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Effect Of Human Resource Counselling And Organisational Productivity Of Manufacturing Firms In Port Harcourt Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined ways human resource counselling impacts on productivity in manufacturing firms based in Rivers State, Nigeria. More specifically, it looked at the link between career counselling and employees' output, career dynamics and their promptness, and career guidance on employee engagement. The survey was carried out by asking questions from 200 employees in randomly selected aluminium and plastic companies with the use of questionnaires. The results were studied with descriptive statistics and simple linear regression to see if the hypotheses were supported at 0.05 significance level. According to the results, career counselling led to better employee results, career dynamics affected how early employees arrived at work, and career guidance increased employees' commitment. This shows that if workers participate in structured counselling, their productivity increases, and their skills in time-management and loyalty to the company improve. Evidence showed that human resource counselling should be used by organisations to boost employee performance and reach their own aims. It was advised that manufacturing firms put professional counselling services into place and include career development in their human resource management. Regulators should also create regulations that boost organisations' motivation to provide employees with career counselling through their development plans.
Keywords: Productivity, Employee Counselling, career counselling, dynamic counselling, guidance counselling, employee output, timeliness.

INTRODUCTION

The environment of business is becoming highly competitive in a way that organisations are compelled to advance its competencies, increase its capacities for more cost-effective, creativity and competitive advantage.

Human Resources are considered the most important and valuable asset of every organization and counselling of its employees is one of the emerging issues that organization may use to encourage employees to develop in their career. Counselling is the process of assisting other people or employees to discover and act upon a solution to their problems, anxieties, uncertainties and various issues (Rao, 2016). Employees are faced with a lot of work-related and personal issues which include stress, trauma, depression, relationship issues, conflict, family problems, career planning, absenteeism etc. Hence, there is need for employee counselling to enable the human resources of organization cope with these challenges for a better job performance and productivity.

Employee productivity is actually the total input and the overall output, been expressed in the unit of labour input and output. The International Labour Organisation also noted that productivity as a ratio is joining the output and input of organization resources used in the process of production (Kato, 2016, in Olasanmi et al., 2021). Employee productivity is essentially crucial for the organization to succeed and have competitive advantage in today's dynamic and global competitive market.

Human resource management counselling is an important service rendered by the HR Consultants or Counsellors who advise and counsel units, departments, managers and employees.

Collins (2021), noted that HR acts as a consultant, they advise and counselling units and department managers on different issues boarding on the employee and how organizational goals can be achieved.

Akparabia and Opara (2018). Opined that Human resource management counselling has to do with the process of assisting the individual employee to determine, admit, comprehend and apply the pertinent truths about the world of profession which are further discover via accompanying and aforethought geographic expedition actions. Rao (2016), also revealed that human resource counselling is actually one of the efficient proceedings to investigate work and family-related employees' problems that negatively affect work and productivity of employees.

Statement of the Problem

Employees in organizations are faced with a lot of uncertainties, issues and difficulties both at the workplace and in the families. As a matter of fact, these difficulties and problems are of different spheres involving economic, social, physical, attitudinal, and of course, they are of religious consideration Rao (2016). Others are from losses, anxiety, depression, stressful life situations, bullying, harassment, alcohol and drug abuse (Marshall, 2016). There are attendant consequences on work performance and productivity in these prevailing circumstances if they are left unattended to, there is an indication that they are likely to cause further losses in term of output and effectiveness of the organization.

A work environment or workplace can only be productive and healthy when the emotional, psychological and physical health as well as the overall wellbeing of its employees are in order. As observed in the study by (King & Gardener,2016 in Mtana & Kepha ,2022).

Employees can only overcome these difficulties through efficient counselling intervention which will enable the managers to find out work and family related employees' issues and challenges that affect work and productivity. Employee most of the suffer lack of career planning, depression, trauma, gambling, drug and alcohol problems, so there is need for professional HR counselling to enable the employee feel better and perform more productively because productivity and performance can be affected for lack of counselling. Even the Holy Bible, in the book of Proverbs 15:22, I quote "Without counsel purposes are disappointed, but in the multitude of counsellors they are established". Employees may have career plans, ambitions and goals, without the counsel of the wise and professional HR Consultants it is almost impossible for employees to achieve their goals as well as organizational objectives. Existing studies, while demonstrating the link between HRM counselling and employee productivity in other regions, have largely overlooked the specifics such as career dynamics, career guidance as well as employee output, timeliness and employee commitment remained basically unexplored in manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Therefore, this study investigates the connection between HRM Counselling and organisational productivity in top management employees of four manufacturing firms, two Aluminum companies and two plastic companies in Rivers State, and explains how HRM Counselling supports both business results and career growth for workers.

