



## Job Characteristics and Employee Performance of Manufacturing Companies in Enugu State

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### Abstract

*The study examined job characteristics and employee performance of manufacturing companies in Enugu State. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine the relationship between task variety and, employee engagement, Examine the effect of task identity on employee satisfaction, and ascertain the relationship between task significance and employee turnover. The study was conducted with a set of hypotheses that related directly to the research objectives and questions. The study adopted a survey research design where the data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured in line with the variables as stated as hypotheses. The Likert-type scale was adopted. A sample size of 299 was drawn from a population of 1181 employees of the seven selected manufacturing firms. The sample size for the study was determined using the Yamane formula. The data were analyzed with the aid of a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 28). Data were presented and analyzed using frequency distribution, percentages, chi-square, and Regression Analysis statistical methods. The findings of the study revealed that Task variety has a significant relationship with employee engagement with a chi-square value of ( $\chi^2=21.18$ ;  $p=0.001$ ); Task identity has a significant positive effect on employee satisfaction with a Regression analysis value of ( $p<0.017$ ). We concluded that job characteristics had a significant positive relationship with the employee performance of manufacturing firms in Enugu state. Based on the findings, we recommended that manufacturing firms in Southeast and the entire of Nigeria should endeavor to hold strongly on the organizational job characteristics since they had a significant positive relationship with employee performance.*

**Keywords:** Job Characteristics; Employee Performance; Manufacturing Companies; Task Identity; Task Variety

## Introduction

Job performance, in general, is a critical factor for business success. In a rapidly changing competitive manufacturing sector, there is a need to study the factors that contribute to increasing the levels of job performance (Hussein, 2020), since identifying these factors could lead to improvements in the work environment. One of the ways to enhance employee performance is by incorporating job characteristics that contribute to employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment of the employees (Ngari, Kilika, and Muathe, 2018). In today's turbulent business environment characterized by working practices, rapid technological advances, workforce age diversity, and globalization, job design enormously impacts national success and employee well-being (Matilu and K'Obonyo, 2018). Job characteristics being one of the job design approaches have become a critical study area for employees' performance (Kaya and Demirer, 2021).

Job characteristics determine the suitability of a person with a particular field of work (Sugianto, Hermanto, Muhyi & Purnomo, 2018). Job traits are objective characteristics of jobs, particularly the degree to which jobs are designed so that they enhance the internal work motivation and the job satisfaction and productivity of job incumbents (Azash *et al.*, 2012). Productivity in organizations relies on deploying Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies that successfully attract, develop, and retain highly engaged and committed employees (Al-Ahmadi, 2009). The deployment of highly engaged and productive personnel is expected to drive an excellent operations system to be a firm basis for performance. According to Armstrong (2012), the engagement of staff is a matter that requires the design of jobs based on their characteristics or traits in a way that will arouse staff motivation.

The best traits or characteristics of a job are specifically skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. The enriched and motivating job traits or characteristics allow employees to have the opportunity to use different skills and talents to perform tasks, associate or identify themselves closely with the task completed, feel empowered in performing the job through autonomy obtained from the job, and get adequate feedback from the job done. In essence, job traits or characteristics are associated with a higher level of job satisfaction, motivation, and other positive attitudinal outcomes. This state determines the incumbents' way of behaving which is reflected in their behavioral outcomes, including job performance and productivity (Johari *et al.*, 2015).

The Job characteristics construct although very important seems to be receiving lesser attention in scholarly and practical spheres in a developing African country like Nigeria. In the Nigerian context, job characteristics research is yet underdeveloped, which highlights the urgent need for instruments to support ongoing research for both theory development and practical implementation. Against this background, the study, therefore, examined the relationship between job characteristics and employee performance.

