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IMPACT OF CHARACTER ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

The impact of character on an employee in an organization affects the employee positively or negatively, in which case it may increase or decrease the productivity level in the university system. Motivation is internal drive for action. University is that level of education obtained after secondary school. The employee as a human resource is very paramount in the achievement of the organizational goals. When these employees are well motivated with good character from the employer in the university system, it will bring about increased productivity and team work from the unit level to management level of teaching and non-teaching staff. The good relationship the head creates with his positive character will enable the employee and various heads put in more effort in the organization. In situations where the employee is not recognized, appreciated or trained and retrained on the job, no fringe benefits and job security provided, no career advancement and promotions, bad attitude from employer and bad policies from management, etc., the workplace will be an unfavourable environment for the employee in the university system. This will tantamount to chaos and the goals of the organization would not be achieved. The paper concluded that human resource department and management should treat their employee as human beings and not as slaves. There should be cordial relationship between the employee from various units to management level. Top management should find out and know their employees' personal challenges and proffer solutions to them. Money is not everything. An employee satisfied with his work and his coworkers will be a productive one. The way forward is that: the employee should be recognized, appreciated, trained and retrained on the job and there should be fringe benefits, job security, career advancement and promotions, good attitude from employer and policies that will favour the employee in the University system.

Keywords: Impact, Character, Employee, Motivation, Universities.

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INTRODUCTION

The impact of character on an employee in an organization can affect the employee either positively or negatively, in which case it may increase or decrease the productivity level in the university system. In the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the word impact is defined as the effect or influence that an event, situation etc. has on someone or something. In the Cambridge dictionary, it is the particular combination of qualities in a person or place that makes them different from others. In the Businessdictionary.com (2019), an employee is an individual who works part-time or full-time under a contract of employment, whether oral or written, express or implied, and has recognized rights and duties. Motivation is an internal drive for action. University is that level of education obtained after secondary school. The employee as a human resource is very paramount in the achievement of the organizational goals. The human resource is the most vital of all resources among other factors of production and the human capital is what distinguishes one organization from the other (Maimuna & Rashad, 2013). When these employees are well motivated with good character from the employer in the university system, it will bring about increased productivity and team work from the unit level to management level of teaching and non-teaching staff.

The good relationship the head creates with his positive character will enable the employee and various heads put in more effort in the organization. Failure to build such relationships in any organization will have an adverse effect on members of the workforce which may lead to productivity gaps (Vineet, Sinha & Bajaj, 2013) for the employee in the university system which will be tantamount to chaos and the goals of the organization would not be achieved. The impact of bad character on employees has an effect on individual decision-making and performance as well as on feelings of well-being which determines the productivity of the employees. The impact can also cause mistrust on the part of employees, resulting in decrease of employee motivation to work. The behavior of the employer will affect the productivity and work output of coworkers and the organization. When the administrators lead with a negative attitude of command and control, it will bring about decrease in productivity.

Staff are more motivated to achieve the goals of the organization while the administrators and management lead by example. The administrator is the executive head which carries out tasks and executes and implements the policies to achieve the objectives and goals of the organization. An administrator is described as an executive head of his organization (Jaiyeoba, 2006). He may be seen as a coordinator who organizes activities and programmes in such a way that those tasks or duties assigned to people will be done well, quickly and efficiently. The administrator gives orders and disciplines his staff in order to achieve maximum outcomes. The way and manner through which he accomplishes this is by carrying out carefully cooperative plans which must be done on time and enlist the support of those concerned in order to achieve objectives (Cited in Unachukwu & Okorji, 2016).

Ahmad and Oranye (2010) considered organizational commitment as an individual's emotional, rational and moral commitment to the goals and ideals of an organization that he or she belongs to, whatever may be the source of this feeling of commitment. Organizational commitment refers to an individual's loyalty or bond to his or her organization (George and Sabapathy, 2011). In situations where the employee is not recognized, appreciated, nor trained and retrained on the job, no fringe benefits and job security, no career advancement and promotions, bad attitude from employer and bad policies from management, the workplace will be an unfavourable environment for the employee in the university system which will be

tantamount to chaos and the goals of the organization would not be achieved. Employee motivation must have a benefit to both the management and employers of the organization.

