

Establishing the Link between Management Practise, Employees' Ability and Workforce Productivity: A Case of UK's Telecom Sector

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Abstract: Workforce productivity had been affected by many different factors in organisations around the globe. There have been many instances in different organisations workforce that has affected their productivity level. Current research looks into the management practices and the ability of employees working in the telecommunication sector of the UK for analysing their linkage with workforce productivity. The use of different management practices has been directly linked with workforce productivity in the telecommunication sector of the UK. The current study uses quantitative primary measures for collecting and analysing the research data. The developed results of the research support all the developed hypotheses of the research that were established to measure the direct impact of employee ability and management practices of the telecommunication sector on workforce productivity. The collected data was analysed through the use of statistical measures of descriptive analysis, regression analysis, and correlation analysis. The developed research results accept the alternate hypotheses developed in the research body.

Keywords: *Management Practice; Workforce productivity; employees' ability; telecom sector; UK telecom sector*

1. Introduction

In accordance with the study of Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, and Saks, (2015), the author explains that management practise pertains to the use of methods and innovations by the concerned managers of the organisation to enhance the performance of their system and increase its effectiveness. Jain, and Moreno, (2015) highlights some of the management practise employed in organisation are empowerment of the staff members, constant employee training, introduction of new methods and ways to improve the quality of business process and manufacture quality products, and the introduction of latest technological innovations, which ensure the inclusion of greater efficiency in the organisation. According to Bender, Bloom, Card, Van Reenen and Wolter, (2018), workforce productivity can be defined as the production of goods or services by worker of an organisation in a set amount of time, which determines their overall productivity. Workforce productivity, often referred as labour productivity, should be distinguished from employee productivity because employee productivity pertains to measuring productivity at an individual level, which is broken down into smaller units to measure the overall productivity of the employee (Attaran, Attaran, & Kirkland, 2019). According to the study of Michaelis, Wagner, and Schweizer, (2015), productivity of an organisation's workforce is dependent on the management practices that are employed in the company. The author

further explains that if the organisation is not able to provide their workforce with appropriate tools and technology, then in each amount of time their productivity will be less than other organisations (Michaelis, Wagner, & Schweizer, 2015). Furthermore, the study of Summers, Jinnett, and Bevan (2015) describes that it is important for the management of the organisation to provide their workforce with latest tools and technology so that the business process of the organisation becomes more efficient and the workforce is able to have increased productivity in each amount of time. However, the productivity of a workforce is further dependant on the ability of each employee in available in the workforce. The study of Kiron, Kane, Palmer, Phillips, and Buckley (2016) elucidates that an employee's ability or skill pertains to the representation of their intellectual and physical characteristics that allows them to provide a certain level of productivity to the organisation and determines their ability to respond to critical situations. As an example, if a sales representative of an organisation is not able to perform simple mathematical calculations on the go during their job, their productivity level is inhibited. Imran, Majeed, and Ayub, (2015) explicate on some of the abilities the employees must possess to increase their level of productivity, these are verbal comprehension, word fluency, inductive reasoning, dynamic strength, dynamic flexibility, manual dexterity, and along with many other abilities as well. This research aims to establish a link between management practise, employees' ability and workforce productivity within organisations working in the Telecom sector of the UK. The Telecom Sector of the UK was selected for the purpose of this study because there is limited research that discusses on the link between management practise, employees' ability and workforce productivity in this sector. Furthermore, the Telecom sector is linked with constant introduction to latest technology that allows for improvement on existing telecom technology being employed currently. Thus, research in area allowed the researcher to be knowledgeable of the practise of management being employed, the ability of the employee to complete their work under the management practise being employed in the company and the overall workforce productivity. Many researches are available that discuss on the individual aspects of management practise, employee ability and workforce productivity within an industry (Gerrish, 2016; Ramdhani, Ramdhani, & Ainissyifa, 2017; Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, & Lings, 2015), however, there is limited research available that discusses on the above three factors in combination for the establishment of a link within an industry.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Management Practice