## Statement of Problem

Lack of autonomy can lead to employee dissatisfaction and reduced creativity. When employees are not given the freedom to make decisions or take ownership of their work, they may feel micromanaged and demotivated. This can stifle innovation and hinder problem-solving, as employees may be hesitant to propose new ideas or improvements. The absence of feedback can be detrimental to employees' development and the overall improvement of processes. Without regular feedback, employees may not know how well they are performing, where they can improve, or what aspects of their work are valued. As a result, they may struggle to grow professionally, and the firm may miss opportunities for optimizing its operations. The consequences of lacking skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback can lead to decreased employee satisfaction, higher turnover rates, reduced productivity, and limited innovation. It can also negatively impact the firm's ability to compete effectively in the industry and meet customer demands. To thrive and remain competitive, manufacturing firms should focus on creating a work environment that promotes skill development, provides clear and meaningful tasks, encourages autonomy and innovation, and offers regular feedback to employees.

## Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine job characteristics and employee performance of manufacturing companies in Enugu State. The specific objectives of the study were to

- i. Determine the relationship between task variety and employee engagement of manufacturing companies in Enugu state and
- ii. Examine the effect of task identity on the employee satisfaction of manufacturing companies in Enugu state.

## Hypotheses of the Study

The following five null hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- i. Task variety has no significant relationship with employee engagement of manufacturing companies in Enugu state.
- ii. Task identity does not significantly affect employee satisfaction of Enugu state manufacturing companies.

## Review of Related Literature

### Conceptual Review

#### Job

A job refers to the specific tasks and duties to be performed for a particular position. For example, a clerical assistant may have the specific tasks of drafting correspondence, drafting monthly reports, and filing reports and documents. Another clerical assistant, with the same position, may have different tasks, such as arranging the printing of reports, preparing distribution lists, and arranging for the distribution of documents.

Job Analysis refers to a detailed and systematic process of breaking down work performed into several separate tasks and duties. It is a detailed process in that it considers all tasks to be performed, sometimes dividing them between main tasks and secondary tasks. It is a systematic process in that it follows a step-by-step approach to collect, record, analyze, and interpret the information collected. Job evaluation is a process to assess the relative worth of jobs, usually to determine pay levels. It is a process of ranking jobs in order of importance and worth, without regard to the personalities performing the work. Job analysis is one of the tools used in job evaluation. Job analysis is done first and can then be used to assist in the ranking of jobs and assessing their relative worth (Robert Heron 2005).

#### Job Characteristics

Robbins and Judge (2015) saw job Characteristics as an effort to identify the characteristic tasks, how they are combined to form different jobs, and their relationship to motivation, job satisfaction, and performance. Job characteristics help to facilitate employees in the work field that have a good impact on the company. When employees can fully understand job characteristics, they learn an easier way to get things done and maximize their skills. According to Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham who have developed by John et al (2010), Job Characteristics also known as Job Traits refer to the behavioral approach and concept that increases the importance of jobs by designing the job that emphasizes its suitability and appropriateness that is measurable (Apisit, 2013). It is also a set of environmental variables that are widely thought to be important causes of employee job affection and behavior (Hackman and Oldham, 1976 cited in Matilu & K'Obonyo, 2018). They are aspects specific to a job, such as knowledge and skills, mental and physical demands, and working conditions that can be recognized, defined, and assessed which are important causes of employee health. Job traits or Job Characteristics focus on the relationship between work and the individual and deal with certain aspects of a job that can be altered to create higher job satisfaction (Miller, 1977 cited in Duke, 1987).

Job traits or Job characteristics are also known as one of the job design approaches (Matilu & K'Obonyo, 2018). Job design refers to the way tasks are combined to form complete jobs and the process of job design has evolved over

a long period. For the first time, the operational measures of the job characteristics were given by Turner & Lawrence (1965) cited in Abdul (2017). Job design is a tool used by management to form the motivation of employees, which would lead to better job performance. Being happy with work and receiving acceptably good rewards from work can influence the working quality level that employees may contribute to the organization. When employees are highly motivated to give back to the organization and work effectively, the organization's level of effectiveness will also increase (Apsit, 2013). According to Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, there are five core job characteristics namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback which influence the three psychological states, which, in turn, influence work outcomes including job satisfaction. The core components of job characteristics are as follows:

