

**IMPACT OF JOB DESCRIPTION ON EMPLOYEE'S
PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF USMANUDANFODIYO
UNIVERSITY SOKOTO.**

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Abstract

Job description is crucial for efficient work performance in any organization, as it plays an important role in the attainment of organizational goals and objectives, because it serve as a nerve that suffices the need of easy and smooth functioning of work which helps in enhancing the quality of work life of employees and organizational development. This paper examines the impact of job description on organizational performance with particular reference to UsmanuDanFodiyo University Sokoto Nigeria. The paper adopts quantitative method to collect data and also used SPSS software version 21 to analyze it. The result reveals that there is positive relationship between job description and organizational performance. The study attributed poor performance to absence or unclear job description. The study therefore, recommends that in order to address the situation and increase performance related to job description, organization should formulate and redesign their job description in line with job specification and made available to staff at the right time, because the findings of the research reveals that such will help in improving and ensuring the attainment of the goals of the University.

Key Words: Job, Role Profile, job analysis, job description, job specification.

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of jobs, roles, skills and competencies is one of the greatest and important techniques in human resource management practice. It provides the information required to produce job description and role profile. Job description is a document that outlines the purpose of the job, the task involved, the duties and responsibilities, the performance objectives and the reporting relationships. It gives details of the terms and conditions,

including the remuneration package and hours of work. It is used in the recruitment process and provides the basis for developing workers specification (Edmond & Mike 2013). Job description is an indispensable tool that defines an employee's profile relating to his/ her job. Despite the fact that job description is vital for efficient work performance in every organization, some research work such as Halima (2014) and Michael (2010) has found out that in many organizations employees complain for having ineffective or non-existence of job description. The existence of this problem prompts the researchers to undertake this study.

It is against the above background that this paper intends to investigate the impact of job description in Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University Sokoto, in relation to increasing performance of employee's and attainment of organizational objectives. To do this, the paper is divided into five parts, with part one containing the introduction, part two review both theoretical and empirical literature on job description. Part three covers methodology, while part four presents and analyzes data collected. Part five covers conclusion.

Concept of Job and Roles

The terms 'job' and role are often used interchangeably, but they are different. A job is an organizational unit consisting of a group of defined tasks or activities to be carried out or duties to be performed, while a role is the part people play in their work—the emphasis is on the expected patterns of behavior to achieve agreed outcomes (Armstrong & Taylor 2014). A job consists of a related set of tasks that are carried out by a person to fulfill a purpose. It can be regarded as a unit in an organizational structure that remains unchanged, whoever is in the job. A job in this sense is a fixed entity, like a part of a machine that can be designed like any other part of a machine. Routine or machine controlled jobs do indeed exist in most organizations but, increasingly, the work embarked upon by people is not mechanistic. What is done and the results achieved depend more or less on the capabilities and motivation of individuals and their interactions with one another and their customers, clients, passengers or supplies (Armstrong, 2012).

The concept of a role conveys these realities more than that of a job. Importantly, a role is the part people play in carrying out their work.

Individual roles are those carried out by one person. Generic roles are those similar activities carried out by a number of people. Thus, a role can be described in behavioral terms- given certain expectations; this is how the person needs to behave to meet them. Micheal et' al (2008) viewed a role as an organized set of behavior, the part people play in their work- the emphasis is on the pattern of behavior expected of them in order to achieve agreed outcomes. According to Armstrong (2012) a job is an organizational unit which consists of a group of defined and identified tasks or activities to be carried out or duties to be performed.

Job Analysis

Job analysis and design are important aspects of HRM across organizations. The two concepts are interrelated and supportive of one another. Job analysis and design provide an insight about job contents and the necessary skills needed for the successful completion of the job. It also creates conducive atmosphere for the accomplishment of organizational objectives as well as the needs of employees in the organization. Basically, job analysis and design involves a systematic study of the tasks involved in a particular job and what is required in terms of human skills and knowledge to satisfactorily accomplish the tasks (Mullins, 1996). Job analysis is thus, a process undertaken to determine which characteristics are necessary for satisfactory job performance and to analyze the conditions in which the job is performed, which all relied on having a comprehensive and detailed job description (Yahaya&Abubakar, 2015). Job analysis is thus, the process of analyzing the content of jobs in order to guide recruitment and selection, identify training needs and for the purpose of job evaluation. Job analysis can be carried out in a number of ways including interviewing job holders and supervisors, observation of work activity, and the completion of a job analysis questionnaire. The result should be an account of the tasks and competencies that comprise a particular job, which can then be used to inform a wide range of HRM practice (Edmund & Noon 2013).

