



Effect of Organizational Structure on Employees' Productivity in Dangote Sugar Company

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Article Info

ISSN (online): 2583-6641

Volume: 04

Issue: 03

May-June 2025

Received: 14-04-2025

Accepted: 10-05-2025

Page No: 102-108

Abstract

This research analyzes the effect of organizational structure specifically, coordination, formalization, and specialization of jobs—on the employee's performance at Dangote Sugar Company. Following Contingency Theory, the study explores the impact of active coordination, formalized structure, and specialized jobs on performance. The study adopted a quantitative approach with a sample size of 133 participants. The data collection method involved the use of a structured questionnaire, and the analysis was done descriptively and inferentially through regression analysis, among other methods. From the results, it was established that all three factors have a considerable effect on performance with job specialization having the greatest impact ($B = 0.330$, $p = 0.000$) followed by formalization ($B = 0.121$, $p = 0.039$) and then coordination ($B = 0.045$, $p = 0.000$). These outcomes support the idea that accurately defined coordination enhances teamwork and efficiency, formalization improves clarity of actions, and specialization increases proficiency and productivity. On the other hand, the research also shows some negative consequences of too much formalization reducing flexibility as well as too much specialization reducing adaptability. The study posits that the best course of action is for companies to improve their coordination systems, practice a formalized structure that is flexible, and strategically plan job design to enhance performance. The study also provided additional recommendations such as establishing effective and proper communication systems and structured coordination systems for Dangote Sugar Company. Regular interdepartmental meetings, along with digital collaboration tools, clear communication channels, and well-established reporting lines will help eliminate functional redundancies and facilitate efficient workflows within the organization.

Keywords: Organizational Structure, Employee Productivity, Coordination, Formalization, Job Specialization

1. Introduction

An organization's structure serves as a framework that shapes employee behavior and impacts productivity. An organized structure provides clear communication, sets boundaries, provides clear role expectations, and improves coordination, which aids in the achievement of the organizational goals. Effective organizational structures are associated with improved employee performance owing to lower redundancies, minimized inter-staff conflicts, and harmonized intentions across the board (Duncan, 2022). In the fierce competitive landscape of Nigeria's manufacturing industry, companies such as Dangote Sugar Company place a high premium on formal coordination, formalization, and job specialization due to the need to maintain heightened employee productivity (Garcia & Chen, 2021).

An organizational structure is a systematic framework that delineates how activities such as tasks subdivided, grouped, and coordinated within a company. Among its key components is inter-departmental coordination which ensures that activities within the department are not in conflict and are aligned at a holistic level.

Effective coordination reduces overlapping efforts, minimizes delays, and enhances collaboration across departments (Olumide & Akinola, 2020). In the case of Dangote Sugar Company, production processes depend on the precise sequencing of diverse activities, making a well-coordinated structure vital for operational efficiency. Without proper coordination, tasks that should be completed sequentially may be performed simultaneously or in conflict, resulting in miscommunication, and loss of productivity.

Formalization, which describes the extent to which policies and procedures are documented, is another important organizational feature. Higher formalization leads to decreased uncertainty, improved accountability, and a greater thorough understanding of assignments among all employees (Johnson *et al.*, 2023). Within the organized work environment such as Dangote Sugar, formalization aids significantly in improving the guided processes which shape employee behavior and decision-making, thereby minimizing errors and improving efficiency. Employees gain confidence and enhance performance when operating within preset frameworks, which enhances productivity at the organization.

Job specialization is defined as the division of work into smaller and more simple tasks which are then allocated to specific individuals. This approach improves efficiency and decreases the amount of training needed as it enables employees to acquire more experience (Smith & Clarke, 2023). At Dangote Sugar Company, specialization increases operational efficiency with prescriptive allocation of tasks fitting within the employees skill set. Along with enhanced workforce productivity and better allocation of available personnel, specialization also improves motivation and overall job satisfaction as a result of clearly defined roles and opportunities for advancement.