### **Skill/Task Variety**

Skill variety has been defined as the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, involving the use of several different skills and talents (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; 1980 cited in Kiyani *et al.*, 2018). How many different skills and talents are the job requirements of a person? Are they asked to do a lot of different things, or is it a monotonous, repetitive job? Whenever employees are allowed to make the best use of their talents and skills, they consider the job as a way of gratifying their aspirations and goals (Bremner & Carriere, 2011; Agarwal & Gupta, 2018). Skill variety was also defined as the set of skills and talents a job incumbent uses to perform his or her job (Jex, 2002; Johari *et al.*, 2011). The Chief Executive's job is the best example of using a variety of skills such as quantitative skills, interpersonal skills, and analytical skills, preparing budgets, resolving conflicts, and developing long-term strategies (Jex, 2002).

### **Task Identity**

Task identity is the degree to which the job requires the completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. Is there a clearly defined beginning, middle, and end to a given task? Does a worker know what he or she is supposed to do, and when he or she has completed the task? Identification with one's job ultimately determines the strength of motivation in the context of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance in a given job (Foss *et al.*, 2009; Bremner and Carriere, 2011). Moreover, when employees work on a small part of a whole job, they may not fully see their effort reflected in the finished product. Consequently, they cannot assume responsibility and feel a sense of completion of the whole product (Lunenborg, 2011). Researchers pointed out the positive reactions of employees towards task identity which also contributes to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance (Castelloano, 2014). Within the occupation of nursing, it is established that employee performance, job satisfaction, and internal motivation emerge stronger in task identity (Gabr and Mohamad, 2012 cited in Kiyani *et al.*, 2018).

### **Employee Performance**

When an employee understands the characteristics of the job, then the employee will make every effort to accomplish the tasks very well. The existence of human beings as human resources is very important in the organization because human resources support the organization through talent, creativity, encouragement, and the role that can be seen in every organization (Masharyono, and Senen, 2015). Job characteristics greatly determine the actions of employees. According to John *et al* (2010), job characteristics, psychological critical conditions, and individual work results are the basis of job design for employees related to job satisfaction issues, employee motivation, and employee performance. Employees' job performance is primarily defined in terms of how well an employee completes his/her assigned duties (Delima, 2019). Employee performance or productivity is the extent to which employees can perform an assignment or make it beyond the level of expectation including productivity, creativity, and other aspects (Steers, 1991 cited in Apsit, 2013).

- a. **Employee engagement:** The extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment (Vance, 2006). The Gallup Organization (2006) simply states that it 'is the involvement with, and enthusiasm for work and also elaborated their understanding by referring to 'engaged employees' as those who 'work with a passion and feel a profound connection to their company and drive innovation and move the organization forward'. In the UK, the CIPD (2007) refers to it as 'passion for work' and the willingness to go the extra mile. Academic

researchers have defined employee engagement as ‘the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances’ (Kahn 1990). Others have noted the centrality of ‘vigor’ in the idea of engagement – that is, feelings of strength and emotional energy in the workplace (Shirom 2003). Shaw (2005) defined engagement as ‘translating employee potential into employee performance and business successes. This means changing the way employees perform ‘by utilizing the tools in the armory of internal communication professionals. International Survey Research (ISR) defines employee engagement as a process by which an organization increases the commitment and continuation of its employees to the achievement of superior results. The ISR separates commitment into three parts: cognitive commitment, affective commitment, and behavioral commitment.

