



EMPOWERING MARKETING EDUCATORS FOR OPTIMAL PRODUCTIVITY IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Marketing practices in recent times have taken a dynamic function which requires that those marketing educators saddled with the responsibility of imparting knowledge on the students are productive. As a result, tertiary institutions in Nigeria must be in a position to empower marketing educators to respond swiftly to customers' demands. Empowerment meets the organizations' needs for high-performing employees that enhance their chances of remaining competitive in the current turbulent business environment. It is on this note that this research article focused on how to empower business educators for optimal productivity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, hence, the author discussed the concept of employee empowerment, the empowerment process of employees, practical measures to empowering employees, and tools for creating empowerment in organizations as well as the implications of employee empowerment on business education programme were projected. It was suggested amongst others that school administrators should adopt the driving force strategy of encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work; and helping in the retention of marketing educators so as to achieve productivity in Nigeria.

Key words: Empowerment; Marketing Educators; Productivity; Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Changes in business environment have forced organizations to review management actions so as to empower employees to remain competitive in a troubled economy, such as that of Nigeria. Empowering employees has become a central theme of related management and leadership practices that have been advocated to allow organizations to become more competitive. Empowerment is a development strategy for organizational prosperity. Employees' empowerment entails encouraging workers to be more participative in decision making as it affects their activities in the organization (Hamid & Behrad, 2014). That means to provide space for employees to be able to create good ideas, and convert them to actions that impact on the organization positively. Berry, Daughtrey and Wieder (2012) noted that employee empowerment is one of the most effective techniques for increasing employee productivity and better use of the capacities and capabilities of their individual and collective organizational goals. Empowered employees are not just proud of their work; they are more productive than their disempowered colleagues.



Empowerment is a critical element of business in the modern world. Obimgbo, Abanyam and Owenubiugie (2022) presented some of the objectives of empowerment to include closeness to the customer, rendering after-sales service, offering continuous innovation, increasing productivity and gaining a competitive fields to organizations that have found new ways to empower their employees. The role of skilled and efficient manpower is obvious and undeniable in achieving the goals of the organization, and no doubt that the wealth of a country and a better sense of human capital appear in the form of skills, organizations and their motives. Managers should accurately identify the motivation factors in their incitement in order to make more use of employed manpower, and try to further this ability on track of organization's goals (Reyahi, 2014). In recent time; empowerment has become one of the concerns of managers, since managers' workload has increased rapidly. Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) opined that the awareness of the importance of empowerment is at the increase.

This, according to Obimgbo et. al. (2022), is due largely to the recent changes to business transactions as a result of, technological developments and competitive nature of the business environment, which demand innovative strategies. Hence, in the course of this study, the author discussed the concept of employee empowerment, the empowerment process of employees, practical measures to empowering employees, and tools for creating empowerment in organizations as well as the implications of employee empowerment on business education programme.

Concept of Employees' Empowerment

Empowerment is a process through which individuals and teams develop the ability to continuously improve performance. In other words, empowerment is a strategy developed for organizational prosperity. Hamid and Behrad (2014) stated that empowerment is the development of capabilities and competencies needed to achieve continuous improvement in organizational performance. The empowerment of employees is the use of power detection and analysis capability, having an insight in their work and participating fully in decisions that affect their lives. Empowerment is the release of internal forces to achieve amazing results. Empowerment of human resources means creating collection of required capacity in staff to enable them create added value in organizations.

Employee empowerment, which in this study would refer to Marketing Educators, is a term that is used to express the ways in which non-managerial staff members can make decisions without consulting their bosses or managers (Ramesh & Kumar, 2014). These decisions can be small or large, depending upon the degree of power with which the company wishes to invest in employees. Employee empowerment can begin with training and converting a whole company to an empowerment model. Conversely, it might merely mean giving employees the ability to make some decisions on their own. Employee empowerment has been defined in many ways but generally means the process of allowing employees to have input and control over their work, and the ability to openly share suggestions and ideas about their work and the organization as a whole. Empowered employees are committed, loyal and conscientious. They are eager to share ideas and can serve as strong ambassadors for their organizations.



