towards achieving a particular task (Ayofe, & Akinbo, 2021; Ogunode, Salman, & Ayoko, 2023). Therefore, employee motivation implies the degree of energy, dedication, and creativeness that workers in the organization exert in doing their jobs (Frank, 2023). The task of motivating employees is among the most crucial and persistent concern of every management team. The importance of motivation to the organization is well echoed in the literature. As Omale et al. (2022) presented, in any organization motivation is the single most important factor for organizational functioning. In fact, the importance of motivation in the workplace is succinctly captured in Vroom's (1964) equation that job performance = ability x motivation.

Motivation is widely categories into extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation refers to tangible rewards such as salary which are external to the work itself and whose size can be seen and controllable. It is a form of motivation that comes from outside the person and includes such things as pay, bonuses, and other tangible rewards. Intrinsic motivation indicates psychological or intangible rewards that employees get from doing meaningful work and performing it well (Frank, 2023). It is a person's internal desire to do something due to such things as interest, challenge, and personal satisfaction. Individuals are intrinsically motivated when they genuinely care about their work, look for better ways to do it, and are energized and fulfilled by doing it well. The rewards the individual gets from intrinsic motivation come from the work itself rather than from external factors such as increases in pay or compliments from the boss (Langton, Robbins, & Judge, 2019). The literature is saddled with the position that motivation is important in the organization because it raises employee's productivity (Ogunode, Salman, & Ayoko, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Research activities on the relationship between employee motivation and job performance is substantial, but two related gaps are obvious in the literature and addressing these gaps is the concern of this study. First, while there are several studies on the relationship between motivation and job performance among different categories of workers (Ogunmakin, &

Adetunji, 2023; Omale, Ojo, & Ibrahim, 2023), there is lack of such study among employees correctional centres. Correctional centre is a place established under Act for the reception, detention, confinement, training, or treatment of persons liable to detention in custody or to placement under protective custody. Meeting the goals of correctional centres is demanding as it requires the workers to be highly vigilant at work and to follow strict security practices. Such level of responsibility would require a match of motivation to performance. Therefore, gauging how much employee motivation influence performance among correctional centre workers is a necessity for knowledge that could guard practice in that institution. Second, almost all the studies on the relationship between employee motivation and job performance conducted in Nigeria did not examine the influence of intervening factors. These studies were limited to the investigation of the direct relationship between employee motivation and job performance. In other words, there is lack of study that examined the moderator in employee motivation and job performance relationship. Investigating moderation effect is widely recommended in the literature and it is vigorously being accepted and implemented in management science literature (e.g., Osazevaru, Amawhe & Akpoyibo, 2023). In response to this gap, this study examined the moderating role of gender in the relationship between motivation and job performance among Nigeria correctional entrées workforce.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) underlying the proposed relationship between motivation and job performance. Social exchange refers to relations between a person or several parties, such as employees and their organisations. The basic principle of social exchange theory (SET) is the standard of reciprocity, which requires individuals to react positively to fair transactions of other entities. For example, in the relationship between employees and their organisations, organisations determine the relationship, and the employee can perceive the congruence between values and goals as fair treatment or not. This understanding can place reciprocal demand on employees by expressing workplace prosocial behaviour. Studies have tested and confirmed the validity of SET in accounting for employees' behaviour as related to their organisation. In a test of SET with 242 participants in hospitality industry Meira and Hancer (2021) reported that perceived organisational support had a significant relationship with psychological empowerment, work engagement, and service-orientated organisational citizenship behaviour. More so, several studies have examined social exchange in the context of job performance. In a study designed to test SET, Wiradana, and Dewi, (2021) with a sample of 103 civil servants and contract workers observed a confirmation

of the theory as commitment, organization culture, and job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Zhang, Bal, Akhtar, Long, Zhang, and Ma, (2018) with a sample of 391 employees and 84 supervisors from 21 firms in China reported that social exchange and thriving mediate the effects of high-performance work system on employee job performance.

