



Organizational Performance and its Effects to Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction in Some Selected Public Universities in the South East, Nigeria

Ugochukwu Paul Orajaka^{1*}

¹Department of Entrepreneurship Studies, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Nigeria.

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The study expressed the effect of job satisfaction and employee recognition to the reward of Management performance in some selected organizations in south East Nigeria. The application of descriptive statistics, correlation tools and mean likert was employed to evaluate the significant relationship and coefficient of determination of the variables. However, the tools show that there is a strong positive relationship association between the job satisfaction and employee recognition in public university. The correlation shows that there is a significant values of 0.000 with relationship of 0.942. This explained that there is a strong positive significant relationship in the system. These results conclude that job satisfaction and employee recognition has a strong positive effect to organizational performance in the study areas selected.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; organization; employees; performance; reward.

*Corresponding author: E-mail: puorajaka@yahoo.com;

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations exist to either produce goods or provide services or both in some instances. Achieving this is reliant on the employees and their echelon of commitment and devotion to the organization. Having recognized the prominent role played by employees organizations, employees are now considered to be the backbone of firms' survival. Buttressing this point, Datta [1] opines that many organizations of dissimilar sizes see employees as their main factor in creating competitive advantage and edge over others. Gostick and Elton [2], asserts that employees are the most valuable asset to an organization and they play a significant role in preserving the successful image of organizations. This could be attributed to the fact that fixed assets like land and buildings no longer take centre stage in organizations particularly in service firms and universities. Ndede [3] avers that the reputation of employees arises from the fact that competition has moved from the fixed resources to human resources and specifically the intangible resources. Supporting this claim, Ejumudo [4] opines that workforce are the most crucial of all resources within the disposal of organizations and their capacity to operate and meet the expectations of people is dependent on both their inward potentials and the outward environment that they operate in.

Reward has to do with what employees receive in exchange for their contribution to an organization. It could also be a form of positive reinforcement and motivation. It is that which an employee expects to get after putting in a days', months or years job in cash or in kind. Thompson [5] avers that reward is the appreciation in cash or in-kind given to employees for their contributions to the organization. Jiang et al. [6] sees reward as a prize given to employees as an inducement towards their performance. It is the compensation that an employee receives from an organization in exchange for the service offered by the employee or as a return for the work done [6]. Thus, reward is viewed as an exchange relationship between an employee or group of employees and an organization. Milkovich and Newman [7] look at reward as a swap strategy. It states that "employees may see reward as a return in exchange between their employer in addition to themselves, as an entitlement for being an employee of the company or as a reward for a job well done." Reward falls under what is termed as an employment exchange [8]. Given the whole ambits of human resource

management, hardly is any issue more important, relevant and crucial to an employee than what he receives in exchange for its work and services to the organisation [9]. Reward and its management are meant to harmonize the effort put forth by employees to propagate the wellbeing of the organization. Banjoko [9] emphasize that reward management systems are meant to complement and reinforce business strategies. Armstrong, Brown and Reilly [10] cited in Korir and Kipkebut [11] state that reward management in competitive firms are designed in ways that make them to have accurate predictions on their current and future expected results. Mollahosseini, Kahnouji, Shamsiyeh and Kahnouji [12] opine that reward management systems should be designed in a way that ensures maximum benefits for an organization. A well-designed reward system creates a sense of belonging among employees in an organization [13]. In the same way that reward management can necessitate positive performance like increase in employee commitment, improvement in job satisfaction and increase in the desire to be good organization ambassador, so also can reward if not properly management can lead to dampening of moral, reduced engagement in the organization and increase in the intention to leave the organization which seem to be the case in the three selected institutions in Ebonyi State University (EBSU), Ebonyi, Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Owerri and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra. It was observed that the performance of the non-teaching staff is not as it is supposed and this seems to be as a result of reward management issues. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to explore the relationship existing between employee recognition and job satisfaction in the selected public Universities in the South East Nigeria.