In organisations, management practise pertains to the adoption of methods and innovations by managers of the organisation to improve the business operations of the organisation and make them more efficient (Kianto, Sáenz, & Aramburu, 2017). Furthermore, the study of Valmohammadi, and Ahmadi (2015) explains that there many methods and techniques that managers of an organisation can adopt to ensure the efficiency within their business processes, some of them are: Extra incentives for all employees, appropriate and meaningful feedback, respecting employees, training of both manager and employees, supporting of employees by higher management, acknowledgement of employee's emotions, adoption of an appropriate leadership style, and being knowledgeable of latest technological innovations. Bititci, Cocca, and Ates (2016) elucidates that managers that ensure that their employees can receive extra incentives by considering their productivity level and their hard work, the employees of the organisation remain satisfied and feel a part of the organisation. Furthermore, Steelman, and Wolfeld, (2018) extricates that another practise that management can employ is, providing employees with a meaningful and appropriate feedback which is positive as this allows them to improve on their mistakes and errors and strengthen their weak areas. Typically, when employees receive support from management, it makes their work more meaningful (Ahmed, Majid, Al-Aali & Mozammel, 2019Majid, Ahmed & Zin, 2017). It is important to note that the management of the organisation must also ensure that appropriate training is being provided to all the employees of the company and the manager as well. This allows them to be knowledgeable of the latest trends that are being currently adopted to improve the efficiency of organisational processes and ensure that the equipment and systems being

used in the company are not outdated and inefficient (Omotayo, 2015). Deery, and Jago, (2015) elucidates that the organisational timings of the employees should be flexible to make sure they a balance between their work life and social life so that they are able to provide time to their friends and families.

2.2. Employees' Ability

Dong, Bartol, Zhang, and Li, (2017) extricates that it is important for employees to be knowledgeable of the concepts and other materials that is required for them to perform their job efficiently. Furthermore, in addition to knowledge, they should also have the ability to perform an efficient job with high productivity level. Iqbal, Anwar, & Haider, (2015) describes that ability of an employee pertains to the capability, capacity and potential of the employee through they perform their job which determines whether they are capable of performing the tasks involved in their job in a satisfactory manner that adheres to the policies of the organisation. Furthermore, according to the study of Imran, Majeed, & Ayub, (2015), in an organisational setting there are two types of skills that every employee must possess, these are Technical and soft skills. Both of these skills are necessary for employees to depict their ability to perform the tasks assigned to them and ensure they are able to achieve the goals and objectives set by the organisation. Ibrahim, Boerhannoeddin, and Bakare, (2017) describe that technical skills pertain to employees having the skills of computer programming, teaching, debugging, operating equipment, building something from scratch, and many other relevant technical skills. Soft skills in employees depict that employees have the skill to effectively communicate with others both in terms of written and verbal communication (Chattoraj, & Shabnam, 2015). Other soft skills that should be present in employees are being able to work in teams, being able to deliver projects in time, able to handle time constraints, work under pressure, able to become a team player, being able to lead their teams, and many other relevant soft skills (Showry, & Manasa, 2016). Organisations must also ensure their employees have the ability to solve complex problems and provide solutions that are simple, scalable and effective that incorporate the use of the latest technology to provide increased efficiency and productivity (Chang, & Hsu, 2015).

2.3. Workforce Productivity

As described, workforce productivity relates to the efficiency of the workers in accomplishing a certain task in a given amount of time, which includes the rate at which the workers are providing goods and services to the customers. This includes examples such as, the speed at which workers are manufacturing products in the factors, handling the number of technical support calls being received by the company, or the rate at which customers are being served in a restaurant (Lane, Owen-Smith, Rosen, & Weinberg, 2015). According to Martin (2015), it is important for organisation to maintain a high level of workforce productivity because it facilitates the reduction of costs incurred to the organisation, facilitates the satisfaction of the concerned stakeholders, be able to gain a competitive advantage in the market they are operating in, and further expand their business operations to other areas as well. Furthermore, Azadeh, and Zarrin (2016) also elucidates the fact that the management of the organisation must be knowledgeable of the factors that reduce the productivity of their workforce because by understanding these factors, the company can streamline their business processes, induce higher morale in their workforce and increase their expectations as well. Cornwell, Schmutte, and Scur (2019) explain that the benefits gained by the organisation by having a productive workforce allow for the satisfaction of customers and investors. This is because when employees within the workforce are able to manage their work and time in an efficient manner without any error, they are able to output greater products to reduce labour and material costs incurred. Furthermore, the workforce who are working in the productive environment tend to develop competition with other employees within the workforce and boost each other's morale so that they remain motivated (Jha, & Kumar, 2016).