Based on the principles of SET, the thesis of this study is that motivation as represented by satisfactory salaries, promotion experience and conducive work environment would be perceived by the employees as act of goodwill from the organization and the employees would be obliged to pay the organization with their performance. Application of SET-in enhancing job performance among employees would entails that the employees are well rewarded in terms of salary and other benefits. Indeed, when employee receives satisfactory pay, he or she would be obligated to perform maximally. The organization should ensure that the employees feel that they are getting some favor from the organization which they are obligated to reciprocate in form of enhanced performance. In other words, the organization should create the environment that instill sense of obligation for reciprocity on the employees. to the organization.

Empirical review

Employee Motivation and job Performance

Motivation is the drive that influences an individual to accomplish maximum productivity for themselves or for the organization. Employee motivation is the processes or activities by which employees are encouraged to attain their goals. It also implies a series of active forces that comes from both within and outside the individual which are responsible for starting and shaping work-related behavior, its form, course, strength, and length. Motivation theorists differentiate between extrinsic (outside) and intrinsic (inside) motivators. This classification of motivation has much appealing and has been discussed in several book volumes that include that of Sansone, and Harackiewicz (2000).

Intrinsic motivation refers to a person's beliefs about the extent to which an activity can satisfy his or her needs for competence and self-determination. Intrinsic motivation is characterized by an innate pleasure, interest and joy that comes from within and enables an individual to find pleasure and to enjoy in one's work and continue one's interest in the effort for a longer period. As being entirely autonomous, intrinsic motivation is the most favorable and long-lasting category of motivation as compared to extrinsic motivation Extrinsic motivators, unlike intrinsic motivation stem from outside the individual, and are generally applied by others higher in the organization's hierarchy. It refers to a wide range of external outcomes or rewards to motivate employees, including bonuses or increases in pay. Although motivation is often

categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic, they relate with one another, and it is often difficult for organizations to categorize all work motivators as precisely as intrinsic or extrinsic.

In general, job performance is defined as actions or behaviours relevant to organizational goals. Job performance represents the value of employee behaviors that contribute to organizational goal accomplishment (Colquitt et al., 2019). It is the degree to which the employee performs his / her job within the rules determined by the institution and shows the behaviors expected from him (Köroğlu Kaba & Öztürk, 2021). Traditionally, job performance was evaluated in terms of the proficiency with which an individual carried out the tasks that were specified in their job description. As the definitions indicate, job performance has both behavioral (process) and outcome aspects. Although several models exist on job performance, but the current understanding among scholars is that the various elements of the existing models of job performance are better grouped into two factors that covered task performance and contextual performance. Task performance refers to employee behaviors directly involved in transforming corporate resources into the goods or services that the organization produces (Colquitt et al., 2019). Contextual performance or extra-role performance or organizational citizenship behaviors refers to discretionary behavior that is not part of an employee's formal job requirements and contributes to the workplace's psychological and social environment (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Several studies have examined the relationship between motivation and job performance, and emerging findings are tilting towards the positive effects. Research (2022) seeks to establish the relationship between public service motivation and job performance in Bondhere district, Mogadishu, Somalia. The research used a cross sectional and survey designs in collecting data from the study population totalling 400 employees. Random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 200 respondents. It was found out that, motivation remains a vital push factor in the performance of workers. Ogunmakin and Adetunji. (2023) investigated the effects of motivation on job performance in public service in Ekiti State, Nigeria with primary data from 112 respondents and observed a significant positive impact of motivation as represented in promotion opportunities on job performance. However, in Nigeria Folalu. and Aneke (2020) studied motivation and employee performance among hotel employees with a sample of 60 participants and observed a weak insignificant relationship between employee performance and motivation. This contradicting finding can be explained by the small sample size adopted in the study. Kumari and Kumar (2023) investigated the factors influence motivation of teachers' job performance in private schools in Mirpurkhas, Pakistan. Using quantitative design and 405 participants the researchers observed that motivation significantly influences teachers' job performance. Albalushi and Devesh (2023) reported that financial

motivating factors such as salary, bonus, health allowance, and house rent have a great influence on an employee's performance, with the study implicating how much the employee cares about financial motivation. non-financial factors such as appreciation, work-life balance, job security, manager's behavior, and working hours significantly impact employees' performance. In view of the above review, it was hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between motivation and job performance among employees of correctional centres.

