

MANAGERIAL COMPETENCY AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN  
ALUMINIUM FIRMS IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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**Abstract**

*In the entire ambit of human resources management, nothing has a more disastrous effect on a firm's performance like managerial incompetence. Thus, this study explored the relationship between managerial competency and performance of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria. However, the specific objective include: To determine the relationship between teamwork and productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria; The study adopted descriptive survey design. A sample size of 265 respondents was drawn from a population of eight hundred and fifty-two (852) employees in twenty selected Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria. The instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics was used to present data generated while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. The results showed that there was a positive significant relationship between teamwork competence and organisational productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria with the values ( $r = 0.784$ , and  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). The implication of this finding is that managerial competence is an important managerial tool that influences employee's commitment to hire organisational performance in Aluminium firms in South East, Nigeria. This shows that managerial competence adopted by the Aluminium firms has helped to secure different degrees of organisational performance. The study concluded that there is a relationship between managerial competency and performance of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria. The study recommends that owners and managers of Aluminium Firms should adopt team work competence through training for improved organizational productivity.*

**Keywords:** Managerial Competency, Teamwork, Employee Performance, Productivity.

## **Introduction**

The Aluminium building products industry in Nigeria could, in relative terms, can be described as an industry still in its growth stages, especially when compared to its counterparts in the industrialized countries. The local industry took off in earnest in 1959 with the establishment of the first Aluminium Rolling mill in Nigeria by then Eastern Region Government in Trans-Amadi, Port Harcourt. The mill which represents the second stage in the processing of Aluminium into its one of many end-products was intended to produce Aluminium coils and Aluminium circles (The coils being the primary input in the fabrication of Aluminium roofing sheets and the circles being the primary input in the production of Aluminium pots, pans and hollow wares (Ali & Abiodun, 2018). Since, the Aluminium industry has experienced tremendous growth in other parts of Nigeria, its survival and expansion in Southeast Nigeria depends on the extent of managerial competency in relation to employee performance in the organization.

Managerial competencies are seen as the skills required to carry out duties as expected, motives to drive and attitudes required by managers in a competitive and dynamic business environment. Such competencies, according to Anoke et al, (2022) include, technical, personal, and conceptual skills, decision-making, leadership skills, responsibility-taking, conflict resolution ability, team building, and good communication skills.

Managerial competencies in manufacturing firms like Aluminium Firms can be assessed in terms of ability to have high sense of customer focus, employees-teamwork, effective communication, self-confidence, problem solving, adaptability, motivation, initiative, organizing, decision making and flexibility in the organisation (Anoke, 2023). Managerial competence indicator such as employees-teamwork, can be investigated to determine the extent of their relationship with organisational performance. On the basis of this study the researcher focused mainly on teamwork competence as it relates to performance in Aluminium Firms.

Teamwork is the concept of people working together cooperatively in order to achieve organisational objectives. Hartenian (2003), asserts that teamwork gives employees a sense of ownership and encourages effective cooperation.

On the other hand, performance in any organisation is linked to the ability of achieving the target goals of the organisation. In the Aluminium Firms, organisational performance can be viewed considering the variables such as the extent of strategic implementation of their operational performance, efficiency, competitiveness, productivity, survival and innovation toward higher organisational performance. These indicators play vital roles in determining the extent to which managers exhibit their managerial capability to influence employees toward higher performance in the firms.

Therefore, it is based on this premise that this study takes a critical look at managerial competencies with relation to the Aluminium industry in Nigeria with a view to ascertaining the extent to which managerial competency affects the organisational performance in the Aluminium industry in Nigerian.