Conceptual Framework: Human Resource Counselling and Organisational Productivity

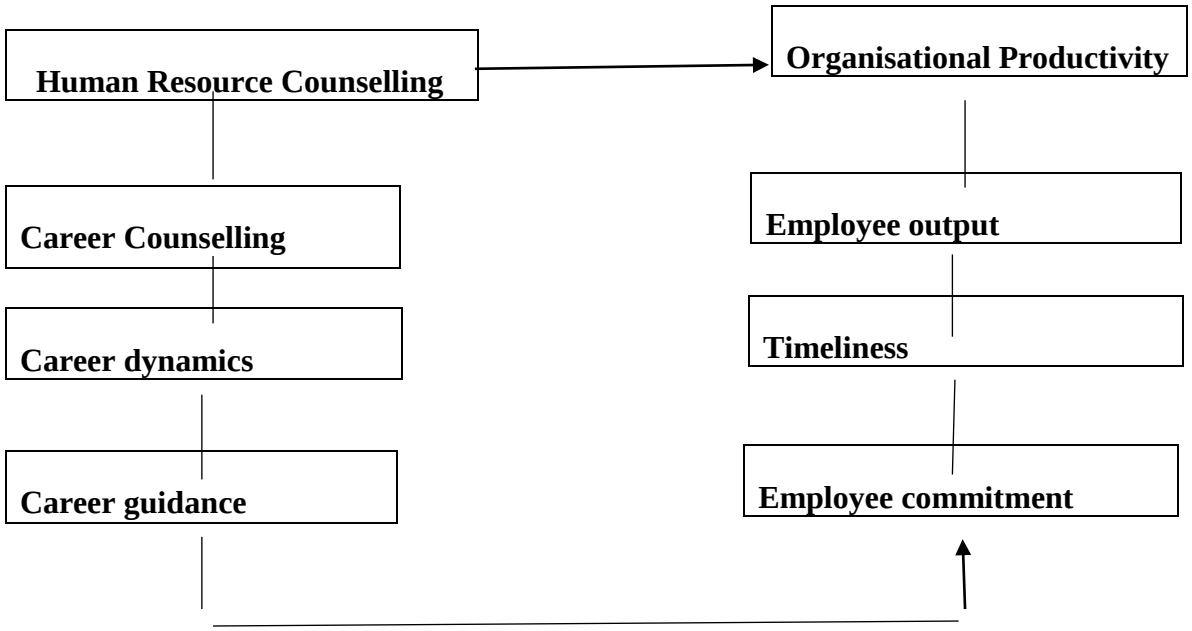

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework of Human Resource Counselling and Organisational Productivity
Source: Researcher (2024)

Aim and objective of the Research

The aim and objective of the study was to examine the effect of human resource counselling and organisational productivity of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. To achieve this, aim the study specific sought to:

1. Examine the effect of career counselling on employee output in manufacturing firms in Rivers State.
2. To ascertain the effect career dynamics on timeliness in manufacturing firms in Rivers State.
3. To determine the effect of career guidance on employee commitment in manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: Career counselling does not have any significant effect on employee output in manufacturing firms in Rivers State?

Ho2: Career dynamics does not any significant effect on timeliness manufacturing firms in Rivers State?

Ho3: Career guidance does not have any significant on employee commitment in manufacturing firms in Rivers State?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Human Resource Counselling

This involves the process of helping an individual employee or the counselee to identify his/her own problem and develop his/her own solution. Human Resource counselling has to do with the process of helping the individual employee to determine, admit, understand and apply the relevant facts about the professional or work-related world (Akpanabia and Opara, 2018).

Musyimi (2020), opined that human resource counselling services mitigate organizational behaviours such as frustration, absenteeism, aggression, drug abuse, and job disputes that impair organizational effectiveness that affect employee

Dimensions of Human Resource counselling

Career Counselling

Career counseling encourages career preparation and understanding in organizations, workplaces, and the community through career counsellors. Career Counselling is one of the Career Development practices that an organization can use to inspire their employees to develop their careers. In another related study, The Career Guidance Analysis (2013) defines career counseling as programmes and activities designed to help individuals make choices about training, career choice, and career management.