- b. **Employee Satisfaction:** Nancy (1997) Satisfaction refers to the level of fulfillment of one's needs, wants, and desires. Satisfaction depends basically upon what an individual wants from the world, and what he gets. Employee satisfaction is a measure of how happy workers are with their job and working environment. It is sure that there may be many factors affecting the organizational effectiveness and one of them is employee satisfaction. Effective organizations should have a culture that encourages employee satisfaction. Bhatti & Qureshi, (2007) Employees are more loyal and productive when they are satisfied. Hunter & Tietjen, (1997) that satisfied employees affect customer satisfaction and organizational productivity, Miller, (2006). Having good relationships with colleagues, high salaries, good working conditions, training and education opportunities, career developments or any other benefits may be related to the increase in employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is the terminology used to describe whether employees are happy, contented, and fulfilling their desires and needs at work. Many measures support that employee satisfaction is a factor in employee motivation, employee goal achievement, and positive employee morale in the workplace. Moyes, Shao & Newsome (2008) that employee satisfaction may be described as how pleased an employee is with his or her position of employment. Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as all the feelings that a given individual has about his/her job and its various aspects. Employee satisfaction is a comprehensive term that comprises the job satisfaction of employees and their satisfaction overall with the company’s policies, company environment, etc.

## Theoretical Review

For better understanding, this section will review two models critically to analyze the various job traits/characteristics.

### Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics Model

The Job Characteristics model was the anchor model in this study as it explains all the five job traits/characteristics as used in the study and their effect on employee productivity. An important viewpoint on factors affecting jobs and motivation is provided by Hackman and Oldham (1974) in the job characteristics model. Hackman and Oldham’s framework distinguished five key components of a job that are useful in making jobs more satisfying for employees. The crucial elements of employment that play critical roles in designing jobs within organizations are specifically: task/skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. The job characteristics model was originally developed by Turner and Lawrence and has been revised by Hackman and Lawler. The final version of the job characteristics model as used in many theoretical reviews have been done by Hackman and Oldham, 1976.

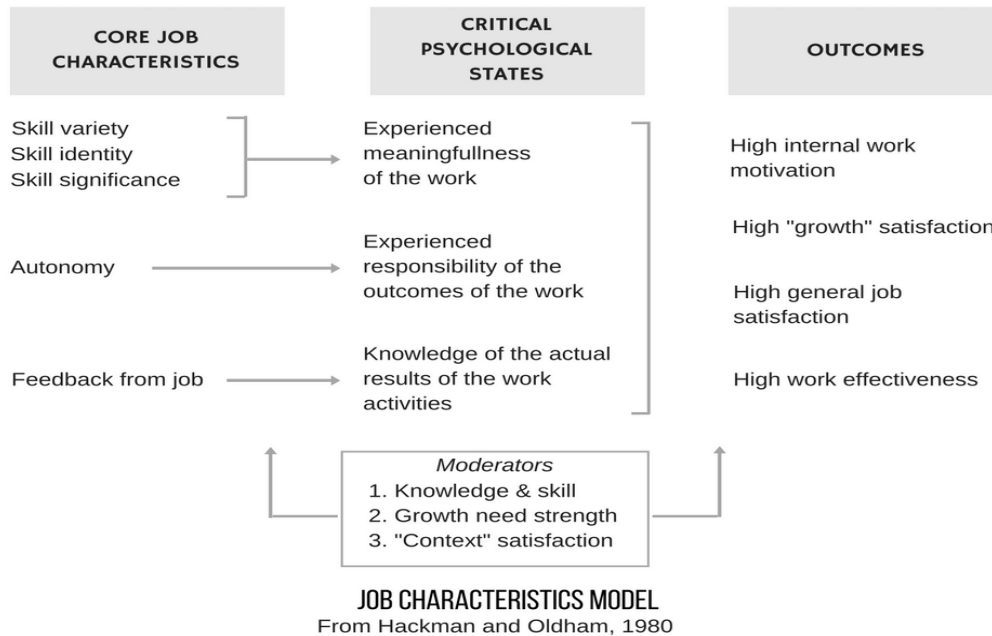


Figure 1: The Complete Job Traits/Characteristics Model  
Source: Hackman and Oldham (1980)