Gender as Moderator in the Relationship

Gender refers to biological and social categorization of male or female. It implies the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It is the social forming of the biological sex. And Sex is a biological categorization, which classifies people as male, or female based on their genes and sex organs (Baxter, & Hoffmann, 2023). With reference to workplace, gender is among the most studied demographic factors. In the extant literature, gender is well implicated in employee motivation and job performance.

Several studies have shown that females and males differ in their level of work motivation and job performance across occupation. With reference to motivation, Weberova, Hitka, and Lizbetinova, (2017) in a sample of Slovak workers in both manufacturing and service organizations reported significant differences between males and females. Similarly, Hitka, Kozubíková, and Potkány (2019) in a study of both public and private employees observed gender differences in work motivation. More so, in Pakistani educational setting Naz, Shah, and Qayum, (2020) reported that male students are more extrinsically motivated than their female counterparts. Intrinsic motivation is greatly found among girls as compared to boys (Anderman & Anderman, 1999). In a sample of 424 students from Poland and Ukraine Kuśnierz, Rogowska, and Pavlova, (2020) observed that women are more motivated regarding academic achievements than men. The possible explanation for the differences between males and females in motivation could be differences in their goals and needs. For instance, men prefer to work independently and seek help from those who are in a position of authority, while women prefer to work interactively and seek help from colleagues with whom they are in a group. Men yearn for independence, for power and status, self-realization, popularity, and success (Weberova, Hitka, & Lizbetinova, 2017).

With reference to job performance, Naz, Shah, and Qayum, (2020) in Pakistani universities observed that gender difference exists in easy work and academic outcomes. Also in Pakistan, Asadullah, Hag, Wahba, Hashmi, Kim, and Hwang (2021) with a sample of 248

restaurant workers found gender differences regarding how employees ingratiate themselves and the employee performance. In Japan, Fukuzaki, and Iwata (2023) reported non-significant gender difference regarding the level of job demands or resources and work engagement, but significant gender difference job performance in favour of women. However, in a study among expatriates, Foldes, and Ones (2017) reported that men and women expatriates were rated similarly in terms of job performance, this implies no difference in performance between women and men. Kuśnierz, Rogowska and Pavlova (2020) found gender as a moderator in the relationship between conscientiousness and academic success. With a sample of Canadians Harlos, Gulseren, O'Farrell, Josephson, Axelrod, Hinds and Montanino (2023) reported that gender moderated the relationship between role conflict and bullying. Ganguli, and Padhy, (2023) found that workplace motivation has a significant effect on Gen Z employees' retention and that the association between job motivation and Gen Z employee retention was moderated by gender, income, and industry type. Ampomah and Mensah's (2023) cross sectional survey study with 319 participants revealed that gender was a significant moderator between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of tutors in Ghana. In Egypt and with a sample of 141 employees Nabih, Massoud, Ayoubi, and Crawford, (2023) reported that the gender variable moderated both the relationship between others' emotional appraisal and leadership effectiveness and use of emotion and leadership effectiveness. In view of the review above it was hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: There is moderation role of gender in the relationship between motivation and job performance among employees of correctional centres.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design used in this study is the quantitative and cross-sectional survey. It is quantitative as numerical data were collected and analyzed and cross-sectional survey because data were collected at a single point in time (Salkind, 2022). That is, in cross-sectional research all variables are measured at the same point in time. The fundamental premise of survey is that respondents speak the "truth" or distort it in a manner that errors cancel one another. According to Thiel (2022) survey design studies individual attitudes, feelings, and opinions. It allows for the study and interpretation of relationships among variables (Salkind, 2022). Several reasons informed the choice of survey design in this study. For instance, the problem statement and hypotheses of this study were in generalized and sweeping forms (e.g. there is significant relationship between employee motivation and task performance in correctional centres). This structure of presentation seeks for results that have wide coverage.

Therefore, the potentials for results generalization that is associated with survey makes it very suitable for this study.