Given the entire ambit of human resources management, hardly is any issue more vital, relevant and crucial to managers and shareholders than managerial competence and its corresponding effect on firms' performance (Olofu, 2021). Sadly, the problems facing the Nigerian manufacturing sector is basically on competence among managers and employees. Although, several reforms programmes introduced by the government were geared towards improving the financial status and performance and introduction of new products but they are yet to initiate reform that focuses on the psychological needs of the employees in terms of teamwork competence which invariably affect productivity of the firms. Most managers are not professionals in the positions they occupied in the organisations as they lack the spirit of team-working for greater outcomes. They lack the key ingredients of professional competencies necessary to influence employees to be committed to higher performance. Most of them are not diligent, business oriented, problem solving, leadership oriented, analytic in thinking and team spirit in planning,

organizing and coordinating employees and this affects the level of organisational productivity and quality products in the markets.

### **Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to examine the relationship between managerial competency and organisational performance of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria. However, the specific objective of the study is to determine the relationship between teamwork and productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria.

### **Research Question**

To what extent does teamwork relate to productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypothesis**

Ho: There is no positive significant relationship between teamwork and productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria.

### **Review Of Related Literature**

#### Concept of Managerial Competency

Managerial competencies are the knowledge, skills, technical know-how, abilities, and behaviour needed for efficient managerial performance. The study by Che-Rusuli (2017) revealed that employee competency has a mediating effect between human resource management function and service quality among workers in the hotel industry in Malaysia. Managerial competency is one of the attributes of management development while employee performance is one of the indicators in service quality elements. Blok (2009) stated that competencies are seen as the ultimate mediator between managerial interventions and employees' performance.

Competency is a term commonly used for people's asserting of their working potential in real activities. Currently, there are various meanings of competence. In principle, there are two main meanings on which individual definitions of competencies are generally based. The first characterizes competencies as a power and a scope of authority associated with a certain person or body (Anoke, Nzewi, eze, & Igwebuike, 2022). The second meaning of competencies refers to the capacity, i.e., abilities to perform a certain activity, to have certain general and specific characteristics and skills, to be qualified in the given area. Generally, it can be said that it is a set of specific knowledge, abilities, skills, traits, motives, attitudes and values essential for the personal development and successful participation of each person in an organisation.

#### Teamwork

Teamwork is the concept of people working together cooperatively in order to improve the productivity of the organisation. Teamwork has become one of the key indicators used to evaluate the competency of managers and employees as the productivity of the organisation solely depends on the cooperative efforts, experience and knowledge of all employees in the workplace. It has also become a valued asset that many large organisations have developed a specific interest in measuring potential employee's teamwork ability. Hence, Moshin and James, (2019) in their study found a positive relationship between teamwork competence and organizational productivity. Karanja, Muraguri, and Kinyua (2018) in their study on the effects of Teamwork on Performance of the water service regulatory board discovered that significant relationship exists teamwork competence and organizational productivity. Abuzid and Abbas (2017) maintain that productivity cannot occur without teamwork competence as productivity is the resultant outcome of team members who pulled their knowledge, skills and experience together attain a certain goal. Adeleke (2020) maintains that the concept of teamwork become vital goal in every organisation the belief that team spirit gives employees a sense of belonging, ownership and encouragement and influence cooperation.

### Organizational Performance

Organisational performance is the behaviour displayed or action displayed by the employees for the firm's effectiveness and is broadly assessed through commitment, innovation, job satisfaction and retention as it relates to employees in manufacturing firm. It focuses on the behaviours and actions of employees in their daily activities in relation to organisational effectiveness. That is why it captures the main behavioural and psychological variables that determines employees' state of mind in relation to organisational tasks.

The relationship between managerial competence and organisational performance has attracted the attention of researchers and scholars in the field of management (Anoke, et al 2022; Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung & Dale, 2006; Konan, 2010,). The managerial competence is being recognized as a strategic tool to achieve the highest performance and competitive advantage; also, managerial practices were found to be interrelated to help achieve the organisational performance goals. In support of this assertion, Ahmad, Halim & Zainal (2010) highlighted that managerial competency has stood out as a vehicle, which has been very conducive to the realization of improvements of managers at all levels in the organisation.

