

**AFRICAN SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL
FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
IMO STATE UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA**

VOL. 10 NO. 1 MARCH 2021

**THE IMPACT OF INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION ON JOB PERFORMANCE IN RIVERS STATE
CIVIL SERVICE**

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Abstract

The current organizational concern on job performance with particular regard to timing had propelled reason scholarly works. The trend of inter-agency collaboration in Nigeria is also increasingly attracting concern. Some researchers on inter-agency collaboration have studied it in terms of inter-agency understanding, cooperation, partnership and relations. However, there is still an empirical gap in terms of the extent to which technical expertise and resources interface as indicators of inter-agency collaboration that can be linked to work performance in the Civil service. In the light of the fore going, this study examines the relationship between inter-agency collaboration and job performance in the Rivers State Civil Service. The survey design was used in this research work. The target population in 1402 whiles the sample size in 311 using the Taro Yamene sampling technique. The data was collected mainly through questionnaires and in depth interviews and analyzed using the SPSS version 23. The findings indicate that there is a positive significant relationship between technical expertise and timely delivery of tasks although it was statistically weak (0.322). There is also a strong positive relationship between resource sharing and job efficiency. It is recommended that the guidelines for technical expertise study be adequately implemented for optimal results. Hence, it was concluded and recommended that the approach to resource sharing should be sustained in various forms of collaboration among technical expertise and resource sharing. The Government of Rivers State through its Administrators should adopt the aspect of collaboration that is feasible in her Civil Service circumstances to attain optimal performance.

Keywords: Collaboration, technical expertise, resource sharing, inter-agency.

Introduction

The current trend of organizational management had clearly demonstrated that a single agency or sector acting attract undue delays or incur cost of delay with technical tasks and scheduled services. As a result, interagency collaboration which involves the deliberate relationship between several agencies for process improvement and cost reduction is now considered as a healthier way to deliver organizational tasks that require technical expertise and more funding. This accounts for why organizational strategists, management practitioners and academics are opting for collaboration as an important element in the administration of public affairs. According to Bratton and Tumin (2012), as well as Stephenson (2007), collaboration has helped to resolve many agency related problems especially during the United States war in Iraq. These scholars are of the opinion that these agencies would not have realized the successes achieved during the “golden hour” of the war without collaborations at different levels. The collaboration between agencies is a key strategy for scaling up the performance of individual agencies as well as that of the larger organization. Similarly, several development agencies like the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations (UN) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have increasingly mainstreamed the practice of interagency collaboration into their operations (Mette, 2002). Kaiser (2011) asserted that the reasons for the current upsurge of interagency collaborations are the growth in government responsibilities, cross-cutting programs, cum their complexity, severe limitations of existing structures and heightened pressure to reduce the size of federal program and expenditures. Consequently, collaboration has become a major focus of attention and action in business and government operations.

Nigeria had continued to face several problems that range from education, security, health among others. As a result, different governments have created agencies for different sectors to proffer solution. However, the complexity of modern social challenges in the Nigerian society has increasingly questioned the problem solving abilities of agencies acting on their own. In light of this, interagency collaboration has gained strategic momentum as a way of dealing with multidimensional problems. It provides a broad based approach for planning; cost reduction, technical inputs among others. Eyi and Baum (2007) added that interagency collaboration encourages agencies to plan more broadly than they necessarily would if functioning in isolation. Propositions of collaboration and its necessity in terms of performance have provided a salient ground for academic researches (Keast and Mandell, 2012, O’Leary et al, 2015). Li, (2017) examined collaborative Governance and partnership in policing in the USA where he reported that multi-agency partnership improves the efficiency of service provision but requires a significant level of vigilance and coordination to minimize chances of conflicts. Similarly, Musa, Olufemi, and Waziri (2017) focused on inter-agency collaboration and the provision of basic education to internally displaced persons in Nigeria. The paper concludes that there is evidence of interagency collaboration in the provision of basic education but such synergy is lacking in the area of designing school curriculum to address education needs of IDP children.

In light of the foregoing, this study aim examines the relationship between interagency collaboration and job performance in the Rivers State Civil Service. It was guided by the following specific objectives and hypotheses.

- i. Examine the impact of technical expertise on timely delivery of jobs in the Rivers State Civil Service.
- ii. Find out if resource sharing among agencies can lead to job efficiency in the Rivers State Civil Service.

The objectives necessitated the test of these hypotheses:

- a) There is significant relationship between technical expertise among agencies and timely delivery of jobs by staff in the Rivers State Civil Service.
- b) The lesser the resource sharing among agencies has no lesser job efficiency among staff in the Rivers State Civil Service.