With regard to its challenges, largely documented and reported by various sources, Dangote Sugar Company, like many big enterprises, faces considerable structural issues. In Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State, a lack of role formalization alongside limited formalization and coordination results in widespread miscommunication and inefficiencies (Johnson *et al.*, 2022). Per these challenges, there is a severe shortage of training, a lack of proactive financial commitment directed at structural changes, and the existing structures within the company. Therefore, this research seeks to investigate the impact of organizational structure on employee productivity within the Dangote Sugar Company. Addressing these structural weaknesses and providing precise, actionable recommendations are vital to improving organizational performance, as defined by enhanced efficiency, agility, and robustness in order to increase competitiveness and enable sustained, enduring dominance in the national sugar industry. Consequently, the outcomes aim to document the impact of Organizational Structure on Employees' Productivity in Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State. The setting further defines:

- a) To investigate the effect of coordination on employees' productivity in Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State.
- b) To evaluate the effect of formalization on employees' productivity in Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State.
- c) To investigate Job Specialization on Employees' Productivity in Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State.

Significance of the Study

The scope of this study is significant because it permits the researcher to develop a thorough comprehension of the impact of organizational structure on productivity of employees within Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State, while acquiring fundamental research skills such as data collection, analysis, and interpretation which are important for career development. It enriches the disciplines of organizational behavior and human resource management by documenting the impact of coordination, formalization, and job specialization on employee performance in large scale manufacturing industries. This study's results will be useful in providing realistic recommendations for and guiding managers and executives in the manufacturing industry on how to restructure various organizational components to enhance productivity and improve operational efficiency. In addition, the study will assist business proprietors in determining how to restructure various components of their organizations to enhance competitiveness and productivity. For policy makers, the study provides a basis for policy advocacy aimed at reinforcing evidence based organizational structure policy initiatives within the manufacturing sector. From the academic perspective the study contributes to the literature gap that exists on the impact of organizational structure on employee performance in Nigerian owned companies in the manufacturing sector which can stimulate further research activities in Nigeria and other countries.

Scope of the study

The study is concerned with Dangote Sugar Company situated in Lamurde LGA, Adamawa State, Nigeria. It looks into the impact of organizational structure on employee productivity with special attention on the factors of coordination, formalization, and job specialization. The study will involve the administration and employees of Dangote Sugar Company Lamurde LGA, focusing on the internal organizational mechanisms that determine productivity in the bulk manufacturing set-up. This study is delimited to this company and does not cover other industries or areas outside this region.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure defines the formal arrangement of tasks, authority, and communication relationships within an organization which outlines how an organization allocates and coordinates responsibilities to accomplish strategic goals (Daft, 2018) ^[8]. It includes several types structures functional, divisional, matrix, and flat which differ in benefits depending on the organization's size, complexity, and operational objectives (Jones, 2018) ^[13]. Having a well-aligned structure improves clarifies roles, improves communication, enhances accountability, and fosters alignment with the corporate strategy (Robbins & Judge, 2019) ^[22]. In addition, it increases operational efficiency in terms of coordination, resource allocation, and decision making (Lee & Hwang, 2021; Zafar & Nawaz, 2022) ^[15, 26]. More recent studies have shown that decentralized and flexible structures are more supportive of innovation and change, empowering employees and increasing responsiveness to market dynamics (Zhang *et al.*, 2023) ^[28]. On the other hand, inflexible or highly hierarchical frameworks tend to stifle innovation, slow the flow of

information, and encourage the creation of departmental silos fostering collabo-responsiveness (Kumar & Gupta, 2021; Brown & Thomas, 2022; Lee *et al.*, 2023) ^[14, 3, 18]. Such frameworks can also lower employee morale and organizational inertia by introducing confusion, inefficiencies, and resistance to change (Kumar & Sharma, 2021; Zhang & Huang, 2022; Gupta *et al.*, 2023) ^[14, 27, 10]. Therefore, an adaptable organizational structure is essential for internal efficiency and external competitive advantage, and critical business functions require review in response to changing circumstances.