H₁: Management Practise has a positive relationship between workforce productivity

H₂: Employees' Ability has a positive relationship between workforce productivity

2.4. Conceptual Framework

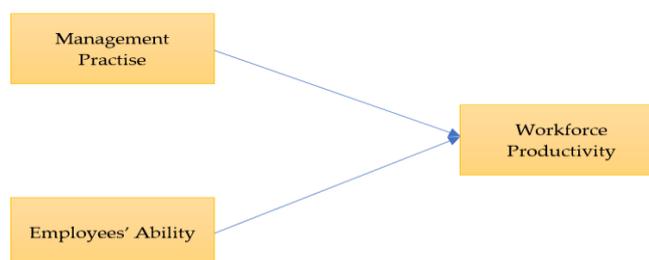


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

The conceptual framework developed shows the independent variables on the left-hand side of the figure, which are Management Practise and Employees' Ability and on the right-hand side shows, that Workforce Productivity is dependent on the two variables.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology that was adopted for the purpose of this study pertains to the employment of quantitative methodology since it allowed the researcher to examine the research field in a quantitative manner and aided the researcher to obtain quantifiable data on which mathematical calculations can be performed (Haegele, & Hodge, 2015). This facilitated the researcher to obtain quantitative data from which the relationships between the variables of this study can be evaluated. The philosophy of this research pertains to the adoption of positivism philosophy. This is because the philosophy of positivism enabled the researcher to gather factual data through real world observations (Sefotho, 2015) and allow for the establishment of a link between management practise, employees' ability and workforce productivity. Moreover, due to the adoption of the positivism philosophy, it allowed the researcher to keep minimal interaction with the participants of the study, so that the data obtained is trustworthy and honest. To complement the adoption of quantitative methodology and positivism philosophy, a deductive approach was adopted for the purpose of this study. This is because it allowed the researcher to develop the hypothesis which would then be tested against the data that has been obtained from the participants of this study. This ensures the acceptance or rejection of developed hypothesis through the data that was analysed, to explain the causal relationships between the variables of the study (Zalaghi, & Khazaei, 2016).

3.1. Data Collection

Since a quantitative methodology was adopted for the purpose of this study, the data collection method pertained to the use of survey questionnaires that were distributed to the participants of this study. The questionnaires were developed on a 5-point Likert scale, where the participants answered the questions based on: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The use of questionnaires allowed the researcher to obtain data in a short amount of time and apply different arithmetical formulas to obtain results from different quantitative aspects.

3.2. Data Analysis

The software that was employed for the purpose of data analysis pertained to the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The data was obtained through the survey questionnaires was sent to SPSS software and descriptive analysis, correlation and regression analysis were used on the obtained data. The benefit of employing the use of SPSS for this research is that the software allowed the researcher to easily manipulate the data and automatically set up the data for analysis with designated names of the variables, their types, and titles.

3.3. Sample Size and Technique

The sample size for this research pertained to the inclusion of 250 participants who belonged to different organisations working within the Telecom sector of the UK. The adopted sampling technique was non-probability sampling along with convenience sampling for the recruitment of the participants. Convenience sampling allowed the researcher to gather the targeted sample size in a short amount of time because participants were drawn from a part of the population which is closely available to the researcher and is the most useful type of sampling

4. Results and discussion

Results and discussion are an important part of the research; because, the results identify the main findings of the chosen study topic. For the current study, the results are acquired by using statistical analyses. This statistical analysis includes descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

4.1. Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis is performed on the numerical data of research so that primary findings of the data can be determined. These primary findings are based on the mean value of results, Skewness, and value of Kurtosis. Descriptive analysis of the current research data is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
MngPr1	250	3.87	.045	.717	.194	.154	-1.035	.307
MngPr2	250	4.12	.048	-.195	-.195	.154	-1.217	.307
MngPr3	250	4.10	.048	-.161	-.161	.154	-1.224	.307
MngPr4	250	3.81	.056	-.442	-.442	.154	-.319	.307
MngPr5	250	4.04	.058	-.749	-.749	.154	-.102	.307
EmpAb1	250	4.11	.045	-.567	-.567	.154	.375	.307
EmpAb2	250	4.00	.052	-.625	-.625	.154	.500	.307
EmpAb3	250	4.13	.047	-.389	-.389	.154	-.518	.307
EmpAb4	250	4.09	.048	-.770	-.770	.154	1.313	.307
EmpAb5	250	4.11	.043	-.136	-.136	.154	-.792	.307
WFP1	250	4.08	.045	-.117	-.117	.154	-1.017	.307
WFP2	250	4.16	.045	-.249	-.249	.154	-1.005	.307
WFP3	250	4.11	.048	-.466	-.466	.154	-.072	.307
WFP4	250	4.08	.053	-.555	-.555	.154	-.226	.307
WFP5	250	4.14	.049	-.505	-.505	.154	-.377	.307
Valid N (listwise)	250							

Table 1 above displays the descriptive statistics of the numerical data that was collected after collecting the results of the questionnaire on the basis of the Likert Scale. Likert scale develops results from the questionnaire statement on five different scenarios of agreement. For collecting answers through a questionnaire, 250 employees of the telecommunication sector of the UK were selected. From the determined value of mean for the asked statements in the questionnaire, it can be stated that all of the responses were in the agreement with the values ranging from 3.80 until 4.14 (Table 1). Moreover, the values of skewness for most of the statement were negative which means that the normal bell curve from the collected data will be steeper at the edges and the curve will be shorter in size. The values of Kurtosis table were, also, negative that were supporting the flatter top of the normal probability curve developed from the results. The second statistical test that was performed on the collected data was correlation analysis.

