

WORKPLACE POLICY AND EMPLOYEES' ENGAGEMENT: A STUDY OF SELECTED ORGANISATIONS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The work examines Workplace Policies and Employee Engagement: A study of selected organisations in Delta State, Nigeria. The following objective guided the study: to examine the presence of workplace policies on employee engagement; to identify key workplace policies that enhance employee motivation and commitment; to analyse the challenges organisations face in implementing effective workplace policies; and to suggest strategies for improving workplace policies to foster employee engagement. Three basic theories were analysed and adopted for the study: Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, and Social Exchange Theory (SET). The survey research design was employed in this study; two hundred respondents (200) who were interviewed provided information for the study. Questionnaires and interviews were the major data-collection methods. The data analysis for the study was conducted using a simple descriptive frequency table. The primary and secondary sources of data collection were the primary means by which this work is anchored. The study reported several findings, including the presence of workplace policies. The study reveals that there are workplace policies across various organisations. Forms of workplace policies: Three major policies were identified: Health and Safety, Maternal and Child, and Environmental Policy. The effectiveness of workplace Policies. It was found that, despite the policies in various organisations, these policies are not effective in practice. Various recommendations were made, including: well-structured workplace policies; selecting diverse organisations; considering employee standpoints; examining organisational performance; and exploring policy implementation challenges.

Key Words: Employee, Engagement, Employee Engagement, Policy, Workplace.

Introduction

Employee engagement has become a major focus in organisational studies and management practice because of its significant influence on productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organisational effectiveness (Kahn, 1990). To create an organised and supportive work environment, organisations develop workplace policies that shape employee attitudes, commitment, and motivation (Gerhart & Fang, 2014). Well-designed workplace policies provide clear directions regarding communication, work flexibility, compensation, and

performance management, thereby promoting a positive and productive organisational culture (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

According to Bakker and Leiter (2010), employee engagement is a key determinant of organizational success, as it affects employee productivity, job satisfaction, and workplace morale. Employee engagement reflects the level of emotional attachment and commitment employees have toward their organization, which often translates into greater motivation and improved performance. Consequently, organizations across different sectors strive to enhance employee engagement through workplace policies that are aligned with both employee expectations and organizational objectives (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011).

Workplace policies consist of formal rules, procedures, and guidelines that regulate employee conduct, expectations, and interactions within an organization. These policies cover various aspects of organizational life, including human resource management practices, work-life balance programmes, performance appraisal systems, diversity and inclusion initiatives, as well as employee training and development opportunities (Becker & Huselid, 2006). The quality and effectiveness of these policies have a considerable impact on employee morale, job satisfaction, and engagement (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004).

Armstrong and Taylor (2023) and Saks (2006) argue that properly developed workplace policies play a vital role in fostering employee engagement by creating a supportive and enabling work environment. Policies that encourage transparent communication, equitable treatment, career growth opportunities, and flexible work arrangements are associated with increased employee retention and enhanced organizational performance. Conversely, inflexible or poorly implemented policies can contribute to employee disengagement, increased turnover, and lower productivity levels (Kahn, 1990; Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004).

Although the importance of workplace policies in promoting employee engagement is widely acknowledged, many organizations encounter difficulties in developing and implementing policies that adequately address employee needs and expectations (Locke & Latham, 2002). Challenges such as inadequate transparency, limited employee participation in policy development, and inconsistencies between organizational policies and workplace culture may weaken engagement efforts. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement is essential for organizational leaders, policymakers, and human resource practitioners seeking to improve employee satisfaction and organizational productivity (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018).

This study seeks to examine the influence of workplace policies on employee engagement, identify effective approaches to policy development and implementation, and investigate the challenges that may hinder successful engagement initiatives. By evaluating the ways workplace policies affect employee motivation, commitment, and involvement, the study aims to offer practical recommendations that organizations can adopt to strengthen employee engagement through comprehensive and inclusive workplace policies.

Statement of the Problem

Employee engagement is widely recognized as an essential element in achieving organizational effectiveness, increased productivity, and sustained competitiveness in today's business environment. To achieve these objectives, organizations are expected to develop and implement workplace policies that support employee well-being, encourage participation in

decision-making processes, promote career growth, facilitate effective communication, ensure fairness, and maintain a healthy work-life balance. When these policies are effectively implemented, they can strengthen employees' commitment, enhance motivation, improve job satisfaction, and boost overall job performance.

Despite the presence of workplace policies in many organizations, employee engagement continues to be a significant concern. Evidence from existing studies suggests that many employees still demonstrate low levels of commitment, motivation, and involvement in organizational activities. This often manifests in increased absenteeism, high employee turnover, poor performance, and declining organizational productivity. Such outcomes indicate that the existence of workplace policies alone may not be enough to ensure meaningful employee engagement.

