

Workload and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Front Office Department in Hospitality Industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This study, guided by one research question and one hypothesis, examined workload and job satisfaction of employees in front office department in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government, Edo State. The survey research design was used for the study. The instrument used for collection of data was a questionnaire titled “Hospitality Industry Employees' Job Satisfaction Scale” (HIEJSS). The HIEJSS was administered on a sample of 100 front office department employees in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State. Mean and Pearson's Correlation analysis were used for data analysis. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in Front office department in hospitality industry. It is concluded that employees in front office department in hospitality industry experience average job satisfaction. It was recommended that the findings of this study should be used as empirical basis for school counsellors in area of career counselling to counsel students who intend to work in the hospitality industry. Students who intend to work in the hospitality industry should be aware that workload in hospitality industry can affect their job satisfaction negatively.

Keywords: Job, Satisfaction, Workload, Employees, Front, office, Hospitality,

Introduction

The hospitality industry is the industry that is primarily responsible for providing food services and accommodations in places such as hotels, resorts, conference centers and amusement parks. A hotel can provide good service, when all its departments work together in an efficient and effective way, by showing good team work, coordination and communication. Importantly, hotels function to provide food and shelter to prospective guest. To provide food and shelter, a number of departments are required, who must all function together round-the-clock. These departments include: Front office (revenue centre); Food & Beverage service (revenue centre); Housekeeping (cost centre); Food production (kitchen) (cost centre); administrative departments (support department); Maintenance department, Account department, Human resource department,

Electronic data processing department, Communication department, Security department, Purchase department, Stores, Sales and marketing department. Excessive work demands on any of these departments' staff can lead to job dissatisfaction. In recent times people seem to be working longer hours, taking on higher level responsibility and exerting themselves more strenuously to meet rising expectations about their workload.

Workload is defined as the demand assigned on the employee by the job (Spector, 2000). Workload according to Herzberg's (1964) motivation theory can be regarded as one of the items under the working conditions. He stated that working condition in an environment can help in motivation of workers. According to him, working condition, in which workload is part, can make a worker to get satisfaction or not, in the course of performing his duty. This is because a worker that will be made to bear the normal workload will have satisfaction and he/she is likely to be happy in the organization. The number of hours an individual worker is made to bear can determine the level of job satisfaction.

Work in the hospitality industry is highly intensive. The nature of work within hotels, according to Kristensen, Hannerz and Tuchsén (2002) include hard deadlines, unexpected interactions with guests, long working hours, night and evening work, repetitive shift work, high work space and problems with coordination of work. Excessive workload may contribute to the level of job satisfaction in an organization. Moorhead and Grifftin (2011) identified work overload as one of the factors that can negatively affect job satisfaction level of employees. Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeampong (2014) carried out a study on Work-related Stress in Hotels, with focus on the causes and effects among Frontline Hotel Employees in the Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana. Findings revealed that frontline hotel employees indicated that they suffer headaches, become dissatisfied, frustrated and are unable to concentrate as a result of work-overload, which results in low job satisfaction.

Excessive workload is a source of dissatisfaction and stress at work (Lo & Lamm, 2005). Higher demands at work drain precious resources such as time, energy, and emotions, which are essential to fulfill family obligations (Lapierre & Allen, 2006). Work within hotels, especially, frontline employees, involves frequent interaction with customers since they are required to deal with numerous requests from these customers. Again, frontline work in hotels places much emphasis on face-to-face contact with guests and the real time nature of service delivery means that workers in this environment are exposed to pressure of being required to respond promptly (Lo & Lamm, 2005). In their work, Lo and Lamm (2005) reported that working in the hospitality industry can be stressful and that many workers are vulnerable in terms of their poor working conditions, work overload and low wages. Hales and Nightingale (1986) noted that frontline employees are subjected to a mass of competing, often contradictory or conflicting demands and expectations for a multiplicity of services which have the

potential of heightening work-related stress. The above assertions give credence to the incidence of low job satisfaction among those who work within the hotel environment, especially frontline employees. In his study, Murphy (2004) directly linked satisfaction to quality of work. Wright and Cropanzano (2000) carried out a study and reported that the link between satisfaction and workload hinged upon the concept of happiness.

Hospitality industry can be seen as a viable industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo state, Nigeria. The industry helps to create employment mostly in the private sector. Job satisfaction of employees in any organization depends on many factors. These factors among other things include motivation, remuneration, workload and job security. In Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, there are several hospitality outfits which provide services in hospitality business. The researchers observed that in spite of the numerous employment opportunities available in the hospitality industry, there is a lack of employee retention in the hospitality industry in Egor Local government Area of Edo State.

It was observed by the researchers that it is not known whether employees in front office department in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area are satisfied with their workload or not, since there was no study found that had measured the job satisfaction of employees in hospitality industry, specifically the relationship between workload and job satisfaction of front office employees in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area. Thus the relationship between workload and job satisfaction of front office employees in the Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State is not known. This study therefore sought to find out whether front office employees in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area are satisfied with their job in terms of their workload. The study was delimited to the relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in front office department in Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State. The study was equally delimited to only employees in front office department in Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

Research Question

Is there any job satisfaction among employees in front office department in Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in Front office department in the hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Methodology

The survey design was used for the study. This is because the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable will be the focus, and the variables will not

be manipulated. The population of employees in front office department in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State could not be ascertained since the State Ministry of Commerce has no record of staff in various departments in hospitality industry. A total number of 100 front office department employees were selected through convenience sampling technique. This technique involves using the available respondents as the sample (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2002). The front office department employees that were present when the researchers visited were given the instrument to respond to.