4.2. Correlation analysis

Different research practices have conducted correlation analysis in their data analysis part for understanding the relationship level between the research variables. The current stud discusses two independent variables of employee ability and management practices respectively. The research has a single dependent variable of workforce productivity. Developed correlation analysis is displayed below (Table 2).

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

		Management Practices	Employee Ability	Work Force Productivity
Management Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.433**	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	250	250	250
Employee Ability	Pearson Correlation	.433**	1	.562**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	250	250	250
Work Force Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.665**	.562**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	250	250	250

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 described the calculated correlational analysis of the developed statements in the questionnaire. The correlation analysis was performed on all 250 responses collected from the sample. In the correlation table, the most important value is the Pearson coefficient of correlation. The value of the Pearson coefficient was positive and was leading towards positive one (+1). That is the Pearson correlation value of 0.655 displays a moderate correlation between management practices and workforce productivity. The Pearson correlation value of 0.562 also explains the moderate correlation between employee ability and workforce productivity. This explains the fact that all research variables are positively related to each other. This means that, when the management practices and employee ability are changes by one unit, there is a one-unit change in workforce productivity.

4.3. Regression analysis

Regression analysis is considered as the important analysis technique that is performed after the correlation analysis. This is because; the regression analysis provides the level of relationship between the dependent variable and one or more independent variables. This is because, the correlation analysis explains the relation between all research variables whereas, and the regression analysis explains the relation between the dependent and independent variables of the research. When regression analysis is performed on the collected data. Three important tables are determined: model summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients.

Table 3: Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	.731a	.534	.531	.431	1.590

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Ability, Management Practices

b. Dependent Variable: Work Force Productivity

Table 3 above displays the model summary of the regression model. This model summary contains the important values of R and R Square. The determined value of R is explaining the model fitness of the regression analysis. The value of R is 0.731 which means that they develop the model is 73.1% fir to the regression line. The value of R Square explains the level of change in the dependent variable with respect to change in the independent variables of research. the determined value of R Square is 0.534;

which means that the dependent variable experience 53.4% change in their value by change in the values of the independent variable. The value of R and R square is supported by the value of Durbin Watson value of 1.590; which means that there is a positive relationship between the research independent and dependent variables. The values of the Model summary are supported by the sig value that is determined in the ANOVA table (Table 4).

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	52.632	2	26.316	141.710	.000b
	Residual	45.868	247	.186		
	Total	98.500	249			

- a. Dependent Variable: Work Force Productivity
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Ability, Management Practices

The developed ANOVA table (Table 4) displays the sig value (0.000) of the regression analysis, which lies in the significant selection region of 0.05; hence describing the model is appropriate and fit for analysis. The impact of such a regression model is explained through the table of coefficients (Table 5).

Table 5: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.704	.209		3.371	.001
Management Practices	.491	.046	.519	10.775	.000
Employee Ability	.352	.050	.337	6.997	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Work Force Productivity

From the determined coefficient table, it is observed that the value of B (unstandardized coefficient) for management practices and Employee ability are 0.491 and 0.352 respectively and are positive. This means that the values of the dependent variable increase positively with the increase in the independent variable. However, such increase is performed at a slower pace. This positive direction of movement between the variables is affirmed by the value of standardised coefficient (Beta) of 0.519 and 0.337 for the management practices and employee ability respectively. The determined sig values in the Table 5 for the management practices and employee' ability are less than 0.05, therefore, the impact of these independent variables is significant.

