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Artificial Intelligence and Employee Job Engagement in Edo State Universities

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Abstract

Presently, Artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized the educational sector and made personalized learning possible through AI-powered platforms. The innovations in educational sector that comes with Artificial Intelligence enhances staff engagement and performance in teaching and learning. Therefore, the broad objective of this study is to examine the relationship between artificial intelligence and Staff Engagement of Edo State Universities. While the specific objective is to examine the relationship between mentorship and staff productivity in Edo State Universities. The study is anchored on Technology Acceptance Theory. A survey research design was adopted for the study. A primary source of data was employed with a sample size of five hundred and sixty eight (261). Regression analysis was used to test the formulated hypothesis. The result obtained from the test of the formulated hypothesis revealed that there is a positively significant relationship between mentorship and staff productivity in Edo State Universities. Based on the findings, the study concluded that there exists a strong significant positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence and staff engagement in Edo State Universities. Sequel to conclusion, the study recommended that the studied tertiary institutions need to be AI compliance as this will lead to employee engagement and improved productivity in the institutions.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Mentorship, Staff Engagement, Staff Productivity, Tertiary Institution, Edo State.

Introduction

Since people are vital resources that enable other production components in the company to operate, the ability to educate and retain them is the most crucial component every firm requires to maintain its competitiveness in today rapidly evolving technological landscape. The success, productivity, retention, and general job happiness of a business are all significantly impacted by employee engagement. It is defined as the positive, emotional, and cognitive connection that an employee has with an organization in relation to the organization's production (Shuck & Wollard, 2019). According to Iddagoda, Opatha, and Gunawardana (2016), employee engagement is the degree to which a worker becomes intellectually, emotionally, and behaviorally interested in their work and the organization. According to a study, motivated staff members go above and beyond to accomplish company objectives and speak well of the company when they interact with the public (Aon, 2018). In a nutshell, employee engagement increases productivity, profitability, safety, loyalty, and retention, all of which contribute to the performance of an organization. Additionally, workers that put a lot of effort into their job are seen to be more engaged. As a result, companies with higher employee engagement levels saw yearly increases in operational income and earnings per share (Towers, 2017).

In essence, artificial intelligence-compliant postsecondary institutions improve productivity, decision-making, teamwork, employee engagement, and corporate cultures (Ransbotham et al., 2021). These days, using artificial intelligence to get trustworthy and accurate information is becoming more and more popular. Since automated tools have been shown to increase employee engagement and productivity in higher education, they must be available in tertiary institutions where data sources for research projects and lecture notes are more important than ever (Ganatra & Pandya, 2023). According to researchers like Mittal (2023), Ganatra (2023), Ersoy (2023), and Wijayati (2022), artificial intelligence (AI) enhances employee engagement via sentiment analysis, real-time monitoring, and natural language processing. Additionally, according to Jabłońska and Pólkowski (2017), using AI-driven measures in an organization's performance includes issue solving, reducing the workload for humans, and lowering costs related to low-cost labor and

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employee engagement. According to Mikalef and Gupta (2021), artificial intelligence mimics the cognitive functions of the human brain, including learning, analysis, and decision-making. Without a doubt, knowing how AI and employee engagement are related will make Edo State's higher education institutions more prepared and encourage employees to stick with the company that has the best chance of competing with those in and outside of Nigeria. Clearly, the research found that mentoring, the key to increasing staff productivity, has not been completely adopted by Edo State higher institutions. Employee productivity will suffer as a result of more experienced workers in a company being unable to impart their expertise to less experienced workers due to a lack of mentoring. Employee engagement in a company will also be impacted by a lack of mentoring. Thus, there is a strong need to investigate the connection between Edo State Universities' employee engagement and artificial intelligence.

Therefore, this study's general goal is to investigate the connection between artificial intelligence and employee engagement at Edo State Universities, while its particular goal is to determine the link between employee productivity and mentoring.