Literature Review

The theoretical foundation of the study includes;

Resource Based Theory: Barney was the proponent of this theory and developed it in 1991. The basic assumptions of the theory are: That enterprise is seen as a combination of resources and capability. That enterprise has a unique resources and capabilities which allow them to control their competitive advantage. In relating resources based view and inter-organizational collaborations, Bharadwaji (2000) viewed inter-organizational collaboration as an important capability of the organization and used empirical data to investigate the relationship between ICT collaborations and enterprise performance. The resource based theory was considered appropriate for this study because it depict inter-organizational collaboration as a unique capability that are relevance to assist the organization in attaining competitive advantage and work performance.

Goal theory: Goal theory provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the independent contributions of task, mission and public service to employee work motivation and performance. In the words of Wright (2007), "Public employees are more motivated to perform their work effectively when they have clearly understood and accepted challenging tasks that they feel are important and achievable especially within a delivery timeline. The intrinsic value identified by employees in mission of their organizations influences their work motivation by increasing the importance they place on their work. In addition to the intrinsic values, increased performance of the public sector employees also depends on their satisfaction with extrinsic rewards such as financial benefits, professional development opportunities, challenging work environment.

Conceptual and empirical reviews

Overview of interagency collaboration: The concept of interagency collaboration was posited by Hansberry (2005) as a complementary advantage and well conceptualized relationship between two or more organizations to attain a specific goal, a jointly developed structure and share responsibility, mutual authority and accountability for success, including the sharing of assets and rewards. Similarly, Smith and Cristina (2008) explained interagency collaboration has to do with the swapping of assets or capital through agency policy or programs for the attainment of organizational goals. According to Snavelly and Tracy (2000), it refers to working deeply with other organizations in a situation where their mission overlaps and intersects and the combination of asset and capital results to enhancement in the service effectiveness and efficiency.

Types of interagency collaboration in the public service: According to Kekez, Howlett and Ramesh (2018), the basic types of interagency collaboration are: Contracting out, consultative in house service delivery, commissioning, co-management, co-production and third party certification. Kekez et al (2018) further put that consultative in-house service delivery has to do with direct provision of services by the public agencies but the services is enhanced by participation and exchange of ideas with the users, stakeholders and the public. In contracting out, there is reduction in state involvement in the provision of services through contractual arrangement non-governmental organizations. Here, public services are design and delivered civil society while government agencies ensure strategic alignment of commissioned action with client's expectation and policy outcomes. For co-management, civil society organizations are responsible for the production of public services, while partnering with other business organizations.

Rationales for interagency collaboration: There are many reasons behind the adoption of collaboration put forward by many authors. For instance, (Kaiser 2011, Akindele, 2012) have deliberated extensively on the rationales behind collaboration. Kaiser (2011) succinctly argued that in the political and economic sphere, collaboration is meant to reduce the size and scope of their responsibilities to cut number, scale, complexity and diversity of cross-cutting programs with respect to increase in overlapping jurisdictions and differentiated duties among agencies. Similarly, Akindele (2012) posited that the reason for interagency collaboration is to reduce policy fragmentation. He is of the view that when collaboration is adopted, codes or strategy implementation would be fragmented and given to other agencies with overlapping jurisdiction and related duties. The outcome of this condition would result in collaboration being minimize and are uncertain over existing and future roles and duties of individual agencies. On the contrast, agencies operating alone might be given contradictory tasks, compete with one another or even work at different area. The implication of views is that interagency collaboration enhances effective policy formulation and execution. This involves bringing together technocrats, expertise, skills and experience hands including resources to solve existing problem.

The benefits of Interagency collaboration: The collaboration policy and programs have potential to help the state and its members immensely bearing in mind that the super-bureaucracies are able to save the state from problems that would have hindered the development and provide solutions through policy redirection. Also, the super-bureaucracies help in policy initiation, formulation and implementation. According to Akindele (2017), through sound policy evaluation super-bureaucrats apply the utility criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, equity, adequacy, feasibility, ethics and technology. By the principles of collaboration, the super bureaucrats will help in removing those damaging factors responsible for disruption or conflict in administration. With collaboration, abuses of public finance will be avoided and adoption of optional strategy for effective management of the economy would be upheld. Summarily, collaboration helps the bureaucrats to identify the government fiscal problems and develop an avenue yielding capacity including that of demand for services, develop a list of priority rankings from all government programs, project, services and benefits design an integrated strategy to generate resources, improve productivity and ratio

expenditure. Again, Musa, Olufemi & Waziri (2008) concluded that it as a synergy between or among government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) partnering together to achieve specific goal.