### Productivity

Misikir, (2004) defined productivity as a summary measure of the quantity and quality of work performance with resource utilization considered. Regardless of the type of production, economic or political system, the definition of productivity remains the same. Thus, though productivity may mean different things to different people, the basic idea is always the relationship between the quality and quantity of goods or service produced and the quantity of resource used to produce them. It can be measured at the level of the individual, group, or organisation. From a manager's perspective, productivity in all cases reflect success or failure in producing goods and services in quantity, of quality, and with

a good use of resources. In short it is the ratio of output value to input value. The output may be raised without an increase in productivity. That means the rate of the increment of input cost may be higher or the quality of the output may be decrease. The concept of productivity is also increasingly linked with quality of output, input, and process itself. Taking the definition of quality as conformance to requirements of the customer, productivity decreases as the quality of the output decrease.

### **Relationship between Managerial Competency and Performance**

For the last few decades, competencies have often been used as the basis of performance evaluation (Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006). The competence measurement indicators, influences behavioural factors relevant to organisational performance and determine the extent the job is carried out. Hence many firms use competency models as a part of their organisational development program to assess behavioural performance indices together with objectives (Özçelik & Ferman, 2006). Accordingly, many scholars (Levenson, Van der Stede, & Cohen, 2009, Ryan, Emmerling & Spencer, 2009) have claimed that the evaluation of managers' competencies provides an effective technique for predicting employees' job performance.

Boyatzis, (2006) pointed out that organisational performance and managerial competencies are interrelated. Since competencies are the building blocks of job performance (Martin & Staines, 1994), the current study postulates that there is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and firm performance. Such hypothesis dovetails with claims that managerial competencies are positively associated with performance across a variety of organisational and industry settings (Tucker & McCarthy, 2001).

### **Relationship between Teamwork and Productivity in Aluminium Firms**

In this period of increased competition, managers recognize the essence of teamwork more than ever before. Cohen & Bailey (1999) assert that teams increase the outputs of

employees through collaboration. Employees who are working in teams become the standard for the firm. It is the way of improving man-power utilization and potentially increasing performance of employees. With the support from upper-level management, an individual performs confidently in team and raises productivity of the firm. Presently, in the global world, managers are assigning more team projects to workers with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and develop their skills (Hartenian, 2003). Researchers have revealed that individual working within the team can produce more output when compared to working alone (Jones, Richard, Paul, Sloane and Peter, 2007). Onyekwelu, Anah and Ejike (2018), Delarue, Van Hootehem, Procter and Burrige (2008), and Ooko and Odundo (2015) in their separate studies affirmed a positive relationship between teamwork competence and productivity among employees in the organization.

Froebel & Marchington, (2005) conducted a study and found that teamwork has a positive significant correlation with organisational productivity. Team members improve the skills, knowledge and abilities while performing in teams (Froebel & Marchington, 2005). This means that employees who work in teams are able to improve upon their skills, knowledge and ability by learning from each other as they are working in a team, and due to that it enables them produce effectively and efficiently as compare to employees who work individually in organisations.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Competency-Based Theory**

The theory states that competence is a key determinant of organisational effectiveness toward competitive advantage. Managers must have the necessary core competencies to turn around organisational resources both human and material resources into productive venture to enhance optimum productivity and profit. Competency movement “became popular in early 1990s with works produced by authors, such as Prahalad & Hamel (1994), Teece, Pisano & Shuen (1997) and many publications highlighting the competency-based



theory. There is no doubt that the bases for the conceptual design of the competency-based theory can be found in the resource-based theory. In particular, this refers to the work produced by Barney (1991). Despite the apparent relationship between the resource-based and competency-based theory, there are still major differences between them.

Hence, Dierichx & Cool (1989) stated: “a key difference between the resource and competency-based view is the chain of causality: Whereas the resource-based view concludes that superior resources will cause performance differences among firms, the competency-based view prefers a subtler reasoning.

