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Effect of Employee Empowerment on Organizational Performance: The Mediating Role of Job Involvement in Tertiary Institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study examined the effect of employee empowerment on organizational performance and the mediating role of job involvement in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the effect of employee empowerment on organizational performance, assessed the relationship between job involvement and employee empowerment, determined the effect of job involvement on organizational performance, and investigated the mediating role of job involvement in the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 4,304 academic and non-academic staff drawn from Adamawa State University, Modibbo Adama University, College of Education Hong, and Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye. A total of 402 copies of questionnaire were administered, out of which 374 valid responses were retained for analysis, representing a response rate of 93.0%.. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's Alpha, with an overall coefficient of 0.764. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and the Sobel test. The findings revealed that employee empowerment had a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Job involvement also had a positive and significant effect on employee empowerment, while job involvement significantly influenced organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Furthermore, the Sobel test revealed a significant indirect effect, confirming a significant mediation relationship among job involvement, employee empowerment, and organizational performance. The study concluded that employee empowerment and job involvement are important determinants of organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. It recommended that management should encourage employee participation, strengthen empowerment practices through delegation and autonomy, promote job involvement through effective communication and recognition, and integrate employee empowerment and job involvement strategies to improve institutional performance.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, Job Involvement, Organizational Performance, Tertiary Institutions, Participation, Delegation, Autonomy

Introduction

Organizational performance is a critical measure of institutional success, encompassing financial stability, employee productivity, operational efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, academic excellence, research output, and administrative efficiency (Girei *et al*., 2024) [14]. In tertiary institutions, strong performance enables institutions to attract qualified students and staff, secure research grants, and remain competitive. Internal factors such as employee engagement, leadership style, and workplace empowerment significantly influence organizational performance (Nwibere, 2014; Augustine, 2019; Ikima, 2023) [23]. Employee empowerment, which involves granting employees autonomy, authority, and resources to make work-related decisions, can enhance motivation, creativity, commitment, innovation, and institutional growth (Baron & Kenny, 2019) [7]. Its importance in improving job satisfaction and organizational commitment has also been recognized in Africa, although structural and policy limitations continue to constrain effective implementation in many institutions (Aggarwal *et al*., 2018) [2].

In Nigeria, employee empowerment is increasingly recognized as an important determinant of job performance and organizational success. Employees who participate in decision-making, receive training, and obtain adequate managerial support are more likely to improve their performance and contribute to institutional development (Buba *et al*., 2018) [9]. In tertiary institutions, empowered lecturers and administrative staff can contribute through innovative teaching, quality research, student support, and other institutional activities. However, bureaucratic constraints, inadequate funding, limited training and

development, and insufficient managerial support continue to hinder effective empowerment (Buba *et al*., 2018; Ogunleye, 2020; Ibekwe, 2019) [9, 16, 25]. These limitations may reduce job involvement, which refers to employees' identification with and engagement in their work. Highly involved employees demonstrate greater enthusiasm, dedication, and willingness to contribute beyond their formal responsibilities, while greater job involvement has been associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and improved institutional performance (Girei *et al*., 2024) [14]. Conversely, inadequate empowerment may contribute to low productivity, employee turnover, poor service delivery, administrative inefficiency, and declining educational standards (Ahmad, 2023; Adebayo & Yusuf, 2021) [1, 3].

Existing studies have examined the relationship between employee empowerment, job involvement, and organizational performance, but important gaps remain. Oladimeji (2020) [27] found that job involvement mediates the effect of empowerment on institutional performance, while Ghazali and Olorunfemi (2022) [13] reported that empowerment strengthens psychological ownership and employees' responsibility toward organizational goals. Ghoneme *et al*. (2023) [4] also examined job involvement as a mediating factor between empowerment and organizational citizenship behaviour and recommended a wider respondent sample for improved analysis. However, limited research has specifically examined these relationships within tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, as much of the existing literature focuses on corporate organizations such as the banking sector (Hussein & Bello, 2021) [15]. This creates a contextual gap regarding how empowerment strategies and job involvement operate within Nigerian tertiary institutions. Therefore, the study examines the effect of employee empowerment on organizational performance, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of job involvement in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H_{01}: Employee empowerment has no significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