Many managers feel that by empowering employees, they relinquish the responsibility to lead and control the organization. This is not the case. Empowerment is actually a culmination of many of the ideas and tenets of employee satisfaction. According to Jinkins, Klecker and Loadman (2008), employee empowerment is a process and through it develops a culture of empowerment where dreams, goals, boundaries and attempts to influence their decisions and the results will be shared with the entire organization.

Today, organizations are affected by factors such as increased global competition, rapid changes, the need for quality after-sales service and limited resources and are under high pressure. After many years of experience, the world has come to the conclusion that if an organization wants to be a leader in the economy and its business affairs and stay in the competition arena, such organization should possess saleable skills, creativity and be highly innovative. Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) reported that there is a direct relationship between human capital and productivity in organizations. Ramesh and Kumar (2014) noted that a successful organization is a set of organization composed of cultured people, ideas and common goals. Teamwork in flexible organization provides experience and knowledge with increasing love and progress for management. Therefore, any individual who performs the task for organization will feel ownership. Using the human resources potential is a huge advantage for any organization. Personal productivity of organization use set of individual talents and potential to improve the organization and with potential power and talents to make tremendous progress in the development of individual and organizational alignment (Rastgar, 2017).

In this regard, growth, progress, prosperity and improved capabilities in recent years as staff empowerment are considered by scholars and experts in human resource management. Employees through knowledge, experience and motivation build up their powers, and, in fact, empowerment is release of this power.

Process of Empowering Marketing Educators

In empowering Marketing Educators for better productivity, mechanical and organic methods must be considered. The mechanical method delegates authority from top to bottom with clear boundaries and limits (Ramesh & Kumar, 2014). In this method, empowerment is a process by which senior management develops a clear vision, plan programs and assign specific responsibilities to be achieved. The management team provides information and resources needed to perform duties for Marketing Educators and allows the employee to practice change and processes improvement (Abdullahi & Ebrahim, 2016). Organic method, on the other hand, assigns responsibilities from down to up to reduce control. Based on this method, empowerment is defined in terms of personal beliefs. According to HamidAzad, Mojtaba, Hamidrezam, Abdolreza, and Marjan (2013), capable Marketing Educators usually possess common characteristics which reflect in their performance in the organization. Thus, empowerment is not something which managers carry out to Marketing Educators; instead it is the mindset of Marketing Educators about their role in the organization.

More so, empowerment process of Marketing Educators should consist of information sharing, autonomy, and team work phases. **Information Sharing** allows Marketing Educators to know their organization's status and to analyze it. Information sharing begins with trust in the

organization, and breaking traditional hierarchical thinking and increases Marketing Educators' sense of responsibility (HamidAzad et. al, 2013).Autonomy has to do with empowering Marketing Educators to work across organizational boundaries by specifying destination, values, imagination, objectives, roles, system and organizational structure (Ibelegbu, Abanyam, & Kanu, 2022). Also, team work should be emphasized instead of hierarchy.Balkar (2015) observed that Marketing Educators engaged in team work usually have divided responsibilities shared among them. Thus, employees with specific responsibilities for work processes be allowed to select, plan and implement their tasks from start to end, and manage everything under their control.

Practical Measures to Empowering Marketing Educators

To achieve empowerment for Marketing Educators is usually an onerous task, however, Berry et. al. (2012), outlined six practical measures for empowering Marketing Educators in an organisation:

- Demonstrate leadership commitment through empowerment
- Consider the interests of Marketing Educators through empowerment
- Staff training to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities through empowerment
- Application of quality teams through empowerment
- Employee participation in planning and performance, information sharing through empowerment
- Delegation of authority through empowerment

Similarly, Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) posited that achievable empowerment of Marketing Educators should accompany training and development, participation, and union activities. Training programs would be useful if implemented and supported with the participation of Marketing Educators and relying on scientific methods. The real purpose of training programs is to create harmonious relationship between marketing educators and management for cordial engagement in institutional programs. Several studies have revealed that engagement of employees in administrative activities is at the core of empowerment indicators (Ibelagbu et. al., 2022; Davidson & Dell, 2013).