Sampling

The study population comprised employees of correctional centres in South-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Non-probability sampling method (convenience sampling) was used to select the 398 participants from sampled correctional centres in south-south geo political zone of Nigeria. Convenience sampling technique is the most adopted non-probability sampling technique and it is a common feature in employee motivation and job performance literature (Cleave, 2023). The sample consists of 345 (87%) males and 53 (23%) females with age mean of 36 years. 324 (81%) were married, 65(16%) not married, 6 (2&) widows and 4(1%) widowers. 309(78%) were senior staff, while 89(22%) were junior staff. 55(14%) had worked for 1-5 years, 91(23%) worked for 6-15 years, 180 (45%) worked for 10-25 years and 72(18%) worked for 26-34 years. 31(8%) hold secondary school certificates, while 367 (92%) hold tertiary institution certificates.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire has two sections (A and B). Section "A" sought information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. It covered information on age, gender, marital status, cadre/designation, educational qualification, religion, and work experience. Section "B" assessed the participants position on the independent variable (employee motivation) and the dependent variables (job performance). The variables were measured with established scales. Established scales are those measures with evidence of reliability and validity in extant literature.

Employee Motivation Measure

Employee motivation was measured with Gagné, Forest, Gilbert, Aubé and Morin, and Malorni's. (2010) 12-item scale. Although some other scales exist on the construct of employee motivation. These extant scales include "Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale" (Gagné, et al, 2015) and "Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale "(Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, & Pelletier, 2009). However, Gagné, et al's (2010) scale was adopted for this study because compared to others it is less complex in structure and wording. The process of responding to the items of the scale is simple and straightforward. The scale has moderate number of items which makes it less burden to respondents. The scale required respondents to indicate the degree the items of the scale presently correspond to one of the reasons for which they are

doing their job. Sample items on the scale are “because I have fun doing my job” “because my work is my life and I do not want to fail”. The scale followed the Likert format and was anchored on 5-point response range that covered (1 =Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = Moderately, 4 = Strongly and 5 = Exactly). Several researchers such as Daniel (2020) used the scale and provided satisfactory psychometric report.

Job Performance Measure

Çalışkan and Köroğlu's (2022) 11-item job performance scale was adopted in this study. The measuring scale is a current development and reflects improvement on the earlier scales in its domain. The 5-point Likert summated rating scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-undecided, 2-disagree, 1-strongly disagree was adopted. Five-point Likert scale is the most adopted response range, and it is widely adjudged to be satisfactory as it generates enough variability in response that gives validity to statistical outputs. Both exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were employed in the construction of the measure and these processes inputted validity on the scale. Sample items from the scale are “I have the competencies that my job requires” “I am proud to be a part of this institution”. For all the scales, scores were computed by averaging each participant's reactions to the items.

Test-retest reliability assessed the stability of the scale. Twenty-four participants were used to establish this reliability and three weeks administration interval was observed. The adopted test-retest duration follows several recommendations in the literature. For the employee motivation scale, a test re-test coefficient of .87 was observed. For the job performance scale, a test re-test coefficient of .78 was observed. Cronbach's alpha reliability assessed the internal consistency of the scale. Cronbach alpha observed for employee motivation and job performance were .88, .78, respectively. The observed test re-test coefficients and Cronbach alpha met the recommended standard of at least .70 coefficient.

Construct validity of the instruments was established with test convergent validity and discriminant validity. To test for the convergent validity of employee motivation, the adopted scale for this study was correlated with Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, and Pelletier's (2009) Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale. And the correlation coefficient obtained was .91. To test for the convergent validity of job performance measure, the adopted scale for this study was correlated with Goodman and Svyantek (1999) 25-items job performance scale. And the correlation coefficient obtained was .89. That the scales positively and significantly correlate with each other indicate convergent validity.

To test for discriminant validity for employee motivation measure, the employee motivation scale adopted for this study was correlated with Ferris and Kacmer's (1992) 12-

items Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). And negative correlation coefficient of -0.81 was observed. To test for discriminant validity for job performance measure, the adopted job performance scale for this study was correlated with Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar's (1998) Organizational Cynicism Scale. Using Pearson moment correlation, a significant coefficient of -0.46 was obtained. The negative correlations observed between the measures indicate discriminant validity.

