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Employee welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of Universities in Ekiti State

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship existing between employee welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State. Its specific objectives are to examine the relationship between housing facilities and identify the welfare areas the universities need to focus on for their employees. The study is a correlational one as it seeks to examine relationships between variables. As a result, only Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used alongside descriptive statistics like frequencies. Data was collected with the aid of close-ended questionnaires from a sample of 384 non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State which was derived using Cochran's (1963) formula. Simple random sampling technique was used to select sample members. Results show that a moderately positive relationship exists between employee welfare and job satisfaction and concludes that an increase in employee welfare will cause a corresponding increase in job satisfaction. The study further shows that housing facilities have a very weak positive correlation with job satisfaction and recommends that welfare areas like work-life balance, transportation and occupational safety should be focused on by the universities.

Keywords: Employee welfare; Job satisfaction; Non-academic staff; Universities; Ekiti State

1. Introduction

Since the advent of globalisation, the business world has been characterised by a high rate of competition. There seems to be no boundary or geographical barriers obstructing the business activities of different organisations across the globe. As a result, every organisation is on a quest to ensure they remain in business and thrive. This has made several organisations focus more on the welfare of their employees as they are aware of the fact that the workforce is a very significant asset for competitive edge in the business world.

In having a committed workforce, attention has to be paid to their welfare. Organisations that neglect the welfare of their employees do so to their own peril. Such organisations would be characterised by a high level of absenteeism, turnover, stress, burnout, etc. (Azeem & Akhtar, 2011). With employees being seen nowadays as business partners of an organisation (Hemalatha, Benita, & Rao, 2017), it is only reasonable to provide them with good welfare facilities since they enable the organisation to succeed.

Employee welfare is seen as the facilities provided for the employees by the employer such as restroom, recreation facilities and other services that add to the well-being of the employees (Nanjundeswaraswamy, Vanishree, Swamy, & Nagesh, 2019). It is what makes employees feel comfortable to carry out their job responsibilities. The provision of welfare facilities greatly contribute to the job satisfaction of employees in an organisation, while job satisfaction refers to the measure to which a person is comfortable, pleased or satisfied with his job (Ali, 2016). Employees become more

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satisfied with jobs that ensure their welfare is adequately taken care of. This tends to stimulate commitment and ultimately improve performance on the job.

In universities in Ekiti State, people believe that there is a high level of job dissatisfaction due to the pervading news of poor welfare packages or facilities, irregular payment of wages or salaries, and unlawful sack of employees by the management of the State university, Ekiti State University (EKSU) (Ani, 2022). Hence, there is a public opinion that, if the welfare of employees in the State's university is poor, there could be a likelihood that the welfare in other universities situated in Ekiti State could follow suit.

Based on this, there is a need to examine this issue empirically as there seems to be a dearth of studies that investigated this phenomenon. Studies that have focused on this phenomenon of interest have not looked at it in reference to non-academic staff in Ekiti State universities. One of those studies is that of Shah and Shah (2016) who investigated the impact of employee welfare activities on job satisfaction in the automobile sector in Ahmedabad district, India. Also, Kumari (2020) investigated how job satisfaction is affected by employee welfare facilities in Hema Engineering Limited, Haryana, India. Munywoki and Kariuki (2020) also examined the impact of employee welfare programmes on job satisfaction but with reference to Kenya Railways Corporation.

Examining these studies amongst others, it is evident that no study focused on the universities situated in Ekiti State. Hence, the research question, what is the relationship between employee welfare and job satisfaction of non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State. It is against this background that this paper seeks to correlate employees' welfare with job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.

1.1. Research Questions

- What is the correlation between employees' welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State?
- How does housing facilities correlate with the job satisfaction of non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State?

1.2. Research Objectives

The study's broad objective is to determine the kind of relationship existing between employee welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State while the specific objectives include:

- To determine what kind of correlation exists between employees' welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.
- To examine how housing facilities correlate with the job satisfaction of non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.

