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Self-Esteem and Achievement Motivation as Predictors of Perceived Sense of Competence among Workers in a Nigerian University Teaching Hospital

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Abstract

This study explored the relationship between self-esteem, achievement motivation and perceived sense of competence among workers in a Nigerian university teaching hospital. Using a correlational design, one hundred and seventy (n=170) workers selected from different sections and clinics at a University teaching hospital in a south western state in Nigeria participated in the study. They comprised of males 85 (50%) and females 85 (50%) with

ages ranged between 20 years and 55 years, and a mean of 32.39 years ($SD=7.13$). The following instruments were used for data collection: self esteem scale developed by Adanijo and Oyefeso (1986), need for achievement scale developed by Edward (1954), perceived sense of competence scale developed by Wagner and Morse (1975) and modified by Synder and Morris (1978). Five hypotheses were tested using correlational statistics such as the Pearson r , Simple linear multiple regression, independent t -test, and One-Way analysis of Variance. Results revealed that a positive relationship existed between achievement motivation ($r = .52$; $p < .01$), self esteem ($r = .65$; $p < .01$), and perceived sense of competence. There was a significant joint influence of achievement motivation, self-esteem, age and years of experience on perceived sense of competence ($R^2 = .55$; $F(4, 165) = 51.10$; $p < .001$). In addition, the independent contributions show significant independent influence of achievement motivation ($\beta = .37$; $t = 6.55$; $p < .001$), self-esteem ($\beta = .59$; $t = 9.90$; $p < .001$), and age ($\beta = -.16$; $t = 2.80$; $p < .01$) on perceived sense of competence. The meaning behind achievement motivation and self-esteem in relationship to perceived sense of competence is discussed, as well as the implication for these factors in enhancing the perceived sense of competence among workers. This will enable researchers and human resource professionals to look at the relationships among these variables in detail.

Introduction

To be successful in any business environment virtually all organisations need competent organisational members. There is now research evidence buttressing the fact that high level of sense of competence in employees results in organisationally relevant work outcomes. These include effective or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982), willingness and ability of employees to use their capacities in specific situations (Spencer, 1983), high levels of individual performance and organisational effectiveness (Armstrong, 1999), and important life outcomes (McClelland, 1973). Competent employees are also more productive and effective in meeting organizational goals (Dutcher & Adams, 1994; Laschinger, Wong, McMahon, & Kaufmann, 1999). Competency used in this way refers to broad psychological or behavioural attributes that are related to successful outcomes, be it on the job or in life in general. Despite the positive individual and organisational outcomes associated with high sense of competence, many employees still experience difficulties in getting along with clients and other colleagues at some points during their working hours. Sometimes these problems may be short-lived for

some workers and for some workers the effects of being left out or teased by colleagues are transitory. However, for other workers, being ignored or rejected by colleagues may be a lasting problem that has lifelong consequences, such as a dislike for work, poor self-esteem, social withdrawal, and difficulties in social relationships such as cooperation and negotiation.

In literature sense of competence is a broader term used to describe an individual's ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context through the mobilization of psychosocial prerequisites (including both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects). Masterpasqua (1989) defines competence as an adaptive, cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and social attributes which complements an individual's implicit or explicit beliefs and expectations about his/her access to and ability to implement those attributes. Thus having a sense of competence refers to the individual's feeling and confidence about abilities in mastering the work setting and the work itself. This definition does not imply an objective measure of how organisational members actually are but rather refers to how they perceive their ability in solving problems in a work environment. Therefore, (White, 1959) defined self-perceived competence as perceptions of individual's ability to skilfully interact with and alter the environment, or, in other words, to be influential. Perceived sense of competence can manifest when an individual personally estimates and believes that he/she has capacity, skill, or ability to do something correctly, efficiently or at least adequately. This differ greatly from one person to another; some individuals perceive themselves as competent in a wide range of activities or tasks, while others do not perceive themselves as particularly competent at all. In the context of organizations, sense of competence may serve an instrumental function in determining how employee interacts with other people and their environment. This can be especially true for service organisations (such as hospital) that rely heavily on the harmonious relationship among organizational members to provide friendly and courteous services to their customers or clients. The organization selected for this study is a University teaching hospital located in the one of the South western states in Nigeria. The justification for choosing an hospital is because traditionally the role of health care institution is nurturing and improving the physical and emotional well-being of patients. In this setting, workers with high levels of sense of competence are more likely to enhance patients' care through more effective work practice. In this scenario, all workers play valuable roles in helping patients recover. In order to do this

successfully they need high level of sense of competence in order to function effectively in the work setting, interact effectively with co-workers, and maintaining and attracting more clients.