H_{02}: Job involvement does not significantly affect employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

H_{03}: Job involvement has no significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

H_{04}: Job involvement does not significantly mediate the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Conceptual Clarifications

Employee Empowerment

Empowering employees refers to the awareness among management that individuals working with them deserve more autonomy, control and power in their jobs also increases employees' commitment and satisfaction towards their organization (Zaraket *et al*., 2018). Employee empowerment is regarded as a motivational practice that aims to increase performance by increasing the opportunities for participation and involvement in decision-making. It is mainly concerned with developing trust and motivation, participating in decision-making, and removing boundaries between employees and top management (Meyerson & Dewettinck, 2012).

Organizational Performance

Richard *et al*. (2019) [30] define organizational performance as a comprehensive construct that includes the actual output or results of an organization measured against its intended goals, objectives, and mission. This definition emphasizes the multifaceted nature of performance by highlighting various dimensions such as financial results, customer satisfaction, internal business processes, and the ability to innovate and learn. According to them, these dimensions help in capturing both short-term achievements and long-term organizational sustainability. Euskel (2018) [12] defines organizational performance as the behavior of individuals within the organization that contributes to the achievement of its goals.

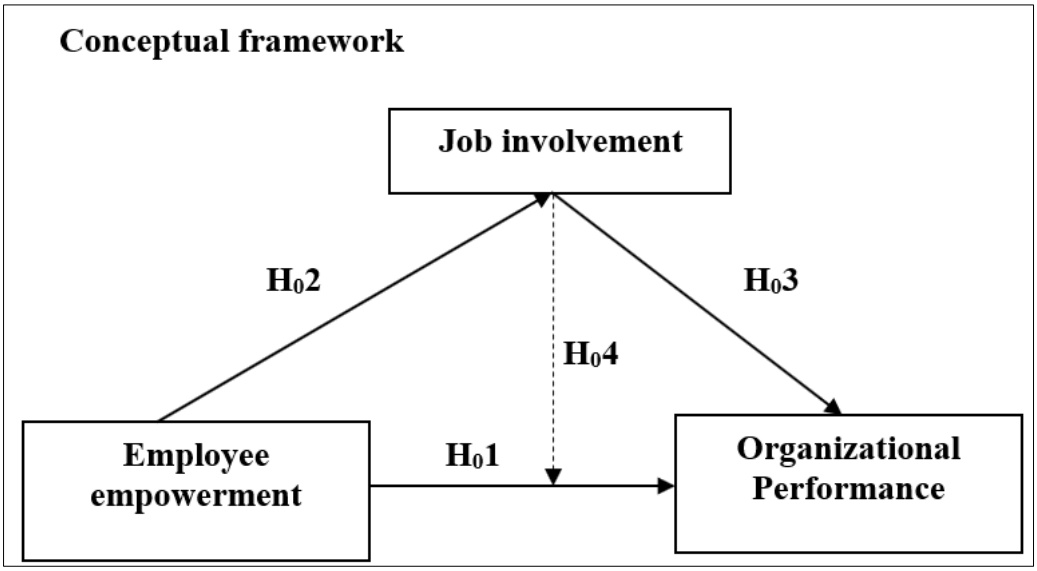
Job Involvement

Job involvement, according to Ojo and Bolarinwa (2024), refers to the psychological identification of an employee with their job, where work becomes a central part of their self-concept and a major source of personal satisfaction. The authors emphasize that when individuals see their job as essential to who they are, they become more invested emotionally and mentally in fulfilling their roles. This involvement goes beyond performing tasks for financial rewards it speaks to a deeper connection between the person and their work environment. Employees with high job involvement tend to experience greater enthusiasm and fulfillment in their duties. Al Hajji and Uche (2023) [4] define job involvement as the degree to which an employee is emotionally and cognitively engaged with their job.