Conceptual Review

Artificial Intelligence

According to Omar, Wiem, Anup, Ersin, Mohammad, Ali, and Yogesh (2023), artificial intelligence is a branch of science and technology that makes it possible for intelligent computers and computer programs to do tasks that have historically required human intellect. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a significant technical development that has allowed people to replace manual labor with higher mental skills and intellectual levels in a number of organizations, going beyond the physical labor assistance provided by machines (Chien et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2023). The display of intelligence by computers or machines, or the ability to have machines do tasks that are typically performed by humans, is known as artificial intelligence (Al). The creation of "computers which perform cognitive tasks, usually associated with human minds, particularly learning and problem-solving" is the primary focus of artificial intelligence in education (AIEd) (Baker and Smith, 2019). It is a kind of intelligence that machines display. It is a machine simulation that allows humans to collaborate with other human brains to solve problems and learn (Nishika, 2017). The field of computer science known as artificial intelligence (AI) studies the intelligence of computers. An intelligent agent is a system that acts in a way that increases its chances of success. It is the study of concepts that allow computers to do tasks that give humans the appearance of intelligence. Reasoning, knowledge, planning, learning, perception, communication, and the capacity to move and control things are some of the fundamental ideas of artificial intelligence. According to Neha (2023), it is the science and engineering of creating intelligent machines, particularly intelligent computer programs. A technology known as artificial intelligence allows machines to learn and comprehend reasoning much like people do. It is claimed that this technology may assist in making difficult tasks easier for humans to complete (Fitria, 2021).

Mentorship

A mentor is a more seasoned, informed, and reliable someone who provides guidance and support to a younger or less seasoned individual over time. According to Klinge (2015), mentoring is a circumstance in which a more knowing or experienced someone assists in guiding a less knowledgeable or experienced individual. One person may help another person grow by sharing resources, ideas, learning, knowledge, values, skills, views, attitudes, proficiencies, and rofessional competence. This is known as mentoring, and it has also been discussed as a personal improvement method. According to the Defense Logistics Agency (2018), it enables the "learner to build skills and knowledge while attaining goals for carrier development." One of the most important tools for developing people inside companies is mentoring. The art of mentoring is the function of artificial intelligence, which is extensively used in many online educational technology platforms. Mentoring happens when an experienced individual offers to help someone else acquire the information they need to operate well in an organization (Klamma et al., 2020). According to Zhang (2016), mentoring is a multimedia-integrated online learning environment that prioritizes intelligence, engagement, and customisation. By strategically developing workers' potential and enhancing their productivity and service quality at a lower cost, mentoring programs allow the company to use its most valuable asset: its workforce (Power, 2017). The technique of mentoring involves matching a more experienced or skilled individual with a less experienced individual in order to help the latter grow and develop particular competencies. This approach not only helps to refine the individual's skills and abilities but also positively alters employees' skills to improve their performance and the performance of the organization (Ahmad & Shahzad 2014). According to researchers like Malik and Nawaz (2021) and Mnasi et al. (2022),

mentoring has a positive impact on staff members' performance in higher education. Mentoring helps people identify their areas of weakness and provides them with the necessary guidance and feedback to acquire new skills and competencies (Ojeaga & Okolocha, 2020).

Staff Engagement

The degree of emotional dedication and participation that workers have for their jobs, coworkers, and the company overall is known as staff engagement (Guo & Hou, 2022). It represents a profound connection that inspires workers to go above and beyond their fundamental duties and goes beyond simple job happiness. Employee engagement is the process of using an organization's workforce's skills in order to achieve its goals and objectives. According to Graça, Pais, Mónico, Santos, Ferraro, and Berger (2019), an engaged worker has a more favorable opinion of their working environment and is less likely to take sick days or want to quit. Engaged workers go above and above to accomplish company objectives, and they speak well of the company when they interact with the public (Aon, 2018). According to Stockley (2014), employee engagement is the degree to which a worker believes in the organization's vision, purpose, and values and expresses this belief via their behavior and attitude toward the company. Employee engagement directly affects their propensity to do exceptionally well on the job and go above and beyond their usual responsibilities. According to Rajeshwari, Avinash, and Vidyavathi (2023), workers that are actively involved in an organization show greater levels of dedication and perform better, which helps the company as a whole. Better team performance, more employee productivity, higher retention rates, fewer turnover, and less burnout are just a few advantages of employee engagement for organizational success (Gyensare et al., 2017). Designing an organizational climate that fosters positive feelings like pride and participation might help increase employee engagement (Robinson, 2015).

