



Determinants of job dissatisfaction among employees in formal organizations in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the determinants of job dissatisfaction in formal organizations, with emphasis on Fredrick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene' theory, in a Nigerian work setting. Three of the factors outlined by Herzberg as capable of creating job dissatisfaction among employees were investigated; namely: monetary benefits, job security and staff supervision. The multistage sampling technique was utilized to select 120 individuals as samples from the United Cement Company (UNICEM), Mfamosing, Cross River State Nigeria. To collect data, a carefully designed four-point Likertscale questionnaire was adopted. Data analyzed revealed that both monetary benefits and job security had significant relationship with workers' job dissatisfaction. Specifically, subjects indicated that monetary benefits and job security function to remove dissatisfaction, while their absence will create dissatisfaction among them. Monetary benefits in particular showed the most significant relationship with job dissatisfaction. Staff supervision however showed no significant relationship with employees' job dissatisfaction, implying that its availability or unavailability will not significantly affect employees' dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction.

Keywords: Job Dissatisfaction; Employees; Formal Organizations; Monetary Benefits; Job Security; Administrative Supervision

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1. Introduction

For any organization, output levels will depend to a recognizable extent on the behavior of its human elements. Human behavior on the other hand is largely a function of the interaction between genetic characteristics and the external environment. For the human elements in organizations, i.e. employees, the behaviors they express are thus not just due to their individual biological characteristics, but also their external environment, especially that of their workplace.

One of the notable forms of behavior that has been observed among workers in formal organizations is that of changing and moving from one job to another. This phenomenon is undoubtedly not without a cause or causes. Many of these workers are confronted with irregular salaries, low incomes, unfavourable working conditions, little or no incentives, job insecurity etc. These issues often create ill-feelings among these employees, causing them to seek for jobs where they can have better working conditions. Even when they do not quit for better jobs, perhaps, because such better jobs are not within easy reach, these poor conditions cause feelings of dissatisfaction to set in, and the end result is usually ineffectiveness and poor work out-put.

The need to address this phenomenon led Herzberg (1974) to develop his 'TWO-FACTOR' or 'MOTIVATION-HYGIENE' theory, in which he postulated that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by what he described as motivation and hygiene factors respectively. According to Herzberg (1974), cited in Mullins (1998), for employees not to express dissatisfaction, certain factors or variables, called hygiene factors must not be absent in the organization. These include favourable company policy, salary, fringe benefits, supervision, job security, and other conditions relating to job context and environment. In other words, when these are absent, dissatisfaction sets in. The other sets of factors according to Herzberg, namely motivators or growth factors are those which make for motivation or satisfaction among employees. They include: achievement, recognition, nature of work, responsibility, opportunity for growth and other issues relating to job content. The implication of Herzberg's theory is that in a formal organization such as UNICEM, employees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction will depend on the availability of the conditions and incentives outlined above. Otherwise, lack of satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction should be expected.

In view of Herzberg's analysis, particularly as it relates to dissatisfaction, this study is articulated with a view to establish the factors that create dissatisfaction among employees in formal organizations in Nigeria. Specifically, the study examines the relationship between

- Monetary benefits
- Job security
- Administrative supervision, and
- job dissatisfaction among workers in formal organizations in a typical Nigerian setting.

2. Methodology

The population investigated in this study consisted of employees of the UNITED CEMENT COMPANY (UNICEM), Mfamosing, in Cross River State, Nigeria. The sampling method adopted was the multistage

sampling technique. To select the needed sample of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents, the study population was first stratified into management and non-management staff. Afterwards, a total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were randomly selected.

To obtain data regarding factors that determine job dissatisfaction from subjects, a carefully constructed questionnaire of 25 items was utilized. The first part of this two-section questionnaire dealt with the demographic characteristics of subjects, while the second part had items that made it possible for responses on the issue of job dissatisfaction among subjects to be generated. The questionnaire was constructed using the four-point Likert scale. Thus, subjects were expected to respond to one of these: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree.

3. Results

A scrutiny of the demographic variables as presented in Table 1 reveals some striking features about the study population. First, majority of the subjects (48.3%) are in their youthful ages while in terms of sex, the larger proportion (81.7%) are males. Also in the area of marital status, as much as 51% of the subjects indicated being married. These features are very relevant because they function to a large extent to determine what conditions will satisfy or dissatisfy employees and otherwise. As such, an organization may focus attention more on the area of need of the employee group that is in majority.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Employees

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age in Years		
18 – 30	58	48.3
31 – 42	30	25.0
43 – 54	23	19.2
55 and above	9	7.5
Sex		
Male	98	81.7
Female	22	18.3
Marital Status		
Single	40	33.3
Married	62	51.7
Divorced	8	6.7
Widowed	10	8.3
Educational Qualification		
FSLC	14	11.7
SSCE	23	19.2
Trade Test	31	25.8
OND	13	10.8
HND/B.Sc.	29	24.2
Others	10	8.3
Religion		
Christianity	96	80
Islam	19	15.8
Traditional Religion	5	4.2

In the case of religion, results indicate that as much as 80% of the respondents are Christians. This is expected, being that the organization under study is located in the Southern part of Nigeria, which has a predominantly Christian population.