1.3. Research Hypotheses

H01: No relationship exists between employees' welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.

H02: Housing facilities does not correlate with the job satisfaction of non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.

Advances In Management Vol. 12 (1) March (2019) World Business 'n Economy Congress 2019115 Empirical Study on the Relationship between Employee Welfare and Job Satisfaction

2. Literature Review

2.1. Employees' Welfare

The definition of employees' welfare is seen to alternate based on the different perceptions of scholars. However, they all still carry the same meanings. Opatha (2009) defined employees' welfare as the provision of facilities and comfort to the workforce of an organisation in order for them to have a better standard of living. It is a term that indicates the amenities, facilities, and services to be provided by the employer for the betterment of the employees (Subhasish, Medha, & Darshana, 2018). According to Rao, Patro, and Raghunath (2015), employees' welfare is seen as a way of searching for the physical, mental, moral and emotional wellbeing of employees. It simply means making life worth living for the employees of an organisation (Varma, n. d.). In the words of Punekar, Deodhar, and Sankaran (2004),

employee welfare is characterized as any operation carried out for the intellectual or social convenience and development of employees that is not required by the industry above and beyond the wages paid.

From these definitions, employees' welfare can be seen as the mechanism or framework established by the employer for the physical, social, environmental, and economic comfort of employees. It could also be seen in simple terms as the established framework by employers for taking care of employees. The organisation is mostly seen as a social unit characterised by a paternalistic relationship between employers and employees. The implication of this is that, employers (parent) are charged with the responsibility of taking care of their employees (child) in the organisation. In the discourse of employees' welfare, the relationship between the employer and employees could be likened to a parent-child relationship.

Recall that, employees are seen as the lifeblood of an organisation (Obisi, 2015). Due to this, it is expedient for employers to provide a work environment that allows for such indispensable asset (employees) of the organisation to be happy in the discharge of their duties. Mendis (2016) was of the viewpoint that employee welfare involves establishing minimum acceptable requirements and providing services such as food, clothes, lodging, fitness, medical assistance, insurance, recreation, and education, among others. Employees and their families, he claims, will enjoy a good social, personal, and work life as a result of these. Employee welfare is also known as labour welfare or worker welfare in the literature, etc.

2.1.1. Measures of Employee Welfare

It should be emphasized that the aim of employee welfare is to enhance the personality of workers and thereby create a more efficient workforce (Aruna & Seetha, 2019). The implementation of welfare schemes create a workforce that is efficient, satisfied and loyal. The various facilities, activities or schemes implemented for the welfare of employees is referred to as measures of employees' welfare. Mendis (2016) in his own view referred to it as dimensions of employees' welfare. There are several measures of employees' welfare. They include: housing facilities, medical facilities, loan facilities, canteen facilities, etc. (Opatha, 2009). Aruna and Seetha (2019) categorised welfare measures into intramural and extramural. According to them, intramural facilities are those provided within the organisation premises which include: canteens, library, recreations, latrines, allowances, etc. while extramural facilities are those provided by the organisation but outside work premises; for example, housing, education, transportation, etc. Other scholars like Chandrasekaran and Ganeshprabhu (2020), etc. grouped welfare into statutory and non-statutory. Statutory welfare facilities are those that are made compulsory by law for employers to provide to employees (examples include; first aid, rest rooms, drinking water, transport allowance, etc.) while non-statutory are those not compelled by law to be provided by employers for their employees. They are solely based on the discretion of the employers (examples include; flexible work arrangement, training, counselling services, etc.).

This study adopts four measures of employee welfare which are; housing facilities, occupational health and safety facilities, transport facilities, and work-life balance. Housing facilities are simply structures made available for the accommodation of employees. The availability of sufficient housing greatly contributes to the living standard of employees. As pertaining to occupational health and safety facilities, are there measures put in place for the safety of workers while carrying out their job duties? Is there any insurance for workers against occupational hazards? These are some important questions occupational health and safety facilities are about. Transport facilities on the other hand are structures put in place to ensure that employees arrive the workplace conveniently and at little or no costs. Employers might provide staff bus or transport allowance for all employees. As concerning work-life balance, it has to do with the employer creating a work arrangement in a manner where job responsibilities do not interfere with an employee's family life.