Mediating Role of Job Involvement in the Relationship Between Employee Empowerment and Organizational Performance

Job involvement is an important psychological construct that explains how empowered employees translate their work engagement into improved organizational performance. It reflects the extent to which employees identify with and attach importance to their jobs (Murad, 2025) [22], while empowerment provides employees with the autonomy, authority, resources, and discretion needed to perform effectively. When employees feel empowered, they are more likely to develop greater motivation, ownership, commitment, and involvement in their work, making job involvement an important mechanism through which empowerment can enhance performance (Obasi & Hassan, 2024; Shafique & Nadeem, 2025) [24, 31]. Evidence further indicates that job involvement can mediate the relationship between empowerment and organizational outcomes, as employees who are empowered but insufficiently involved may not achieve optimal performance (Jalil & Shaikl, 2025) [17]. Highly involved employees are also more likely to demonstrate initiative, innovation, resilience, and discretionary effort (Okeke, 2024) [26]. In tertiary institutions, active involvement of academic and non-academic staff in institutional decisions can strengthen commitment to service delivery, curriculum development, and student support, thereby improving institutional effectiveness (Mohammed & Oche, 2025) [21]. Similarly, when employees are both empowered and highly involved, their personal goals become

more aligned with organizational objectives, fostering synergy, continuous improvement, and better performance outcomes (Bature & Olalekan, 2025) [6]. Thus, job involvement serves as a significant mediating mechanism through which employee empowerment can contribute to improved organizational performance.



Source: Researcher's Design, 2026

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Empowerment Theory and Social Exchange Theory (SET). Empowerment Theory, introduced by Conger and Kanungo (1988) [10], views empowerment as a motivational construct that enhances employees' self-efficacy by providing autonomy, discretion, and control over work-related decisions. In tertiary institutions, empowering academic and administrative staff through participation in decision-making and autonomy over their functions can foster ownership, commitment, motivation, and responsibility, thereby improving teaching quality, research productivity, and service delivery. Empowered employees are also more likely to internalize institutional goals, proactively solve problems, collaborate with colleagues, and demonstrate resilience, all of which contribute to improved institutional performance. Increased empowerment may further enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which are important for achieving long-term organizational goals (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2023) [18].

Social Exchange Theory, propounded by Blau (1964) [8], explains workplace relationships as reciprocal exchanges in which employees respond to favourable organizational treatment with loyalty, dedication, job involvement, and improved performance. This study is anchored on SET because empowerment practices such as granting autonomy, recognizing contributions, involving staff in decision-making, and providing professional development represent organizational investments that can encourage employees to reciprocate through greater commitment, motivation, productivity, and discretionary behaviours. In tertiary institutions, empowered staff may demonstrate stronger involvement through mentoring students, participating in committees, initiating research collaborations, and supporting institutional reforms. Thus, SET provides a suitable foundation for explaining how employee empowerment influences job involvement and organizational performance through reciprocal employer–employee relationships, ultimately contributing to improved teaching, research, administration, and student support outcomes.

Empirical Review

Zijing *et al*., (2025) examined the role of innovation and entrepreneurship employee training programs in enhancing organizational commitment from organizational commitment from the perspective of industry– education integration. Using the relevance of training content to employees' job roles and career aspirations has a significant impact on training effectiveness. Employees highly value practical and work - applicable training, which is closely linked to job satisfaction. The quality of trainers is also crucial, as competent and engaging trainers can enhance the perceived value of training. Moreover, knowledge sharing promoted by training programs benefits employees' personal and professional development and strengthens the organization's collaborative culture. The results highlight that these findings have practical implications for managers. They should design training programs that match employees' needs and career goals, invest in improving trainers' capabilities, and create a knowledge - sharing - friendly environment. By taking these actions, managers can enhance employees' job satisfaction, skills, and career growth, thereby strengthening organizational commitment. Looking ahead, future research could conduct longitudinal studies to track the long - term effects of training on organizational commitment. Also, exploring the influence of organizational culture and individual differences on training outcomes can offer more targeted training strategies for different organizations and employees.

Rahman, *et al*., (2025) examine the role of organizational commitment in improving teacher's job satisfaction in public high school in Indonesia. The research employs a quantitative survey method, involving 126 teachers from three public high schools on Bacan Island, South Halmahera Regency, Indonesia, namely SMAN 1, SMAN 7, and SMAN 8. The findings reveal that both transformational leadership and

organizational culture have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Additionally, organizational commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and job satisfaction. Among the factors studied, organizational commitment has the strongest influence on teacher job satisfaction. These results highlight the critical role of organizational commitment in improving job satisfaction among teachers in public high schools. The practical implications of these findings are discussed.