Dimensions of organizational structure

A. Coordination

The term coordination identifies the basic process by which different parts of an organization are integrated with respect to time and space to attain organizational objectives as one. It's ensuring activities in different departments, units, or teams are unified and their integration is done properly. Effective coordination enhances collaboration and communication throughout the organization, thus reduces conflict, redundancy, and provides streamlined operations.

Scholarly studies define coordination with respect to more specific roles within interdependencies of an organization. To Mintzberg (2017), coordination is defined as the process aligning activities and tasks in such a way that can make an organization functional with sensitivity to scale in multi-layered systems where units or departments have some degree of self-governance. It captures the orchestration of activities, the receipt and dispatch of critical inputs at appropriate times, and the circulation of information among the organizational parts, and its system.

B. Formalization

Formalization is another critical dimension of organizational structure that policies, procedures, job descriptions, and delineations are documented, systematized, and adhered to within an organization. It is a measure of the scope to which an organizational activity and behavior is governed by formal regulations as opposed to informal norms or discretion. Within highly formalized organization, employees' actions and decisions are quite specific. Less formalized structures allow for greater variability on how work is accomplished.

As noted scholarly works, formalization is primarily aimed at fostering order and control in an organization. In the words of Robbins and Judge (2020) ^[22], formalization "refers to the degree to which roles, procedures, instructions, and communications are crafted and adhered to in a given organization/setting." This enables organizations to create realistic and performability uniform standards, which ensures employees are clear regarding their undertaken tasks and obligations. Generally, the degree of formalization advanced increases observed organized into larger and more complex units where there are numerous departments and functions to be coordinated.

C. Job Specialization

"Job specialization" is the degree to which tasks within a single organization are divided into separate roles or functions. One feature of highly specialized organizations is the use of broad occupational categories where all employees have defined roles with specific tasks that are simple and repetitive. Such systems permit mastery of skills. This idea is well understood in the context of elementary organizational

theories that were developed by scholars such as Adam Smith. Such theorists argued on the basis of their empirical studies that specialization brought efficiency (Smith, 1776) ^[23]. In contemporary organizations, job specialization plays a crucial role in making decisions about the division of work as well as structuring the workforce to enhance efficiency.

The scholarly concepts of job specialization stress productivity as a salient outcome, projecting the relationship with effectiveness and efficiency optimization. They uphold that specialization is done with an intention of creating more value with respect to a unit of output, thus increase the productivity of the organization. Such as stated in the, "It is the process of concentrating attention on a particular task or set of activities to increase efficiency," coined under specialist's management paradigms by Robbins and Judge (2020) ^[22]. When an employee's scope of tasks is limited to few activities, it becomes easier with time to achieve mastery. As learning and improvement dynamics are both time bound, such accelerated mastery translates to enhanced task output in shorter durations.

2.2 Literature Review

The basis of this research is aligned with the Contingency Theory, which maintains there is no singular suitable organizational design; rather, the most effective structure is dependent on numerous internal and external considerations (Fiedler, 1964) ^[7]. This theory argues that performance is maximized when there is an alignment between the organizational structure and situational factors such as the task environment, technological complexity, and regulatory requirements. With regard to Dangote Sugar Company, Lamurde LGA, Contingency Theory is most useful because it illustrates how structural elements, including coordination, formalization, and specialization, fit with the operational realities of the firm. For example, while high formalization may aid compliance within dominated industries, flexible coordination can improve responsiveness in more fluid market conditions (Burns & Stalker, 1961) ^[4]. The theory also illustrates the balancing autonomy and control which should be tailored to varying departmental needs. Thus, Contingency Theory is useful in explaining the structure-context fit and its impact on productivity which justifies its critical relevance for this study.

2.3 Empirical Review

Examining workplace productivity in relation to coordination within organizational frameworks, Smith *et al.* (2018) performed their study in the United States. With a survey research design, the authors narrowed down a population of factory employees to a sample of 300 participants, which were chosen through simple random sampling, and verified the proposed hypotheses with regression analysis. Having found that coordination, especially in cross-departmental collaboration, enhances productivity, the study identified key factors of clear communication channels and efficient decision-making processes as primary contributors. The study also analyzed survey data using both descriptive and inferential statistics, concluding that firms with better coordination were able to help streamline workflows and reduce redundant activities. It advised businesses to invest systems designed to improve coordination in order to maximize employee productivity.