### Job Demand Control and Support Model

The job demand control and support model (JDCS) was developed by Karasek and his colleagues during the 1980s (Kristensen, 1995; Landsbergis, 1988) and resolved many of the difficulties associated with job stress research at the time (Karasek, 2002). At first, Karasek's model consisted of only two components, namely demand and control (also known as the job demand and control model, JDC model), in a later stage they added the dimension of social support (also known as the job demand control and support model, JDCS model). In the JDC model, demands are defined as psychological stressors present in the work situation, and control is defined as the opportunities for the employee to use and develop his or her skills and authority over decisions. These definitions show that the JDC model has been originally developed from a psychological perspective as well. According to the JDC model, two basic dimensions job demands and decision latitude (control) make it possible to distinguish between four main types of jobs: High strain jobs with high demands and low decision latitude, like assemblers. Low-strain jobs with low demands and high decision latitude, like repairmen. Active jobs with high demands and high decision latitude, like managers. Passive jobs with low demands and low decision latitude, like janitors (Karasek et al., 1998; Kristensen, 1995; Pelfrene et al., 2002 all cited in Matilu & K'Obonyo, 2018).

The job demand control and support model combines both dimensions to distinguish between jobs increasing in strain and jobs increasing in activity level. When job demands go up and decision latitude goes down, the strain an employee experiences increases. One might assume that demands and latitude are highly correlated, that is authority proportionally grows with responsibility. This is one dimension on which the job demand and control model is a better tool for investigating the relationship between job characteristics and health than the Hackman and Oldham model (1976). Besides the JDC model explicitly distinguishes control as a separate feature influencing work-related outcomes and employee performance. As Becherer (2009) pointed out; job stress researchers have generally ignored the decision-making or response selection process of employees leading to confusion in the literature. For example, (Ritti, 2005 cited in Matilu & K'Obonyo, 2018) found higher intellectual demands associated with greater satisfaction among engineers. In this case, intellectual demands were not simply stressors but included the ability to use a variety of skills and perform less routine and monotonous work.

## Empirical Review

Ahmad and Mohd (2017) studied the impact of task characteristics on the performance of nursing teams. The study involved a total of 300 nursing teams (1436 individual nurses) from seven state hospitals in Peninsular Malaysia. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires which were initially distributed to 320 teams. One set was given to the team members and another set was given to the team leaders. Of the 320 sets sent out, 300 sets were returned. Responses were then combined and aggregated at the team level to get the team's final score. Analyses of the hypotheses were done using Partial Least Squares (PLS) through assessment of the measurement and structural model. Results from the path analysis revealed that of the three dimensions of team task attributes, only task significance was positively and significantly related to team task performance ( $\beta = 0.076, P > 0.05$ ), while task identity ( $\beta = 0.076, P > 0.05$ ) and task interdependence ( $\beta = -0.037, P > 0.05$ ) were found unrelated to team task performance.

Swaroop and Dixit (2018) carried out a study on employee engagement, work autonomy, and innovative work behavior using an empirical study. 330 hard copies of questionnaires were distributed. The surveys were returned directly to the researchers, ensuring the confidentiality of the participants. However, only 282 responses were received. Out of the 282 responses, 15 were found to be incomplete and were not included in the final data set. Thus, the final sample size was 267 giving a response rate of 81%. Data was analysed through SPSS software version 21. The primary statistics used were correlational analysis and hierarchical regression analysis. The results indicate that employee engagement and work autonomy are both positively related to innovative work behaviour. It was also found that employee engagement does not moderate the positive relationship of work autonomy with innovative work behaviour.

Rochaeni, Luddin, & Ramly (2019) studied the Impact of Task Variety, Career Promotion, And Reward to Agricultural Extension Worker's Performance. The research conducted through survey using interview and fill up questionnaire. Using the design of structural equation model of factors that influence the performance of agricultural extension worker, the data was analysed using model Structural Equation Models (SEM) with software Smart PLS 3.2.7 ver. Results of the research was: (1) there were a direct impact of task variety to performance, and indirect impact through career promotion and reward; (2) there were a direct impact of career promotion to performance, and indirect impact through task variety and reward; (3) there were a direct impact of reward to performance, and indirect impact through task variety and career promotion.