Detcharat and Orawan (2025) [11] conducted study on exploring barriers in supply chain disaster management using fuzzy total interpretative structure modeling approach: Insight from Thai automotive industry. Using the barriers to SCDM implementation and investigate their interrelationships. Fourteen barriers are identified through a broad literature review and certified by a panel of experts. The Fuzzy interpretative structural modeling (Fuzzy-ISM) approach is applied to construct a hierarchical model and identify the contextual relationships among SCDM barriers. Matrice d' impacts croises multiplication applique a casements (MICMAC) is deployed to categorize the 14 barriers into four actionable groups based on driving and dependence power. This study contributes to SCDM knowledge by identifying the main barriers to implementation and revealing their interrelationships. This empirical study uses an upstream supply chain in the Thai automotive industry. The results provide insight into the Thai automotive industry to alleviate barriers and efficiently and effectively manage resources while implementing SCDM. Finally, future research directions and theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

Laith and Ahmad (2025) [19] examine the impact of organizational commitment on the relationship between emotional intelligence and talent management practices: a visionary leadership point of view. Using the impact of organizational commitment on the relationship between emotional intelligence and talent management practices using visionary leadership yardstick. Field data and information were collected using the survey method through a sample of 35 visionary leaders at different organizations. The researcher found that there were significant correlations between emotional intelligence, talent management, organizational commitment and job performance, as well as a significant and positive impact between emotional intelligence and talent management on organizational commitment. The results also showed that there was a positive impact of the organizational commitment variable as an intervening variable on the relationship between emotional intelligence and talent management. The researcher recommends spreading the culture of the necessity for the researched institutions to make efforts to control emotional intelligence, manage talents and establish the concept of organizational commitment to improve the level of job performance at different organizations.

Michael, *et al*., (2024) conducted the study on employee empowerment and organizational commitment among employees of star-rate hotels in Ghana. Using the nexus between employee empowerment and organizational commitment in the Ghanaian hospitality industry. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from 274 frontline workers from 4-star and 5-star hotels at two different waves within a 7-month interval. The data received were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS V. 23.0) and SmartPLS (V.4.0), respectively. As hypothesized in the study, employee empowerment was significantly related to organizational commitment. Furthermore, the results revealed that perceived supervisor support moderated the nexus between employee empowerment and affective and continuance commitment but did not moderate the nexus between employee empowerment and normative commitment. Arguably, support from supervisors has been theoretically identified as a key construct in enhancing subordinates' commitment to an organization. However, less is known in the literature about the moderating role of perceived supervisory support in the nexus between employee empowerment and organizational commitment, especially in the Ghanaian hospitality industry.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design, which is well-suited for systematically collecting and analyzing numerical data to examine the relationships among the variables of interest employee empowerment, job involvement, and organizational performance. This study was carried out in Adamawa State. The population of this study comprised both academic and non-academic staff of selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. Specifically, the institutions included Adamawa State University, Modibbo Adama University, Yola, College of Education Hong, and Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye.

Table 1: Population of the Study

Institution	Level	Staff`
Adamawa State University	Academic staff	287
	Non-academic staff	548
Modibbo Adama University, Yola	Academic staff	988
	Non-academic staff	1277
College of Education Hong	Academic staff	409
	Non-academic staff	381
Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye	Academic staff	153
	Non-academic staff	261
Total		4304

Source: Registry Dept. 2026

To determine the sample size, the researcher adopted the use of Taro Yamani`s formula (1964).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where (N) is the total population size, and (e) is the margin of error (0.05).

N=4304

$$n=\frac{4304}{}$$

$1 + 4304(0.05)^2$
$n = \frac{4304}{1 + 4304(0.0025)}$
$= \frac{4304}{11.8}$
$= 364.7$ i.e. ≈ 365

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 365. However, 10% of the sample size was added to the 365 actual sample to guide for non-return instrument, therefore, the sample size for this study was 365 + 37 = 402.

