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## Team Effectiveness in The Workplace: Predictive Roles Of Self-Esteem And Perceived Social Support Among Civil Servants

### Tochukwu Matthew Oguegbe

Psychology Department, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka,

Nigeria

Corresponding Email- tma.oguegbe@unizik.edu.ng

#### Abstract

This research explored team effectiveness among civil servants: predictive roles of perceived social support and self-esteem. One hundred and eighty-seven (187) civil servants (one hundred and six females and eightyone males), whose age ranged between 22 and 63 years, with a mean age of 41.12, standard deviation of 12.45, and were randomly selected, participated in the study. Multidimensional scale for perceived social support (MSPSS), Rosenberg self-esteem scale and the Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ) assisted in the data collection. The study made use of predictive design and multiple linear regression in testing the two hypotheses postulated. Hypothesis one which stated that perceived social support will significantly predict team effectiveness, was upheld, t = -3.184, p <.05. Hypothesis two which stated that self-esteem will significantly predict team effectiveness, was also affirmed, t = 2.037, p <.05. In line with this finding, it was recommended that for organisations to ensure a mutually beneficial relationship between the employer and employee as well as among the employees, policies that take psychological perspective to life should be enacted in all workplaces while ensuring that the public is sensitized on matters concerning mental wellbeing.

Keywords: Team effectiveness; Self-esteem; Perceived social support.

#### Introduction

Team effectiveness is pivotal to the organizational goals which can be subsumed into making gains and sustenance. In recent times, there is a remarkable increase in the growth factories and industry and with a large population; there exist also a large market for these organization especially in Nigeria. Their ability to make a mark in the market is dependent on the level of competency, cooperation, efficiency and effectiveness of the team they make use of to attain this objective. When these requisite qualities become missing, then the effectiveness of the team is brought into question. This is in line with the postulations of Mealiea and Baltazar (2005) where he posits certain team features to be functional in achieving organizational goals.

However, in order to meet with this aim, these organizations need to make use of its employees who attain these objectives and must work as a team. The workers are an integral part of the organization on which it is dependent to attain its goals. If the effectiveness of its labor source comes into question due to certain variable whether environmental, demographic and especially psychologically, then the survival of the organization become debatable at best and part of history at worst. This prompted the researcher to focus on the factors that affect team with emphasis on the psychological perspective.

The major aim of the organization is to maximize profit alongside sustenance of the organization and in doing this, they rely on the effectiveness of their workers who work as a team to attain that objective. Failure to attain its objectives leads to low productivity, poor interpersonal relationship among workers, retrenchment of workers, a breach in communication between management and staff and ultimately, the dissolution of the company. This is attributable to the ineffectiveness of the workers. The success of teambuilding efforts is a function of the number of desirable team characteristics that can be built into a work environment (Mealiea & Baltazar 2005). A setting where many individuals work together to achieve common goal is called an organization.

Organizations depend on the effectiveness of individual workers who come and work together as a team to achieve the objective. More so, team's inability to become cohesive is specifically occasioned by decrease in the effectiveness of the team. (Field & Swift, 1996). These issues often encountered by team manifests in the form of absence of team cohesive, poor interpersonal relationship, lack of competent team members as well as the leadership and good charity. Fapohunda (2013) also observed that lack of cohesion among workers lead to limitation in workers' efforts as individually, they cannot achieve much. More so, when workgroups integrate into cohesive and yet distinct units, they share striking goals and objectives necessary in accomplishing their tasks. This in turn, enhances mutual trust for one another and respect for individual differences. Bell (2004) is of the view that teams are widespread in organizations and hold significant contributions to organizational efficiency. Team effectiveness assists in curbing and managing conflict and out rightly help in improving workers' performance. Therefore, effectiveness is dependent on the team's ability of the team members to meet the goals and objectiveness of the company (Gull et al. 2012). Wisner and Feist (2001) posit that very few studies have shown a clear connection between team and performance and even fewer have assessed the team impact on employees and organizational performance

Industrial psychology sees team effectiveness as the measurement/evaluation of results of performance in organizations (Campbell, 1990). Unfortunately, this explanation has been heavily criticized for being too simple (Cohen, 1994). Team effectiveness is seen as the degree to which a team achieves its aims, goals, achieves the needs and interests of its members and sustains itself in an organization (McShane & Glinow, 2003).