However, the resource endowment of the firm is not enough without adequate team members cooperation in order to explain performance differences. The firm itself has to be in a position to make use of team members resources in terms of skill, knowledge and experience in a goal- and market-oriented way. At this point, the competency-based view steps in with its further explanation of the way to achieve competitive advantages, thus, supplementing and upgrading the resource-based perspective.

### **Empirical Review**

Sabath, Laith & Manar (2012) investigated the effect of core competence on competitive advantage and organisational performance in United Arab Emirate. The objective of the study was to examine the effect of core competence, competitive advantage and organisational performance of paint industry in United Arab Emirate. The study decomposed core competence in three dimensions which include; shared vision, cooperation and empowerment. Competitive advantage was decomposed in terms of flexibility and responsiveness. The study adopted descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire was administered electronically to a total of 77 managers. The data generated were analysed using regression test. The results showed that core competence has a strong and positive impact on competitive advantage and organisational performance while competitive advantage has a significant impact on organisational performance. The study

recommended that for organisations to remain competitive and achieve competitive advantages, managers should endeavour to improve organisational performance by managing the dimensions of core competence.

A study on distinctive competence in a recessed economy and performance of selected commercial banks in Enugu State, Nigeria was conducted by Chiekezie, Onwuchekwa & Nwobodo (2017). The objective of the study was to examine the influence of employee-customer relationship on adaptability of commercial banks in Enugu State. A descriptive survey research design was employed. A sample size of 144 respondents and 140 customers were selected from three commercial banks in the three senatorial districts in Enugu state. A structured questionnaire was used to generate data which were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. The results indicated that a positive significant relationship exist between employee-customer relationship and adaptability of selected commercial banks in Enugu State. The study concluded that employee-customer relationship is vital for adaptability and sustainability of organisations toward economic development. The study suggested that organisations should have a strong employee-customer relationship competence so as to improve their performance.

A study on distinctive capabilities and the performance of small and medium size enterprises in Malaysia was conducted by Kim-man (2012). The aim of the study was to examine strategic factors that influence the performance of small and medium size enterprises in the Malaysia manufacturing sector. The study employed a descriptive survey design. A sample population of 100 small and medium enterprises was selected and administered a questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using correlation test with the aid of statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). The results revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between distinctive competence and the performance of small and medium enterprises.

Kolibacova (2014) conducted a study on the relationship between competency and performance in Czech Republic. The aim of this paper is to describe the relationship

between the competencies of employees and their performance in one particular company. The study adopted a descriptive survey method. Data were gathered from respondents through a semi-structured interview. The data collected were analysed using multiple regression analysis. The results of the study revealed that when the competency rate of one employee is a unit higher than the competency rate of another employee, it can be assumed that his performance rate is 7 to 12.5% higher. The result supports investing of time and money in staff development.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The study focused on Aluminium Firms in South East Nigeria.

There are many Aluminium firms in the South East Nigeria but for the purpose of this study, the total population of staff of the twenty (20) selected Aluminium Firms in South-East Nigeria is eight hundred and fifty-two (852), which comprise all categories of staff except the out sourced workers. The selection of these firms was based on the firms that have been in operation for at least ten years and staff strength above twenty-five (25) employees. In addition, certain group of employees were not selected because they were not under the payroll of the organisation. However, the staff strength of eight hundred and fifty-two (852) employees of the twenty selected Aluminium Firms were extracted from the personnel units of each of the Aluminium Firms as at August, 2023

Primary source of data formed the major source of data collection used in the study.

In order to ensure fairness in the sampling of data required for the investigation, the study adopted stratified random sampling to select a sample from the target population of 852 employees of the Aluminium Firms in South East Nigeria. The study grouped the population into twenty strata firms. However, the sample size was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula as shown below:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2P (1-P)}$$

where:

S = Sample size

$X^2$  = Table value of Chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at 0.05% confidence level (3.84).

N = Total population size.

P = Population proportion (0.5).

d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05). Thus;

$$S = \frac{3.84 (852) (0.5) (1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2 (852-1) + (3.84) (0.5) (1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{817.92}{2.1275 + 0.96}$$

$$S = \frac{817.92}{3.0875}$$

S = 265 respondents.

