

## **Role of Self –Efficacy and Sex on Work Centrality among Workers**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the role of self-efficacy and sex on work centrality among workers. The participants comprised of 348 workers (133 male and 215 female) with the mean age of 32.85, standard deviation of 7.62 and age range of 20 to 60 years. The study made use of two questionnaires; work ethic scale and self-efficacy scale . The study adopted a 2x2 factorial design and hence 2way ANOVA was used. Two Hypotheses were tested in this study. The first which state that workers who are high on self-efficacy will be significantly different from workers who are low on self-efficacy on their work centrality was accepted at  $F(1,344)=7.29$ ; at  $P<.05$  level of significance. Thus workers who are high on self-efficacy were seen to have high work centrality than those who are low on self-efficacy. Also, the second hypothesis which state that workers who are male will be significantly different from workers who are female on work centrality was rejected at  $F(1,344)=.433$  at  $P>.05$ . Hence findings were discussed and recommendations were made.*

### **Introduction**

The hallmark of every developing country lies on its sustainable development across all facets of human endeavor. The critical role of organizations in developing countries can never be over emphasized. In Nigeria, Organizations have witnessed great negative turn around in productivity which can be seen as a result of unprecedented downsizing of workers, high turnover intentions and bullying among employees. All of which indicate a decline in work ethic among workers. (Sacks 1998). ` So many organizations have winded up and these could be seen as a result of non-commitment of workers to the objectives of the organization, because we know that for the sustenance of every organization there is bound to be a harmonious agreement between the workers and management. This is as a result of the fact that workers exert more influence in every organization. The attitude of workers determines the extent to which an organization can grow Sheehy (1970).

Eizenberger (1989) saw work ethics as the hallmark for realization of the goals of the organization because it lies heavily on the behavior of workers in the organization. Sacks (1998) believed that work ethics is declining both in American as well as other industrial countries like Nigeria. He expressed that the decline in work ethic corresponds to lower levels of job performance because the behavior of a worker will go to a large extent to increase the propensity of the output of such organization. These imply that for every behavior, the worker stands at the center of the whole activities. Some organizations wind up, while others exist but not achieve its designed goals/objective and this could be as a result of negative work attitude of employees. Ethics are systems of moral principle and a branch of philosophy which defines what is good for individual and society..

Work ethic is a set of values based on hard work and diligence. It is also a belief in the moral benefit of work and its ability to enhance character. In the work place, there are various dimensions of work ethic that can influence the attitude of workers in organization. According to Miller, Woehr, Hudspeth (2001), work ethics can be seen in the dimensions of morality in work place, self-reliance, hard work, delay of gratification, work centrality and so on. The present study is interested in work centrality as an attitudinal aspect of work ethic.

### **Concept of Work Centrality**

According to Paullay, Alliger and Romero (1994) work centrality is the belief that individuals have, with regard to the degree of importance that work plays in their lives. It is a general belief about the value of working in one's life . It is also a belief in work for work sake and the important of work (Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth 2001).

The concept of work centrality refers generally to the degree of importance work plays in one's life (Paullay, et al 1994). In organizational work setting, the attitude a worker exhibit depend on the value the person placed on that work and this will determine their input to the organization and the output result they get at last. A worker who does not value his/her work will not be able to take risk for the organization and most times, it can also lead to inefficiency in the work place. People with high work centrality report to work even when they are eligible for retirement and would continue to work, even if their financial situation would allow them to live comfortably without working (Arvey, Harpaz and Liao, 2004, Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth 2001) .

Researchers in their bid to understand the determinants of work ethics, have discussed various suspected environmental antecedents of work centrality, the most common of which include Age, Education, occupation, seniority, job reward and employment status,

Apart from the above antecedents, there are other factors that are likely to impact on our goals and accomplishments by influencing emotional reaction, personal choice and motive. The researchers for the purpose of this work are looking at self-efficacy and sex as a psychological factor that can predispose work ethic among Nigerian workers.

### **Self-efficacy**

Albert Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. It measures one's own ability to complete task and reach goals. It is a person's judgment about being able to perform particular activities. Gardner and Peirce (1998) stated that self efficacy can be viewed from both specific and general angle. An example of specific angle is seen as an expectation or judgment about the likelihood that a task will be successfully performed. Self efficacy can also be regarded as an optimistic and self-confident view of one's capability to deal with certain life stressor. Individuals with high self-efficacy set for themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. Such individual in the face of failure quickly recover their senses of efficacy and attribute their failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skill which are acquirable. Therefore, approaching threatening situation with assurance that they can exercise control over them. Judge, Lock Durham and Wilger (1998).