Rowena, Victoria and Florianna (2020) studied the Relationship between Task Characteristics and Employee Engagement. A quantitative method using survey questionnaire was conducted for this study. The population was the employees in one healthcare service located in Sabah. There were 298 employees, including those in the clinical (i.e. emergency unit, pharmacy unit, pathology unit) and non-clinical sections (i.e. medical record unit, administration unit). A formula derived by Luck, Taylor, and Robin (1987) was used to calculate the minimum sample size, which were 54 respondents. Since there were time constraints on the part of the participants, a convenience sampling approach was used to carry out the study. A total of 78 questionnaires were collected and analyzed. The results revealed a significant and positive relationship between task characteristics (variety of skills, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback) and employee engagement in the studied organization.

## Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design. The data for the study were of two kinds; primary and secondary data. Primary data was gotten from the respondents by the use of structural questionnaire, while secondary data were information obtained from textbooks, periodicals, publication, newspaper, published/unpublished works and internet sites which relates to the subject of the study.

The study was conducted in Enugu state metropolis with reference to manufacturing companies within the state. The population of the study is 1181 employees of seven selected manufacturing firms. A sample size of 299 was drawn. Simple random sampling was employed in selecting the sample size (Frankfirt-Nachmias, 2009).

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS Version 28) was used to aid data analysis. The result of the study was presented in frequencies, and simple percentages. The hypotheses formulated were tested using Chi-Square and Regression Analysis.

## Result

The descriptive statistics were calculated from the collected responses to determine the means and standard deviations for the various variables in this study. Levin and Rubin, however, point out that the use of descriptive analysis aids in the presentation and comprehension of the collected data.

### Descriptive Analysis of Employee Engagement

The mean score and standard deviations for the task performance variable scale are displayed in table 1 below. The result from the table shows that the highest mean score, thus the measure of central tendency was 4.38 on a scale of 5, had the lowest standard deviation of 0.578 and represented "Being able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort". The value of the standard deviation of this variable which is low is an indication that the data point is close to the mean. My plan is optimal, had the lowest mean of the employee engagement variable and was 2.49 with a standard deviation of 0.931. With reference to the table below, the small range standard deviation thus from 0.578 to 1.479 of all the different dimensions of the task performance variables is an indication that, there was not much variation in the responses received in relation to the survey questionnaire. However, these findings were crucial for this study because they expedited the right test for additional investigation.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

S/N	Measurement Item	N	Mean	Std dev
1	I managed to plan my work so that it was on done on time.	257	4.38	0.834
2	My planning is optimal.	257	2.49	0.931
3	I was able to separate main issues from aside issues at work.	257	3.26	0.619
4	I was able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort	257	4.38	0.578
5	Collaboration with others was others was very productive	257	3.75	1.479

### Descriptive Analysis of Task Variety

Referring to the table 2 below, the highest mean score for the operational performance dimensions was 3.82 at a range of 5 with a standard deviation of 1.04, indicating that intrinsic motivation has an effect on employees' ability to meet their goals and their dependability within the company. The lowest mean score of 2.74, represented "The Job involves doing a number of different things" had a standard deviation of 1.258. The lowest standard deviation was 0.947 and the highest was 1.593 representing the dimensions, "The Job requires a wide variety of task" and "The job requires a wide range of task" respectively. However, all of the dimensions under the task variety variable had standard deviation ranges between 0.947 and 1.593, indicating that the responses obtained were not randomly distributed. These results were important because they helped choose the right test for more investigation.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

S/N	Measurement Item	N	Mean	Std Dev
1	The Job involves a wide variety of tasks	257	4.04	0.947
2	The Job involves doing a number of different things.	257	2.74	1.258
3	The Job require a wide range of task	257	3.88	1.593
4	The Job involves performing a variety of tasks	257	3.27	1.071