Therefore, the sample size for the study is two hundred and sixty-five (265) determined from the population of the twenty Aluminium Firms under investigation. To determine the administration of the questionnaire to the respondents of the twenty selected Aluminium Firms under investigation, equation (2) popularly called “Bowley’s Proportionate Sample Allocation Technique” is used.

The formula is given as:

$$n_1 = k \times \frac{n}{N}$$

Where,

$n_1$  = proportionate sample size for the  $i$ th ( $i= 1,2,3$ ) firms

$n$  = sample size already determined using equation (1)

$k$  = proportion of the population for the  $i$ th of the firm ( $i=1--3$ )

N= Total population of staff in the study which is 852.

Primary source of data formed the major source of data collection used in the study. This was accomplished through the administration of the questionnaire with questions structured in close-ended statements.

The analytical technique used to test hypotheses one to four (1-4) was the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient denoted by r and its value is between  $-1 < r < +1$  with the aid of Software Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

$$r = \frac{n(\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{n(\sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2} \sqrt{n(\sum Y^2) - (\sum Y)^2}}$$

Where, r= Correlation Coefficient, x= Independent Variables, y= Dependent Variables, n= Number of Scores.

### Data Presentation and Analysis

**Table 1 Teamwork Competence**

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	The level of cooperation in my firm has encouraged us to broaden our skills and knowledge.	3.35	1.124	Accepted
2	Managers often recognize and rewards employees who maintain the team-working policy.	3.63	0.968	Accepted
3	Working with team increases employee's work efficiency.	3.58	1.110	Accepted
4	All members of the team have an equal opportunity for participation to develop confidence and skills.	3.68	1.131	Accepted

5	Team members intimidate individuals to limit their intentions and work towards achieving overall objective of the firm.	3.78	1.142	Accepted
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*Source: Field Survey, July, 2023*

The means and standard deviations of questions under teamwork competence construct are as shown in Table 1 above.

**Table 2 Organisational Productivity**

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	To the best of my knowledge, the defect/ errors in the finished products have decreased.	3.34	1.133	Accepted
2	I am sensitive that adoption of recent technical processes has led to higher output per-day	3.67	1.135	Accepted
3	I am convinced that the problems in the production process have decreased.	3.62	1.070	Accepted
4	The total output per worker has improved as a result of employee' build a strong bond with their co-workers in the firm.	3.76	1.083	Accepted
5	My organisation takes care to ensure the rational use of energy, materials and time.	3.68	1.000	Accepted

*Source: Field Survey, July, 2023*

The means and standard deviations of questions under Organisational Productivity construct is as shown in table 2 above.

### Hypothesis

**Table 3 Correlation coefficient between Teamwork Competence and Organisational Productivity**

		Teamwork competence	Organisational Productivity
Teamwork competence	Pearson Correlation	1	.784**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	254	254
Organisational Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.784**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	254	254

1. \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 3 shows that Teamwork Competence (TC) has a positive correlation coefficient of 0.784 which is significant with a p-value of 0.00. The coefficient of 0.784 indicates that there is a positive significance relationship between Teamwork Competence and Organisational Productivity, and the p-value of 0.00 suggests that this relationship is statistically significant. This suggest that there is a positive significant relationship between Teamwork Competence and Organisational Productivity.

### Discussion of Findings

Based on the result of the analysis, it therefore shows that there is a positive significant relationship between teamwork competence and organisational productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria with the values ( $r = 0.784$ , and  $P\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). This

relationship could also be said to be significant and direct, because as teamwork competence increases, the level of organisational productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria, increases.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, managerial competency has a high positive relationship with organisational productivity of Aluminium Firms in South East, Nigeria.

### **Recommendation**

The owners and managers of Aluminium Firms who have not adopted teamwork need to commence employing it by frequently organising training and development programmes for employees of the firm on how to form on work in teams before its implementation to improve organisational productivity.

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