A search through the literature reveals that theoretical and empirical advances in psychology make it evident that an explanation of sense of competence that fail to consider personal disposition and human motivation is incomplete. In an extensive body of research, scholars attest that self-esteem and need for achievement are likely to influence the processes underlying sense of competence (Erez & Isen, 2002; Forgas & George, 2001; Isen, 2000), and that self-esteem and achievement motivation constitute an important source of influence on human thought and behaviour (Haidt, 2000; Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001; Winkielman, Zajonc, & Schwarz, 1997). Despite the fact that self-esteem and achievement motivation have implications for sense of competence in individuals, self-esteem and achievement motivation are still largely neglected in existing organizational literature in Nigeria. Therefore, a gap exist in knowledge in this area, this study is an attempt to empirical fill this gap by exploring self-esteem, achievement motivation, and perceived sense of competence among workers in a Nigerian university teaching hospital. Availability of this information would provide micro-foundational explanations about why people vary in their perceptions of sense of competence, even while working in the same organization.

Self-esteem is a person's positive or negative evaluation of self. Franzoi (2000) defined self-esteem as individual's numerous evaluations of self as being good, bad, or mediocre. A person with high self esteem perceives self as better, more capable, and of greater worth than does someone with low self-esteem. Self evaluations are based in part on the opinions of others and in part on how people perceive specific experience. Interestingly, negative self-perceptions lead to more predictable behaviour than positive self-perceptions. Presumably, this happens because negative self-views involve more tightly organized scheme than positive one (Malle & Horowitz, 1995); as a result, someone with high self-esteem and low self-esteem might report different levels of sense of competence. Research has demonstrated a connection between self-esteem and behaviour. For example, Chen, Lee-Chai, and Bargh (2001) found that having high self-esteem increases the likelihood of believing that individuals have the prerequisite knowledge of the work or task at hand as well as the skills to perform effectively and with

confidence. Leary and Downs (1995), Kirkpatrick and Ellis (2001) have proposed that mechanisms designed to monitor one's performance, and especially one's standing with respect to relevant others are also components of self-esteem.

Shaffer (1994) defined the need for achievement as a learned motive to compete and to strive for success in situations in which individual's performance can be evaluated against some standard of excellence. In other words, need for achievement refers to the desire to excel and accomplish something difficult. Achievement-motivated people prefer tasks of moderate ability, situations in which their performance is due to their own efforts and more feedback on their success and failures than do low achievers. Therefore, individual difference in achievement motivation may constitute an important explanation for perceived sense of competence among health workers. A number of empirical studies show that the need for achievement appears to influence perceived sense of competence; employees with high achievement motivation perceive themselves as more competent on the job (Georgesens & Harris, 2006; Morrison, Fast, & Ybarra, 2009). Additionally, when teacher perceived sense of competence was examined by Scott and Dinham (2003), they found that it was influenced by need for achievement and personal efficacy.