2.2. Job Satisfaction

In the field of industrial and organizational psychology, job satisfaction is one of the most studied subjects (Highhouse & Becker, 1993). This is due to the significant role it plays in organisational performance. The higher the job satisfaction of employees, the higher their commitment and the higher the overall organisational performance. Despite the widespread interest in the topic, there is no widely accepted definition of the term (Mumford, 1991). Job satisfaction, according to Locke (1976), is the good feeling an employee gets after evaluating his work experience. This means the pleasant emotional outcome a worker derives after examining his experience on the job. In the words of Islam and Hossain (2018), the degree to which an employee is pleased or contented with his or her work is referred to as job satisfaction. This definition implies the measurability of the concept. It simply refers to the perceptions and feelings of employees about their job responsibilities and work environment (Rizwan et al., n.d.). In essence, it is about the satisfaction of the need of employees in the place of work (Togia, Koustelios, & Tsigilis, 2004).

2.2.1. Types of Job Satisfaction

Kalleberg (1977) opined that job satisfaction can be broken down into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic job satisfaction is concerned with factors that greatly influence the internal feelings of an employee which end up serving as a motivation for such employee (Lee, 2017). According to Hirschfield (2000), people's thoughts regarding the quality of their work duties are referred to as intrinsic job satisfaction. It is the satisfaction that is derived from the particular job duty of an employee. Employees who are intrinsically satisfied tend to easily take up responsibilities in the organisation (Bektas, 2017). Employees who take on these roles are able to go above and beyond for the business (Xie, Zhou, Huang, & Xia, 2017). The work itself, allowance for creativity and innovation on the job, allowance for the use of individual abilities and capacities on the job, and so on are examples of factors that induce intrinsic job satisfaction. Extrinsic workplace satisfaction, on the other hand, refers to satisfaction resulting from factors outside of the employee's job responsibilities (Bektas, 2017). In the words of Shim, Lusch and O' Brien (2002), people's feelings about various aspects of their work situation that are not related to their job duties or work are referred to as extrinsic job satisfaction. It is a satisfaction derived based on the positive environmental factors associated with such job responsibility. Examples of factors that induce extrinsic job satisfaction are: work environment, technology, rewards, promotions, training opportunities, etc. Voon, Lo, Ngui, and Ayob (2011) summarised intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction as working assignment and working condition respectively.

2.2.2. Measures of Job Satisfaction

The parameters used to evaluate the degree to which workers are happy with their work are referred to as job satisfaction measures. There are several parameters by which job satisfaction can be measured. Some of them include: rewards, the job itself, training opportunities, office space, supervision, etc. As regards rewards, it is a common notion that a high paying job is one significant factor that induces job satisfaction in employees. Also, the job itself, as earlier explained, when an employee feels that he can utilise his skills and capabilities in executing tasks of a particular job position, he tends to be satisfied. Concerning training opportunities, employees tend to be satisfied when they perceive that there is opportunity for their human capital development in the organisation they find themselves. With respect to office space, having a comfortable office space to carry out the job requirements has a way of inducing satisfaction on employees. Finally, concerning supervision, an employee will not be satisfied if he perceives his superior to be hostile. His supervision has to create an atmosphere that is void of fear where creativity and innovation can thrive