### Descriptive Analysis of Task Identity

The mean score and standard deviations for the task identity variable scale are displayed in table 3 below. The result from the table shows that the highest mean score, thus the measure of central tendency was 3.25 on a scale of 5, had the highest standard deviation of 1.201 and represented "The Job involves completing activities with a clear beginning and end". The value of the standard deviation of this variable which is moderate is a suggestion that the data point is close to the mean. "The Job is arranged so that I can perform an entire task from the beginning to the



end”, had the lowest mean of the task identity variable and was 2.86 with a standard deviation of 1.172. With reference to the table below, the small range standard deviation thus from 1.005 to 1.201 of all the different dimensions of the task identity variables is an indication that, there was not much variation in the responses received in relation to the survey questionnaire. However, these findings were crucial for this study because they expedited the right test for additional investigation.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

S/N	Measurement Item	N	Mean	Std Dev
1	The Job involves completing activities with a clear beginning and end.	257	3.25	1.201
2	The Job allows me to finish task I begin.	257	3.11	1.005
3	The Job is arranged so that I can perform an entire task from beginning to end.	257	2.86	1.172

### Descriptive Analysis of Employee Satisfaction

The mean score and standard deviations for employee satisfaction variable scale are displayed in table 4 below. The result from the table shows that the highest mean score, thus the measure of central tendency was 4.89 on a scale of 5, had the highest standard deviation of 1.321 and represented “My organization uses electronic medical records to access employee health information”. The value of the standard deviation of this variable which is a suggestion that the data point is close to the mean. With reference to the table below, the small range standard deviation thus from 0.526 to 1.321 of all the different dimensions of employee satisfaction instrument is an indication that, there was not much variation in the responses received in relation to the survey questionnaire. These findings were crucial for this study because they expedited the right test for additional investigation.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics**

S/N	Measurement Item	N	Mean	Std Dev
1	My organization usually address employee needs through our online contact details.	257	3.39	0.612
2	My organization’s physical environment is accessible to employee with disabilities	257	3.45	0.526
3	My organization uses electronic medical records to access employee health information.	257	4.89	1.321

### Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypothesis one

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between task variety and employee engagement of manufacturing companies in Enugu state.

**Table 5: Relationship between Task Variety and Employee Engagement**

Item	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std.Dev	X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.	df
A1	167	36	12	21	19	3.912	0.210	21.18	0.001	3
A2	124	105	09	09	10					
A3	95	129	13	08	12					
A4	129	121	00	07	00					

Source: Field survey 2023

#### Interpretation and Decision

The result of Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) test on the relationship between task variety and employee engagement is presented in table 4.6.1a. The mean score of this proposition is 3.912, with a standard deviation of 0.210. This means that respondents strongly agree that there is a relationship between task variety and employee engagement of manufacturing firms in Enugu state. The  $\chi^2$  (21.18, p = 0.001) is significant at 5% level which suggests that the null

hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) should not be accepted. In other words, Task variety has a significantly positive relationship with employee engagement.

**Hypothesis Two**

H<sub>1</sub>: Task identity has no significant effect on employee satisfaction of manufacturing companies in Enugu state.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.177 <sup>a</sup>	.031	.025	5.15251

a. Predictors: (Constant), Task identity

Table 7: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	129.014	1	129.014	8.294	.013 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3982.249	256	15.555		
	Total	4111.263	257			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee satisfaction  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Task Identity

Table 8: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.968	2.415		7.855	.000
	Task Identity	.228	.104	.177	2.204	.017

a. Dependent Variable: Employee satisfaction

The result of the regression analysis is summarized above, table 8 specifically shows that the model for the task identity and Employee satisfaction is

$$EMS = 18.968 + 0.228(TI) + \mu_i$$

This reveals that task identity have a significant effect on the employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the p-value =0.017 which indicates a statistically significant effect at 5% level of significance.

**Decision Rule**

Reject H<sub>0</sub> if the P-value <0.05; otherwise accept.

Therefore, based on the decision we must reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and conclude that at 5% level of significant task identity have a significant effect on employee satisfaction of manufacturing companies in Enugu state

**Discussion**

This study generally examines the relationship between job characteristics and employee performance of manufacturing companies in Enugu state. This section addresses the findings of this study in alignment with previous research and potential drawbacks of the employed approach. The research question asked: “What is the relationship between task variety and employee engagement of manufacturing companies in Enugu state”, “To what extent does task identity affects employee satisfaction of manufacturing companies in Enugu state”, “What is the relationship between task significance and employee turnover of manufacturing companies in Enugu state”, “What is the effect of autonomy on employee retention of manufacturing companies in Enugu state”, and “To what extent does

feedback affect employee capacity of manufacturing companies in Enugu state". This implies that 5 hypotheses were tested in line with the research questions.