In view of the foregoing, attempts have been made in the preceding years to gain insight into the concept of team effectiveness with emphasis in its predicting factors. However, these factors have been viewed from demographic and environmental perspectives with little or no attempts to the psychological perspective. It is however against this backdrop that this present study is hinged on its attempt to study self-esteem and perceived social support as predictors of team effectiveness in workers in Awka, Anambra, Nigeria.

Being a predictor of perceived social support, team effectiveness has been defined by Meadows (2007) as beliefs and/or perception that indicates an individual is part of an interpersonal relationship that includes parents and peers. This variable entails the idea and conception that one is being interest in, and has the support network which can comprise of family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, organizations among others. Agreeableness is said to be associated with people receiving the most care and having the least affected relationships at work and home. This deduction is made from the Big Five personality inventory. Shafiro (2011) opined that taking supports from a superior in the work place is linked with reducing tension at home, at work and are interdependency of a worker.

Support from our social circle with teammates inclusive, involves sharing of information as well as providing positive feedback that will help each member be up and doing and accomplish their allocated tasks. To this end, social support can be categorized into perceived and taken support (Taylor 2011). A recipient's subjective evaluation that employees will offer effective/affective succor in times of want is seen as perceived support is known as perceived support. Received support entails specific supportive actions (e.g. advice or reassurance) given by employees during period of want (Gurung, 2006). It can further be assessed in cases of structural and functional contribution. Structural contribution in integrating one is in his or her area of coverage can provide emotional, instrumental, information and companionship support (Uchino, 2004). Family relationships, friends and membership in clubs and organizations is said to contribute heavily in social integration (Wills 1991). Supports originating from functional perspectives at specific function that members in this social network can provide such as emotional, instrumental, and informational and companionship support (Uchino 2004). With tensions which lead to stress reduced through interaction and affiliations, the inevitability of the team being effective becomes more of a norm rather than an occurrence.

Simply put, support one gets from one's social environment will inadvertently reduce the stressors which one encounter, increases his belief in his capabilities which may encourage output of the organization due to collectivization among individual effort and resources that will culminate into team performance that is above par thereby giving credence to the effectiveness of the team. According to Rosenfeld and Richman (2008), members of team that provide social support for each other, offer each other opportunity to increase their physical and emotional health as well as likelihood to initiate a working, achieve a shared commitment to team goals and a team vision of success.

Another variable of interest in this study is the concept of self-esteem as it relates to the effectiveness of a team. According to Mackie (2007), self-esteem is "the self-concept of what we think about ourselves" self-esteem is the general assessment of an individual, as in our overall perception about it. It is also referred to as individual's overall subjective emotional assessment of their worth.

According to Hewitt (2009), self-esteem comprises belief about an individual as well as emotional states such as victory, despise, shame and guilt. This is also the appraisal of oneself which encompass feelings of belief. This belief in oneself is necessary for one to be able to give his/her best to the unit. Without this self-esteem, feelings of doubt becloud competence. For Butler (1998) environmental mix up is another useful contribution in enhancing one's self-esteem. Social experiences are derived from interaction within our social group. The belief in oneself and the onward contributions towards group process will lead to acceptance by other team members which may in turn, elicit appreciation for one's effort and shape the behaviour of others towards an individual thereby leading to increase in the belief in oneself. To this end, Brockner and Hess (2017) asserted that a group can only be an effective as the members that make up the group and believes that self-esteem contributes in determining the effectiveness of workers in organization. These employees constitute the team and their individual effectiveness collectively translates into team effectiveness.

Given the above background of team effectiveness in an organization, this present research work is aimed at investigating the concept of team effectiveness and the factors that both variables (perceived social support and self-esteem) play in ensuring it.

#### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the research:

- 1. Perceived Social Support will significantly predict team effectiveness among workers
- 2. Self-esteem will significantly predict team effectiveness among work.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

#### The Input-Process-Output Model (McGrath, 1964)

As formulated by McGrath (1964), the input–process–output (IPO) model of team provides a framework for conceptualizing teams which suggests that many factors influence a team's productivity and unity. It "provides a way to understand how teams perform, and how to maximize their performance". This model of team is a system theory as it premised on the assumption that a team is more than one-to-one relationship between various variables, and more than the sum of its members. It claims that a lot of interactions and feedback exists and acts as contributing factors (Forsyth, 2010).