The research instrument for the study was a questionnaire titled: “Hospitality Industry Employees Job Satisfaction Scale” (HIEJSS). The HIEJSS comprise of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A seeks for bio data information of the participants such as gender, age, marital status. Section B is made up of two subscales for workload and job satisfaction. Each scale has five response options viz: Strongly Agree =5, Agree =4, Partially Agree=3, Disagree=2 and Strongly Disagree=1. The Job satisfaction subscale has 21 items, while Workload subscale has 14 items. The justification of the instrument is based on the fact that the respondents will not be manipulated. The level of significance is 0.05. If the r value is less than the alpha level of 0.05 the null hypothesis will be rejected. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using the test retest method. The instrument was administered on 20 employees from hospitality industry in another Local Government Area of Edo state yielding a reliability score of 0.75. Thus the instrument was considered reliable for the study.

The researchers visited the hospitality outfits to administer the instrument and also retrieve the completed questionnaire. This ensured a high turnover of the administered questionnaires. All the 100 questionnaire administered to the respondents were retrieved. The percentage of questionnaire retrieved is 100%. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level.

Presentation of results

Research Question 1: Is there Job Satisfaction among Employees in Front Office Department in Hospitality Industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State?

Table 1: Mean of Job Satisfaction of Employees in Hospitality industry

| Variables | N | Mean | Std. Dev |
|------------------|-----|-------|----------|
| Job Satisfaction | 100 | 53.60 | 8.00 |

N=100; alpha= 0.05

Table 1 shows a mean score of 53.60 and standard deviation of 8.00, indicating an average level of job satisfaction for employees in hospitality industry. Consequently, there is job satisfaction among employees in front office department in Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Ho1: There is no Significant Relationship between Workload and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Front Office Department in Hospitality Industry in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation of workload and Job Satisfaction of employees in front office department

| Variables | Mean | Std. Dev | r | Sig.(2-tailed) |
|------------------|-------|----------|------|----------------|
| Workload | 40.17 | 6.14 | | |
| | | | .247 | .000 |
| Job Satisfaction | 53.60 | 8.00 | | |

N=100; alpha=0.05

Table 2 shows a Pearson r value of .247 and a p-value of .000. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level, so the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in front office department” is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in front office department.

Discussion of the findings

Research question one sought to find out if there is any Job Satisfaction among Employees in Front Office Department in Hospitality Industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings of this study revealed that the employees in front office department in hospitality industry are averagely satisfied with their jobs. The reasons for this could be due to the fact that employees are very familiar with the organization and the nature of work which include attending to diverse customers and shift work. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Murphy (2004) who directly linked satisfaction to quality of work. Also the finding of this study corroborates the findings of Wright and Cropanzano (2000). They argued that the link between satisfaction and workload hinged upon the concept of happiness. The finding of this study is also in line with the findings of Unklesbay, Chong, Richard and Dowdy (2000) who studied job satisfaction as perceived by managerial personnel and food service employees in hospital food service departments, and reported that majority of non-manager male workers are very satisfied with pay and nature of the work.

Hypothesis one stated that there is no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in front office department in hospitality industry. The findings of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction of employees in Front Office department in hospitality industry. The study revealed that employees in Front Office department in the hospitality industry are not very satisfied with their workload. The reason for this could be due to the fact that Front office employees in the hospitality industry are meant to attend to numerous customers with different personality. Their job impact on them both physically and emotionally. The findings of this study corroborates the findings of Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeampong (2014); their findings revealed that Frontline hotel employees suffer headaches, become dissatisfied, frustrated and are unable to concentrate as a result of work-overload. The findings of this study is in line with the findings of Lapierre and Allen (2006) that working in hotels, especially the frontline employees, involves frequent interaction with customers since they are required to deal with numerous requests from these customers. Also, the findings of Lo and Lamm (2005) shows that frontline work in hotels places much emphasis on face-to-face contact with guests and the real time nature of service delivery means that workers in this environment are exposed to pressure of being required to respond promptly. The findings of the study corroborates the findings of Hales and Nightingale (1986) that frontline employees are “subject to a mass of competing, often contradictory or conflicting demands and expectations for a multiplicity of services”. The findings of this study supports the findings of Lo and Lamm (2005) who reported that working in the hospitality industry can be stressful and that many workers are vulnerable in terms of their poor working conditions and low wages. The above assertions give credence to the incidence of low job satisfaction among those who work within the hotel environment, especially frontline employees. The findings of this study is also in line with the findings of Kristensen et al. (2002) who concluded that the work of Frontline employee in hotel include hard deadlines, unexpected interactions with guests, long working hours, night and evening work, repetitive shift work, high work space and problems with coordination of work. Excessive workload may contribute to the level of job satisfaction in an organization. Frontline hotel employees indicated that they suffer headaches, become dissatisfied, frustrated and are unable to concentrate as a result of work-overload.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that employees in front office department in Hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State are averagely satisfied with their job. It is also concluded that workload and job satisfaction of employees in hospitality industry in Egor Local Government Area are significantly related.

Recommendations

The findings of this study should be used as empirical basis on the need for hotel managers in the management of human resources to employ adequate number of staff to man the front office department in order to reduce the workload of employees. Employees in hospitality industry should be aware that workload in hospitality industry can affect their job satisfaction either negatively or positively.

Implications for counselling

School counsellors can rely on the findings of this study to counsel students who wish to work in Hospitality industry on what to expect in terms of job satisfaction. School counsellors, being aware that excessive workload in hospitality industry can affect the job satisfaction of employees in front office department negatively, should guide students appropriately in this regard when career counselling is being carried out. Students who wish to work as hospitality workers/managers should be aware that they are likely to face irregular hours and demanding work when they enter the industry. Thus individuals who cannot tolerate the above conditions should not choose career in hospitality.

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