Empirical review are summarized as follows:

Author	Objective	Methods	Findings
Lari (2016)	The effect of collaboration on performance in Public management.	Mixed method approach	Institutional factors may provide the additional mediating variables as the proximate cause for collaboration capacity to transmit its effect over longer time spans.
Ihm & Shumate (2018)	The role of board members' social and human capital on non-profit collaboration with other nonprofits.	survey approach	board social capital, but not board human capital is positively related to the presence and number of within sector and cross-sector nonprofit.
Kevin, <i>et al.</i> (2018)	Examined the processes involved in two agencies to successfully collaborate on data collection and reporting.	Cross-sectional survey design.	Showed that the process of developing and implementing joint performance measures may facilitate important conversations relating to the mission, vision and goals of partnership.
Hansberry, (2005)	Examined the influence of Denver County human service nonprofit organization's collaborative activities on the organization effectiveness.	Cross-sectional survey design.	That change management and collaboration are stronger influences on organizational effectiveness than management procedures and board performance.
Evans (2015)	To examine the area of collaboration between the Nigerian police force and Lagos state Trafficking Management Authority.	Descriptive survey design	Interagency collaboration has translated to interagency understanding and cooperation through constant dialogue and interaction, understanding of mandate, partnership in enforcement of traffic laws and operational understanding.
Smith & Mogro-Wilson (2008)	Examined the practice of interagency collaboration and assess how collaborative practices vary both between and within organization.	Survey approach	Showed that staff collaborative practice is associated with staff perception of policy but not with administrator reports of agency policy.

Methodology

The cross-sectional design was employed for the study. Obadan (2012) aptly put that the design allows data to be collected from a cross-section of a population under study within a particular point especially in time. The reason for this is to estimate the prevalence of a behavior within a selected population. The targeted population for the quantitative study was one thousand four hundred and two (1402) drawn from eight ministries, departments and agencies in Rivers State civil service. A scientific method proposed by Taro Yamene (1967) was used to establish the sample size from the total research population of one thousand, four hundred and two (1402) persons.

This is because it provides an easy- to- adopt formula in calculating sample sizes. The sample size therefore is three hundred and eleven (311). Primary data was collected using questionnaire and personal interview methods with some selected staff as the main primary data collection. Tables and descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies represented in simple tables, and charts were used to present the data from the field. In addition, the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23 software was used to test the hypothesis formulated in the study because it helps reduce computational error rate to the barest minimum and it measures the strength of the relationships between variables (Udofia, 2003).

Results and Discussion

Technical expertise among agencies and timely delivery of job in the Rivers State Civil Service.

S/no	Statement on technical collaboration	Options					Statement on timely delivery of job	Options				
		N-1	R-2	O-3	Of-4	Vof-5		N-1	R-2	O-3	Of-4	VOf-5
1	Outcome of technical collaboration efforts.	21	5	35	70	180	Achieve its administrative goals	10	-	71	185	40
2	Co-operation with other service organisation.	13	2	20	220	51	Plan for timely delivery of services.	13	-	13	205	75
3	Procedures with other organisation for service	11	15	30	50	200	procedures with other organisation for service delivery	11	15	30	50	200
4	To collaborate technically on mission	16	10	30	210	40	specific task within a reasonable timeframe	31	20	25	50	180
5	Joint budget with other organisation	30	30	50	26	170	Methods to save time and cost	6	10	95	155	40
6	Participate in strategic planning	15	1	40	200	50	Accept responsibility for delayed tasks	29	41	40	156	40
7	Inter-agency teams for planning with others	6	1	9	40	250	Achieve job targets at less wastages	24	26	30	180	46
8	Other organisations to write mission statements.	25	10	31	190	50	Productivity with meritorious awards	16	26	34	190	40

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table presents data for the first hypothetical test. The notations (N, R, O, of and VOf) representing the options: Never, Rarely, and Occasionally, Often and Very often. A modified likert scale scores 1 to 5 were employed used for the strength of options cycled as shown on the table. The option never has 1point, rarely is 2point, occasionally is 3points, often is 4points and very often has 5points.

H01: There is no significant relationship between technical expertise among agencies and timely delivery of jobs by staff in the Rivers state civil service.