Several studies reported the influence of cognitive, social, motivational and affective factors on perceived competence, including age, working experience, gender, confidence, and attitudes (Campbell & Williams, 1990; Corston & Colman, 1996; Rozell & Gardner, 2000). In addition, perceived competence is also influenced by the factors to which people attribute their success and failures to, how they evaluate themselves, how they believe others view them, and by individuals past experiences in a particular domain (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Snyder and Bruning (1979) examined the self-perceived competence of 817 employees of federally-funded social service organizations, and contrary to the speculations of many previous writers, occupancy of a supervisory position, not sex, was demonstrated to be a predictor of an individual's work-related sense of competence. Ezell, Odewahn, and Beadles (1993) surveyed managers in social service organizations to study the extent and nature of their perceived competence, with emphasis given to determining the degree to which several demographic variables serve as antecedents in explaining perceptions of self-competence. Based on responses from 299 managers, the results reveal that the managers

see themselves as competent individuals in the work setting. Further, no significant differences were found on any of the four competence subscales for the demographic variables of sex, position in agency, organizational level, education, and education major. However, for three of the subscales significant perceptual differences were noted for the demographic variables of age and length of service in present position.

Hypotheses

The foregoing generates the following hypotheses:

- 1) Self esteem, achievement motivation, age, and years of working experience would significantly predict perceived sense of competence of workers.
- 2) Workers that are male would significantly perceive themselves as more competent than female workers.
- 3) Married workers would significantly perceive themselves as more competent than single workers.
- 4) There would be a significant effect of educational level on perceived sense of competence.

Methodology

Research design: The study is a correlational research thus a cross-sectional survey design is adopted. This is because the variables of interest are not manipulated in any way and some of the variables might correlate with each other. The independent variables are self esteem, achievement motivation, and demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, working experience, and level of education. The dependent variable is perceived sense of competence.

Participants

Using simple random sampling technique, a total of one hundred and seventy (n=170) health workers selected from different sections and clinics at a University teaching hospital participated in the study. They comprised males 85 (50%) and females 85 (50%) with ages ranged between 20 years and 55 years, and a mean age of 32.39 years (sd= 7.13). In terms of their marital status, single 51 (30%) and married 119 (70%). Seventeen (10%) of the participants had secondary school leaving certificate, 26 (15.3%) had diploma or certificate in education, 101 (59.4%) had Bachelor degrees or its

equivalent, 26 (15.3%) had postgraduate qualifications. while the remaining 7 (4.1%) did not indicate their level of education. Their job status varied; office assistant 3 (1.8%), research assistant 3 (1.8%), computer operator 5 (2.9%), accountant 21 (12.4%), administrative staff 14 (8.2%), medical officers 17 (10.0%), library staff 1 (0.6%), secretary 13 (7.6%), higher executive officer 15 (8.8%), senior executive officer 3 (1.8%), assistant executive officer 12 (7.1%), executive officer 8 (4.7%), clerical officer 20 (11.8%), chief typist 1 (0.6%), higher technical officer 4 (2.4%), chief technical officer 1 (0.6%), technical officer 2 (1.2%), senior technical officer 1 (0.6%), medical record officer 3 (1.8%), staff nurse 1 (0.6%) while the remaining 22 (12.9) participants did not indicate their job status. Lastly, participants' years of working experience with the hospital range from 1 to 25 years with a mean of 3.42 years (sd=2.80).

Instrument

The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire composed in English language. It measures self esteem, achievement motivation, perceived sense of competence, and some personal demographic data such as age, gender, marital status, working experience, job status, and level of education. The Cronbach alpha reliabilities for the scales used in the present study are as follows: Self-esteem ($\alpha = 0.849$), Need for achievement ($\alpha = 0.905$), and Sense of Competence ($\alpha = 0.721$).

Self esteem: This is measured using the 15 item self esteem scale developed by Adanijo and Oyefeso (1986) as a self reported questionnaire. The response is on a 5 points Likert format of "Strongly Agree = 5" to "Strongly Disagree =1" so that high score above the mean value on the scale indicates high self-esteem and low score indicates low self-esteem. Of the 15 items only two are positive statements while others are negative statements. It has factors on dependency, worth, adequacy, competence, and acceptability. Adanijo and Oyefeso (1986) reported an internal consistency of 0.79 among bank workers. In addition, Adanijo (1987) reported an internal consistency of 0.78 and 0.76 for bank and government workers respectively.