Career dynamics

This refers to career management based on concerned about how careers progress, the pattern in which individuals move through their careers upwards. There are three stages of career progression, it includes expanding, establishing and maturing. It also shows how individuals progress or fails to progress at different rate through the phases. (Armstrong, 2012).

Career guidance

Rajuik and Swamy (2021), view career guidance as a process of helping individuals to acquire the knowledge, information, skills and experience necessary to identify career option, and narrow them down to make one's career decision.

Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interest, qualification and abilities. It is a service that helps people make decisions about their education, training, manage and develop career thinking. People can plan their personal lives, taking into account their situations and the environment, through career guidance. As noted by Fitzpatrick, Monda and Wooding (2016), career guidance offers direction, preparation capacity, decision-making adequacy, career readiness, and career maturity. Once employees feel qualified to perform their work, employee satisfaction arises, which can be accomplished by improved career development.

Organizational Productivity

When an organisation is productive, it makes efficient use of things such as workers, inputs, and finances to get the desired results. It means checking both the amount and the excellence of what a company produces in relation to the resources it uses throughout its existence (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). A company is called productive if it is effective, saves resources, grows its profits, and becomes more competitive. Robbins and Coulter (2021) believe that productivity includes not only making things but also meeting demands, creating new methods, and making the workforce work together towards the company's goals.

Studies done by scholars in the past few years have demonstrated the impact of human resource strategies on how productive an organization is. According to Ojo and Salau (2022), career development, counselling, and giving feedback to workers at work positively impact the outcomes of manufacturing businesses in Nigeria. It was found that organisations that support their employees' wellbeing and learning perform better in productivity. Uzonwanne (2021) claimed that giving employees support and making them feel supported with services such as counseling and mentorship can improve both their commitment and the quality of their task performance. It shows that using measures aside from monetary ones encourages employees to perform well. On the same note, Adebayo and Nwankwo (2020) showed that those organisations making efforts to provide a good workplace and career growth opportunities have less turnover and offer exemplary services in areas where needs are high, such as manufacturing and healthcare.

Indicators for Organization Productivity

Employee Output

Outcome production by employees tends to represent the productivity of an organization, indicating the way employees convert time, skills, and resources into important results. Mathis and Jackson (2019) say

that employee output consists of both the quantity and quality of work done by staff members within a certain period, and it is commonly used to rate performance, productivity, and achievements related to the organisation's objectives.

Usually, when people are highly productive, it is because they understand their role, like their job, have the needed training, and feel supported. Lately, scholars have analyzed many aspects that lead to better employee performance. It was shown by Olasanmi et al. (2021) that employees benefit from career advice and emotional support by doing their work better and with more focus. Eze and Odu (2022) noticed that with structured counselling, employees are able to deal with their challenges, which makes performing their duties smoothly. As explained by Mahmood-Aziz et al. (2023), if employees feel more motivated and leaders adopt a great style, and professional growth chances exist, the quantity of their job output increases. Other organizational approaches, for example, mentoring, coaching, and consistent feedback, can have a major role in improving results in a company (Radu, 2023). From these findings, it is safe to say that businesses should look at both the skills and mental states of their workers to achieve higher productivity.

Timeliness

Every employee who is present and ready to start on time makes things better for the worker and the company. Timeliness assigns stocks a rating based on how the analyst thinks the stocks may change in price. Sadikoglu and Cemal (2010) also mentioned in a different study that improved performance by employees is seen in high-quality work as well as work done on time, with help and friendliness to others, and by making sure they are present at all required times.

Entering into a market first with a product or service gives a company the edge over its competitors (Wikipedia, 2019). It is important to check if medical product reviews are timely and if they still follow the agency's rules for safety and effectiveness. The statement is based on (Food and Drug Administration 2012).

Employee Commitment

People who are committed to their job help the organization improve in terms of productivity, retention, and performance. Staff dedication plays an important role in shaping things like people's feelings about their job, their desire to leave, and how well they do their duties. It is widely proven that there is a positive connection between how involved employees are in their work and how happy they feel at their jobs (Mahmood-Aziz, et al., 2021)). Besides, when employees are more committed, they are much less likely to look for other jobs (Opolot, et al., 2023). Also, organizations whose employees are deeply committed usually achieve good results in terms of productivity, pleasing customers, and financial success (Mansor, et al., 2023). How employees commit to their work matters a lot for the success of any organization. Improving culture in the organization, supporting leaders, and giving employees opportunities for independence and satisfaction builds their commitment and makes them more involved at work (Radu, 2023). Also, understanding how employee commitment relates to organizational achievements encourages companies to pay attention to employee involvement and loyalty, which benefits the company in the long run.