1.1 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis used for this study is:

H₀: There is no significant relationship that exists within employee recognition and job satisfaction in public Universities of South East, Nigeria.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employee Recognition

Recognition is one of the most effective and efficient reward strategies used by organizations to motivate workers. Lawler [14] avers that

recognition plays an imperative role in motivating employees and improving performance. To Njanja et al. [15], they explicate that recognition and appreciation are other integral components of a winning strategic reward system. One of the most powerful motivations is recognition and it is necessary because people need to know not only how well they have achieved their objectives, but also that their achievements are appreciated. Recognition can have an effect on the job satisfaction and motivation of teachers [16]. A number of research studies indicate that nonfinancial rewards such as recognition and other intrinsic rewards are a sine qua non for job satisfaction [17,18].

To Brun and Dugas (2008), recognition represents a reward experienced primarily at the symbolic level, but may also take on emotional, practical or financial value. Shaw et al. (2007) state that recognition is a leadership tool that sends a message to employees about what is important to the leaders and the behaviours that are valued. It is to acknowledge someone before their peers for the desired behaviour or even for accomplishments achieved, actions taken or having a positive attitude [15]. It is a process of giving employees a certain status within the organization [19]. It is a public expression of appreciation given by a group to individuals who undertake desired behaviours [20].

Recognition is the acknowledgement, appreciation, or approval of the positive accomplishments or behaviours of an individual or team [18]. According to Gostick and Elton [2], recognition entails praise or a personal note that acknowledges achievements including small gestures that are important to employees. Harrison [21] posits that recognition is the timely, informal or formal acknowledgement of a person's or team's behaviour, effort or business result that supports the organization's goals and values, and which usually is beyond normal expectations. A meaningful, thoughtful employee appreciation program is about valuing employees' efforts and having respect for who they are and what they do [22].

Most employees according to extant literature are not only interested in getting base pay or salary for a job executed or service offered, to look for things more than this. Capturing this, Akafo and Boateng [23] opine that employees do not only want attractive pay and benefits but also expect that their efforts are valued, appreciated and treated fairly. In the experience of a

'recognised' employee, "to be recognised formally or informally gave me extra motivation and made me wonder what I could do to keep the momentum going" (Gyurcik and Brawley, 2000). Employees respond to appreciation expressed through recognition of their good work because it confirms their work is valued. When employees and their work are valued, their satisfaction and productivity rises and they are motivated to maintain or improve their good work (Roshan, 2005). Most people have the urge to be recognized as an individual or member of a group and to feel a sense of achievement for work well done or even for a fearless effort. Everyone wants a 'pat on the back' to make them feel good (Kim, 2004).

There are many ways employees can be recognized or appreciated. Recognition can include letters or postcards, memory items that last longer than cash, nonmonetary awards that have trophy value, lunch with managers/supervisors, a picture displayed in a prominent place, having a room or hallway named after the employee, posting names in the organization's notice board or website, a video rental certificate, a coffee card, an event ticket, or a candy bar [17,18]. Furthermore, it can be in the form of praise, awards or ceremonies [18]. Effective recognition measures can also include verbal and written praise, public praise, and symbolic gestures by managers (Nelson & Spritzer, 2002). Through reward and recognition programs, employees' morale will increase and a link will be created between the performance and motivation of employees [24]. It may have monetary value e.g. luncheon, gift certificate or plaques. However, money itself is not given to recognize performance [25]. Praise is probably the most common way of giving recognition, but there are other forms of recognition such as long service awards, status symbols of one kind or another; sabbaticals and work-related trips abroad, all of which can be part of the total reward process [2]. Recognition by ranking is one of the most potent motivators and plays a key role in effective reward practices [2]. These informal rewards require minimal planning, efforts or expense [17] and can be given for a number of reasons including recognition for a job well done, a birthday, a service anniversary, a special favour, completing an unpleasant task, or saving the company time or money [17]. Nelson [18] concludes that recognition leads to improved communication, better cooperation and decreased absenteeism and turnover. It can motivate by helping to build feelings of

confidence and satisfaction [26] and inspire loyalty and commitment, as well as encouraging employees to extend their efforts [27].