Achievement motivation: Achievement motivation is tapped using the 11 item forced choice need for achievement scale developed by Edward (1954) but revised and shortened to 9 items questionnaire by Oyefeso (1988) with response on a 5 points Likert format of "Strongly Agree = 5" to "Strongly Disagree =1" so that high score above the mean value on the scale indicates high achievement motivation and low score indicates low achievement

motivation. As reported by Oyefeso (1988), the scale has a convergence validity of $r = 0.27$ ($P < .001$) with subjects actual self-rating on perceived need for achievement. He also obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.78 and a stability coefficient of .22. Babalola (2000) also reported an r coefficient of .60 using Spearman –Brown reliability coefficient.

Sense of competence: Perceived sense of competence was measured using a 13 item scale developed by Wagner and Morse (1975) and modified by Synder and Morris (1978). The scale is in three dimensions- items 1 to 5 measure general competence thema, items 6 to 9 measure perceived task knowledge or ability, and items 10 to 13 measure influence which is a work specific index of the individual's locus of control. The response format is on a 5-point Likert format of "Strongly Agree=5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, Disagree=2 and Strongly Disagree=1. Items 5, 8, 10, 11 and 13 have reversed scores. High score above the mean value on the scale indicates high level of sense of competence and vice versa. Bajo (2005) reported an alpha coefficient of 0.65 and Split half reliability coefficient of 0.57 for the scale.

Procedure

Firstly, permission was obtained from the relevant authority of the teaching hospital to allow their employees to participate in the study. Heads of departments or units of different sections of the hospital were also approached for their support and co-operation in questionnaire administration. Moving from one department to the other, the researchers obtained the list of all staff at each department and units from the heads of departments and units. The researchers then used the simple random sampling technique (odd-even method) to select those staff whose names fall at even numbers on the staff lists. After this selection, the chosen staffs were identified through the assistance of the heads of departments and units. The purpose of the study was explained to the identified staffs and they were given questionnaires to complete after they have indicated their intention and willingness to participate in the study. The researchers also enlisted the assistant of some colleagues (who were briefed on the procedure for data collection) at various sections of the hospital in the distribution of questionnaires. A total of two hundred and fifty ($n=250$) questionnaires were administered under the condition of anonymity, while one hundred and eighty questionnaires were returned. Out of these only one hundred and seventy questionnaires were found usable for data analysis, the remaining ten questionnaires have missing information. Questionnaire administration and

collection took about 8 weeks. The completed questionnaires were scored, processed and analysed using computer.

Data Analysis

Pearson r moment correlation was used to test for the strength of the relationship among the variables of study. Hypothesis one was tested using multiple regression statistical analysis to find the independent and joint influence of self-esteem, achievement motivation, age, and years of working experience on perceived sense of competence. Hypotheses two and three were tested using the t-test for independent samples. The reason for this choice was because the researcher examines the differences among comparison groups that were categorized by some chosen employees demographic characteristics such as gender and marital status. Lastly, hypothesis four was tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This is to find difference on perceived sense of competence based on different level of education.

Results

The first analysis involved correlations between predictor variables and the dependent variable in order to meet the requirements of multiple regression statistical analysis. Results of the correlational presented in Table 1 showed significant positive relationship between achievement motivation and perceived sense of competence ($r = .52$; $p < .01$), suggesting that individuals with high achievement motivation will also report high level of sense of competence. There is also a significant positive relationship between self esteem and perceived sense of competence ($r = .65$; $p < .01$), suggesting that when individuals' level of self-esteem increase, perceived sense of competence also increases. Results further revealed a significant positive relationship between age and perceived sense of competence ($r = .17$; $p < .05$). This indicates that older individuals are more likely to report high level of perceived sense of competence. However, there was no significant relationship between years of working experience and perceived sense of competence ($r = -.11$; $p > .05$), meaning that long or short years of working experience has nothing significantly to do with increase or decrease in perceived sense of competence.

Other correlational results revealed significant positive relationship between achievement motivation and self esteem ($r = .33$; $p < .01$), and between achievement motivation and age ($r = .18$; $p < .05$). However, there was no significant relationship between achievement motivation and years of

working experience ($r = -.03$; $p > .05$). Similarly, there was no significant relationship between self-esteem and age ($r = .15$; $p > .05$), and between self esteem and years of working experience ($r = -.00$; $p > .05$). In contrast, there was a significant positive relationship between age and years of working experience ($r = .37$; $p < .01$).