Yang (2017) investigated how formalization affects productivity in China's service-focused businesses. With a

longitudinal research approach, the study looked at 50 service companies over a decade. The population included employees from these companies and data were captured through archival documents and surveys. Through time-series analysis, Yang concluded that formalized systems with clearly defined roles, rules, and procedures boosted efficiency and consistency in service delivery. On the flip side, too much formalization hindered creativity and diminished job satisfaction. The study suggested that companies should strike a balance between formalization and flexibility in order to enhance productivity.

Brown and Green (2019) focused on job specialization and its impact on employee productivity in the German manufacturing industry. With a descriptive research design, the study surveyed 250 employees who were identified through stratified random sampling and performed secondary analysis on organizational performance data. Utilizing regression analysis, the specialized performed overtly repetitive tasks was linked to increased productivity attributed to greater productivity, proficiency, and skill acquisition. The study suggested that specialized roles should be designed for complex tasks to improve overall productivity.

Review of literature gaps

While the previous works have provided some useful insights, they have neglected some areas that are arguably the most critical. A majority of researchers conduct these studies as if the factors are independent and of little to no consideration to each other in their systems thinking approach toward productivity, particularly in changing environments. Moreover, the concentration has been primarily on advanced countries, with Nigeria studies being largely confined to the oil and gas sectors—resulting in a shallow captured cross-sectoral picture of industries. More importantly, little attention has been paid to how the differences in culture and context impact the balance between structure and flexibility in most of the emerging economies such as Nigeria. Addressing these interrelations—coordination, formalization, and specialization against the backdrop of cultural and sectoral contexts—would enrich understanding of organizational productivity in developing countries.

3. Methodology

This part explains the approach and scope of the study, which uses survey research methods because they best capture primary data from a sample while observing the participants. The study area is within the Dangote Sugar Company located at Lamurde LGA in Adamawa State which, economically speaking, is the heartbeat of Benue State in Nigeria. The

population of this study consists of 222 employees which include both junior and senior staff. Employing the Taro Yamane Statistical Formula, the sample size was calculated to be 142 employees, who were then selected through simple random sampling to ensure equal representation from all departments. Primary data was gathered with a structured questionnaire which incorporated five levels of agreement on a Likert scale focusing on coordination, formalization, specialization (independent variables), and employee productivity (dependent variable). This method allows purposeful collection of information to uncover the connections between operational practices and performance of the organization. In ensuring enhanced instrument validity, both content and face validity were utilized. Peer review and suggestion protocols were solicited from the supervisor to polish the questionnaire, leading to its subsequent refinement and validity. Reliability was achieved by pretesting the questionnaire on a small sample beyond the study locale at Omokene Rice Mill Wukari. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated through the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which assesses the internal consistency of the responses.

Table 1: Reliability Result

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Coordination	0.732
Formalization	0.821
Specialization	0.793
Employee productivity	0.182

Source: Field survey, 2025

The data collected was presented in frequency tables, and percentages was used for analysis. Hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using regression analysis, with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The null hypothesis will be rejected if the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and accepted if the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This decision rule will guide the interpretation of the statistical results.

4. Data analysis and discussion

This section presents the analysis and discussion of the findings based on the data collected from respondents at Dangote Sugar Company. The study examined the effect of coordination, formalization, and job specialization on employee performance, aiming to determine how these structural elements influence workplace productivity and efficiency. A total of 142 questionnaires were distributed to employees across different departments of Dangote Sugar Company. Out of these, 133 responses were received, representing a response rate of 93.7%.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EMPLOYEE_PERF	20.9699	2.20516	133
COORDINATION	18.0526	2.36872	133
FORMALIZATION	20.0602	3.05941	133
JOB_SAT	19.4211	2.41902	133

Source: SPSS V27, 2025

Table 4.26 presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The mean score for employee performance (EMPLOYEE_PERF) is 20.9699 with a standard deviation of 2.20516, indicating moderate variability in responses.