Procedure

The researcher with a research assistant visited the sampled correctional centres for the distribution of the research questionnaires. In every centre visited the researcher first identify the administration department and introduced himself. The self-introduction was accompanied with the introduction letter from the Dean of the Faculty of the Management Sciences, Delta State University, Abraka addressed specifically to each centre. The researcher requested the assistance of some staff of the correctional centres in the distribution of the questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires was subjected to several statistical procedures that included both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to organize or summarize a particular set of measurements. Descriptive statistics that were applied on the collected data include mean, standard deviation, and correlation analyses. Inferential statistics use data gathered from a sample to make inferences about the larger population from which the sample was drawn. The inferential statistics used was regression analysis complemented with Hayes' Macro process. Macro process became necessary because of hypothesis 2 that tested for moderation. According to Field (2018) Macro process is among the best approaches to the test of mediation and moderation and its value and acceptance reflects in the wide adoption of the approach in management literature. Regression analysis was appropriate and adequate for this study as it aimed to predict job performance from employee motivation. Since regression as a statistical tool is a parametric statistical test several assumptions that guide its applications were observed in data collection process and analysis. Parametric tests are statistical procedures that require meeting several conditions usually referred to assumptions before they can be adopted and applied on data. Several of the conditions associated with regression were met in data collection and analysis. For instance, prior to the test of the hypotheses check of normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and Shapiro-Wilk were conducted and the observed statistics indicated that the data sets used in this study met the normality requirement. Similarly, scatter plots on the focal variables were

examined to check for linearity. Likert scale format anchored on five-points used to collect data to meet the assumption of interval level of measurement.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical authorisation was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was presented appropriately, along with the questionnaire. The voluntary nature of participation was made known to the participants. Participants were also informed that they could terminate participation at any point in the response stage. Since no form of identification was requested from the participants, anonymity and confidentiality was ensured. Participants were also assured that they would not suffer any wrath from their organisation or any other agent by participating in the study.

RESULTS

Statistics on Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation, and the correlation coefficients of the study variables. The statistics revealed that employee motivation has a mean of 3.26 (SD .81) and job performance has a mean of 3.23 (SD .98).

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient on the study variables.

	Variables	Mean	Sd	1	.2
1)	Employee motivation	3.26	.87	1	
2)	Job Performance	3.23	.98	.13**	1

** sig. .05 (Two-tailed)

Test of Direct relationship

Table 2 shows a simple regression analysis that predicts job performance from employee motivation. The statistics in the table supported hypotheses 1, employee motivation significantly predicted job performance ($b = .20$, 95% CI [.04 .36], $t = 2.53$, $p < .01$). The significant effect was also confirmed by the confidence interval statistic. This interpretation came from the observation that the interval range did not include zero. The observed b-value indicates that a one-unit increase in employee motivation brings a .20-unit increase in job performance. The R-squared statistic indicates that employee motivation explained 3% variance in job performance. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that the regression was statistically significant, meaning job performance can be predicted from employee motivation. The small difference between the R-squared statistic and adjusted R-squared statistic indicates good

cross-validation. This means that this model would apply to other samples that could be generated from the same population.

Table 2: simple regression analysis on the effect of employee motivation on job performance

Model	B	Se	B	T	df	P	95% CI	
							LB	UB
Constant	2.52	.26		9.74			2.05	3.09
Motivation	.20	.08	.12	2.53	397	.01	.04	.36
F(1; 397) = 15.55, p = .001, R ² = .03, Durin Watson = 2.10								

Test of moderation

Table 3 shows the statistics on the test of Hypothesis 2. The relationship between employee motivation and job performance when gender was kept constant was ($b = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$), and the relationship between gender and job performance when employee motivation was kept constant was ($b = -.02$, $p < 0.71$). The interaction of employee motivation and gender on job performance was statistically significant ($b = .37$, $p = .02$). This result indicates that gender moderate the relationship between employee motivation and job performance.