Multi-stage sampling technique adopted for this study because the population is large and distributed across several tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The study relied primarily on primary data, which was collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to academic and non-academic staff of selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

The primary instrument was employed for data collection, in this study structured questionnaire was designed to align with the specific objectives and hypotheses of the research. A 5-point Likert scale was adopted throughout the questionnaire, with response categories ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

The data collected from the field was analyse using both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations, which was employed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and provide an overview of the responses across the major constructs' employee empowerment, job involvement, and organizational performance.

Analysis and Findings

A total of 402 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Out of these, 383 questionnaires were returned, representing a 95.3% response rate, while 19 questionnaires (4.7%) were not returned. Following the screening process, 9 questionnaires (2.2% of the total distributed, or 2.3% of those returned) were rejected because they were either incomplete or improperly completed. Consequently, 374 questionnaires were retained for the final analysis, representing 93.0% of the questionnaires distributed and 97.7% of the questionnaires returned.

Hypotheses Testing

H_{01}: Employee empowerment has no significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Table 2: Model Summary of the of effect employee empowerment on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-Values	p-values	Hypothesis Testing
(Constant)	2.027	2.093	0.968	0.000	
EE	0.939	0.044	21.549	0.000	$H_0$1: Rejected
R	0.745				
R^2	0.555				
Adjust. R^2	0.554				
F-Stats	646.356				

a. Predictors: (Constant), EE
b. Dependent Variable: OP

Table 1 shows that employee empowerment has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The model recorded an R-value of 0.745 and an R^2 of 0.555, indicating that employee empowerment explains 55.5% of the variation in organizational performance, while the remaining 44.5% is explained by other factors. The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.939$, SE = 0.044, t = 21.549, p = 0.000) confirms that a one-unit increase in employee empowerment is associated with a 0.939-unit increase in organizational performance. The model is also statistically significant overall, as indicated by the F-statistic of 646.356 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the study concludes that employee empowerment significantly and positively influences organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Table 3: Population of the Study

Institution	Level	Staff`
Adamawa State University	Academic staff	287
	Non-academic staff	548
Modibbo Adama University, Yola	Academic staff	988
	Non-academic staff	1277
College of Education Hong	Academic staff	409
	Non-academic staff	381
Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye	Academic staff	153
	Non-academic staff	**261**
Total		**4304**

H_02: Job involvement does not significantly affect employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Table 4: Model Summary of the of effect Job involvement on employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-Values	p-values	Hypothesis Testing
(Constant)	41.009	1.610	25.472	0.000	
JI	0.149	0.034	4.354	0.000	$H_0$2: Rejected
R	0.220				
R^2	0.148				
Adjust. R^2	0.146				
F-Stats	18.956				

a. Predictors: (Constant), JI
b. Dependent Variable: EE

Table 2 demonstrates that job involvement has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The R^2 value of 0.148 indicates that job involvement explains 14.8% of the variation in employee empowerment, while the remaining 85.2% is explained by other factors outside the model. The regression coefficient for job involvement ($\beta = 0.149$, SE = 0.034, t = 4.354, p = 0.000) confirms that increased job involvement is associated with higher employee empowerment. The F-statistic of 18.956 further indicates that the regression model is statistically significant overall. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected, and the study concludes that job involvement significantly and positively influences employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

H_03: Job involvement has no significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Table 5: Model Summary of the of effect job involvement on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-Values	p-values	Hypothesis Testing
(Constant)	33.157	1.190	17.007	0.000	
JI	0.296	0.041	7.166	0.000	$H_0$3: Rejected
R	0.348				
R^2	0.121				
Adjust. R^2	0.119				
F-Stats	51.350				

a. Predictors: (Constant), JI
b. Dependent Variable: OP

Table 3 shows that job involvement has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The R^2 value of 0.148 indicates that job involvement explains 14.8% of the variation in employee empowerment, while the remaining 85.2% is explained by other factors not included in the model. The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.149$, SE = 0.034, t = 4.354, p = 0.000) confirms that higher levels of job involvement are associated with increased employee empowerment. The F-statistic of 18.956 further demonstrates that the model is statistically significant overall. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected, and the study concludes that job involvement significantly and positively influences employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Table 6: Sobel Test Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Employee Empowerment on Job Involvement and Organizational Performance

Path	Relationship	Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	Indirect Effect	Sobel Z-Value	p-value	Decision
Path a	JI → EE	0.149	0.034	—	—	0.000	Significant
Path b	EE → OP	0.939	0.044	—	—	0.000	Significant
Indirect Path (a × b)	JI → EE → OP	—	0.0326	0.140	4.293	0.000	H_04 Rejected

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2026.