In this framework, inputs refer to the composition of the team in terms of the constellation of individual characteristics and resources at multiple levels (individual, team, organization). Inputs include any antecedent factors such as organizational context, task characteristics, and team composition (Landy et al 2009) that may influence the team itself, directly or indirectly (Forsyth, 2010).

According to Forsyth (2010), inputs can include individual-level factors, team-level factors, and environmental-level factors.

- Individual-level factors of team members includes personality traits, strengths, weaknesses, preferences and dislikes
- Team-level factors includes the resources that the team has access to, how large the team is how much time the team spends together and how close the team members are to each other.
- Environmental factors include how the team work with other teams and whether the team is part of an organization

In the same vein, team process refers to activities that team members participate in, bringing in their resources to bring tasks and demands. Team processes develop and unfold over time (McGrath 1991). Essentially, team process captures how team members bring together their individual resources, overwhelming knowledge, skill and effort to accomplish a task. According Allport (1954), this perspective on team processes is clearly dynamic, but it is also the case that the repeated interactions among individuals that constitute processes tend to regularize, such that shared structures and emergent states crystallize and then serve to guide subsequent process interactions. Allport (1954) explained this reciprocal nature of process and structure in terms of "ongoing". Thus, it is important to appreciate that while team processes are dynamic and difficult to capture in real time, they yield collective cognitive structures, emergent states, and regular behavior patterns that have been enacted by, but also guide, team processes are by definition dynamic, they are most typically addressed in static terms—as constructs that emerge over time (i.e.,

emergent states) as team members interact and the team develops (Kozlowski, Gully, Nason, & Smith, 1999; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001).). Team processes are operations and activities that interface in the relationship between the input factors and the team's output. Processes include group norms, group's decision-making process, and level of communication, coordination, and cohesion. Specifically, processes can be things such as: steps taken to plan activities, initiating actions, monitoring resources, monitoring progress, maintenance of interpersonal relationships and dealing with conflicting members' sense of commitment to the team.

Productivity on the other hand is the consequence of the team's actions or activities. In line with the thoughts of Forsyth (2010), most often, this refers to the team's tangible output; that is what they made, achieved, or accomplished. Other productive outcomes such as changes in the team's cohesiveness, the degree to which the team learn to be prepared for future tasks.

#### Method

#### **Participants**

The participants comprised of 187 civil servants of Awka - 81 males (43.3%) and 106 females (56.7%) whose age ranged between 22 and 63 years, with mean age of 41.12 and standard deviation of 12.45. 38 (20.3%) of the participants were single, 113 (60.4%) were married while 36 (19.3%) were either divorced or widowed. Thirty-four (34) (18.2%) of the participants work in Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board (ASUBEB), 24 (12.8%) were from Ministry of Road, Rail and Water Transportation, 29 (15.5%) were from the Ministry of Basic Education, 23 (12.3%) were from the Ministry of Diaspora, culture and Artwork, 24 (12.8%) were from the Ministry of Environment, 27 (14.4%) were from the Ministry of Health, 26 (13.9%) were from Ministry of Lands.

#### Procedure

Participants for this study were from selected Ministries in Awka, Anambra State. 7 Ministries were selected using simple random sampling technique. Thus, the 19 Ministries in Anambra State Secretariat were listed out in alphabetical order and were numbered. Thereafter, 7 ministries were randomly selected through balloting. Thus, 7 ministries were randomly selected for the study. After this, the participants for this study were selected using convenient sampling technique, which involves selecting the participants of interest seen at the field of study who met the inclusion criteria and are willing to participate. The inclusion criteria for this study were: 1) the participants must be a bonafide staff of the ministry; and 2) the participants must show willingness to participate in the study voluntarily.

Meanwhile, before administering the instruments on the participants, a good rapport was created and the goal of the study was explained. Of the 200 respondents recruited, 187 completely filled the instruments. Data collection lasted for 6 days.

#### Instruments

The instruments employed in this research are the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and Team Effectiveness Questionnaire.

#### Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support was developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley (1988) using adult samples. It has been used to measure perceived social support across cultures (Canty-Mitchell & Zimet, 2000; Chou, 2000). The 12 item MSPSS provides assessment of three sources of support; family, friends and significant others support. It is scored on a 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items on the scale include – I get emotional help and support I need from my family; I can count on my friends when things go wrong. The internal consistencies of the subscale are a = 0.78, 0.76 and 0.69 for family, friends and significant others respectively. A study in Nigeria, Onyishi & Okongwu (2013) found a cronbach alpha reliability of 0.82 and a concurrent validity coefficient of 0.73.

#### **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965)**

Rosenberg self-esteem scale, is a widely used self-report instrument for evaluating individual self-esteem. It is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is one-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4- point Likert type scale format ranging from strongly agree to

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strongly disagree. Scoring: Items 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are reverse scored. Give "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. The scores are on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. Samples items included: "I am able to do things as well as most other people" showed that the RSES had adequate internal reliability, and test retest correlation of 0.61 over a 7- month period in Ontario, reported a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.79. (Baumeister et al 2003). A study in Nigeria (Donald & Oluwatelure 2016) obtained a cronbach alpha of 0.92.

#### **Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ)**

The study made use of an 11-item team effectiveness questionnaire (TEQ) as was developed by Larson and Lafasto (2001). It was used to measure team effectiveness. It is 5point Likert response scale with "strongly agree denoting (5) and strongly disagree denoting (1). The TEQ is a self-reporting scale and is based on Larson and Lafasto's (2001) earlier grounded theory work that attempted to identify the essential characteristics of effective teams. The authors reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of this questionnaire as 0.85. Dannhauser (2007) administered the TEQ on a South African sample and obtained 0.88. Some of the items in the questionnaire included: 'achieving the team goal is a higher priority than any individual objective' and 'the team is given the resources it needs to get the job done'. The researcher further conducted a pilot tested with 50 civil servants of the Ministry of Housing. This was done to obtain the reliability coefficient of TEQ among the participants. The pilot study result yielded a Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) reliability coefficient of 0.73

#### **Design/Statistics**

The study employed a predictive design. Linear multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data because social support and self-esteem are been used to know how they will predict team effectiveness using SPSS version 23.

#### Result

#### Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the Study variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ν
Team Effectiveness	58.42	14.060	187
Perceived Social Support	48.33	10.298	187
Self-Esteem	25.04	6.682	187

Table 1 above reported the mean and standard deviation of the study variables.

# Table 2: summary table of Multiple Regression analysis on perceived social supportand self-esteem as predictors of team effectiveness

	В		β		
Model	(UC)	Std. Error	(SC)	Т	Sig.
Constant	66.379	6.503		10.207	.000
Perceived Social Support	337	.106	247	-3.184	.002
Self-Esteem	.332	.163	.158	2.037	.043

Note: UC= Unstandardized Coefficients; SC= Standardized Coefficients

The inspection from table 2 above revealed that perceived social support negatively and significantly predicted team effectiveness among employees,  $\beta = -.25$ , t = -3.18, p<. 05 level of significance. Hence, the first hypothesis, which stated that perceived social support will significantly predict team effectiveness was accepted. This means that increased perceived social support among employees may lead to effective teamwork that would facilitate productive outcomes. Similarly, it was found that self-esteem positively and significantly predicted team effectiveness among employees at  $\beta = .16$ , t = 2.04, p<. 05. Thus, the second hypothesis which stated that self-esteem increases, team effectiveness was accepted. This indicates that as employees' self-esteem increases, team effectiveness also increases.

#### Discussion

This research investigated self-esteem and perceived social support as driving force of team effectiveness. Two hypotheses were tested. First, perceived social support will significantly predict team effectiveness among workers. Secondly, self-esteem will significantly predict team effectiveness.

It was observed that perceived social support significantly predicted team effectiveness. Thus, hypothesis 1 was accepted since perceived social support predicted team effectiveness positively. This goes to show that when an individual receives significant support from family, friends, coworkers among others, he contributes his quota to the effectiveness of the team and this collective social support received from social groups helps to alleviate stressors and stress effects and therefore will help the team to be more effective. Researchers such as Cheng- Ling Tai (2012) have further highlighted the effect of adequate social support in the workplace when he found a correlation between social support and job performance and also observed that social support has an antecedent effect by reducing stressors and thereby increasing job performance. To this, Cutrona (1986) observed that those who perceive high level of social support may also be more likely to seek and receive help during a life crisis.