Coordination has a mean of 18.0526 with a standard deviation of 2.36872, suggesting slightly higher variation compared to employee performance. Formalization has a mean of 20.0602 and a standard deviation of 3.05941, while

job satisfaction records a mean of 19.4211 with a standard deviation of 2.41902. These statistics provide an overview of the central tendencies and dispersion levels of the key variables in the study.

Table 3: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.426 ^a	.182	.163	2.01789
a. Predictors: (Constant), JOB_SAT, FORMALIZATION, CORDINATION				
b. Dependent Variable: EMPLOYEE_PERF				

Source: SPSS V27, 2025

Table 3 presents the model summary, showing the strength of the relationship between the independent variables (coordination, formalization, and job satisfaction) and the dependent variable (employee performance). The R value (.426) indicates a moderate positive correlation between the predictors and employee performance. The R Square value (.182) suggests that 18.2% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R Square value (.163) accounts for potential sample bias, confirming that the model maintains predictive

validity. The standard error of the estimate (2.01789) suggests a reasonable level of model accuracy.

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	116.606	3	38.869	9.546	.000 ^b
	Residual	525.274	129	4.072		
	Total	641.880	132			
a. Dependent Variable: EMPLOYEE_PERF						
b. Predictors: (Constant), JOB_SAT, FORMALIZATION, CORDINATION						

Source: SPSS V27, 2025

Table 4 presents the ANOVA results, which assess the overall significance of the regression model. The F-statistic (9.546) with a significance level of .000 ($p < .05$) indicates that the model is statistically significant. This confirms that the independent variables (coordination, formalization, and job satisfaction) collectively have a significant impact on employee performance.

4. Hypotheses Testing

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.319	1.963		5.766	.000
	CORDINATION	.045	.179	.049	3.101	.000
	FORMALIZATION	.121	.058	.167	2.084	.039
	JOB_SAT	.330	.077	.362	4.312	.000
a. Dependent Variable: EMPLOYEE_PERF						

Source: SPSS V27, 2025

This section presents the hypotheses testing results based on the regression analysis in Table 5. The significance level (p-value) is used to determine whether to accept or reject each null hypothesis at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Coordination has no significant effect on employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.
H₁₁: Coordination has a significant effect on employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.

From Table 3, the regression coefficient for coordination is $B = 0.045$, with a t-value of 3.101 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Since the p-value is statistically significant, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁₁) is accepted. This implies that coordination significantly influences employee performance, and improving coordination mechanisms can enhance productivity in the organization.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Formalization does not significantly affect employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.
H₁₂: Formalization significantly affects employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.

The regression results show that formalization has a coefficient of $B = 0.121$, a t-value of 2.084, and a p-value of 0.039 ($p < 0.05$). Since the p-value is below the threshold of significance, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁₂) is accepted. This means that

formalization has a significant effect on employee performance, suggesting that structured policies, rules, and procedures contribute positively to employee efficiency.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: Job satisfaction has no significant influence on employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.
H₁₃: Job satisfaction significantly influences employee performance in Dangote Sugar Company.

The coefficient for job satisfaction is $B = 0.330$, with a t-value of 4.312 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Since the p-value is statistically significant, the null hypothesis (H₀₃) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁₃) is accepted. This suggests that job satisfaction has the most substantial effect on employee performance, indicating that organizations should prioritize employee well-being, motivation, and engagement to improve productivity.

5. Discussion of Findings

This research focused on the effects of coordination, formalization, and job specialization on employee performance at the Dangote Sugar Company. It was established that all three factors have a considerable impact on effectiveness cumulatively, with job specialization yielding the greatest impact.