Result of first hypothetical test

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N

Technical Collaboration	4.2190	1.15138	306
Timely Delivery of Job	4.3497	1.07366	306

Correlations

		Technical expertise	Timely Delivery of Job
Technical Collaboration	Pearson Correlation	1	.322**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	306	306
Timely Delivery of Job	Pearson Correlation	.322**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	306	306

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

Regressed Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.715	.261		10.409	.000
	Timely Delivery of Job	.346	.058	.322	5.939	.000

Independent Variable: Technical expertise

Interpretation of result: The above Table revealed that statistical evidence to justify that technical collaboration has positive relationship with timely delivery of jobs. This is demonstrated with correlation coefficient of 0.322. Although, the observed relationship appeared weak; it is significant at 0.000 (Sig.2-tailed) which is less than 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Similarly, a corroboration test of regression, revealed a standard coefficient (Beta) of 0.322 and it is significant at 0.000, compared to conventional levels.

The level of resource sharing among agencies and job efficiency in Rivers State Civil Service.

S/no	Statement on resources based collaboration	Options				Statement on job efficiency	Options				
		DN-1	DS-2	DW-3	DVW-4		N-1	R-2	O-3	Of-4	VO f-5
1	Accountable to constituent parts.	20	40	95	191	Arrival on the job punctually.	3	50	60	153	40
2	Give leadership resources to provide vision and strategic direction.	24	36	201	45	Be on the job regularly	15	30	40	190	31
3	Staff and other stakeholders are involved in program decision.	16	30	223	37	Accomplish specific task within a reasonable timeframe	31	20	25	50	180
4	Excellent relationship with principal sources of fund	5	7	84	210	Adopt new methods to save time and cost	6	10	95	155	40
5	Promotes public image of integrity, cooperation and capability	30	35	42	199	Accept responsibility for delayed tasks	29	41	40	156	40
6	Sufficient human resources to deliver services; attract resources and promote mission.	11	15	245	45	Open to performance feedback adjustments	16	20	40	200	30
7	Achieve its administrative goals	10	71	185	40	Handle job schedules with ethical standards	22	31	31	51	171
8	States operational plan for	13	13	205	75	Achieve job targets at	24	26	30	180	46

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

The above table presents data for the second hypothetical test. The notations (N, R, O, Of and VOf) represent the options: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Often and Very often. Also the acronyms for resources based collaboration data (DN, DS, DW, DVW) represent the options: Does not Describe, Describe Somewhat, Describe Well and Describe Very Well. A modified likert scale scores 1 to 5 were employed used for the strength of options cycled for job efficiency while 1-4 was used for resources based collaboration as shown on the table. The option never has 1point, rarely is 2point, occasionally is 3points, often is 4points and very often has 5points. Similarly, 1point is used to measure does not describe, 2 points measures describe somewhat, 3points measures describe well and 4 points measures describe very well.

H02: The level of resources sharing among agencies has no significant relationship with job efficiency among staff in River state civil service.

Results of second hypothetical test

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
RESOURCE BASE	2.8333	.68353	306
JOB EFFICIENCY	3.9967	1.30698	306

Correlations

		RESOURCE SHARING	JOB EFFICIENCY
RESOURCE BASE	Pearson Correlation	1	.832**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	306	306
JOB EFFICIENCY	Pearson Correlation	.832**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	306	306

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

Regressed Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.093	.070		15.647	.000
	JOB EFFICIENCY	.435	.017	.832	26.199	.000

a. Independent Variable: RESOURCE SHARING

Interpretation of Result: The above table showed statistical evidence to explain that Resource sharing portrayed positive relationship with job efficiency among staff in Rivers state civil service. It was demonstrated with correlation coefficient of 0.832. The observed relationship is very strong and it is significant at 0.000 (Sig.2-tailed) which is less than 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Also, a corroboration test of regression indicated standard coefficient (Beta) of 0.832 and it is significant at 0.000 based on conventional levels.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The use of interagency collaboration options in Rivers state civil service impact significantly on the assessed work performance. This viewpoint was predicated on the peculiar effect of the technical based collaboration which ushered in innovative skills, core competences and technological expertise in the service needs. Also, the resources sharing systematically allowed shared resources such as exchange of ideas, vision, policies, intellectual capability; funds et cetera to actualize effective job performance to stakeholders who include clients, contactors, government agencies, private organization and civil society. Hence, it recommended that the principles and established guidelines for technical expertise in Rivers state civil service should be adequately implemented for optimal results because the statistical result indicated a weak outcome. Also, the approach to resource sharing should be sustained in the Civil service affairs because it generated efficient job performance due to saving time and cost of services.

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