### **SEX**

Another likely factor that can affect work ethics is sex. Sex is the natural state of being either a male or a female. It is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential.

Lorence (1987) presented two theoretical models for explaining the relation between work centrality and sex (i.e. male vs female).

The “gender model”: This suggests that men take on the role of career builder and provide for the family economically while women are traditionally raised to accept more family centered roles. Thus men tend to invest relatively more resources in developing their career and as a result their identity as workers becomes more prevalent, while women tend to allocate their resources to family building and view their role in the workplace as a less important part of themselves.

The “job model”: This suggests the unequal nature of the work environment which causes woman to value work less than men because they do not receive the same valued outcome. Women still earn less than their male counterpart and often find themselves in less rewarding and motivating jobs. Gould and Werbal (1983).

Based on these obvious conditions of work centrality, an attitudinal aspect of work ethics,, this study is set to investigate the role of self-efficacy and sex on work centrality among workers.

### **Research Questions**

1. Will self-efficacy of workers determine their work centrality?
2. Will the sex of workers determine their work centrality?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of self-efficacy and sex on work ethics (work centrality) among non-academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study will:

1. Determine the role of self efficacy on work centrality.
2. Determine the role of sex on work centrality.

### **1.4 Relevance of the Study**

This study has both theoretical and practical relevance.

Theoretically, the study will add to the existing body of literature on the antecedents of work ethics especially in the areas of identifying psychological and demographic factors like self-efficacy and sex on work centrality especially as is obtained within the south eastern part of Nigeria.

Practically, knowing that organizational interest is growth, profit making and establishment, this work is set to help managers of organizations determine the category of workers to employ and the sex for maximum performance and growth of the organization.

### **Hypotheses**

The study tested the following alternate hypotheses:

- Workers who are high in self-efficacy will be significantly different from workers who are low in self – efficacy on their work centrality.
- Workers who are male will be significantly different from workers who are female on their work centrality.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were three hundred and forty eight (348) non-academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Nigeria, drawn through systematic type of sampling. The study involved 133 males and 215 females with the mean age of 32.85, standard deviation of 7.62 and age range from 20 to 60 years.

### **Instrument**

Two instruments were used in this study, work ethics scale by Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth (2001) and self efficacy scale by Sherer, Maddox, Mercandanter, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers (1982).

The work ethic scale by Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth (2001) is a 65 item psychological instrument measuring hard work, self-reliance, morality/ethics, leisure, centrality of work, wasted time, and delay of gratification. However, the centrality in work place subscale was adopted for this study. Centrality in workplace has 10 items measuring ones belief on the two degree of importance that work place in their life. The scale contains five point likert format scoring pattern (SD, D, N, A, SA). All the items for centrality in work place were directly scored, and point awarded as follows (SA = 5, A = 4, N = 3, D = 2, SD = 1).

Self efficacy scale by M. Sherer, J.E Maddox, B. Mercandanter, S. Prentice-Dunn, B. Jacobs & R.W. Rogers (1982) is a psychological instrument measuring an individual’s belief about their capacity to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence after events that affect the lives (Bandura 1994).It is a 30 item scale

**3.2 Validity and Reliability**

Centrality of work ,a 10 item questionnaire developed by Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth (2001) was validated by the Authors using (face, content and construct validity).the instrument was also subjected to factor analysis were the items were selected and obtained Alpha coefficient reliability of .81 However the researchers for the purpose of the present study, established the reliability of the instrument by subjecting it to pilot study using 60 participants drawn from non academic staff of federal college of education (technical). The result showed the instrument to be reliable with the reliability coefficient (cronbach alpha) of .68.

Self-efficacy questionnaire by Sherer, Maddox, Mercandanter, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers (1982) is a 30 item questionnaire. The instrument was validated by Ayodele (1998), using concurrent validity coefficient of .23, it was also subjected to factor analysis were the author obtained cronbach alpha internal consistency of .86. The researchers for the purpose of this study conducted a pilot study and obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .58.

**Procedure**

The researcher administered 400 copies of the questionnaire on centrality of work and self-efficacy to the non academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. This was done through the head of units after the researchers introduced themselves as researchers. The respondent asked the researchers to wait for few hours while others asked the researchers to come back the next day. Eventually, out of 400 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 348 was correctly filled and returned. Hence, 348 copies were used for the study.

**Design and Stastics**

The survey study adopted a 2(high & low) x 2(male & female) factorial design. This is because it has two predictor variables against one criterion variable. The data collected was analyzed using a two way analysis of variance (ANOVA) which is in keeping with the design of the study.