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has captured the attention of researchers in the field of human resources, behavioural studies and organizational studies. Gostick and Elton, [2] posit that it is generally recognized in the organizational behaviour field that job satisfaction is the most important and frequently studied attitude. This is probably because job satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining employee's performance and invariably the organizational performance. Job satisfaction is listed as one of the primary concerns in human resource management department because it helps retain the employees and raises their performance level (Mehr et al. 2012). Aninkan [28] posits that job satisfaction no doubt is a prerequisite for the growth of any organisation or even a nation. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, they will perform well in the organization (Judge et al. 2001). Halkos and Bousinakis (2010) have found that increased satisfaction by employees will lead to improved productivity.

The term job satisfaction is merely seen as the amount or level of joy employees receive from performing their functions in an organization. Crudely defined, job satisfaction refers to "the degree to which people like their jobs" [29]. Tangthong [30] states "Job satisfaction is in regard to one's feelings or state-of-mind regarding the nature of their work and is a positive emotional feeling, a result of one's evaluation towards his job and his job experience by comparing between what he expects from his job and what he actually gets from it as well as a function of the range of specific satisfactions and dissatisfactions that he/she experiences with respect to the various dimensions of work.

Galanou et al. [31] reasoned that "the term of job satisfaction has become a very significant one, now that managers seek for practices which are likely to make people more satisfied and therefore, more productive. Practices like reward have been observed to have a say on the level of satisfaction employees derive from their jobs. In most organizations, poor reward systems lead to lower satisfaction and in turn produces very low organizational commitment [32]. The alignment of reward management practices with personnel needs creates employee satisfaction which leads to higher productivity. Increasingly, organizations

are realizing that in order to build on employee's job satisfaction, they have to establish an equitable balance between the employee's contribution to the organization and the organization's contribution to the employee [33]. Buttressing this point, Pratheepkanth [34] explicates that employees cannot be satisfied with their jobs unless they are motivated by effective reward systems. Gerald and Dorothee [35] found that rewards are significantly related to professionalism and job satisfaction. Employees are satisfied when they feel that the rewards they receive from their jobs correspond to their skills and effort [33].

2.3 Theoretical Exposition for Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction

Empirical results of researchers in the area of employee recognition and job satisfaction include Shagufta and Abugre [36] whose findings indicated that rewards such as recognition induced positive job satisfaction of employees. Also, Ahmed and Ali [37] revealed a positive relationship between rewards and work satisfaction as well as motivation. Similarly, Salisu, Chinyio and Suresh [38] revealed that compensation impacts positively to employees job satisfaction. Uduji [39] also indicated that a diversity of factors, including job enrichment, recognition, promotion, encouragement and praise can motivate people for exceptional performance in the banking industry in Nigeria.

With regard to statistics, Ali and Ahmed [40] aver that there is an important correlation between reward and recognition and that between motivation and satisfaction. They confirmed the strong positive effects of rewards and recognition on job motivation and satisfaction. Tessema, Ready and Embaye [41] states that workers might be motivated to improve their performance with nonmonetary rewards like employee appreciation. One distinct reason for recognizing employees is that that people who feel appreciated are more likely to have a positive feeling about themselves as well as their ability to have a say [18,2].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a survey research design. This is because this study seeks to elicit data for analysis through the use of a questionnaire. A

survey research design is such that collects data from people about variables through a questionnaire, observation or interview. Data were collected on employee recognition and job satisfaction.

3.2 Area of Study

This study was carried out in the South East Zone of Nigeria. The zone consists of five states which are Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo in their alphabetical order. The people found in these states are people of Igbo extractions and are mostly Christians and. The creation of Abia state was 1991 and its state capital is Umuahia. The creation of Anambra State also took place in 1991 with its state capital is in Awka. The capital of Ebonyi State is Abakaliki and its creation took place in 1996 while Enugu State was created in 1991 and the state capital is in Enugu town. Imo State was created in 1976 and its state capital is in Owerri (www.mydestinationnigeria.com/regionalinfo/south-east-region).

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all the non-academic staff in the selected universities. The distribution of the population is given in the table.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the population among the three studied organization. From the table, it shows that EBSU has a total non-academic strength of 1619; FUTO has 1624 while UNIZIK has 2479 making it a total of 5722 staff.