Within the Nigerian organizational environment, numerous organizations have introduced policies relating to employee welfare, promotion, training and development, communication, and disciplinary procedures. However, questions remain regarding the effectiveness of the communication and implementation of these policies. In many instances, employees lack adequate awareness of the policies governing their employment or perceive their application as inconsistent and inequitable. As a result, employees may experience dissatisfaction, reduced engagement, and diminished commitment to organizational objectives.

Moreover, although previous research has explored the relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance, there is still limited empirical evidence regarding the specific influence of workplace policies on employee engagement in Nigerian organizations. The gap between policy formulation and actual implementation creates uncertainty about the extent to which workplace policies contribute to enhancing employee engagement.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement in Nigerian organizations. Specifically, it aims to determine the extent to which workplace policies influence employee engagement and contribute to overall organizational effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

Several organizational and behavioural theories have been used to explain the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement. These theories offer valuable insights into how workplace environments, organizational support mechanisms, and employee perceptions influence their commitment, motivation, and participation in organizational activities. This study is anchored on three relevant theories: Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, and Social Exchange Theory (SET), which collectively provide a framework for understanding the connection between workplace policies and employee engagement.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), argues that individuals are naturally motivated when their fundamental psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. Within organizations, workplace policies that promote employee involvement in decision-making, provide opportunities for learning and professional development, and encourage positive workplace relationships help satisfy these needs, thereby increasing employee engagement. The theory suggests that employees are more likely to be enthusiastic, committed, and actively involved in their work

when they perceive organizational policies as supportive of their growth, well-being, and personal development.

In the same vein, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model introduced by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) explains employee engagement in terms of the interaction between job demands and the resources available to employees. The model views workplace policies as valuable organizational resources that enable employees to manage job pressures, minimize stress, and maintain high levels of motivation. Policies relating to employee welfare, training and development, communication, flexible work arrangements, and career advancement provide essential resources that support employee engagement and productivity. Consequently, the JD-R Model emphasizes the importance of workplace policies in creating supportive work environments that enhance employee well-being and organizational performance.

Social Exchange Theory (SET), propounded by Blau (1964), provides another important perspective for understanding employee engagement. The theory is based on the principle that social relationships involve reciprocal exchanges between individuals and organizations. In the workplace, employees who perceive organizational policies as fair, supportive, and beneficial are likely to respond with greater commitment, loyalty, and engagement. Conversely, when policies are viewed as unfair, inconsistent, or unsupportive, employees may reduce their level of commitment and become less engaged in organizational activities. Therefore, SET highlights the significance of fairness, trust, and reciprocal obligations in influencing employee attitudes and behaviours.

Among the theories discussed, Social Exchange Theory is adopted as the primary theoretical framework for this study. This theory offers the most direct explanation of the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement by emphasising the reciprocal nature of interactions between employees and organisations. When organizations implement policies that employees perceive as equitable and supportive, employees are more likely to reciprocate with higher levels of engagement, commitment, and positive organizational behaviours. As such, Social Exchange Theory provides an appropriate framework for examining how workplace policies influence employee engagement within Nigerian organisations.

Research Methodology

This section ex-rays the various methods that were applied in this work. Therefore, the processes and procedures that were used in this work were presented.

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement in selected organizations in Delta State, Nigeria, specifically First Bank Nigeria Limited and Beta Glass Plc, both located in Ughelli. The descriptive survey design is appropriate for studies that seek to obtain information directly from a population regarding their opinions, perceptions, attitudes, and experiences concerning a particular phenomenon without manipulating any variables.

The choice of this design was informed by the nature of the study. Workplace policies and employee engagement are behavioural and organisational phenomena that are best understood through the perceptions and experiences of employees directly affected by these

policies. Since the study aimed to examine employees' awareness of workplace policies, their perceptions of policy implementation, and the extent to which such policies influence their engagement, a survey design was an effective means of collecting relevant data from a relatively large number of respondents within a limited period.

Furthermore, the descriptive survey design was considered suitable because it enables the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data on existing conditions within organisations. Unlike experimental designs, which require the manipulation of variables under controlled conditions, the present study sought to examine workplace realities as they naturally occur in organisational settings. The researcher had no intention of altering workplace policies or employee behaviour but rather aimed to describe and analyse the existing relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement.

The design also enabled the researcher to generate empirical evidence from employees across different departments and job categories, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings within the selected organisations. Consequently, the descriptive survey research design was considered the most appropriate approach to achieving the study's objectives and providing a comprehensive understanding of how workplace policies influence employee engagement in the selected organisations.