Self-esteem was found to be positively related to team effectiveness and significantly predicted team effectiveness. Therefore, hypothesis 2 which stated that self-esteem will significantly predict team effectiveness among workers was accepted. This result is concurrent with previous researches on self-esteem in the work setting with Alavi and Askaripur (2003) finding a novel measure of self-esteem and team effectiveness in a sample of 310 personnel from Kerman Province Iran.

Decrease or increase in the way and manner that people become satisfied on their jobs can be as a result of decrease in self-esteem (Alavi & Askaripur, 2003). Also, increase in team effectiveness leads to increase in the feeling of satisfaction in one's job and when they are satisfied, workers give in their best thereby making the team very effective. They were of the notion that employers should employed individual with high self-esteem so to enhance job satisfaction and subsequently team effectiveness while also increase the esteem of their workers so as to meet organizational requirements as well as goals and objectives.

#### Implications

Findings of this research imply that social support significantly predict team effectiveness. This goes further to imply that the level of support one receives from his/her social goes a long way to influence how effective the team becomes. It is the goal of the organization to grow and sustain itself and these aims are dependent of on the competencies and capabilities the team members pull together. No doubt, stress becomes an expected phenomenon in the course of work. The effects of this stress can be ameliorated through support the individual receives from their social circle which include the employers, family, friends, significant others, coworkers as well as the employer. Social support gives people a sense of belonging and thus will influence them to put in their best and thus a resultant increase in team effectiveness.

Since self-esteem significantly predict team effectiveness, the belief in oneself equally helps to see challenges as a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block. This belief will equally make them believe in their individual competencies as well as their capacity as a team to attain the organizational goals and objectives

To this end, it is expected that the employers ensure that a cordial relationship and supports are given between the employers and the employee on one hand as well as among coworkers in the organization. Also belief in oneself should be increased through rewards and reinforcement and these will help to increase the team's effectiveness and their capabilities to attain the organizational goals and objectives.

#### Limitations

The result of this study is limited by the following considerations:

First, participants sampled from Awka only were involved in this study. The scope of the research was limited to Awka and did not include other parastals in the nation, which made it difficult for the findings of the study to be generalized. Also apart from the variables studied, other constructs such as locus of control, religion, personality can affect the

dependent variable. Religious affiliation was also a consideration observed as all participants were Christians and other religions were not part of the study.

Another limitation comes from the fact that to the best of the researcher's knowledge, not much research has been done on team effectiveness and emphasis were placed on demographic and environmental factors rather the psychological factors that affect team effectiveness and thus, it was hard securing materials to carry out this research.

Following from the above, the door is still open for further studies. It is recommended that this research be replicated with other workers in other states and also extended to private corporations as well. Further studies should also include other psychological variables such as personality types, locus of control among others to widen the horizon on team effectiveness by including psychological constructs.

Going by the above findings, the researchers recommend that:

The government should enact favorable policies that will take due recognition of the psychological aspect of human life while ensuring the recruitment of at least a certified psychologist in every government parastatal as well as public and private institutions so as to check the psychological factors that affect both organizational and normal human functioning. Also, the government should ensure the sensitization of the general public on issues bordering on mental health.

Employers should ensure cooperation among workers as well as between the employers and their workers. Families, friends, coworkers should also offer support to one another thereby enhancing the sense of belonging and spirit of oneness among all and sundry. Employers on the other hand should employ individuals with high self-esteem as well as increase the esteem of their employees through reinforcement and rewards so that organizational aims and objectives will be fully attained. Also, they should create a supportive network and ensure the establishment of mutual relationship between the employer and employee on one hand and also employee and employee among other

#### Conclusion

This study investigated self-esteem and perceived social support as predictors of team effectiveness. One hundred and eighty-seven participants constituting of 81 males and 106 females were used with ages ranging from 22-63 with a mean age of 41.12%.

Theories such as social exchange and social comparison theories were used to explain how social support and self-esteem can influence the effectiveness of teams. To test the proposed hypothesis that perceived social support and self-esteem will significantly predict team effectiveness, the following scales were used to measure the participants' response: team effectiveness questionnaire by Larson & LaFasto (2001), Rosenberg self-esteem scale by Rosenberg and the Multidimensional scale of perceived social support developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley (1988). The result showed that both perceived social support and self-esteem significantly predict team effectiveness.

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