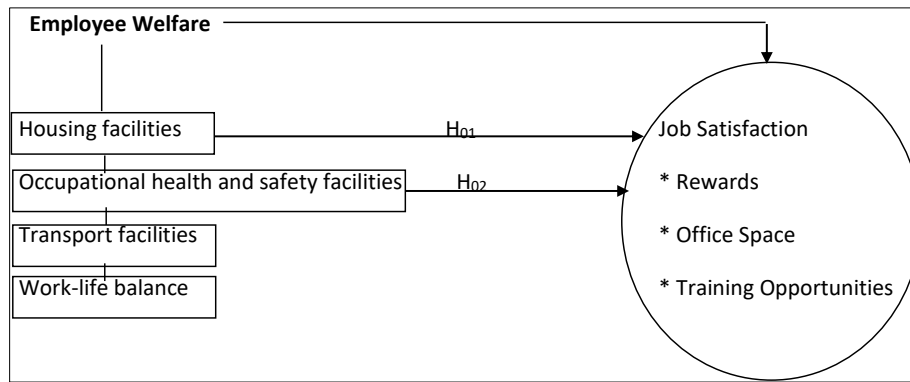
2.3. Employee Welfare and Job Satisfaction

With the advent of globalisation, competition in the business world has been seen to be on a sprint. Due to this, business organisations are daily on their toes to ensuring they are not edged out of business. And with employees being the most important asset that provides competitive advantage for organisations, several attempts are being made to ensure more commitment, retention and ultimately improved performance from them. To achieve these targets, steps must be taken to ensure that workers are happy at work. When employees are happy in their jobs, they are more loyal to the business, and vice versa. An organization characterised by absenteeism, high level of turnover, stress, burnout, etc. is as a result of job dissatisfaction (Azeem & Akhtar, 2011). Such occurrences if not properly managed by addressing the issue of job satisfaction for employees, might edge such organisation out of business.

One way of addressing the job satisfaction of employees is taking seriously the issue of their welfare. As earlier stated, welfare has to do with the framework established for the physical, environmental, social and economic comfort of employees. Every requirement that will improve both the living and working standards of employees should be provided if an organisation is to see increased commitment and improved performance from its employees. This was affirmed by Opatha (2009) who stated that the installation of welfare facilities in an organisation will positively contribute to employees' job satisfaction via employees' loyalty. This consequently reduces absenteeism which ultimately affect employee production positively. De Souza (2009) summarised the whole matter by stating that employees' welfare and their job satisfaction are of great significance to organisational efficiency and effectiveness.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

Fig. 2.1 is the conceptual framework of this study. It shows the relationship between employee welfare and job satisfaction of non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State. As shown in the diagram above, employee welfare comprises four dimensions – housing facilities, occupational health and safety facilities, transport facilities, and work-life balance while job satisfaction is seen to be measured by rewards, office space, and training opportunities. The model illustrates that the dimensions of employee welfare kind of have a relationship with job satisfaction. This shall be proven or disproven by the study's findings.



Source: Adapted from Opatha (2009)

Figure 1 Model Showing the Relationship between Employee Welfare and Job Satisfaction

2.5. Theoretical Framework

2.5.1. Social Exchange Theory

This theory was first introduced into the literature by George Homans in 1958 in his essay, "Social Behaviour as Exchange". This theory is premised on the cost-benefit analysis associated with a social relationship. A relationship is formed, maintained or terminated based on the outcomes being perceived by either party in the relationship. The theory is of the idea that individuals in a relationship seek to maximise benefits and reduce costs. If a relationship seems to be more beneficial to them, such relationship is maintained and vice versa.

The social exchange theory is relevant to this study because it provides a very good explanation for how the provision of welfare facilities induces job satisfaction for employees and further stimulates employee retention. When employees are well taken care of, they feel obligated to remain in such organisation and give their best and vice versa. Organisations that seek to have a very low turnover rate and high rate of retention should provide good welfare facilities for their employees.