4.4. Discussion

From the above-generated results, it is visible that the increase in workforce productivity is supported simultaneously by the practices of management in the organisations and work abilities of the employees. It was also explained by Paşaoğlu, (2015) that productivity of the workforce can be improved after following different strategies followed by the management of the telecommunication sector. These strategies are based on the effective practices of management in the telecommunication sector. The first strategy that must be followed by the management of the telecommunication sector is to equip the workforce with the training of modern technology that can make their work easy and can boost their morale at work (Alfalla-Luque, Marin-Garcia & Medina-Lopez, 2015). Moreover, it is also discussed by Alfalla-Luque, Marin-Garcia and Medina-Lopez, (2015) that the improvement in the work culture can also increase the workforce productivity level in the telecommunication sector. It is also explained by Osabiya, (2015) that organisations like the telecommunication industry can increase workforce productivity by improving their cultures. By improving the culture of the organisation, the employees feel motivated to help with government officials.

It was explained by Ramdhani, Ramdhani & Ainissyifa, and (2017) that improving the organisational culture can help the management of the company in making good time pass about the time. Further effective training of the employees in the telecommunication sector in better performance. It is also observed by Anitha, (2016) that for increasing the workforce's ability to learn and share it was observed by the employees, who are a major part. It is also discussed by Anitha, (2016) that the best way for the management of the telecommunication sector that can help them in increasing the overall productivity of the employees at the workplace. It was also explained by Osborne, and Hammoud, (2017) that the productivity of the employees can be encouraged when the employees are given the right to the part in the decision-making process of the organisation. In this manner, these organisational goals are attained in such a manner that helps the management of the organisations in keeping their focus on the future implication process (Osborne, & Hammoud, 2017).

It is also further explained by Chadwick, Super, and Kwon, (2015) that the effective communication practices performed among the workforce can easily help the management practices in performing their organisational tasks in an effective manner. It was further added that the communication practices that are taken place in the organisation should be based on the current practices and must be targeting the future of the organisations (Chadwick, Super, & Kwon, 2015). Moreover, it was also discussed by Bititci, Cocca and Ates, and (2016) that the management practices must include different economic incentives that could be distributed among employees when they participate in the attainment of the organisational objectives. It is also further explained by Chatteraj, and Shabnam, (2015) that when the management of the telecommunication sector practices the sharing of meaningful feedback to the workers daily. It is also explained by Chatteraj and Shabnam, (2015) that regular feedbacks must be reported to motivate the workforce rather than demotivate them. In this manner, the ability of employees is increased for performing their assigned tasks effectively.

It is also described by Karanges *et al.*, (2015) that the management of the telecommunication sector must also establish such practices that can easily increase the respect level of the employees in the organisations. In this manner, the management of the telecommunication sector can increase the performance of their workforce in a manner that helps the organisational management in performing their assigned tasks in an effective manner (Karanges, *et al.*, 2015). It is discussed by Lane, *et al.* (2015) that the management of the telecommunication sector must be sure enough to deal with all levels of workforce effectively so that the organisational goals should be attained by the organisations. Such type of dealing with the workforce can easily help the growth of the telecommunication in the UK. Conclusively, Table 6 below provides summary of the hypothesis.

Table 6: Hypothesis Summary

S. No	Hypothesis	Status
H ₁	Management Practise has a positive relationship between workforce productivity	Accepted
H ₂	Employees' Ability has a positive relationship between workforce productivity	Accepted

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

In the current research, it is explained that the management practices and the employee's ability to work have a direct impact on workforce productivity. It is also mentioned in the above research work that the organisations working in the telecommunication of the UK are developing different productivity levels based on the ability of the employees so that the management of the organisation can easily attain the developed organisational objectives. It was also further explained by the researchers that the ability of employees is based on the learning practices that are provided to them when they join the organisation for becoming the part of a team supporting increased productivity. It was also discussed in the report that workforce productivity in the telecommunication sector of the UK can be explained as the organisational practices that can enhance the employee's effective in the organisation. It was further established in the research that management practices and the employee

able to work in the telecommunication sector of UK are very much independent of each other but have a direct impact of the productivity level of their workforce.

This fact leads to the development of research hypotheses that paves the path of research methodology. The developed research methodology was based on quantitative methods with the research philosophy of positivism that supports the deductive approach of reasoning for reaching the research data collection and analysis. From the conducted research results, all the developed hypotheses were supported. The end of the article is based on the recommendations made to future researches.

5.2. Recommendations

For the future research to be conducted on the topic of analysing the impact of management practices and employee's ability on the workforce productivity of the UK. It is recommended to the future researchers that they must investigate other organisational sectors of the UK for analysing the impact of management practices and employee ability on workforce proactivity. Accordingly, it is also recommended that the research must be conducted for the analysing different factors that might affect workforce productivity in the telecommunication sector. Equally, we recommended the telecommunication sector of the UK that they must train their employees for using the new technologies at work so that their ability can be increased for increasing workforce productivity.

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