Table 3: Moderation of gender in the relationship of employee motivation with job performance

Model	Job Performance			
	B	Se	T	P
Constant	3.24	.03	99.65	.01
Motivation	.23	.08	2.88	.001
Gender	-.02	.07	-.38	.71
Motivation * Gender	.37	.17	2.26	.02

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the relationship between employee motivation and job performance in correctional centres in South – south geopolitical zone of Nigeria with 398 participants drawn with a non-probability sampling technique. The purpose was to identify the direction and extent of impact employee motivation has on job performance and to identify the role of demographic variable of gender in the relationship. Demographic statistics revealed that mean scores of 3.26 and 3.23 for employee motivation and job performance respectively. These mean statistics are of moderate position in a five-point scale, and it indicates that the respondents are not fully motivated and are not performing at their optimum.

Employee motivation and job performance

Inferential statistics on hypothesis one revealed a significant and positive relationship between employee motivation and job performance. This means that employee motivation positively and significantly enhances job performance of employees in correctional centres in Nigeria. By implication the more the employees feel motivated on their job the higher their job performance. This finding supported the proposed hypothesis; hence the hypothesis was accepted. The finding that employee motivation enhances job performance is in congruence with the literature as revealed in several studies (e.g., Research, 2022; Ogunmakin & Adetunji, 2023; Meta, Saharuddin, & Khadapi, 2023).

Some plausible explanation could be offered for the positive influence of motivation on job performance. First, motivation initiates in employees work attitudes (e. g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) with the capacity to trigger work behaviour, including job performance. For instance, Aljumah (2023) reported that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly and positively impact job satisfaction. Similarly, Fauziyah, Akerina, and Sugiharto, (2022) reported that among teachers, work motivation has a positive and significant influence on the organizational commitment. And Rachman, (2023) reported that employee commitment positively influences job performance and mediate the relationship between employee motivation and job performance.

Gender as moderator in the relationship

Hypothesis 2 tests for moderation of gender in the relationship between employee motivation and job performance. Data analysis revealed that gender moderates the relationship. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was accepted. This finding aligned with the extant literature. Several studies have identified gender difference in employee motivation and job performance. In a case study of motivation, Weberova, Hitka, and Lizbetinova, (2017) with a sample of both manufacturing and service organizations reported significant differences between males and females. Similarly, Hitka, Kozubíková, and Potkány (2019) in a study of both public and private employees observed gender differences in work motivation. For job performance Asadullah, Hag, Wahba, Hashmi, Kim, and Hwang (2021) with a sample of restaurant workers found gender differences regarding employee performance. Fukuzaki and Iwata (2023) reported gender difference in job performance in favour of women. More so, gender has been well reported to moderate the relationship between several organizational variables. Kuśnierz, Rogowska and Pavlova (2020) found gender as a moderator in the relationship between conscientiousness and academic success. Harlos, Gulseren, O'Farrell, Josephson, Axelrod, Hinds and Montanino (2023) reported gender

moderation in the relationship between role conflict and bullying. Ganguli, and Padhy, (2023) found that workplace motivation has a significant effect on Gen Z employees' retention and that the association between job motivation and Gen Z employee retention was moderated by gender, income, and industry type. Ampomah and Mensah (2023) cross sectional survey revealed that gender was a significant moderator between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of tutors.

The observed moderating role of gender in the relationship between employee motivation and job performance has plausible explanation in how males and females perceived and respond to favourable actions from people and organizations. This is an issue of social exchange. Employee motivation either inform of salary, participation in decision making or recognition is a good turn from the organization and social exchange theory expects reciprocal response from the employees to the organization. The positive effect of employee motivation on job performance symbolises employee social exchange behaviour. And social exchange behaviour is expression of gratitude. Studies have shown that men and women differs in degree of appreciation (Li, 2022). So, the moderating role of gender in the relationship between employee motivation and job performance favouring women is plausibly because women are more appreciate than men as the cited studies show. In a study of 238 participants (125 women and 113 men) Skalski, and Pochwatko (2022) reported that femininity was associated with higher scores on the scales of gratitude and positive orientation. Similarly, in a cross-sectional study of 214 Polish (104 women) Agnieszka, Katarzyna, and Sandra (2022) observed that females scored higher in empathy and gratitude than males.