The results presented in Table 2 also indicated a significant joint influence of achievement motivation, self-esteem, age, and years of working experience on perceived sense of competence ($R^2 = .55$; $F(4, 165) = 51.10$; $p < .001$). This shows that achievement motivation, self-esteem, age, and years of working experience jointly account for 55% of variance in perceived sense of competence. The independent contributions showed that achievement motivation contributed significantly to perceived sense of competence ($\beta = .37$; $t = 6.55$; $p < .001$), meaning that when achievement motivation increases, perceived sense of competence is likely to increase. There was also a significant influence of self-esteem on perceived sense of competence ($\beta = .59$; $t = 9.90$; $p < .001$), suggesting that when the level of self esteem increases, perceived sense of competence is likely to increase. There was a significant influence of age on perceived sense of competence ($\beta = .16$; $t = 2.80$; $p < .01$), implying that as chronological age of an individual increases, perceived sense of competence is likely to increase. In contrast, years of working experience did not contribute significantly to perceived sense of competence ($\beta = -.04$; $t = -.69$; $p > .05$), meaning that any change in the years of working experience will not lead to a significant increase or decrease in perceived sense of competence. Therefore, hypothesis one is partially supported.

In table 3, the results of t-test analysis that investigated sex differences in perceived sense of competence revealed no significant difference in perceived sense of competence between male and female workers ($t = 1.19$; $df = 168$; $p > .05$), implying that both male (mean = 42.61) and female (mean = 41.08) workers report similar levels of perceived sense of competence. Therefore, hypothesis two is rejected.

Results in Table 4 showed no significant difference on perceived sense of competence between married and single workers ($t = -1.44$; $df = 168$; $p > .05$). This means that both married (mean = 42.45) and single (mean = 40.43) workers report similar levels of perceived sense of competence. Thus, hypothesis three is rejected.

The results presented in Table 5 also showed no significant influence of educational levels on perceived sense of competence of workers ($F(3, 166) = .26; p = >.05$), meaning that workers with secondary school leaving certificate (mean= 40.82; sd=9.34), diploma or national certificate in education (mean= 41.00; sd=7.99), First degrees or its equivalent (mean= 42.27; sd=8.71), and postgraduate qualifications (mean= 41.69; Sd=7.37) report similar levels of perceived sense of competence. Therefore, hypothesis four is rejected.

Discussion

To begin, the present study reinforces earlier work that significant positive relationship exists between achievement motivation, self esteem and perceived sense of competence. These findings are consistent with those of Chen et al. (2001) that found that having high self-esteem increases the likelihood of believing that individuals have the prerequisite knowledge of the work or task at hand as well as the skills to perform effectively and with confidence. The finding also buttress earlier findings by Georgesen and Harris (2006), Morrison et al. (2009), which showed that need for achievement influence perceived sense of competence; employees with high achievement motivation perceive themselves as more competent on the job. Additionally, when teacher perceived sense of competence was examined by Scott and Dinham (2003), they found that it was influenced by need for achievement and personal efficacy.

Additionally, findings reveal significant joint influence of achievement motivation, self-esteem, age, and years of working experience on perceived sense of competence. This implies that a combination of these psychodemographic variables jointly account for significant variation in perceived sense of competence of workers. The independent contributions also show significant influence of achievement motivation on perceived sense of competence. A probable explanation for this finding is the sense of adequacy and the motive to be successful that characterise individual with high achievement motivation probably result in workers with high achievement motivation perceived themselves as more competent. Thus high need for achievement seems to be an important factor in perceived sense of competence. Self-esteem also contributes significantly to perceived sense of competence. A possible explanation for this finding is the attribution of positive evaluations to self and from significant others that are associated with individuals with high self-esteem that is responsible for perceiving

themselves as more competent. Age also contribute significantly to perceived sense of competence. This means that the younger may still be deciding what they want to do for a career. Deciding on a choice of work in life or for a given period of time may prevent perceived sense of competence. In contrast, years of working experience did not contribute significantly to perceived sense of competence. This finding is congruent with the work of Campbell and Williams (1990), Corston and Colman (1996), Rozell and Gardner (2000) who reported the influence of cognitive, social, motivational and affective factors on perceived competence, including age, working experience, gender, confidence and attitudes. In addition, perceived competence is influenced by the factors to which people attribute their success and failures, how they evaluate themselves and how they believe others view them and by individuals past experiences in a particular domain (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003).