Theoretical Review

These two are known as Trait and Factor Theory.

The main theoretical foundation of the study came from Frank Parsons's Trait and Factor theory of 1908. The theory looks at individuals judging where their skills lie and then making an occupation choice. It suggests that for a person to choose a vocation, they should find out their strengths and weaknesses (Kinanee, 2015).

Employee Commitment

Commitment in employees is necessary for an organization to succeed because it affects productivity, keeping staff, and reaching goals. Staff dedication can greatly affect the organization, shown in their job happiness, plans to quit, and work performance. Several research studies have established that there is a direct relationship between employees being committed and job satisfaction, while also indicating that committed employees often feel more fulfilled and are more engaged at their job (Mahmood-Aziz, et al.,

2021)). Also, committed workers tend to stay where they are, so employees' loyalty is connected to a decrease in thinking of new jobs elsewhere (Opolot, et al., 2023). Additionally, organisations whose employees are strongly committed usually perform well by being more productive, giving good customer service, and earning more (Mansor, et al., 2023). Figuring out what influences employee commitment and its results is very important for organizations. A good organizational culture, effective leadership development, and well-designed jobs that allow workers autonomy encourage employees to stay loyal and take greater interest in their job (Radu, 2023). Because employees' commitment connects to important results for the organization, businesses should focus on keeping employees satisfied and engaged, which helps the company succeed in the long run.

Empirical Review

The researchers Okafor and Chukwuma (2021) focused on the relationship between career counselling and performance in workers in the banking industry in Lagos State. To explore the concept, a descriptive survey design was used and data were obtained by asking 250 bank employees questions through questionnaires. There was a noticeable and significant link between career counselling and employees' levels of performance. Employees who could use career counselling services felt surer about their tasks, fit well into their roles, and became more productive. According to the researchers, career counselling allows people to understand themselves better and to fit their skills with their work, leading to better results. They urged human resource departments to add career counselling into the employee development process.

Adewale and Shittu (2020) undertook a study on Career Development and Punctuality of Employees in Medium–Sized Manufacturing Firms from Ogun State. The study based its findings on a correlational approach and included 180 staff members from units of various departments. It was shown by research that the presence of supportive career policies led to improvement in employees' arrival at work. Those workers whose careers had a clear path were more likely to show up punctually, manage their time well, and finish their work on time. The study showed that the right approach to careers motivates workers, so it suggested that managers introduce clear and easy-to-follow career advancement procedures to save time.

Eze and Odu (2022) performed a study that examined the influence of career guidance on workers' commitment in the telecom industry in Abuja. Data were collected from 220 participants who answered a survey that had been carefully developed. It was revealed from the analysis that those given career advice were more emotionally involved with the organisation, felt like they belonged, and were much less likely to look for a job elsewhere. It was concluded that career guidance helps individuals follow the organisation's goals, which strengthens commitment. The writers recommended adding mentorship and career coaching to HR policies to help secure employees' loyalty and maintain the stability of the company.

Lawal and James (2023) studied how Human Resource Counselling affects the behavior of staffers in construction firms within Port Harcourt. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained by interviewing 200 employees and HR managers for the study. It was found that counselling services designed to improve feelings and career concerns greatly lessened stress, improved how people relate to others, and raised their productivity. In short, the authors found that access to counselling should support normal employee engagement all the time, not just when a crisis appears. The committee said that hiring licensed counsellors and forming special employees' counselling services was necessary.

Muhammed and Isa (2021) investigated Career Counselling and how many Nigerian Breweries tasks were finished. This study collected data from 200 employees taken from various departments by using a cross-sectional survey design. According to the regression analysis, students who received career counselling finished their tasks more successfully. Workers who got frequent career advice were observed to improve their focus, dedication, and the way they handle their time. It was found that by taking part in counselling, employees become clear about their role and set goals that are actually achievable. They advised that everyone should undergo career counselling as a required part of joining and further training.