To this end job analysis can be viewed as the detailed and proper study of the elements involved in the job such a job contents, duties, functions knowledge and skills. Thus, job analysis concentrates on what job holders are expected to do or not to do. US Office of Personnel Management (2011) defines job analysis as a systematic process of gathering, documenting and analyzing information about the content, context and requirements of a job.

On the basis of these, Herbert & Timothy (2009) argued that job analysis should be used when assessing the accuracy of organizational selection procedures. Consequently, Ivancevich&Konopaske, (2013) contended that a good job analysis most provide the following if it is to be viewed favorably:

1. It should yield a thorough, clear job description
2. The frequency and significance of task behaviors should be assessed
3. It must allow for an accurate assessment of the knowledge, skills, abilities and other features (KSAOs) required by the job.
4. It must yield information about the relationship between job duty and KSAOs. Thus, it most clearly determines which KSAOs are required for each job duty.

In addition to helping organizations satisfy their KSAOs requirements, job analysis is closely tied to HRM activities. It is used extensively as argued by Ivancerich&Kanopaske (2013) in each of the following areas:

1. Recruitment and selection: job analysis information helps recruiters seek and find the right persons for the organizations and to hire the right person, selection testing most assess the most critical skills and abilities needed to perform a job. All this information comes from job analysis.
2. Training and career development: knowing the skills acquired for a job is necessary to building effective training programs. As such, it helps individual workers to move easily from one career stage to another.
3. Compensation: compensation is tied to the duties and responsibilities of a job. Thus, proper compensation demands accurate assessments of what various job entail.
4. Strategic planning: Nowadays, managers are beginning to realize that job analysis is the major tool in an organization's overall strategic planning efforts, effective job analysis can help organizations change and restructure work and work flow processes to meet the changing demands of uncertain environments

Job analysis is made up of two sub-divisions, job description and job specification. Job description is a factual statement and summary of the job contents in terms of duties, relationship with other jobs and personnel requirement of the job. Job specification on the other hand, states the minimum qualifications, job related experience, knowledge, skills and capabilities needed on performing the job (Mullins, 1996.).

Job Description

A job description defines what job holders are required to do in terms of activities, duties or tasks. It is prescriptive and inflexible giving people the

opportunity to say: ‘it’s not in my job description, meaning that they only need to do the tasks listed there (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). In addition, a job description is more concerned with tasks than outcomes and with the duties to be performed than the competencies required in performing the task. Job description is a document that outlines the purpose of the job, the task involved, the duties and responsibilities, the performance objectives and the reporting relationships. It gives details of the terms and conditions, including the remuneration package and hours of work. It is used in the recruitment process and provides the basis for developing workers specification (Edmond & Mike 2013). Job description is one of the primary aspects provided by a systematic job analysis (Bill, 2007). Simply put, a job description is a written description of what the job entails (Bill, 2007). It is, however, difficult to overemphasize how important thorough and accurate a job description is to an organization, as it serve as an effective instrument for the realization of organizational goal.

Employee Performance

The success of any organization is closely tied to the job performance of its employee. Thus, employee performance is seen as the related activities expected of a worker and how well those activities were executed. Today, many organizations assess the employee performance of each staff member on an annual or quarterly basis in order to help them identify suggested area for improvement, which is done through performance review (Lyndsey, 2016). Performance review is designed to evaluate how workers are performing in their roles and to identify any areas where training may be required. Many employees felt nervous about their performance review and consider it as a negative meeting designed for their supervisors to reproof them. Although this is not the case, as performance review is a two-way street, an opportunity to discuss how you feel you are getting on in your job and for your manager to also articulate their own views. When it comes to undertaking a performance review, preparation is the key, thus one should be able to express his skills and achievement as part of the process. The following steps should therefore be followed in performance review:

1. Understand the process: In order to prepare for your performance review, it is important that you understand the process. There are various formats performance review can take, including, ratings based, objectives and 360 degree feedback. As the more you understand the performance review process, the better prepared you will be.