Driving Factors towards Empowerment of Marketing Educators

The driving forces to achieving Marketing Educators' productivity in Nigeria includes but not limited to encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work: and helping in employee retention.Hamid and Behra (2014) stated that employee initiation and creativity helps organizations to innovate and improve the processes. Similarly, Ramesh and Kumar (2014) pointed out that when Marketing Educators are satisfied they will display zeal towards their jobs and align their goals with those of the organization. Furthermore where Marketing Educators are given autonomy in the way they perform their jobs, it motivates them in developing their skills and knowledge (Klecker & Loadman, (2008).



Moreover, Marketing Educators have a need to feel like they are participating in the well-being of the organization. They want to know that they are contributing to the success of the organization. In organizations that provide Marketing Educators with the guarantee flexibility in decision making, Marketing Educators feel empowered to deliver high quality work. Lee and Nie (2014) noted that empowered Marketing Educators take personal pride in their work and responsibility for doing a good job. As a result, organizations reap the benefits of empowered Marketing Educators by delivering high quality products and services.

Empowering Marketing Educators for Optimal Productivity

Marketing Educators empowerment has a scope different from the empowerment of other employees working outside the education sector. Teacher empowerment generally is ascertained in line with the authority given to them to engage in the decision-making processes linked to teaching and learning processes (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2015). Balkar (2015) explained teacher empowerment under six dimensions: participation of teachers in decision-making processes, professional development of teachers, teacher status, self-efficacy of teachers, teacher autonomy, and teacher impact on others and educational issues at school. The level of teacher empowerment is measured by how well teachers shape the operational and pedagogic culture (Talbert, 2013). Empowerment is used for expressing the appreciation and support of the organisation leaders regarding their Marketing Educators (Bogler & Nir, 2012). School leaders may encourage the inclusion of marketing educators into school reform with an understanding of distributive leadership, thus enabling them to evaluate their own growth or otherwise (Vernon-Dotson & Floyd, 2012). The inclusion of teachers in the decision making processes by way of participative leadership understanding enables teacher empowerment (Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013).

Empowerment, as a critical domain to teachers' working conditions, implies that teachers desire a major voice in school improvement. For educational reforms to occur, teachers' working conditions should be considered (Hirsch, 2016). Empowered teachers encourage colleagues to improve student achievement (Anderson, 2014). Teacher empowerment creates a positive learning environment (Martin, Crossland, & Johnson, 2015). According to Hirsch (2016), working conditions which are sometimes overlooked, are essential to student learning.

Administrators are an important component in empowering teachers; they must be transformational leaders, those that empower their staff (Hirsch, 2016; Leech & Fulton, 2008). Administrators should consider allowing teachers to assist in hiring and budgeting decisions and choosing the content of their professional learning; this will help the teachers to feel more empowered (Hirsch, 2016). Administrators should consider promoting an atmosphere of trust; teachers who have a positive view of the administrators in the building feel more empowered. It is suggested that administrators be an integral part of creating a climate for teacher empowerment to occur (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

When administrators promote participatory leadership/distributed leadership, teacher leaders will evolve and this will often lead to teacher empowerment. Teachers who are allowed to



participate in decision making and other aspects of leadership will feel more empowered (Leech & Fulton, 2008). According to Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel (2009), distributed leadership is important in creating high performing schools. In the context of educational changes, teacher empowerment is an important tool for carrying out educational reforms at schools. Carrying out the reforms requires consideration of both administrative and behavioural changes. Empowerment provides a new administrative framework and its outputs create changes in the behaviours of teachers.