Staff Productivity

Since it has taken on several dimensions (Adeinat and Kassim, 2019), the concept of employee productivity is not new in the world of management (Shivangi & Nirmala, 2022). These days, it's linked to a number of things, including pay, service profit chain, internet, work-life balance, motivation, and the workplace. Organizations these days are more focused on ways to boost worker productivity (Yunus & Ernawati, 2017). Employee productivity and organizational performance are related; the more productive people are, the better the organization performs (Yunus and Ernawati, 2017; Iqbal, Ahmed, and Allen, 2019). Employee productivity, according to Yunus and Ernawati (2017), is the capacity of employees to generate products and services in order to meet the objectives of the company. In a similar vein, employee productivity indicates the degree of efficiency and the amount of time required to complete a given work. When workers are productive, they complete a job more quickly and effectively; when they are not productive, they take longer to complete a task, which costs money. Employee loyalty, productivity, and happiness all affect internal or external organizational duties (Adeinat & Kassim, 2019). The connection between employee happiness and loyalty was shown to be mediated by staff productivity. In summary, employee engagement (Lee et al., 2017), employee wellness (Sharma et al., 2016), and employee commitment and satisfaction (Adeina and Kassim, 2019) all have a major impact on staff productivity.

Theoretical Framework

Technology Acceptance Theory serves as the foundation for the investigation. Fred Davis introduced the Technology Acceptance Theory in his doctoral thesis in 1986. One of the most important topics in the world of software engineering nowadays is technology adoption. According to Alaa and Mamoun (2017), technology acceptance theory explains how people utilize technology. According to the idea of technology acceptance, users' behavioral intentions, which are based on their perceptions of the technology's utility and simplicity of use, indicate whether or not they will adopt it. our notion is pertinent to our investigation as artificial intelligence has gained widespread recognition due to its quick adoption and application in higher education. Additionally, since it makes finding information for academic purposes simpler, it is acknowledged as a factor in promoting employee engagement in postsecondary institutions.

Empirical Review

The effect of artificial intelligence on employee engagement at Access Bank Plc in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria, was investigated by Oluseye, Taiwo, Hauwa, and Akeem (2024). The study's population consisted of 126 Access Bank employees, and it used a descriptive survey research methodology. All 126 of the bank's employees made up the sample size. A standardized questionnaire with a Likert scale was used to gather data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 was used to analyze the data using multiple regression. The

study's conclusions demonstrated that artificial intelligence significantly and favorably impacted employee engagement.

Zouhaier (2022) conducted an empirical research in Oman, Spain, to investigate the effects of artificial intelligence on higher education. This study's objectives are to analyze how AI is affecting higher education, look at how it affects the teaching and learning process, assess how it affects assessment and grading, and forecast how it will affect graduates' future employment. The research collected data from both primary and secondary sources. The research used a qualitative survey. The research uses a qualitative methodology based on a survey of the audience in higher education to achieve this. The study's findings highlight how important artificial intelligence will be to higher education in the future. The results of the research indicate that AI improves learning by making it easier to pick up new information and abilities. The researcher suggests that all higher education institutions use AI as a prerequisite, based on the concerns and conclusions presented in this study report.

Zahir, Bibi, Mohammad, Yuzery, Noral & Khairul (2023), investigated the use of AI in higher education from the viewpoint of academicians. The purpose of this research was to evaluate professors at both public and private universities. The data utilized came from a survey, and the tool used to acquire the data was a questionnaire. There were 362 people living there. According to the study's findings, artificial intelligence significantly enhances the performance of Nigerian tertiary institutions.

The impact of AI-powered learning platforms on student performance and engagement was investigated by Syed and Chaya (2024): new technologies in Bengaluru education. This research used a mixed-methods approach to gather data from 50 students who utilized the AI-powered platforms. The study focused on academic accomplishment, motivation, confidence, class participation, engagement levels, and help-seeking behaviors. The SPSS program was used to conduct the statistical analysis, which included descriptive statistics and paired samples t-tests. The study's conclusions showed that learning enabled by artificial intelligence has a favorable and substantial impact on student performance and engagement.