2. Compare previous performance review: If you have undertaken a performance review in the past with your employer, it is good idea to take a look at it before you start your preparation. In doing so, you can get a clear understanding of what your objectives were from the previous one and whether you have achieved them. If the performance review is only carried out on an annual basis you will have no doubt forgotten what you discussed during the process.
3. Evaluate yourself and achievement: The performance review is an opportunity for you to express what you feel you have achieved and to identify any area you wish to improve on. It may be that your boss has the same opinion on your performance or it may be necessary for further discussions and improvement to enable you to reach the goal of the organization.

Writing a Job Description

Job descriptions should be based on the job analysis and should be brief and factual as possible. The headings under which the job description should be written and notes for guidance on completing each section are spelt out by Armstrong (2012) below:

1. **Job Title:** The existing job title should indicate as clearly as possible the function in which the job is carried out and the level of the job within that function. The use of the terms such as ‘manager’, assistant manager’ or ‘senior’ to describe job levels should be reasonably consistent between functions with regard to grading of the job.
2. **Reporting to:** The job title of the manager or team leader to whom the job holder is directly responsible should be given under this heading. No attempt should be made to indicate here any functional relationships the job holder have to other people.
3. **Reporting to Job Holder:** The job titles of all the posts directly reporting to the job holder should be given under this heading. Again, no attempt should be made to indicate any functional relationships that might exist between the job holder and other employees.
4. **Overall Purpose:** This section should describe clearly the overall purpose of the job. The aim should be to convey in one sentence a broad picture of the job which will clearly distinguish it from other jobs and establish the role of the job holders and the contributions they should make towards achieving the objectives of the organization and their own function or unit. When preparing a job description, it is often best to defer writing down the definition of overall responsibilities until the activities have been analyzed and described.
5. **Main Activities, Tasks or Duties.** The following method of describing activities, tasks or duties should be followed.

- I. Group the various activities identified by the job analysis together so that no more than seven or eight areas remain. If the number is more than that, then the job description will become complex and difficult to be specific about the activities, tasks or duties.
- II. Define each activity in one sentence, which starts with a verb in the active voice in order to provide a positive indication of what has to be done and eliminate unnecessary wording, for example plan, prepare, produce, implement, process, provide, schedule, complete, dispatch, maintain, liaise with and collaborates with.
- III. Describe what is to be done as clearly as possible, for example, post cash to the nominal and sales ledgers, dispatch packed output to the warehouse, schedule production, ensure that management accounts are produced, prepare marketing plans etc.
- IV. State briefly the purpose of the activity in terms of outcomes, outputs or standards to be achieved. For examples: test new systems to ensure they meet agreed systems specifications, post cash to the nominal and sales ledgers in order to provide up-to-date and accurate financial information, dispatch to the warehouse planned output so that all items are removed or carries on the same day they are packed, schedule production to meet laid-down output and delivery targets, ensure that management accounts are produced that provide the required level of information to management and individual managers on financial performance against budget and on any variances, prepare marketing plans that support the achievement of the marketing strategies of the enterprises, are realistic and provide clear guidance on the actions or in actions to be taken.

Methodology

This study adopted quantitative method using structured questionnaire based on five Likert scale to collect data. The research population covered the 2907 staff of UsmanuDanFodiyo University Sokoto. The respondents covered academic staff, senior non-academic staff and junior staff of the university. There are 1142 academic staff, 812 senior academic staff and 953 junior staff. It is worthwhile to note that out of the 2907 employees at UsmanuDanFodiyo University 341 was selected as the required sample size based on Krejcie & Morgan table of determining sample size in a given research activities, as the table indicates that when the total population is 3000 a sample of 341 will be the required sample size, as the total population of Usmanu DanFodiyo University Sokoto employees was 2907 which is close to 3000, a sample of 341 is taken as the sample size of the study. After getting the required number of the sample size, the research

divides the sample size into three stratification based on the categorization of staff (academic, senior non-academics and junior staff) in order to ensure that all the category of the staff were duly represented. The method that was used in drawing out sampled respondents for the study is stratified sampling technique. In stratified sampling, the sampling frame is divided into homogeneous and non-overlapping sub groups called (Strata) and a simple random sample is drawn within each sub groups (Bhattacharjee 2012). A total of 341 copies of questionnaires were administered out of which 308 copies were filled and returned. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis was done with the help of SPSS software version 21.

