

Staff Emolument Problems/Job Satisfaction And Depression Among Public Servants In Cross River State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study was carried out to establish the relationship between emolument and job satisfaction as potent factor in explaining the incident of depression among public servants in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study adopted the ex-post facto design. The sample consisted of 500 (429 males and 71 females) public servants who were randomly selected from state ministries, schools, board and parastatals in the state. A Public Servant Opinion Questionnaire (PSOQ) constructed by the researcher was used for data collection. Two null hypotheses were tested in the study using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The major findings indicated that staff emolument problem and job satisfaction significantly led to some degree of depression. Based on this result it was concluded that emolument and job satisfaction were significant factors in explaining the incidence of depression. The major recommendations are that depressed people should be referred to seek the services of social psychologist, clinical psychologists in psychiatric hospitals, and also that government/sectors should help in providing good conditions for her staff.

Keywords: staff emolument, job satisfaction, depression

1. Introduction

Most individuals at one time or the other have unique experiences that serve to influence their personal life and general well being. One of such experience is the feeling of depression.

Depression could be defined as a feeling state, a reaction to a situation, a person's characteristic style of behavior and as any downturn in mood, which may be relatively transitory and perhaps due to something trivial. This is differentiated from clinical depression which is marked by symptoms that last for two weeks or more and are so severe that they interfere with daily living. The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM) states that, a depressed mood is often reported as being: "depressed, sad, hopeless, discouraged, or down in the dumps" depression can be the result of many factors individually and acting in concert (Vandantam, 2007).

Personal experiences shape the individual character and traits. Transitory periods of misery and emotional disturbances usually result in abnormal thought processes, distorted sleep, poor eating habit and behavior disorder all of which affects the way individuals relate with others. Individuals who suffer from depressive moods end up having diseases precipitated by emotion arousal (Coon, 1989). Among the emotionally precipitated diseases are asthma, ulcers, hypertension, headaches, strokes, heart attach etc. On the extreme, prolonged unresolved emotional problem could lead to mental problem (Napoli, Kilbride and Tebbs, 1982, Murray and Lopez, 1997).

The individual at any time is a reaction of his/her life situation. The severe cases of depression make it impossible for the individual to function maximally at work, due to being exposed to the same harsh working environment and condition. By observation and personal interaction, it is noticed that most of them are not happy with them the event around them in their offices. This however gives them much concern, as some wonder how life will be for them after retirement, as they are merely able to feed their families with not reserve for a rainy day. Depression at work can be hazardous to health (Super, 1980 Asia 1996, Marx, 1998). Maslow, (1965) on his part, observed that "the road to personal salvation is meaningful work and total commitment to doing the job that needs to be done and that which fall at your lot." This means that, there must be an agreement between that person's personality, his innate potentials and the job he/she is entering into, as work is life in itself. He also state that people's behavior is motivated towards self-fulfillment so that they might be everything their potentials allow them to become. With this in mind, most of the Cross River State public servants could be said not to have achieved this satisfaction.

2. Conceptual Framework

The type of job a person does influence his/her economic well being. That is, if a person is engaged in a lowly paid job, his/her economic power will be low. The individual enters a job with the hope to gain his self-satisfaction which is an aspect of self-actualization and the individual operating in economically balanced

organization will be able to fulfill his set goals, that of functioning maximally at work and at home. This is so because if his work ends him a good pay, he will be able to take care of his home and meet other needs.

Staff emolument problems, refers to the extent to which the income of the public servants meet his/her needs, while job satisfaction is defined as “the extent to which people like (Satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs” (Spector 1997, p.2). Job satisfaction is a general or global affective reaction that individual holds about their job. Traditional job satisfaction facets include: Co-workers, pay, job conditions, supervision, nature of the work and benefits.

Reliable and valid measures of both emoluments and job satisfaction have been developed. Typical measures used include: The job satisfaction survey (JSS) (Spector, 1997). The job descriptive index (JDI) (Smith, Kendell, and Hulin, 1969), England and Lefquist, 1967, and the job diagnostic survey (JDS) Hackman and Olham, 1975).

The public servants do go through a series of attitudinal and emotional reactions as a result of job related and personal experience. Their job environment exposed most of them to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and feeling of low accomplishment. They see themselves as being drained or used up by government with little or nothing to show for all the human hours they put in, they feel that they are at the end of the roped and are physically fatigued. Each working day they wake up, the thought of going to work to put another day on the job introduces a feeling of dread in them, and they develop a “detached concert”, became cynical, and fell callous toward others in their work place (Organ and Ryan, 1995, Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1994; Murphy and Saulter, 2003)

Herzberg, Mausner Synderman (1999) opines that if the motivation factors are present and in an positive direction in a job situation, employees will experience feelings of satisfaction. But when the motivation factors are absent and negative in direction employees will not experience feelings of satisfaction. This will also apply to a situation where a public servant experience poor work situation such as non payment or irregular payment of salary, lack of promotion, lack of fringe benefits, lack of job security etc, a situation of this nature makes him so depressed that he sees no need contributing to such a job.