5.1 Coordination and employee performance

The results of the study indicated that coordination has a positive effect on employee performance ($B = 0.045$, $p =$

0.000). Better coordination facilitates effective intercommunication, task sequencing, and collaboration, which often leads to improved productivity. Employees who know and understand their roles and responsibilities perform better when there is order and structure in the organization's coordination systems. This supports the findings of Smith *et al.* (2018) which reported enhanced productivity from effective coordination in U.S. manufacturing firms as a result of improved workflow and decreased redundancy. James *et al.* (2020) also reported higher output and greater job satisfaction among employees with improved coordination in the UK public sector. These studies reinforce the theory that coordination provided in a systematic manner enhances effectiveness within organizations.

5.2 Formalization and employee performance

The research indicated that formalization has a notable impact on employee performance ($B = 0.121$, $p = 0.039$). Comprehensive policies, rules, and procedures increase clarity for and guide employees, eliminating uncertainty about how to complete tasks. Compliance is bolstered by formalization which increases consistency in repetitive actions, reduces errors, and sharpens adherence to defined organizational norms. This finding aligns with Yang (2017) as he reported formalization was beneficial to operating service firms in China's heuristic adaptive strategies, but impacted flexibility in agile ecosystems. Oluwaseun and Akinyemi (2021)^[20] also noted that formalized frameworks within Nigerian banks enhanced service delivery, though to the detriment of employees servicing customized client requisitions. These investigations highlight the importance of balancing adaptable frameworks and formalized policies to preserve structured guiding documents responsive agility to ensure optimal performance.

5.3 Job specialization and employee performance

Within the three examined variables, job specialization exhibited the highest influence upon performance ($B = 0.330$, $p = 0.000$). Specialization enables employees to concentrate on areas within their roles, resulting in higher efficiency and faster completion times. Employees who occupy specialized positions tend to acquire more knowledge and skills about particular functions, which increases accuracy, problem-solving abilities, and productivity. Brown and Green (2019) support this finding as they reported that specialization greatly increased efficiency of workers in the German manufacturing industry because of greater skilled attainment. In the same manner, Miller *et al.* (2021)^[16] noted that while there was an increase in productivity as a result of job specialization in Japanese multinational firms, it made the production lines less flexible in imaginative problem-solving strategies. These studies strengthen the argument that, while specialization increases productivity, organizations should strive to make job design as flexible as possible.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study derived from Dangote Sugar Company outlining their employee performance analyzed coordination, formalization, job specialization and their various forms as determinants of productivity. Effective formalized oral directives enhance vertical communication while team directed processes improve lateral communication and collaboration, thus improving workflow efficiency. Though too much rigidity in formalization can be harmful to

flexibility, structure and clarity provided by formalization improves role fulfillment consistency. Among all these factors, reasoned job specialization holds the most striking effect due to associated expertise development that improves productivity and diminishes task execution time. An organization must, however, equilibrate specialization with flexibility in order to mitigate excessive routine monotony and uplift overall employee engagement. All in all, the conclusions of the study reinforce the notion of balanced triangulation of formalized structured coordination with tempered rigid adaptive formalization alongside dynamic specialization as determinants of employee output in conjunction with organizational effectiveness.

Recommendations

Within the context of this study, the Optional Recommendations aim at fostering the outlined issues, while focusing chiefly on the latter two to better equip the organization:

- a) Enhanced organizational performance through improved productivity can be achieved by earmarking streamlined defined reporting structures while interdepartmental hubs as well as digital collaborative frameworks are instituted in parallel to increased role beyond standalone silos.
- b) Enhancing organizational agility dynamic rigidity in fluid systems can be achieved should the organization implement scheduled periodic self-audits of policy documents while reviewing frameworks listed to avoid implementation stagnation. Encouraging the governed to voice their opinions on organizational structures while allowing some degree of autonomy to decision boundaries enhances positive reinforcement on controlled permissiveness.
- c) Cross-training should be provided alongside appropriate role allocation based on employee skill sets. Implementation of job rotation programs should be done as they increase employee exposure to practices beyond their primary duties, reducing job monotony and improving organizational adaptability.

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