Results

As highlighted above data analysis has been done with the help of SPSS software. After the respondents had filled in the questionnaire, the data was entered into the software and the analysis was made thereafter. The data has been presented in the form of tables and interpretation of each table is provided. The results of the objective of the study hypothesized as “*There is a significant relationship between job description and organizational performance*”. Thus, the hypothesis was tested using simple regression, Pearson correlation and chi square test.

The model summary results presented in Table 1.2 indicate that the value of F statistics is significant at 1%. This implies that the model is fit to capture the effect of job description on service delivery. However, the value of R² indicates that job description explains only 2% variation in service delivery. This is as a result of other factors that may influence service delivery not captured on the model. These therefore, serve as one of the limitation of this study that ought to be captured by future studies.

Table 1.1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig. (P value)
	0.153	0.023	0.020	0.31	7.29	0.001

Source: SPSS Version 21 Statistic Output

The results of simple linear regression presented in Table 1.2 reveals that job description has a positive and significant relationship with organizational performance at 1% level of significance. This corroborates

with the results of Pearson correlation reported in Table 1.2, which reveals that there is positive and significant correlation between job description and organizational performance. Linear regression and Pearson correlation result has an estimated coefficient of 0.15 with significant value of probability of less than 0.01. Whereas, the chi-square analysis on the association between job description and organizational performance using Pearson, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear methods shows that job description and organizational performance are less associative since sig. values (p values) are all higher than 0.05.

Table 1.2: Regression Result on the Effect of Job Description on Organizational Performance

Variable	Coefficient	P-value	T-Statistics	Standard Error
Job Description	0.153	0.007	2.700	.053

Source: SPSS Version 21 Statistic Output

Table 1.3 Correlations of Job Description to Organizational Performance

		TJBD_AV	Organizational Performance
TJBD_AV	Pearson Correlation	1	.153**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	308	308
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.153**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	308	308

Source: SPSS Version 21 Statistic Output

Table 1.3 shows the results of correlation coefficients and coefficient of determination of organizational performance on job description. The results revealed that service delivery and job description has positive correlation and that the relationship is statistically significance at 5% level.

Table 1.4: Chi-Square Test for the Association between Job Description and Organizational Performance

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	138.334 ^a	135	.404
Likelihood Ratio	121.250	135	.796
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.144	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	308		

Source: SPSS Version 21 Statistic Output.

Table 1.4 above shows the result on the association between job description and service delivery using Pearson, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear methods. Thus, the results of chi-square tests by Pearson and Likelihood Ratio methods revealed that job description and organizational performance are less associative since sig. values (p values) are all higher than 0.05 but Linear-by-Linear method revealed that job description and service delivery are highly associated.

The outcome of this study is line with the expectation as well as the literature. It corroborated with the finding of Halima (2014) who revealed that job description is needed for increased work performance, while Moses (2012) also found out that the problem leading to poor performance among workers are related to absence or unclear job description. The finding of Michael (2010) reveals that an effective and well defined job description is necessary for the attainment of all organization in respective of whether public or private.

Conclusion

Nigerian Universities in recent years are beset with many problems that make them unable to meet up with their objectives. Although these problems are many and varied, results from the major findings of this study revealed that problem leading to poor performance among workers is related to absence or unclear job description and can impact negatively on the attainment of the goal of the university. Also, the research found out that job description increased work performance. The study therefore, concludes that HRM practice (job description) in UDUS and other Universities in Nigeria can be improved for the better should the management of UDUS, Government and other stake holders in HRM accept and properly

implement the suggested solutions as recommended below: that managers/administrators should made available to their employees a comprehensive and a clear job description for that is one of the yardstick for the attainment of organizational goals. The study also recommends that in order to address the situation and increased job performance, organizations should formulate effective job description which would include job specifications and be made available to employees at the appropriate time. The study also recommends the need to redesign scheme of service and job description, according to the situation, ensure availability of job analysis and establish an appropriate HR policy to reduce brain drain of qualified employees who look for greener pasture. In addition, the termination of one research may be the beginning of the other. This research work should have covered the whole Nigerian universities, but due to lack of enough time and resources, it was restricted to UsmanuDanfodiyo University, Sokoto. This study therefore, suggests that more research of this nature should be carried out to cover more than one University. Future researches are also needed to use larger sample sizes in order to statistically validates the results of this research and provide a support for the present findings.

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