Uche and Mba looked at the results of giving Career Guidance to public sector workers in Enugu State (2024). The study covered 270 staff members, regression analysis was performed to investigate the connection between career guidance and loyalty and commitment. Employees felt more purposeful and included because they could access career details, advice, and support services, which made them stay loyal to the organisation. It was established by the study that good career advice assists in lowering workplace turnover and improves teamwork within the organization. It was advised that public agencies should frequently alter and upgrade career policies to reflect the existing workforce trends.

METHODOLOGY

To examine the effect of human resource counselling and organisational productivity of manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt Rivers State, the study used a survey research method involving data collected from a structured questionnaire and analysed with descriptive, correlation coupled with multiple regression analysis. The population of the study comprised employees, both senior and junior staff, in selected 4 manufacturing firms, (2) Aluminum manufacturing firms and (2) Plastics manufacturing firms in Rivers State. For Aluminum Manufacturing Firm, the selected companies are Boskel Nigeria Limited and Midsteel Industries Nigeria Limited. while for Plastic manufacturing firms, the selected companies are Prazic Limited and General Plastic Limited. Four hundred questionnaires of which 50 were distributed each to the head office of the selected companies located in Port Harcourt.

Sampling Technique: Using stratified random sampling, some people from every department and staff group were selected to be sure the sample was fair. All items for the research were made on a four-point Likert scale ranging from disagree strongly to agree strongly. The instrument's reliability was supported by experts in human resource management and educational psychology checking its content. A possible sample was tested with 30 individuals working in a similar firm not involved in the main study, and the results from Cronbach's Alpha fell between 0.78 to 0.86, indicating no problem with internal consistency. Surveying was done by the research team, with expert assistants, to make certain participants would take part in the research. Statistics from the data were analyzed with SPSS using descriptive statistics and linear regression to run the test hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Model Specification

To examine effect of human resource counselling and organisational productivity of manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, the study formulated it models as:

$EO = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CC + \epsilon$ ……1

$TM = \beta_0 + \beta_2 CD + \epsilon$ ……2

$EC = \beta_0 + \beta_3 CG + \epsilon$ ……3

Where:

EO = Employee Output
TM = Timeliness
EC =Employee Commitment
CC = Career Counselling
CD = Career Dynamics
CG = Career Guidance
β_0 = Intercept
$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Coefficients representing the effect of each HRC component
ϵ = Error term

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
Career Counselling (CC)	1.00	5.00	3.84	0.76	-0.45	-0.12
Career Dynamics (CD)	1.00	5.00	3.67	0.82	-0.29	-0.35
Career Guidance (CG)	1.00	5.00	3.92	0.73	-0.51	0.04
Employee Output (EO)	1.00	5.00	3.75	0.79	-0.33	-0.22
Timeliness (TM)	1.00	5.00	3.69	0.81	-0.38	-0.16
Employee Commitment (EC)	1.00	5.00	3.87	0.77	-0.47	-0.10

The numbers in Table 1 offer information on how people feel about human resource counselling and the productivity of their organisations. All the variable averages are between 3.67 and 3.92 out of 4, which means that most people answered positively. The finding indicated that career guidance is most commonly featured in counselling, followed by helping employees with commitment reasons and providing career counselling. Career dynamics was the option with the least mean score (3.67), so people reported less activity or involvement in their career advancement.

Since the standard deviation is between 0.73 and 0.82, participants show modest changes in their answers, so their beliefs are quite alike. All the skewness values are on the negative side (from -0.29 to -0.51), meaning that the majority of the employees answered in agreement with the questions. There is evidence of approximately normal distribution since the values of Kurtosis are between 0.04 and -0.35. We can rely on parametric tests for testing the topic's data. This means that human resource counselling is valued by organizations and most likely boosts their productivity in Port Harcourt.

Regression Analysis

Table 2: Regression Summary for the Effect of Career Counselling on Employee Output

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Career Counselling	0.715	0.511	0.509	0.553

Table 3 Coefficient of Variation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	1.215	0.203	–	5.986	0.000
Career Counselling	0.662	0.058	0.715	11.414	0.000

Table 2 and 3 outline the way career counselling affects the productivity of employees. The result of the regression analysis shows that there is a significant positive connection between career counselling and employee output ($\beta = 0.715$, $p < 0.001$). The fact that $B = 0.662$ lets us know that when level of career counselling goes up by 1 unit, employee output also increases by 0.662 units. The model result shows that career counselling helps predict the performance of employees by nearly 51.1%. The study confirms that career counselling plays a major role in employee productivity in manufacturing businesses of Rivers State.