3.4 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Technique

The sample size of the study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. The formula is given thus:

$$s = \frac{X^2 NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + X^2 P(1 - P)}$$

Where,

- S = Sample size.
- X² = Table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom @ 0.05% confidence level (3.84).
- N = Population size (5722).
- P = Population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 since this would provide the maximum sample size).
- d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05).

$$S = \frac{3.84 (5722)(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2(5722-1) + (3.84)(0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{5493.12}{14.305 + 0.96} = \frac{5493.12}{15.265}$$

$$S \cong 360$$

Bowley's proportionate allocation formula was used in distributing the copies of the questionnaire in proportion to the population of the organizations studied. The formula is as follows:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$$

Where,

- n = Total sample size.
- Nh = Number of items in each stratum in the population.
- N = Population size.

Table 2 gives details on how the copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the studied higher institutions. A total of 102 copies were allocated to EBSU, 102 copies to FUTO and 156 copies to UNIZIK making it a total of 360.

3.5 Sources of Data

The sources of data for this study were both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire instrument constitutes the primary source while journal articles and materials, textbooks and the internet constitute secondary sources.

Table 1. Population distribution

S/n	State	Organizations	Population
1	Ebonyi	Ebonyi State University (EBSU)	1619
2	Imo	Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO) Owerri	1624
3	Anambra	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (UNIZIK)	2479
	Total		5722

Source: Field survey, 2020, statistics unit of the personnel department of the studied institutions

Table 2. Bowley’s allocation formula

S/n	Organizations	Applying formula	No. allocated
1	Ebonyi State University (EBSU)	$1619 \times 360 / 5722$	102
2	Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO) Owerri	$1624 \times 360 / 5722$	102
3	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (NAU)	$2479 \times 360 / 5722$	156
	Total		360

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 3. Distribution of responses for employee recognition and job satisfaction

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Employee recognition								
1.	Each time I do a good job, my organization acknowledges it.	43	65	-	121	87	2.54	Reject
2.	My place of work encourages me to work harder by praising good performers.	17	79	-	140	80	2.41	Reject
3.	When you perform better than others in my organization, your status will be made to improve by the organization.	-	101	19	69	127	2.30	Reject
4.	The reward system in place in my organization does not recognize hard work.	121	87	21	87	-	3.77	Accept
5.	There are formal ways of recognizing people that exceed expectations in terms of performance in my organization.	39	60	32	64	121	2.47	Reject
Job satisfaction								
6.	When I am praised for better performance, it makes me feel proud of myself and my job.	121	156	05	34	-	4.15	Accept
7.	I enjoy doing my work knowing that my effort will be properly recognized.	43	68	-	94	111	2.49	Reject
8.	If bonuses are attached to performance, my work experience will be enjoyable.	108	139	-	69	-	3.91	Accept
9.	The satisfaction I derive from my work depends on the recognition I receive for performance.	98	118	-	72	28	3.59	Accept
10.	I do not enjoy my job because my efforts are not properly recognized.	39	171	9 b	60	37	3.36	Accept

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4. Correlation analysis for employee recognition and job satisfaction

		EMPREC	JOBSAT
EMPREC	Pearson correlation	1	.942**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	316	316
JOBSAT	Pearson correlation	.942**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	316	316

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 5. Significance test for hypothesis one

N	Cal. r	DF	Crit. r.	Remark
316	942	314	0.098	Significant

Source: Field survey, 2020

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument was a five-point structured Likert questionnaire. The codes are as follows: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire contains eight parts with five questionnaire items each which made the total number of items in the questionnaire to be ten (10).

3.7 Test of Hypothesis One Using Mean Likert

What is the relationship existing between Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction in the selected Public Universities in the South East?

Table 3 gives details of the distribution of responses and descriptive statistics for Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction in the selected Public Universities in the South East. The analysis is based on the mean of the individual questionnaire items and the benchmark for acceptance or rejection as being true or embedded in the institutions is $3 (5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 15 \div 5 = 3)$.

Starting with the independent variable (Employee Recognition), when the respondents were asked whether each time they do a good job if their organization acknowledges it, they said no with a mean of 2.54 signifying rejection. They also rejected the notion that their place of work encourages them to work harder by praising good performers with a mean of 2.41. The same goes for if when they perform better than others in their organization, your status will be made to improve by the organization with a mean of 2.30. They, however, accepted that the reward system in place in their organization does not recognize hard work with a mean of 3.77. The respondents rejected that there are formal ways of recognizing people that exceed expectations in terms of performance in their organization 2.47.