**Results**

The result is stated in order in which the hypotheses were presente

**Table 1:** Showing the mean (x) and standard deviation (SD) of self efficacy and sex on work centrality.

Independent Variable	Levels	Mean	Std Deviation	N
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	High	36.11	9.08	188
	Low	34.01	10.02	160
<b>Sex</b>	Male	35.92	8.82	133
	<b>Female</b>	34.66	9.99	215
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35.14</b>	<b>9.57</b>	<b>348</b>

**Table 2: Test of Between-Subject Effect ( ANOVA Summary Table).**  
Dependent Variable: CENTRALITY OF WORK.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self Efficacy	645.4	1	645.38	7.29	.007
Sex	38.29	1	38.29	.433	.511
Self efficacy * sex	845.21	1	845.21	9.55	.002
Error	30437.70	344	88.48		
Total	31762.82	347			

Keys: \* = Significant, P<.05

Table 1 above, reveals the difference between the means of participants of high self efficacy (36.11) and low self efficacy (34.01). However, there is a marginal difference between the means of participants who are male (35.92) and those who are female (34.66). This indicate that the first hypothesis which stated that workers who are high on self-efficacy will be significantly different from workers who are low on self-efficacy on work centrality, was confirmed at F(1,344)=7.29 at P<.05 level of significance.

Also, the second hypothesis which stated that workers who are male will be significantly different from workers who are female on work centrality was rejected at  $F(1,344)=.433$  at  $P<.05$  level of significance. The mean indicated no significant difference between male and female on centrality of work.

### ***Discussion***

This study stated two hypotheses. The first hypothesis which states that workers who are high in self efficacy, will be significantly different from workers who are low in self efficacy on work centrality, was significant and as such was accepted. This is in accordance with the work of Bandura (1997) which claimed that beliefs of personal efficacy constitutes the key factor of human agency. He said that high self efficacy helps create feelings of serenity in approaching difficult task and activities, while people with low self efficacy may believe that things are tougher than they really are.

The second hypothesis, which states that workers who are male will be significantly different from workers who are female on their work centrality. Unlike the first hypotheses, the result of the second hypotheses is not significant. That is to say that those workers who are male or female are the same in centrality of work. Unlike the work of Lorence (1987), who presented two theoretical models for explaining the relation between work centrality and sex. (male vs female). From his findings, it shows that male take on the role of career building and provider for the family economically, while woman are traditionally raised to accept more family centered roles. Thus men tend to invest relatively more resources in developing their career and as a result their identity as a worker become more prevalent. Also, woman may be faced with male dominated work environment and thus find themselves in less satisfying and financially rewarding job (Gould & Werbel, 1983). However, some studies found women responding high level of work centrality than men.

### ***5.1 Conclusion***

Work centrality is an important psychological construct that can influence a variety of work related outcome as well as impact a person's life beyond work. This study has accumulated research on work centrality and furthered our understanding of its network. People who value work as an important part of their life, are committed to their organization and occupation, remain with their organization longer, make money, experience less psychological symptoms and are more satisfied with their job and life. They work longer hour and are ready to embark on any challenging task without fear of failure, and commit themselves less to activities outside of their work environment

This study set out to study the role of self –efficacy and sex on work centrality using 348 participants.

### ***Recommendation***

Base on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

The organization could recruit and select individuals who display high level of self efficacy as potential employees.

It can contribute to the development of employees work centrality, by providing training on the self-efficacy dimension that exhibit a significant correlation with work centrality.

Self efficacy ought to be one of the main criteria for the organization in its employee selection and recruitment.

### ***Suggestion for Further Study***

A large amount of work has been directed toward work centrality and some of its relationship has been well studied. However, there are several questions that are yet to be answered. Further research should investigate how work centrality change over the life-span, this will help shed light upon decisions regarding when to begin a career and when to retire.

Further study will also help to check if someone's work centrality can be influenced by an organization, for example, if a company wants to encourage some of its worker to retire, will encouraging them to take part in non work activities influence the value they place on work?. Do young people have lower work centrality than the older people? Further research should focus on the nature of self-efficacy and work centrality, by enhancing the size of the sample group, more convincing result may be obtained.

### ***Limitation of the Study***

Due to inadequate time frame for the research of this nature, the following limitations were observed and should be looked in further findings.

The participants were selected from just one university out of several universities organization available in Anambra state, Nigeria. And as a result, the sample size were relatively small, thereby limited conclusions were drawn.

Some of the workers refused to cooperate with the researchers demand due to some personal reasons.

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