The Sobel test result of Z = 4.293, p < 0.05 indicates that employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

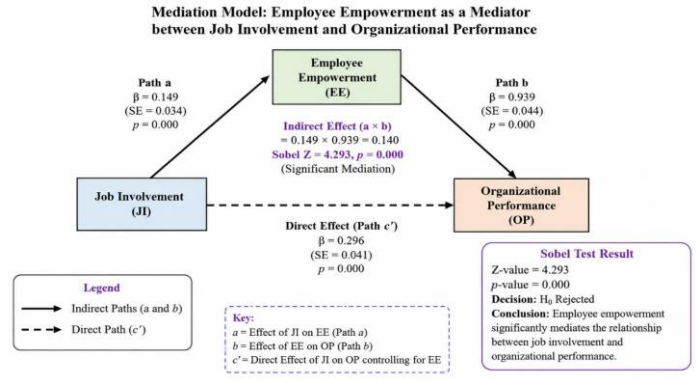


Fig 2: Sobel test analysis of the mediating effect of employee empowerment on job involvement and organizational performance

The figure demonstrates that employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. Job involvement has a positive and significant effect on employee empowerment (β = 0.149, SE = 0.034, p = 0.000), while employee empowerment has a strong positive and significant effect on organizational performance (β = 0.939, SE = 0.044, p = 0.000). The resulting indirect effect of job involvement on organizational performance through employee empowerment is 0.140, with a Sobel Z-value of 4.293 and p = 0.000, confirming a statistically significant mediation effect. The total effect of job involvement on organizational performance is also positive and significant (β = 0.296, SE = 0.041, p = 0.000). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance; however, the available results do not establish whether the mediation is partial or full because the direct effect of job involvement on organizational performance after controlling for employee empowerment was not estimated.

Summary of Findings

The following findings were derived from the above analysis:

1. Job involvement significantly affects employee empowerment. The result (β = 0.149, p = 0.000) shows that increased job involvement leads to a significant increase in employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.
2. Employee empowerment significantly affects organizational performance. The result (β = 0.939, p = 0.000) indicates that employee empowerment has a strong positive and significant effect on organizational performance.
3. Job involvement significantly affects organizational performance. The result (β = 0.296, p = 0.000) reveals that higher levels of job involvement are associated with improved organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.
4. Employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance. The Sobel test result (Z = 4.293, p = 0.000) confirms a significant indirect effect, indicating that job involvement contributes to organizational performance through employee empowerment.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of the study revealed that job involvement has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee empowerment in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, as indicated by a coefficient of 0.149 and a p-value of 0.000. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that employees who demonstrate a higher level of involvement in their jobs are more likely to experience increased empowerment within their institutions. This finding suggests that when employees identify strongly with their work, participate actively in institutional activities, and perceive their jobs as important aspects of their professional lives, they are more likely to develop the confidence and willingness required to exercise autonomy and accept greater responsibilities (Abdallah *et al*., 2016; Awan *et al*., 2024). The finding may be explained by the fact that job involvement creates opportunities for employees to acquire greater knowledge about their responsibilities and the general operations of their institutions. Employees who are highly involved in their jobs are likely to develop stronger professional competence, gain greater work experience, and establish productive relationships with management and colleagues. These conditions can increase employees' sense of competence and responsibility and may encourage management to entrust them with greater authority and discretion, which are important elements of employee empowerment (Afram *et al*., 2022; Sulistio, 2024).