Population of the Study

The study population comprises the total staff of First Bank and Beta Glass in Delta State, Nigeria. The population of these organisations is fifty (50) First Bank and one thousand four hundred Beta Glass (1400). The total population for the two organisations is one thousand four hundred and fifty (1,450).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample is a smaller group of elements drawn through a defined procedure from a specified population. The sample size for this study is two hundred (200) respondents. The respondents are staff from the two organisations studied. Due to trust issues, staff at the various organisations studied refused to provide the researcher with official documents on the organisations' policy matters. Based on that, convenience sampling or purposive sampling was adopted. Data for this work were mainly from primary and secondary sources.

Data Collection Methods

Questionnaires were administered to respondents by the researcher after a considerable period of time the questionnaires were retrieved. Interviews were also conducted. These methods were the primary means through which data were gathered for the study.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data gathered for this work was analysed using simple percentage and frequency tables. The descriptive method was used to analyse data obtained from respondents.

Presentation of Findings

Data from the field was presented and analysed. The results are presented in line with the study's objectives. The data was analysed using descriptive methods. The first section of the analysis looks at the demographic characteristics of respondents.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	140	70
Female	60	30
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Survey Data, 2025

Table 1 presents the age bracket of respondents who provided data for the study. It shows that 70% of the population is male. Whereas 30% of the population is female.

Table 2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
22 - 28 Years	15	7.5
29 – 36 Years	35	17.5
37 - 44 Years	110	55
45 and above	40	20
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Survey Data, 2025

Table 2 above illustrates the age brackets that participated in this work. It revealed that respondents between the ages of 22 and 28 years represent 7.5% of the population, and those between the ages of 29 and 36 years. This figure represents 17.5% of the study population; 55% are in the age bracket of 37-44 years, and the final category comprises people aged 45 years and above. This group constitutes 20% of the study population.

Table 3: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	16	8
Married	140	70
Divorced	4	2
Separated	10	5
Widow/Widower	30	15
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Survey Data, 2025

Table 3 shows the marital statuses of the respondents who participated in this study. It indicates that those who are single constitute 8%, whereas those who are married represent

70% of the total population of the study, those who are divorced represent 2% of the population, while those who are separated represent 5% of the population, and 15% of the population were widowed/widower.

Table 4: Highest Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
FSLC &below	8	4
WASC	15	7.5
OND	5	2.5
B.Sc/HND	130	65
PGD	17	8.5
MSC	18	9
Ph.D.	7	3.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Survey Data, 2025

Table 4 above looks at the educational qualifications of respondents who participated in the study. It was found that 4% of the population had FSLC and below. The next category of respondents is those with WASC and its equivalent. This group comprised 7.5% of the population, while those with OND represented 2.5%, people with B.Sc/HND represented 65%, those with PGD represented 8.5%, those with M.Sc. represented 9%, and the final category was those with PhD. represent 3.5%.

Analysis of Data

This section analysed data obtained from the field

TABLE 5: Presence of Workplace Policies on Employee Engagement.

S/n	Responses	Response rate	Percentage
1	There is a workplace policy, but not effective	140	70
2	No workplace policy	40	20
3	Not aware of any workplace policy	20	10
Total		200	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 5 shows respondents' responses regarding the presence of policies in their organisation. The first category of respondents stated that the organisation has workplace policies. They also stated that these policies are in the document and are ineffective. This represents 70%. 20% of the population stated that there are no workplace policies in their organisation, whereas 10% stated that they are unaware of any. The percentage of respondents who said

there is a workplace policy indicates that one exists. Whether these policies are effective is another issue to consider.

TABLE 6: Forms Workplace Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Health and Safety	120	60
Maternal and Child	50	25
Environmental Sanitation Policy	30	15
Total	200	100

Source: Researcher's field work 2025

The above table shows that the various organisations studied have a Health and Safety policy. This represents 60% of the total population, while 25% of the population said there is a maternal and child policy. The last said there is an environmental policy in the organisation. Those who said there is an environmental policy constitute 15% of the population.

TABLE 6Effectiveness of Workplace Policies

Effectiveness of Workplace Policies	Frequency	Percentage
Very low	150	75
Low	40	20
No answer	10	5
Total	200	100

Source: Researcher's field work 2025

Table 6 above presents respondents' responses regarding the effectiveness of workplace policy in the organisation. The first group of respondents said that although there are workplace policies, these policies are not effective at all. They represent 75% of the population. While 20% of the population said the implementation and effectiveness of the policies are low. The last group of respondents refused to answer the question. Based on the respondents' responses, it is clear that although there are workplace policies in the organisations, these policies are ineffective.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that workplace policies exist in the selected organisations, as a substantial proportion of respondents acknowledged their presence. This finding supports the position of scholars who argue that organisations formulate workplace policies to provide guidelines for employee conduct, promote organisational efficiency, and ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards. The finding is consistent with studies that reported that formal workplace policies are common features of modern organisations and serve as frameworks for regulating employee behaviour and organisational operations.

