

## EMPLOYEES' INVOLVEMENT IN WELFARE DECISION MAKING AND THEIR JOB PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE COMPANIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

by

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### Abstract

The study sought to test the hypothesis that involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues would influence employees' job performance in private companies. The study area was Cross River State, Nigeria. A sample of 720 employees of private companies in Cross River State participated in the study by completing a questionnaire. Data analysis using the simple linear regression revealed that employees' job performance was significantly influenced by their participation in welfare-related decision-making. From the finding, the involvement of staff of private companies in decision-making regarding their welfare was recommended.

**Keywords:** Conditions of service, decision-making, job performance, private companies, staff welfare,

### Introduction

Many private companies have folded up or have experienced declining income because of low job performance by employees. Since employees are driven largely by self-interest, often, their job performance may be the consequence of the extent to which they perceive their working conditions as beneficial to their welfare. (Agbor&Perekeme, 2012, Omojuwa, Timothy &Obiekezie, 2009). Such personnel expect some extrinsic benefits and some assurances that their welfare is guaranteed by their employers. Where employers are unclear about their welfare, their motivation may wane and their productivity or job performance may consequently decline. Therefore, one of the ways employers may remove uncertainty about employees' welfare packages could be to involve them in decision-making about their welfare.

Employees generally, spend over fifty percent of their adult life-span working for their organizations. This means, these employees have a lot of expectation on being catered for by their employers. This kind of care according to Arikpo (2008, p.28), goes beyond financial, promotion and training incentives, but rather, care for other areas of staff welfare such as provision of furniture, vehicle and medical allowances, etc. Also, furniture allowance to employees make it easier for them to get amenities in their homes which they would have otherwise been reluctant to buy.

Ukpong (2000) disclosed that, appropriate change and use of motivational techniques in a working environment can enhance workers effectiveness such as; fun, stimulation of curiosity, discipline, etc. Supporting this view, Ekabua (2010)

proposed that the employer must therefore create a working condition that is flexible, open and reasonably permissive enough to allow for workers involvement, exploration and arts of responsibility, as well as promote a feeling of achievement. Similarly, Denga in Arikpo (2014) contended that, the workers need for shelter cannot be contested, such that, if housing becomes such a big problem for workers, it is fertile ground for strike, whose resultant effect would be low job performance. The causes of conflict between employers and employees could be traceable to wages, job security, workplace health environment, union relations, government policy, company policy and the economic factors (Adejumo, 2011; Agbor&Emeh, 2003)

In an empirical study, Ekabua (2010) investigated among other sub-independent variables, the relationship between workers' participation in decision-making on staff welfare issues and labour management relations in selected companies in the Cross River State. The findings show that there is no significant relationship between workers' participation in decision making on staff welfare issues and labour management relations at (.04;  $p>05$ ),

Similarly, Eyo (2012) empirical study on "Employers' Motivational Strategies and Workers' Productivity in selected Financial Institutions in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State" found out that staff welfare had a significant influence on their job performance. It was therefore, concluded that workers' remuneration and welfare packages has a significant influence on workers' productivity.

In a related study, Ajayi, Awosusi, Arogundade and Ekundayo (2011) correlated work environment of academic staff with their job performance and found out among others that suitability of work environment of academic staff in South-Western Nigerian universities was favourable in terms of; physical facilities (59.7%) information services (70.9%), motivation (70.7%) participation in decision making (70.5%), authority-staff relationship (70.5%) and staff development (74.6%).

Igbal, Latif, Ijaz and Mushtaq (2015) found out among others that, "long working hours have negative effect on employees' performance as well as their families, the employer and community." Continuing, Igbal and others (2015, p.313) observed that:

*... long working hours have more complex relationship with risk, as long working hours can reduce efficiency of employees because nonstop working will increase the chances of mistakes and faults. Employees who are allowed for some rest time during their job and work fewer hours, show greater efficiency and effectiveness at their job, as they are fresh and energetic during their job.*

In a similar view, Oyira, Regina, Nkamare, Felicia, Uwa and Mbum (2015) remarked that, "any organization that does not have concern for workers' welfare tend to produce less and is vulnerable to failure" (p.45).

### **Purpose of the study**

The study investigated the influence of workers' participation on decisions pertaining to their welfare and their job performance. In other words, the study sought to establish empirically if employers' job performance could be determined by their participation in making decisions about their welfare.

**Hypothesis**

In order to carry out the investigation, one hypothesis was stated in the null form:  
 Hypothesis: Workers' involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues does not significantly influence employees' job performance.

**Methodology**

The study adopted an ex post facto design while the study areas was Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. In order to collect data with which to test the hypothesis, a questionnaire was designed by the researcher. It has a four-option Likert scale. Five items were used to measure the independent variable (participation in welfare matters decision-making), while ten items were used to measure the dependent variable (job performance and face-validated by her dissertation supervisor and an expert in measurement and evaluation.

The participants were 720 randomly selected employees of private companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.

**Data analysis**

The data collected were analysed using the linear regression. The result is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
 Summary of linear regression analysis of workers' involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues and employees' job performance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	p-level
Regression	3455.302	1	3455.302	288.195	.000
Residual	9004.093	751	11.989		
Total	12459.394	752			

\*p<.05 R= .527; R<sup>2</sup> = .277

**The result**

The result shows that the analysis of variance in the regression output produced an F-ratio of 59.159, which was statistically significant at .05 probability level. On the basis of this result, hypothesis three was rejected. This means that, workers' involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues significantly influences employees' job performance. The results also show a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of .527 and a coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) of .277. This implies that, 27.7% of the variance in employees' job performance was accounted for by workers' involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues. Thus, 72.30% of the variance in employees' job performance may be attributed to the effect of other variables extraneous to the study.

**Discussion of findings**

The result of the analysis of variance in the regression output produced an F-ratio of 59.159, which was statistically significant at .05 probability level. On the basis of this result, the hypothesis was rejected. This means that, workers' involvement in decision making on staff welfare issues significantly influences employees' job performance.

The finding of this study largely corroborates empirical studies on staff welfare issues (Wonah, 2015; Kuchi, 2008; Igbal, Latif, Ijaz&Mushtag, 2015) and Okara, 2007) as well as theoretical review of literature like those of Arikpo (2012),(Timothy, 2016); Ukpong (2000),andEyo (2012). A possible explanation for this finding is that workers are motivated by self-interest. Where their self-interest and welfare are compromised, they feel threatened and insecure. Such sense of insecurity could hamper their productivity.

However, the sense of insecurity may be assuaged if workers are involved in taking decisions such as determining parameters for social welfare, healthcare, staff housing, life insurance, as well as comfort and conduciveness of work environment. Such participation could build confidence in the workers and remove uncertainties and ambivalence about workplace benefits and privileges. Once employees find themselves as stakeholders in the decision making process, their attitude to work is likely to change positively, thereby increasing their job performance.

### **Conclusion and recommendation**

The study set out to determine if job performance of workers in private companies in Cross River State, Nigeria would be significantly influenced by their participation in decision-making concerning their welfare. The result showed that workers involvement in decision-making concerning their welfare had a significant influence on their job performance. Therefore, it could be concluded that it is important to staff job performance if they participate in making decisions about their welfare.

In view of the finding, it is recommended that employers allow workers to have a say about their workplace welfare. Employers can do this by having staff representative in committees that determine staff welfare issues and design staff welfare packages.

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