Contribution to Knowledge

The present study offered some theoretical and practical contributions to the extent body of knowledge on employee motivation and job performance. From a theoretical perspective this study extended the literature on employee motivation and job performance to correctional centres employees. In the management science literature several studies exist on the relationship between employee motivation and job performance among various categories of workers that include teachers, bank workers and hospital workers. Examining the relationship between employee motivation and job performance in correctional centres is necessary as such study is lacking in the literature. More so, the directions of the relationship that exist between employee motivation and job performance revealed by regression analysis indicate confirmation for social exchange theory. In that understanding, this study contributed to the literature on the empirical test of the theory.

In terms of practice this study through its findings made some substantial contributions. First, employee motivation was observed to relate in organizationally desirable direction with job performance. Job performance is highly desirable and sought employee behaviour as it has positive implication for the effective functioning of the organization. Therefore, the findings of this study have provided the understanding that would be of practical value for management of correctional centres in their bid to improve job performance. Simply put, Nigerian correctional centres management is provided with the information that addressing issues of employee motivation would enhance employee performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The present study examined the relationship between motivation and job performance among workforce of correctional centres in South-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. two hypotheses were tested, and the results obtained informed the following recommendations.

1 The descriptive statistics showed that the mean scores of the respondents on the independent variable (employee motivation) and dependent variables (job performance) are of moderate level. This indicates that the correctional centres employees are not fully motivated and are not performing at their maximum capacity. Therefore, it is recommended that management of the correctional centres institute policies and programmes that would enhance the motivation and performance of their workforce.

2 The results obtained from data analysis of hypothesis 1, revealed that employee motivation positively and significantly influenced job performance among worker in correctional centres in South-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. From the finding it is therefore recommended that management of correctional centres institute sufficient employee motivation practices and policies in correctional centres to improve the performance of their employees. Several valid practices and policies of motivation such as attractive salaries and allowances, conducive working condition, training and development opportunities, work-family balance are available.

3 The result obtained from hypothesis 2 revealed that gender plays moderation role in the influence of motivation on employee job performance. The moderation effect was in favour of females. That is, the effect of motivation on employee job performance is more pronounced in women than in men. Therefore, it is recommended that management of correctional centres should not totally apply the same motivation practices and policies to men and women. It is obvious from the finding that to achieve the same level of job performance men needs to be more motivated than women.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This study has some limitations in methodology that should be considered when interpreting and adopting the findings for practice. The first limitation is in the use of cross-sectional research design. Cross-sectional research design is known for its inability to identify cause-effect relationship. That is, cause-effect interpretation cannot be possible from study that applied cross-sectional design. Therefore, to achieved cause-effect interpretation from study on employee motivation and job performance longitudinal design is recommended for future studies. The second limitation is the use of data collected from only one source (self-report). Same-source data has the potential for common method bias. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies implement both procedural and statistical measures to address issues of common method variance.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the direct relationship between employee motivation and job performance among correctional centres workforce, and the moderation role of gender in the relationship. Two hypotheses were tested and analysis of data supported the hypotheses. Several conclusions could be draw from the magnitude and the direction of relationships between the employee motivation and job performance. From the finding on hypothesis 1 of this study it could be concluded that employee motivation significantly relates with job performance and that employee motivation has some percentage of influence on job performance as indicated by the r-squared statistics. It could also be concluded from the findings of hypothesis 1 of this study that the effect of employee motivation on job performance is small as indicated by the effect size statistics. The summary is that employee motivation is an important variable to be considered in intervention aimed at improving job performance. Analysis of data on hypothesis 2 of this study revealed that gender moderates the relationship between employee motivation and job performance. The data also revealed that the moderation effect was in favour of female gender. The conclusion that could be drawn from this finding is that the impact of employee motivation on job performance is more pronounce in females than in males. That is motivation has greater impact on females' performance than on males' performance.

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