To determine the relationship between: monetary benefits; job security; administrative supervision and job dissatisfaction, the chi-square analysis was adopted as follows:

Table 2. Chi-Square Analysis of Relationship between Monetary Benefits and Job Dissatisfaction

Responses	Percentage	Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
Strongly Agree	0	0	30	-30	900	30
Agree	13.33	16	30	-14	196	6.53
Disagree	65.0	78	30	48	2304	76.8
Strongly Disagree	21.67	26	30	-4	16	0.53
Total	100	120	120	-	3416	113.86

In Table 2, the chi-square analysis of the relationship between monetary benefits and job dissatisfaction shows that the calculated value of 113.86 is far greater than the table value which is 8.33. This suggests a significant relationship between monetary benefits and job dissatisfaction among employees. This means that the presence of monetary benefits will remove dissatisfaction among employees, while the absence of it will create dissatisfaction.

In the case of job security, the chi-square analysis of its relationship with job dissatisfaction in Table 3 reveals that the calculated value which stands at 80.13 is greater than the critical value of 8.33. A result of this nature is also indicative of a significant relationship between job security and job dissatisfaction among workers. This means that like monetary benefits, the existence of job security can make workers not to have feelings of dissatisfaction, while its absence will create dissatisfaction.

Table 3. Chi-Square Analysis of Relationship between Job Security and Job Dissatisfaction

Responses	Percentage	Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
Strongly Agree	5	6	30	-24	576	19.2
Agree	9.16	11	30	-19	361	12.0
Disagree	56.6	68	30	38	144	48.1
Strongly Disagree	29.2	35	30	5	25	0.83
Total	100	120	120	-	2406	80.13

Unlike monetary benefits and job security, administrative supervision was found to have no significant relationship with job dissatisfaction among subjects. Data in this regard is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Chi-Square Analysis of Relationship between Administrative Supervision and Job Dissatisfaction

Responses	Percentage	Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	(Fo-Fe) ² / Fe
Strongly Agree	20.8	25	30	-5	25	0.83
Agree	29.2	35	30	5	25	0.83
Disagree	31.7	38	30	8	64	2.13
Strongly Disagree	18.3	22	30	-8	64	2.13
Total	100	120	120	0	178	5.92

The analysis in Table 4 shows that the calculated chi-square value of 5.92 is less than the critical value of 8.33. This indicates the inexistence of a significant relationship between administrative supervision and job dissatisfaction. This in effect means that for the subjects under study, and probably workers in other formal organizations in Nigeria, administrative supervision does not really make a significant difference in workers expression of dissatisfaction or otherwise. No doubt, such supervision has the potential to tell positively on effectiveness among workers, and consequently on overall work output. However, the tendency for it to remove dissatisfaction or create it was found in this study to be very minimal.

4. Discussion

The three chi-square analyses presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4 suggest that the strongest factor to job dissatisfaction among the subjects of this investigation is monetary incentives. This result is not surprising considering the peculiar relevance of monetary benefits. With it, employees can actually take care of personal needs which if not met create dissatisfaction and even cause satisfaction levels to reduce. Vroom (1970) in his cognitive model of motivation, emphasized that money attracts significant importance and recognition because it possesses the potential of being an instrument for obtaining other desired outcomes. Furthermore, in his Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Maslow (1954), cited in Mullins (1998), outlined five levels of human needs. They include: Physiological Needs such as food and clothing; Safety Needs such as security and protection from pain; Social Needs such as friendship and sense of belonging; Esteem Needs such as desire for recognition and attention from others, and Self Actualization Need. A critical examination of these needs reveals that with monetary benefits, all or at least most of them can be adequately attended to. This implies that if workers in any organization have monetary incentives enough to handle these human needs as outlined by Maslow (1954), dissatisfaction will be minimal or even non-existent. As such, even where an organization does not make available incentives that directly address these needs, but provides adequate monetary incentives with which employees can take care of the needs by themselves, the same, if not a better