The study further revealed that the major workplace policies within the organisations include health and safety, maternal and child, and environmental policies. This finding is in agreement with previous studies, which observed that organisations increasingly adopt health and safety policies to protect employees from occupational hazards, family-related policies to promote employee welfare, and environmental policies to ensure sustainable organisational practices. The presence of these policies suggests that the organisations recognise their responsibilities toward employee well-being and environmental protection.

Another important finding of the study is that, despite the existence of workplace policies, many respondents perceived them as ineffective. This finding corroborates the views of scholars who contend that the mere existence of workplace policies does not automatically guarantee their effectiveness. Effective workplace policies require proper implementation, monitoring, enforcement, and employee awareness. The finding also aligns with empirical studies that reported a gap between policy formulation and policy implementation in many organisations. Such a gap often results in employee dissatisfaction, low commitment, and reduced organisational performance. Therefore, the perceived ineffectiveness of workplace policies in the studied organisations may be attributed to inadequate enforcement mechanisms, poor communication of policy provisions, or a lack of management commitment to policy implementation.

Conclusion

The outcome of the work is consistent with the popular view of the Nigerian situation, where policies are formulated but not implemented. The study on workplace policy and employee engagement: A Study of Selected Organizations in Delta State,

Nigeria has conclusively established certain facts. In this work, it was discovered that in the Selected Organisations studied in Delta State, Nigeria, there exist documented workplace policies that, in practice, are not effective or implemented. Three major workplace policies were identified. Health and Safety, Maternal and Child and Environmental policy. After making some findings, the work also made certain recommendations to organisations, human resource managers, and owners of institutions on how to develop organisational policies that are effective and efficient. These policies, if applied appropriately, will enhance employee engagement within the organisation.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings on Workplace Policy and Employees' Engagement: A Study of Selected Organisations in Delta State, Nigeria, basic recommendations have been provided. Employee engagement is a serious factor that could affect organisational achievement. Workplace policies play an important role in shaping employee motivation, commitment, and productivity. This study examines the relationship between workplace policies and employee engagement in Selected Organizations in Delta State, Nigeria.

The study found that although workplace policies exist in the selected organisations, many employees perceived them as ineffective in promoting employee engagement. Therefore, the management and Human Resource Departments of the organisations should review and restructure existing workplace policies by clearly defining policies relating to employee

compensation, work-life balance, career development, diversity and inclusion, and organisational culture.

This can be achieved through periodic policy reviews, consultations with employees, and the establishment of policy implementation and monitoring committees to ensure that the policies are effectively communicated and enforced.

1. The study found that employees considered existing workplace policies to be ineffective. Therefore, the management of the selected organisations should establish effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation and impact of workplace policies on employee engagement. This can be achieved through periodic staff surveys, performance reviews, policy compliance assessments, and feedback sessions with employees. Such measures will enable management to identify implementation gaps and make necessary adjustments to improve policy effectiveness and employee engagement.
2. The study found that employees perceived existing workplace policies as ineffective in enhancing employee engagement. Therefore, the management and Human Resource Departments of the selected organisations should establish regular employee feedback mechanisms that allow staff at all levels to express their views on workplace policies and their implementation. This can be achieved through periodic staff meetings, employee satisfaction surveys, suggestion boxes, and consultative forums involving junior, middle-level, and senior staff. Such feedback will enable management to identify policy gaps, address employee concerns, and improve the effectiveness of workplace policies in promoting employee engagement.
3. The study found that existing workplace policies have not been effective in enhancing employee engagement.

Therefore, the management of the selected organizations should regularly assess the impact of workplace policies on employee engagement and organizational performance. This can be achieved through periodic performance evaluations, employee engagement surveys, and policy review exercises coordinated by the Human Resource Department. The outcome of such assessments should be used to improve policy implementation and ensure that workplace policies contribute positively to employee productivity, commitment, and overall organizational performance.

4. The study found that employees perceived workplace policies in the selected organizations as ineffective. Therefore, the management and Human Resource Departments of the organizations should identify and address the factors hindering effective policy implementation. This can be achieved through periodic policy audits, employee consultations, staff training programmes, and adequate monitoring of policy compliance. Addressing implementation challenges will enhance the effectiveness of workplace policies, improve employee engagement, and contribute to better organizational performance.

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