2.5.2. Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow proposed the hierarchy of needs theory in 1943 in a paper titled "A Theory of Human Motivation." The theory states that human behaviour is determined by five major needs in their respective order from tangible needs to intangible needs. Physiological needs, protection needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs are among them. The physiological needs are the essential requirements of life that must be fulfilled in order to live, such as food, shelter, water, clothes, and so on. Safety needs as the name implies refer to the desire for protection from anything that could stand as a threat to life and property. Social needs arise from the desire to be emotionally attached to a person or group. It is a need to feel belonged to a social group either in a formal or informal setting. Esteem needs refer to one's desire to be valued, to be seen as dignified personality and accorded respect. It is a need that massages the ego of an individual. Self-actualisation needs which is the highest level of the Maslow's pyramid is about the desire of an individual to reach his fullest potential.

This theory is relevant to this discourse because it creates a solid foundation for organisations to understand the needs of employees in a hierarchical manner and attend to those needs based on the order so as to have a highly satisfied workforce. Every employee desires that their physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualisation needs are met by their employers. Only when these needs are met, would they feel satisfied. Hence, it is the duty of every employee to identify these needs and meet them so as to have a committed workforce for better organisational performance.

2.6. Empirical Review of Literature

In Kanpur, Srivastava (2004) examined the effect of labor welfare on employee attitudes and work satisfaction in both the private and public sectors. In carrying out this study, primary data was used. A total of 200 employees from both the private and public sectors were chosen using the incidence sampling process. Welfare practices influenced employees' attitudes toward management and job satisfaction in both industries, according to the findings. The study concluded that the satisfaction of workers stimulates positive attitudes towards their organisation which contributes to its development.

The effect of welfare on work satisfaction among non-managerial employees in Sri Lanka's apparel industry was investigated by Almeida and Perrera (2015). Primary data was used for the study and were analysed with the aid of univariate, correlation and regression analysis. The findings revealed that welfare facilities have a positive relationship with work satisfaction, leading to the conclusion that welfare facilities and job satisfaction have a strong positive relationship.

The impact of employee welfare programs on employee performance: A case study of Kenya Railways Corporation was investigated by Waititu, Kihara, and Senaji (2017). In carrying out this investigation, quantitative and qualitative data were used and were analysed using regression analysis and content analysis respectively. The quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Employee wellness programs had an impact on employee performance, according to the study's findings. The study further concluded that the implementation of welfare programmes increased the performance of employees.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative approach to answering the research questions. This is due to the fact the study adopted the philosophy of positivism. Positivism is of the idea that different phenomena in the world can be studied in an objective and quantifiable way. Furthermore, the study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive research design and made use of survey method in collecting data via the use of a close-ended structured questionnaire. Only Pearson's correlation methods were used in analysing the data. In determining the sample, Cochran's (1963) formula was used. This was because the researchers could not gain access to the population figure of non-academic staff in the four universities in Ekiti State. As a result, a sample of 384 non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State was used. Simple random sampling technique was used to select sample members.

The data collection instrument was divided into two segments. The first segment focuses on the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, marital status, education, faith, ethnicity, and employment duration. While the second segment relates with the variables of the study's topic. Sections B, C, and D make up the second segment. Housing facilities, workplace health and safety facilities, transportation facilities, and work-life balance are among the 12 questionnaire elements in Section B that pertain to employees' well-being. Section C, on the other hand contains 7 items relating to job satisfaction while section D contains 4 items pertaining to suggested welfare focus areas for the college. All questionnaire items were put on a 3-point Likert Scale starting with section B: 1- Accept, 2-Indecisive, 3-Disagree.

4. Results

Having administered the research instrument to the study's respondents, only 302 properly responded, indicating a response rate of 78.65%. Concerning the outcome of the field survey, and with regards to the socio-demographic features of the respondents, more female staff (54.5%) participated in the study than male (45.5%) and also showed that most of the staff are married (90.9%) and of the least age of 31 years. Moreover, pertaining to their education, a higher fraction (72.7%) of the respondents have a B.Sc. degree while concerning religion, 90.9% of the respondents are Christians. In the aspects of ethnicity and employment duration, 81.8% of respondents are Yorubas and 54.5% of the entire respondents have an employment duration of at least 2 years with the firm.