The outputs of teacher empowerment facilitate the adoption of changes, as well as implementation of new necessities by teachers at schools. There are many studies indicating the benefits of empowering teachers at schools. Empowerment has positive effects on organisational and professional commitment (Bogler & Somech, 2014; Keiser, 2017; Park, 2013), organisational citizenship behaviour (Aksel, Serinkan, Kızıloğlu & Aksoy, 2013; Bogler & Somech, 2014) and job satisfaction (Martino, 2013; Meng & Han, 2013; Hung, 2015). Teachers can feel that their work is more meaningful if principals emphasise the importance of the individual roles of teachers, as well as the work they do which supports school objectives during their interactions with other teachers (Janssen, 2014). Thus, Balkar (2015) stated that members of organisations feel a greater desire to take action when they are empowered. Teacher empowerment contributes to sustainability of the professional development of teachers, via the autonomy it supplies to the teachers and the positive impacts it makes on their job satisfaction.

The establishments of professional learning communities that contribute to professional development of teachers as well as their progressive behaviour are also supported by empowering behaviours of school leaders (Hollingworth, 2012). Studies carried out in Turkey on teacher empowerment have observed that it is an application that helps in the professional development of teachers, increasing student success as well as supporting the development of the school and the educational region (Kuzu, 2009). Even though these positive outcomes from teacher empowerment are emphasised, when findings on what is done to empower teachers are examined it is seen that these applications are not sufficient. Studies in this field indicate that teachers are seen as disempowered individuals who work devotedly with no thought of any personal gain (Yıldırım, Ünal & Çelik, 2011); that they are empowered in issues related only with the development of their effective behaviour, whilst they are not empowered in issues relating to autonomy, status and decision making as well as professional development (Mete, 2014).

The most important tool needed for teacher empowerment is in-service training, since professional development plays an effective role in development of teacher empowerment (Balkar, 2015). However, serving teacher empowerment through this training is dependent on the arrangement of the school in line with the needs of the teacher (İlğan, 2013). Personal development areas such as conflict and stress management, communication skills and problem solving methods are also among the areas for which teachers need training. When the determined training needs are examined, it is observed that they may differ according to the attributes of teachers, schools and students. Thus, it is not possible to state that including every teacher in a standard training session will yield effective results. Hence, the best method for ensuring teacher empowerment under the current conditions of Nigeria can be identified as school based applications carried out under the



coordination of the school managers, addressing also the attitudes of the school managers regarding these issues.

Teachers' perceptions of empowerment are affected by different factors. The personalities of teachers, their positions in the school, the leadership style of the principal and their relationships to the principal can affect the empowerment perception of teachers (Lim, 2017). School culture is among the most important factors with impact on teacher empowerment.

Conclusion

Employee empowerment is a philosophy associated with real benefits for an organization. Its underlying principle of giving Marketing Educators the freedom, flexibility, and power to make decisions and solve problems leaves an employee feeling energized, capable, and determined to make the organization successful. As a result of these management practices, quality of work increases, employee satisfaction increases, collaboration increases, employee productivity rises, and organizational costs decrease. All of these benefits enable an organization to achieve a competitive advantage and to bolster its bottom line. Teacher empowerment is defined according to the power that teachers have in participating in the decision-making processes related to school wide learning and teaching processes. Marketing Educators can be empowered through involvement in decision making, provision of professional development, autonomy, self-efficacy and status improvement.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were made to achieve empowerment for Marketing Educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions:

1. Management Team should ensure that Marketing Educators with specific responsibilities for work processes be allowed to select, plan and implement their tasks from start to end, and manage everything under their control. This action would empower them for better productivity;
2. School administrators should adopt mechanical and organic methods in empowering Marketing Educators for better productivity,. These methods provide authority and confidence to the marketing educators to function productively;
3. School administrators should adopt the driving force strategy of encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work: and helping in the retention of marketing educators so as to achieve productivity in Nigeria

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