Artificial intelligence and satisfaction with HR methods were studied by Hemalatha, Indra, Sruthi, and Sri (2024), with particular reference to academics' employee engagement in Coimbatore, India. The study's primary goal is to determine how artificial intelligence functions and how satisfied people are with HR procedures. A random sampling technique was used to choose a sample of 250. Statistical procedures such as percentage analysis, descriptive analysis, chi square factor analysis, and ANOVA using SPSS were used to structure the questionnaire and assess the data that was gathered. The results showed that employee satisfaction at tertiary institutions and artificial intelligence had a substantial beneficial link.

Methodology

Research Design

Survey Research Design was used in this study to enable the researcher observe what happened to the sample subjects without manipulating them.

Population of Study

The study's participants were the faculty members of Edo State University in Uzairue and Ambrose Alli University in Ekpoma. Given a total of 816 employees, their numerical values are Edo State University Uzairue (288) and Ambrose Alli University (528).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling technique was used for this study. The formula is:

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + x^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where

S	=	Sample Size
X^2	=	Table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom 0.05 confidence level (3.84)
N	=	population Size (816)
P	=	Population proportion (0.5)
d^2	=	Degree of accuracy (0.05)

$$S = \frac{3.84\ (816)\ (0.5)\ (1\text{-}0.5)}{(0.05)^2\ (816\text{-}1) + (3.84)\ (0.5)\ (1\text{-}0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{783.36}{2.0375 + 0.96}$$

$$S = \frac{783.36}{2.9975}$$

$$S = 261.33 = 261$$

The questionnaire was created using a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Strongly Disagree (SD), and Disagree (D). 261 copies of the questionnaire were sent at random to respondents from the targeted postsecondary institutions. The copies that would

be arbitrarily distributed to each organization were determined using Bowley's (1926) allocation algorithm. Thus:

Nh = n(nh)/N
Where
Nh = Number of units to be distributed to each group.
nh = Number of respondents in each group.
N = Total Sample Size.
N = Total Population Size.

Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma: - 261 (528)/816 = 137,808/816 = 169

Edo University Uzairue: - 261 (288)/816 = 75168/816 = 92

Test of Hypothesis
Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis with the aid of SPSS version 20.

H_1: There is a significant positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence and Employee Engagement.
H_0: There is no significant positive relationship between Mentorship and Employee Productivity.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.891[a]	.788	.776	1.89063	.788	78.095	1	23	.000	1.644

a. Predictors: (Constant),Virtual Mentorship
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity

The findings showed that virtual mentoring significantly affects the productivity of the tertiary institutions' employees ($\beta = 1.89$, $p<0.05$). Employee productivity is predicted by virtual mentoring (F-statistics = 78.1; R-squared = 0.788; $p<0.05$). The predictor variable alone accounted for 78.8% of the variation in work satisfaction; the impact of the extraneous factors may have contributed the remaining 21.2%. The absence of first-order serial correlation is shown by the Durbin Watson value of 1.6.

Discussion of Finding
According to the body of existing research on AI, using AI may significantly improve employee engagement, especially in developing regions like Edo State, Nigeria. According to the results, virtual mentoring that improves an employee's productivity and competences might raise their intention to remain with a company and their level of work satisfaction in general. The results of the hypothesis test showed a significant positive correlation between employee productivity and virtual mentoring. This supports the research of Oluseye, Taiwo, Hauwa, and Akeem (2024), Zouhaier (2022), Hemalatha, Indra, Sruthi, and Sri (2024), and Zahir, Bibi, Mohammad, Yuzery, Noral, and Khairul (2023). The research also finds that in order for Edo State University employees to be productive, they need artificial intelligence devices and sufficient understanding of how to use them. This would ultimately improve the tertiary institutions' performance.

Conclusion
Based on the results, the research comes to the conclusion that employee productivity in Edo State tertiary institutions is strongly positively correlated with virtual mentoring. According to Rajeshwari, Avinash, and Vidyavathi (2023), there is a positive correlation between the success of a business and the degree of dedication and performance of its workers who are actively involved via technological assistance.

Recommendations
According to the report, Edo State's higher education institutions should consider integrating artificial intelligence into their operations a top priority as it would enable their employees to access more data that they need to do their jobs well. Additionally, as it will increase staff productivity at higher institutions, mentoring that equips staff with the necessary skills in the application of artificial intelligence should be promoted.

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