For the dependent variable (Job Satisfaction), maintaining the threshold of 3, the respondents agreed that when they are praised for better performance, it makes them feel proud of themselves and their jobs with a mean of 4.15. A mean of 2.49 indicates that the respondents do not enjoy doing their work knowing that their effort will not be properly recognized. They show with a mean of 3.19 that their work experience

will be enjoyable if bonuses are attached to performance. In the same line of response, they agreed that the satisfaction they derive from their work depends on the recognition they receive for performance with a mean of 3.59. They also indicate that they do not enjoy their job because their efforts are not properly recognized with a mean of 3.36.

3.8 Test of Hypothesis One Using Correlations

H₁: There is a significant relationship existing between Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction in the selected Public Universities in the South East.

Where, EMPREC = Employee Recognition, JOBSAT = Job Satisfaction

Table 4 shows the correlation analysis for Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction in the selected Public Universities in the South East. The result reveals that there is a very strong positive relationship existing between the variables ($r = .942$).

3.9 Using Test of Significant for Hypothesis One

Table 5 shows the test of significance for hypothesis two. It showed that at 0.05 level of significant and at 314 degrees of freedom, that the critical r is 0.098. Given that the calculated r .942 is greater than the critical r (cal. r .942 > crit. r 0.098), the research hypothesis is therefore accepted.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The hypotheses of the study were empirically analysed through the use of correlation analysis and findings were made. From the test of hypothesis, it was tested empirically using correlation analysis and the alternate hypothesis was accepted following the revelation of the findings. It was revealed that there is a significant positive relationship existing between employee recognition and job satisfaction in the selected public universities in southeast Nigeria. The implication of this result is that employee recognition and job satisfaction of the employees go in one direction. That is, the more the recognition employees receive for better performance, the more they will be satisfied with their job and by extension the organization. This

finding is corroborated by previous research in this area or similar areas. For instance, Ahmed and Ali [37] who examined the impact of reward and recognition programs on employee motivation and satisfaction found a positive relationship between rewards and work satisfaction as well as motivation. The analysis showed support for a positive relationship between reward and employee satisfaction. In the same line of findings, Tessema, Ready and Embaye [41] who analysed the effect of employee recognition, pay and benefits on job satisfaction indicated that employee recognition, pay and benefits have a significant impact on job satisfaction. Similarly, Ndungu [42] who determined the effects of reward and recognition on employee job performance in Kenyatta University revealed that a significantly positive relationship existed between reward and recognition, with employee performance. Also corroborating with the findings of the present study is the study of Tuvei, Wanjere and Mauyo [43] that examined the influence of intrinsic rewards on organizational performance in public and private sugar companies in western Kenya. The results of the study showed that there existed a positive influence between intrinsic rewards in which employee recognition is a component of and organizational performance. The study of Shagufta and Abugre [36] also came out with a similar result when they examined the relationship between employees' rewards and the dimension of their job satisfaction in the service sector in Ghana. The findings showed that rewards induced positive job satisfaction of employees. Mbah, Mgbemena and Ejike [44] found that pay reward and some non-financial rewards of employee recognition, conducive work environment, and staff development are positively and significantly related to employee performance in civil service when they examined the impact of effective reward system as a tool for employee performance in civil service using Anambra State Civil Service as case study also aligns with the findings of this study.

4.1 Summary of Findings

- a) There is a significant relationship existing between employee recognition and job satisfaction in the selected Public Universities in the South East.

cal. r .942 > crit. r 0.098

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that job satisfaction has a significant positive relationship with employee recognition in the studied Public University in the South East of Nigeria. This is owing to the fact that all the decomposed variables of job satisfaction and employee recognition had significant positive relationships with each other as paired. The analysis concludes that there is a strong significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee recognition in the system. The result is recommended for further wider of the study, for academic purposes and for understanding of job satisfaction and employee recognition to management performance and management practices in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, South East, Nigeria.

CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard or university standard guideline participant consent and ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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