Employee Empowerment and Organizational Performance

The second major finding established that employee empowerment has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The coefficient of 0.939, with a p-value of 0.000, demonstrates a strong positive relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance. This implies that improvements in employee empowerment are associated with improvements in the performance of the tertiary institutions studied. The finding underscores the importance of giving employees sufficient authority, autonomy, resources, information, and opportunities to contribute to institutional activities and decision-making processes (Afram *et al*., 2022; Imam, 2024). In tertiary institutions, employees regularly deal with academic, administrative, student-related, and operational responsibilities that require timely decisions. When employees possess the authority and confidence to make appropriate decisions within their areas of responsibility, operational delays can be reduced and service delivery can be improved. Empowerment can also stimulate creativity, commitment, innovation, and personal responsibility because employees perceive themselves as important contributors to organizational success (Afram *et al*., 2022; Desta & Mulie, 2024).

Job Involvement and Organizational Performance

The third major finding revealed that job involvement has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The coefficient of 0.296 and p-value of 0.000 indicate that increased job involvement is associated with improved organizational performance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This finding demonstrates that the extent to which employees are psychologically attached to, interested in, and actively involved in their jobs has important implications for institutional performance (Al-Refaei *et al*., 2024; Awan *et al*., 2024). The finding is consistent with Al-Refaei *et al*. (2024), who examined the role of job involvement in organizational outcomes and demonstrated the importance of job involvement in explaining how employee attitudes contribute to service quality and other performance-related outcomes. Their study reinforces the argument that employees' psychological attachment to their jobs can translate into productive behaviours that enhance organizational outcomes. The finding therefore supports the view that job involvement represents an important employee attitude that organizations should encourage in their efforts to improve performance (Al-Refaei *et al*., 2024).

Mediating Role of Employee Empowerment in the Relationship Between Job Involvement and Organizational Performance

The fourth and central finding of the study established that employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The indirect effect of job involvement on organizational performance through employee empowerment was 0.140, while the Sobel test produced a Z-value of 4.293 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the Sobel Z-value exceeded the critical value of 1.96 and the probability value was below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result supports the growing body of organizational research emphasizing the importance of intervening employee attitudes and psychological mechanisms in explaining organizational performance. Afram *et al*. (2022), for example, demonstrated that the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance can operate through employee-related mechanisms, particularly organizational citizenship behaviour. This demonstrates that relationships between human resource practices and organizational performance are not always purely direct but may operate through intermediate psychological and behavioural processes (Afram *et al*., 2022). Similarly, Desta and Mulie (2024) established that work engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between empowering leadership practices and employee performance. Although their study examined a different causal sequence from the present research, the findings support the broader principle that empowerment, involvement, engagement, and performance are interconnected through important psychological mechanisms. The present finding extends this reasoning by demonstrating that employee empowerment can serve as a mechanism through which job involvement contributes to organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State (Desta & Mulie, 2024).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that job involvement and employee empowerment are important determinants of organizational performance in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The study established that job involvement has a positive and significant effect on employee empowerment, indicating that employees who are actively involved in their jobs are more likely to experience a greater sense of empowerment in carrying out their responsibilities. The study further concluded that employee empowerment has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance. This implies that providing employees with adequate authority, autonomy, resources, and opportunities to participate in decision-making contributes significantly to improved institutional performance. Furthermore, job involvement was found to have a positive and significant effect on organizational performance. This demonstrates that employees who are psychologically and actively engaged in their jobs contribute more effectively to the overall performance of their institutions. Thus, promoting greater employee involvement can enhance commitment, productivity, and the attainment of institutional objectives. Finally, the study concludes that employee empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between job involvement and organizational performance. The significant Sobel test result confirms that part of the influence of job involvement on organizational performance operates through employee empowerment.

Recommendations

The following findings were derived from the above findings and conclusion:

1. Management of tertiary institutions should encourage employees to actively participate in decision-making and work-related activities to enhance their involvement and empowerment.
2. Tertiary institutions should empower employees by providing adequate authority, autonomy, resources, and training to improve organizational performance.
3. Management should promote employee involvement through effective communication, teamwork, consultation, recognition, and appropriate reward systems to enhance organizational performance.
4. Tertiary institutions should integrate job involvement and employee empowerment by ensuring that involved employees are given the necessary authority, resources, and managerial support to improve organizational performance.

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