Table 4: Regression Summary for the Effect of Career Dynamics on Timeliness

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Career Dynamics	0.684	0.468	0.466	0.576

Table 5 Coefficient of Variation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	1.482	0.196	–	7.561	0.000
Career Dynamics	0.592	0.061	0.684	9.705	0.000

It is shown in Table 4 and 5 how career counselling affects employee performance. It has been determined through regression analysis that career dynamics significantly relate to being timely ($\beta = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). When career dynamics rise by one, timeliness can be expected to rise by 0.592 as a result. About 46.8% of the timeliness variation is explained by the model, proving it to be a strong predictor. This outcome backs the second hypothesis since it proves that career matters strongly affect how punctual employees in Rivers State manufacturing firms are.

Table 6: Regression Summary for the Effect of Career Guidance on Employee Commitment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Career Guidance	0.703	0.494	0.492	0.561

Table 7 Coefficient of Variation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	1.368	0.189	–	7.239	0.000
Career Guidance	0.643	0.056	0.703	11.482	0.000

It is shown in Table 4 and 5 how career counselling affects employee performance. It has been determined through regression analysis that career dynamics significantly relate to being timely ($\beta = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). When career dynamics rise by one, timeliness can be expected to rise by 0.592 as a result. About 46.8% of the timeliness variation is explained by the model, proving it to be a strong predictor. This outcome backs the second hypothesis since it proves that career matters strongly affect how punctual employees in Rivers State manufacturing firms are.

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Table 7 Coefficient of Variation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	1.368	0.189	–	7.239	0.000
Career Guidance	0.643	0.056	0.703	11.482	0.000

These data in Tables 6 and 7 look at how career guidance affects employees' dedication. It can be inferred that career guidance is positively related to employee commitment, since the result was statistically significant ($\beta = 0.703$, $p < 0.001$). If career guidance is increased by one unit, the employee commitment will probably increase by about 0.643 units, according to the unstandardized coefficient. According to the model, 49.4% of the variance in employees' commitment can be explained by how much career guidance they receive, which means career guidance is very important for employee commitment. It shows that the

third hypothesis is correct and proves why structured career guidance has a positive effect on company loyalty and performance.

DISCUSS OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research shows that human resource counselling increases manufacturing firms' productivity in Rivers State. According to studies, giving employees career counselling can result in their increased productivity by encouraging better job delivery. The result mirrors the findings earlier put forward by Okafor and Chukwuma (2021), who noted the effect of planned counselling on task outcomes. In a similar manner, the study found that how a person's career is developing affects their punctuality. People working in clear career advancement systems usually care about punctuality and managing their time, just as Adewale and Shittu (2020) found. It was also found that career guidance greatly increased employees' commitment to their jobs. Those who have guidance with their careers tend to connect emotionally and stay committed to their organisations, just as Eze and Odu (2022) discovered. These outcomes demonstrate how crucial it is to have human resource counselling in HR strategies, most of all in manufacturing sectors, since employee motivation and effectiveness matter a lot there. The results of the study can affect many areas.

Every organisation needs to offer career development activities, like counselling, mentorship, and workshops on career planning. Human Resource Managers ought to design clear steps to support workers' careers and ensure their well-being. As a result, both team performance and loyalty of employees will get better. The study shows that it is important for managers to ensure that counselling programs are built into the organisation's main policies and practices.

Each human resource counseling element has a strong, positive impact on respective productivity outcomes. Career counseling increases employee production with clarity and focus, whereas career dynamics improve timeliness considerably with systematic progression and advancement systems.

Thus, career guidance was seen to increase employee involvement by matching each person's goals with the company's goals. According to these results, human resource counselling helps boost employees' productivity and overall well-being. Clearly, employers in the manufacturing sector understand how important it is to support employee development as talent gets harder to find these days.

It is believed that manufacturing companies should open special human resource centers with counselors who can guide employees in their careers, help with emotions, and set career goals together. To help employees, organisations ought to use career programs that have mentorship, a career map, and advancement tied to performance. Employee counselling sessions that help people overcome their job and personal challenges in an organized manner could decrease productivity. It is also important for authorities to create guidelines that require counselling for employees to be a regular HR process.

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