Unlike the majority of earlier work (e.g., Campbell & Williams, 1990; Corston & Colman, 1996; Rozell & Gardner, 2000) that explores gender differences in perceived sense of competence, the current finding did not show significant gender differences in perceived sense of competence. This finding is constituent with those of Snyder and Bruning (1979) which reported contrary to the speculations of many previous writers, occupancy of a supervisory position, not sex, was demonstrated to be a predictor of an individual's work-related sense of competence. This finding may be due to low motivation and lack of incentives that have affected the staff negatively.

Regarding the influence of level of education on perceived sense of competence, workers with secondary school leaving certificate, diploma or national certificate in education, first degrees or its equivalent, and postgraduate qualifications are similar in their perceived sense of competence. The finding is not consistent with evidence suggesting that high educated employees are better able to “broaden-and-build” themselves to achieve more job competency. It is plausible that working in the same environment can make all employees irrespective of their level of education perceived themselves as more competent, and thus apply their potential in carrying out the job, actively try to solve problems and take advantage of opportunities, and persevere when facing obstacles.

In conclusion, the findings clearly demonstrate the importance of a combination of need for achievement, self-esteem, age, and years of working experience as significant predictors of perceived sense of competence. As the

results indicate, need for achievement is strongly associated with perceived sense of competence. This means that when employees possess high achievement motivation, they are perceived as having high sense of competence. Another important finding is that self-esteem has a significant positive association with sense of competence, this shows that self-esteem can have a strong influence on this concept. Overall, the present empirical study provides useful insights regarding the sense of competence literature by illuminating a range of psycho-demographic variables that can create competent human resources in the health care sector.

Implications of findings

The findings from this study have great implications for programmes for improving workers' perceived sense of competence. The findings of the study reveal that achievement motivation, self-esteem, and age of workers significantly correlated with perceived sense of competence. Older workers had a higher level of perceived sense of competence than the younger workers. The significant independent influence of achievement motivation and self-esteem on perceived sense of competence indicates that lack of these variables may also reduce perceived sense of competence. This means that one of them cannot exist without the other. The implication is that there is a need for organisational/industrial or counselling psychologists to design staff development programmes to foster achievement motivation, self-esteem, and sense of competence among workers. Such programmes should also take into account the age of the workers. For example, younger workers may need information about sense of competence from older workers who may be mentoring the younger workers to increase their sense of competence. Above all, organisational management should provide necessary facilities, conducive organisational climate, and take actions that cater for the welfare of the workers to improve their perceived sense of competence. In conclusion, findings from this study have shown that achievement motivation and self-esteem could be relied upon by organisational management in order to improve the perceived sense of competence of the workers.

Conclusions and recommendations

If management of service organisation such as a hospital and other related organisations want to increase the perceived sense of competence of their employees, this study offers several suggestions. First, managers should ensure that employees perceive themselves as having high achievement motivation and self-esteem and should make these components of regular

communication programmes. To this end sources of high achievement motivation and self-esteem (such as signals from significant others, successful work experiences and systems that indicate employees are trusted) may be used by the organizations to manage low perception of sense of competence. Managers should make sure that employees with low achievement motivation and self-esteem receive other messages suggesting they are a valuable part of the organization, but perhaps not as valuable as other employees with high perception of sense of competence.

Secondly, organizations might consider implementing competency- or skill-based pay systems where employees receive enhanced pay levels as they acquire new skills (e.g. programming) and/or competencies (leadership) that are job-related and potentially improve their job performance. This pay level increase is to reflect employee value to the organization. In other words, as employees increase their value to the organization, their pay level should increase. Skill-based pay reinforces this relationship.