result of no or minimal dissatisfaction can still be achieved. Thus, in a study among teachers, Okon (1998) revealed that his subjects loved their jobs if salaries from such jobs could easily buy them cars, build their houses and pay their children's school fees. Moreover, in a society like Nigeria, much value is attached to an individual's financial status. With a good financial status coming from monetary incentives from one's job, beyond food and clothing, such needs like shelter, children's education and other such needs which the government makes little or no provision for, can be taken care of by individuals themselves. Also, with a good financial standing, people in Nigeria can meet their ego needs by purchasing titles and honours for themselves. Furthermore, in a society like Nigeria, where social security services are almost non-existent, with adequate monetary benefits, individuals can go ahead and make investments on which they can fall back, should they experience job loss. The relevance of monetary benefits in the Nigerian environment cannot be overemphasized. Thus, according to Okon (1998), people tend to settle for job with the highest monetary satisfaction. Unfortunately, the need to get a good hold of monetary incentives via their jobs has driven individuals to utilize unlawful means in pursuit of these monetary benefits. The results have been the incessant cases of financial fraud, embezzlement and money laundering, which have come to characterize not only public office holders but also their counterparts in the private sector in Nigeria.

In the case of job security, its strong relationship with job dissatisfaction as revealed in the analysis presented in Table 3 is indicative of the degree of importance employees attach to it also. When workers do not feel secure in their jobs, even if their monetary incentives are such that they should not express dissatisfaction, the tendency will be for some elements of dissatisfaction to still be present in them. In Ubeku (1984), it is stressed that job security is the principal requirement for employee's functionality, and that workers would likely keep their jobs even with less pay if they are not declared redundant. The reason is not far-fetched. Lack of job security means that at any time they could lose their jobs and whatever monetary benefits attached. Thus, according to Henderson (1979), workers want to have the assurance that their job and income they derive from working will continue until they retire. Moreover, in Nigeria, social security services like those for the unemployed and the aged are yet to receive serious attention. For most people, the social security they have is their jobs. These jobs, according to Strauss and Sayless (1987), protect employees from complete financial blackout under conditions in which they have little or no control. However, if such jobs do not provide this needed security, there is every tendency for employees in such jobs to express dissatisfaction. A number of them easily leave if they find options with job security, even when the pay may not be so high. However, with jobs that have adequate security, feelings dissatisfaction emanating from job insecurity need not arise, hence the strong relationship found between job security and job dissatisfaction. Monetary benefits alone cannot therefore completely eliminate dissatisfaction. On the other hand, if there is job security, complete elimination of dissatisfaction will also not be guaranteed if there are no adequate monetary benefits. Therefore, on their own, monetary benefits and job security both have strong relevance to job dissatisfaction among workers in a formal organization, although monetary benefits appear to have stronger relevance.

On the issue of administrative supervision, results as earlier noted indicated no significant relationship with job dissatisfaction. That is to say, its presence or absence in an organization has no strong relevance with job dissatisfaction. Put in another way, the absence of supervision is not likely to create dissatisfaction

and its presence may not also remove dissatisfaction. The likely explanation is that supervision has no direct and strong link with employees' personal wellbeing per se. Whereas monetary benefits and job security both have direct link with workers personal life and wellbeing, this is not so with administrative supervision, which is rather linked with the job itself and performance. In his Want-Satisfaction theory of Attitude Formation, Rosenberg (1956) cited in Okolo (2000) postulated that individuals' disposition towards an object, event or situation is a function of whether or not the object, event or situation facilitates the satisfaction of their need. In the light of this theory, it can be deduced that the existence of no significant relationship between administrative supervision and job dissatisfaction among subjects is due to the fact that administrative supervision does not really directly facilitate the satisfaction of employees' personal needs. This is unlike job security and monetary incentives both of which have direct relevance to employees' wellbeing and the direct satisfaction of their personal needs. As a consequence, subjects considered them as strong determinant factors to job dissatisfaction, while considering supervision otherwise.

5. Conclusion

Nigeria is still working at making adequate provision for social services that cater for the aged, unemployed, children's welfare, healthcare, housing, etc. While these remain to be properly addressed, a major means through which individuals acquire the financial capacity to take direct responsibility for their welfare is via their jobs. Certainly, for such jobs to be dependable means of maintaining and sustaining the various dimensions of people's wellbeing, monetary benefits from such jobs must be adequate. In addition, such jobs must be reliable, not the type that employees are easily thrown out. It is not surprising therefore that this study found that subjects considered monetary benefits and job security as significant determinants factors with regards to their job dissatisfaction. Supervision on the other hand was considered otherwise by subjects, the possible reason being that it does not directly address employees' personal needs. This leads to the conclusion that formal organizations in Nigeria must take seriously, as well as give due attention to employees' monetary benefits and job security. When this is done, little room is left for dissatisfaction. The result will be for both performance and overall output to be affected positively. Above all, employees' migration from one job to another will be greatly minimized.

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