Statutorily, the public servant has the right to get his salary at the end of the month to enable him take care of his economic and other needs. Individuals may have dependants who look up to him others may be sole bread winners of the family. Therefore, the event where he is not paid on time will eventually create some psychological problems in form of depression and any period of economic depression is likely to precipitate a wide array of mental problem and more people experience during economic hardship and recessions (Rothausen, 1999).

Some workers may not even see the organization contributing to their predicament rather they will feel they are failures. When these factor – emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feeling of low accomplishments are combined it may reduce one’s motivation to a point where performances is in fact impaired which leads to more failure experiences. This is a phenomenon referred to by psychologists as learned helplessness (Miller and Norman, 1979). Most of them resort to heavy smoking, drinking, gambling and end up as drug addicts with complex psychosis.

3. Methodology

Study sample: The sample comprised 500 (429 males and 71 females) public servant in grade level 05 and above who were randomly selected across the state through the stratified random sampling method (see table)

3.1 Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was the public servants opinion questionnaire (PSOQ). The researcher’s choice of questionnaire for data collection was based on the fact that it provided the opportunity for sampling a good representative number of subjects with less financial cost and energy expenditure.

The instrument had two sections as follows:

Section A: demographic information

Section B: variables of the study, staff emolument problem, job satisfaction and depression. The questionnaire was constructed on a four point Likert types scale and had 24 items, based on the researcher’s experience, observation as well as through information obtained from literature reviewed.

3.2 Method of data collection

After collection of data the raw scores were summed up and the mean and standard deviation were computed. The data was further analyzed based on 0.5 alpa level. The analysis was done by null hypothesis using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient as follows.

Hypothesis I

There is no significant relationship between staff emoluments problems and level of depression among the public servants in Cross River State.

Data Needed

Independent variable: Measure of Emolument

Dependable Variable: Measure of Depression

Hypothesis II

There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and the level of depression among public servants in Cross River State.

Data Needed

Independent Variable: Measure of job satisfaction

Dependent Variable: Measure of depression

Table 1

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of relationship between Staff Emolument Problem end level of depression (N=500)

Variable	EX EV	EX2 EV2	EXY	r	t - cal
Depression(x)	9649	192553	187724	.76	26.09*
Emolument(x)	6550	190482			

P < .05, df = 498, critical t = 1.960

Table2

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Job Satisfaction and Level of depression

Variable	EX EV	EV2 EV2	EXY	r	t - cal
Depression(x)	9649	192553	183703	.75	25.31*
Job Satisfaction (x)	9289	178065			

P < .05, df = 498, critical t = 1.960

3.3 Result and Discussion of findings

Table 1 shows that the calculated t-value of 26.09 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.960, given 498 degrees of freedom at .05 alpha levels, this equally means that there is a significant relationship between these two variables as staff emolument problems increases, so does the staff level of depression.

Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value of 25.31 greater than the critical t-value of 1.960, given 498 degrees of freedom at .05 alpha levels. This equally means that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and depression.

Going by this result, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship therefore is rejected at .05 level of significant. The findings show that there is significant relationship between staff emolument problems, job

satisfaction and depression. It therefore means that the level of depression is greatly influenced or affected by the level of job satisfaction of the individuals, depression increases as job satisfaction decreases. While workers income go a long way to either promote or eliminate depressive state in his/her work environment.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the author therefore concluded that staff emolument problems and job satisfaction generates depression. If one does not want depression to set in, and the job you are doing is not bringing satisfaction in terms of meeting ones basic needs in any way, there is always a plus element in life. Improvement of ones quality of life by higher educational attainments will go a long way in bringing public servants in harmony with themselves in near future.

5. Recommendations

In view of the result of this study, the following recommendations were made:

It is advised that people should have the family size they can adequately cater for to reduce depression. Government and private sector employers should live up to their expectations through of enabling work environment. Social psychologists and physicians need to be alert to the co-occurrence of depression and to organize enlightenment campaigns to create public awareness. Depressed public servants in Cross River State should seek the services of psychotherapists, family doctors, mental health specialists, social psychologists, marriage counselors, social agencies, teaching hospitals and clinical psychologists in the psychiatric hospitals who will be in a better medical outfit to properly administer some anti-depressants. Psychotherapy section be conducted as interpersonal therapy could help patients learn new behaviours that lead to more satisfaction in life and “unlearn” counter-productive behaviours, that cause or exacerbate depression.

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