Firstly, we described the demographic information of the participants; the result of this study suggested that most of the participants are male having approximately 77% response rate. With reference to the age category of the respondents, employees aged within "56-29" and above had the lowest percentage (8.2%) followed by employees between "46-55" (14.0%) as the second least of employees age group. Employees aged "26-35" had the highest percentage (34.6%) of employees in the manufacturing companies leaving those with the ages from "36-45" (24.9%) as the second highest working force in the manufacturing companies. It is important to note that most employees representing 41.6% are degree holders whereas 22.6% of them are HND/Diploma holders. 19.1% of the respondents represented post graduate degree holders leaving 4.2% of the respondents as those who preferred not to reveal their educational level.

The work experience shows that 42.0% of employees have worked for manufacturing companies for more than 5 years. Employees who had worked with the manufacturing companies within the range of 2-3 years was represented by 19.1% leaving a percentage of 10.9% who have worked for less than 1 year with the manufacturing companies.

The results of the hypothesis 1 was tested using Chi-Square analysis, while the result of hypothesis 2 was tested using Regression analysis considering the probability value as a means of deciding when significant if  $[p < 0.05]$  or not if  $[p > 0.05]$  respectively. Below is the result of each hypothesis as it concerns the study.

**Hypothesis One:** The result of the Chi-Square analysis test with respect to hypothesis one in table 5 shows that at 5% level of significance, task variety has a significant positive relationship with employee engagement with a probability value ( $p = 0.001$ ). This result agrees with the study of Nicholas and Jules, (2011), who study was on the Effects of Skill Variety, Task Significance, Task Identity and Autonomy on Occupational Burnout in A Hospital Setting and the Mediating Effect of Work Meaningfulness. Task variety is significant in the expected direction. The result also agreed with the study of Sara, Donald & Franco (2013) on differential effects of task variety and skill variety on burnout and turnover intentions for older and younger workers. The study revealed that increased task variety led to less work-related burnout and turnover intentions for younger workers compared to older workers.

**Hypothesis Two:** The result of the Regression analysis test with respect to hypothesis two in table 8 shows that at 5% level of significance, task identity has a significant positive effect on employee satisfaction. The Coefficient of task identity value in this case is represented as = 0.228, and probability value ( $p = 0.017$ ). This result agrees with the study of Nicholas and Jules (2011), who studied on the Effects of Skill Variety, Task Significance, Task Identity and Autonomy on Occupational Burnout in A Hospital Setting and the Mediating Effect of Work Meaningfulness. Task identity remained significant in the expected direction. The result also agreed with the study of Ngari, James, and Stephen, (2018) in their work on job characteristics and employee performance in Private Equity Firms in Kenya. The study revealed that Task identity was also found to be significant at a P value of 0.006 while was found to be significant at 0.028.

## Conclusion

After conducting a thorough analysis of the relationship between job characteristics and employee performance in manufacturing companies in Enugu State, Nigeria, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between job characteristics and employee performance. The study found that job characteristics such as skill variety and task identity have a positive impact on employee performance. The study revealed that employees who have jobs that offer a high degree of skill variety and task identity tend to be more engaged and motivated in their work, leading to higher levels of performance.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings, we recommended that manufacturing firms in southeast and the entire Nigeria should endeavor to hold strongly on the organizational job characteristics since it has significant positive relationship with employee performance of manufacturing companies in Enugu State.

We also recommend the following;

- i. All manufacturing firms across the globe should endeavor to pay more attention task variety since it has significant positive relationship with employee task performance.
- ii. All manufacturing firms across the globe should endeavor to pay more attention task identity since it has significant positive relationship with employee task performance.

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