Thirdly, managers should send signals (direct and indirect, verbal and non-verbal) that employees are valuable assets to the organization and that their contributions make a difference to the organization. Higher perceived sense of competence should enhance performance.

In addition, the relationship between age and perceived sense of competence suggests that to increase the perceived sense of competence of younger employees, enhancing supportive networks within the organisation is crucial to give a stronger sense of competence to young workers. Lastly, the study findings also suggest that organisation that motivates high need for achievement and promote high self esteem can promote and enhance a high sense of perceived competence among their workers. To motivate high need for achievement and promote high self esteem, organisation managers could invite workers to participate in the decision-making process in establishing annual goals and strategic information. Organisation also needs to implement effective and efficient communication channels to ensure that workers have access to strategic information.

Like all studies, the present study, however, has some limitations. The data were obtained from one hospital. Therefore, its findings may not be generalisable to other industries. Another issue concerns the cross – sectional analysis of the data which cannot directly assess causality. Future research should address the generalisability of our results and adopt a longitudinal

design. Furthermore, it can include other psychological factors that may influence perceived sense of competence such as opportunity for training and development, recognition and skill variety. Also, data on the dependent and independent variables were collected simultaneously from the same source. This makes the study vulnerable to common method variance. Thus, future studies could collect data from dependent and independent variables in separate moments. This would reduce the respondents' tendency to search for similarities in the questions and to maintain consistency in the answers. Another way to minimize the risks of common method biases could be to use a multiple source method, with employees reporting their achievement motivation and self-esteem, and supervisors describing their perceptions of sense of competence. Objective measures of job related competence may also be considered when possible. Finally, replication of the present results both within Nigeria and other countries also needs further research.

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Table 1: Linear Correlation showing the Relationship among the Variables of Study (n=170)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Mean | S.D |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|---|-------|-------|
| 1.Perceived sense of competence | - | | | | | 41.09 | 10.25 |
| | .52** | - | | | | 41.85 | 8.43 |
| 2. Achievement motivation | .65** | .33** | | | | 44.28 | 9.82 |
| 3. Self-esteem | .17* | .18* | .15 | - | | 32.39 | 7.13 |
| 4. Age | -.11 | -.03 | .00 | .37** | - | 3.42 | 2.80 |
| 5. Years of working experience | | | | | | | |

* Correlation significant at 0.05, ** Correlation significant at 0.01

Table 2: Summary of Simple Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Achievement Motivation, Self-esteem, Age, and Years of Working Experience as Predictors of Perceived Sense of Competence

| Variables | R ² | F | P | β | t | P |
|------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|
| Achievement motivation | .55 | 51.10 | <.001 | .37 | 6.55 | <.001 |
| Self-esteem | | | | .59 | 9.90 | <.001 |
| Age | | | | .16 | 2.80 | <.01 |
| Years of Experience | | | | -.04 | -.69 | >.05 |

Table 3: T-test Analysis Showing the Influence of Sex on Perceived Sense of Competence

| Sex | N | Mean | S.D | Df | t | P |
|--------|----|-------|------|-----|------|------|
| Male | 85 | 42.61 | 8.17 | 168 | 1.19 | >.05 |
| Female | 85 | 41.08 | 8.65 | | | |

Table 4: T-test Analysis Showing the Influence of Marital Status on Perceived Sense of Competence

| Marital Status | N | Mean | S.D | Df | t | P |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|------|
| Married | 119 | 42.45 | 8.43 | 168 | -1.44 | >.05 |
| Single | 51 | 40.43 | 8.32 | | | |

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA Showing the Influence of Educational Level on Perceived Sense of Competence

| Source | SS | Df | MS | F | P |
|---------|-----------|-----|--------|-----|------|
| Within | 55.777 | 3 | 18.592 | .26 | >.05 |
| Between | 11940.237 | 166 | 71.929 | | |
| Total | 11996.024 | 169 | | | |