Table 1 Correlation between Employee Welfare and Job Satisfaction

Correlations			
		Employees Welfare	Job Satisfaction
Employees Welfare	Pearson Correlation	1	0.580
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.041
	N	302	302
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.580	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.061	
	N	302	302

The correlation coefficient between employee welfare and job satisfaction is shown in Table 4.1 above. In the table below, Pearson correlation coefficient was seen to be at 0.580. This value indicates a moderately positive relationship existing between the variables. This suggests that improving employee welfare would lead to a moderate increase in employee job satisfaction. Moreover, based on the fact that the p-value is lesser than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. This therefore implies that, a relationship truly exists between employee welfare and job satisfaction among non-academic staff of universities in Ekiti State.

The relationship between housing facilities and job satisfaction is depicted in Table 4.2. In the table, Pearson's correlation coefficient is seen to be at 0.160. This depicts a very weak positive correlation between housing facilities and job satisfaction. The implication of this statement is that an increase in housing facilities will lead to a very little increase in job satisfaction. To ascertain whether to accept or reject the second research hypothesis, the p-value is looked at. Since the p-value is lesser than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis would be rejected. This means, housing facilities have a relationship with job satisfaction of non-academic staff of Universities in Ekiti State.

As regards welfare areas the universities should focus on, 90.9% both agreed that adequate provision for transportation should be made and that attention should be paid to their occupational safety while 100% agreed that the issue of their work-life balance should be paid attention to.

Table 2 Correlation between Housing Facilities and Job Satisfaction

Correlations			
		Housing Facilities	Job Satisfaction
Housing Facilities	Pearson Correlation	1	0.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.008
	N	302	302
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.160	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.638	
	N	302	302

5. Discussion of Findings

The results show that among non-academic workers of universities in Ekiti State, there is a moderately positive relationship between employee welfare and job satisfaction. This means that both variables tend to move in the same direction. The implication of this is that when a bit more attention is paid to employees' welfare, employees tend to get a bit more satisfied. Although the degree of change caused by paying attention to employees welfare was seen to be moderate, this finding is consistent with those of Sathyanarayan and Reddy (2012), Madusanka and Perrera (2016).

Also, the study found out that housing facilities have a (very weak) positive relationship with job satisfaction. This result is similar to those of Srimannarayana and Srinivas (2005) and Sathyanarayan and Reddy (2012). Furthermore, it shows that both variables move in same direction but a change in one causes a very weak change in the other. In the event where the college pays more attention to housing facilities for its non-academic staff, it will only trigger a minute increase in the job satisfaction of employees. Employees would just feel a little bit satisfied. This means that housing is not really an issue or concern for non-academic staff of the universities, and as a result, attention should not be paid only to the provision of housing facilities for employees but to other aspects of welfare.

As pertaining to the welfare areas the college should focus on for the employees, the study revealed transportation, occupational safety facilities, and work-life balance to be the areas of serious concern most especially that of work-life balance. Every respondent agreed with the fact that work should not interfere with personal life activities and family time. Hence, it is pertinent for the universities to look into that area and ensure there is a good work-life balance.

6. Conclusion and Limitation of the Study

Having examined collected data, findings of the research showed that a moderately positive relationship exists between employees' welfare and job satisfaction. It was also discovered that there is a very weak positive relationship between housing facilities and work satisfaction and showed welfare areas the universities should focus on like, work-life balance, transportation facilities, etc. Quantitative approach was used in achieving the study's objectives and data was analysed with the aid of Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The study recommended that the universities pay more attention to their employees welfare for increased job satisfaction so as to attain the ultimate goal of increased performance. Preference should be given to work-life balance, transportation, and occupational safety. These would greatly satisfy the employees and increase their commitment. However, this study possesses a limitation. The study made use of only quantitative method, and this means that the study is unable to gather in-depth information about the phenomenon of interest.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors want to make it clear that none of them have any conflicts of interest.

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