The management aims to gain the trust and good service of its employees; therefore, the aims of employee motivation are:

To make employees content or satisfied with their job

An organization that wants to be successful has to ensure that its staff are satisfied with their jobs. This means that the organization has to provide a comfortable environment for work and incentives like free healthcare, promotions, flexible working hours, etc. An employee that is satisfied with his job will do what he can to improve his position in the organization by working harder. An organization that provides good motivation will make the staff see themselves as a family. They will then work together to increase organization performance and success.

To increase the performance of the staff

An organization that has staff that are well motivated will have increased performance. The staff would like to keep their position in the organization because they are very comfortable with its benefits and they will also strive for higher positions because they are assured that there will be increased rewards. Therefore, the staff will ensure they put in more hours in their work and put in their best to make the organization successful because they see the organization and their coworkers as family and would want everyone's happiness.

Increasing Employees Enthusiasm, Zeal and Dedication for Work

Every organization strives for success and the workers play a key role in this. The organization that provides a suitable environment for workers to do their jobs will have dedicated employees. This means workers will be comfortable in the workplace, content and devoted to their work. An employee who loves his job will be willing to sacrifice a lot for it and that is the kind of employee that will contribute to the profit of the organization. This employee will give good customer service even if customers are rude or unreasonable, he will be able to attract and retain customers and customers would always prefer his services. The organization will benefit greatly from an employee like that. Some importance of motivation are as follows:

- **It improves worker's enthusiasm for work:** In a job where there is high motivation, workers are willing to put in more effort to work. The employees thus become more creative, hardworking and they are willing to work extra hours. This means there will be increased performance, productivity, higher profit and customer satisfaction.
- **Decrease in loss of workers:** In a motivated work environment, there would be no need for side jobs and the staff would struggle to improve their position because the organization is the only place that they can be comfortable in. Workers would not feel the need to resign or complain about job dissatisfaction. There would even be more people seeking employment because of how good the job is for others.
- **It improves the quality of work:** The motivation improves the efficiency level of employees which means the employees start performing the job to the best of their abilities with minimum wastage of time and resources because motivated employees

always go for best utilization of resources. The motivation bridges the gap between the ability to work and willingness to work and willingness always improves efficiency.

It creates a suitable environment for work relations and work performance

In a motivated work environment, workers are united and see one another as family. There is cooperation, good relationship, support and good sportsmanship in the case of a competitive project.

It helps in meeting set goals of the organization

The staff that are well motivated would put in time and effort to ensure that they meet the organization expectations and even work harder to surpass it.

Problems of employee motivation in university

In situations where the employee is not motivated by employers, it could resort to the following problems:

Lack of training and retraining on the job

Training refers to arming your employees with more skills and knowledge on how best to perform their jobs or improve the skills they already have. When an organization does not provide training, the employees will remain stagnant in knowledge and others would have an edge over them. Training refers to “the systematic accretion of skills, command, concepts or mindset leads to improve performance” (Lazazzara & Bombelli, 2011). Commeiras, Loubes and Bories (2013) pointed out that traineeship is continuing to grow.

The unfair treatment from superiors

In an organization where staff of higher authority undermine their subordinates and treat them unfairly, the staff would use their anger to perform their duties and there would be chaos in the organization.

No incentives to encourage workers

Incentives are like benefits derived from having a job. These could be healthcare benefits, provision of living quarters, free transportation, child allowance, bonus salary etc. These incentives make the job easier for the employee. One of the most persuasive incentives is the monetary incentive and staff would work harder when they are that aware they will receive more money. Park (2010) provides that monetary incentive acts as a stimulus for greater action and inculcates zeal and enthusiasm toward work, it helps an employee in recognition of achievement. Beretti, Figuières and Grolleau (2013) discussed that monetary incentives are used to build a positive environment and maintain a job interest, which inconsistent among the employee and offer a spur or zeal in the employees for better performance. When an employee is not provided with incentives to make his work more comfortable, there are chances he will quit his job.

Lack of Job satisfaction

When an employee is not satisfied with his job, he will not be able to contribute to his job properly. In 2011, Parvin and Kabir described job satisfaction as how content an individual is with his or her job, and concluded that job satisfaction is not the same as motivation, although clearly linked. Similarly, Pantouvakis and Bouranta (2013) indicated job satisfaction as a consequence of physical features and as an antecedent of interactive features. An individual with this situation will either quit his job or get a side job to compensate for what they are lacking in the first job; whether it be better pay, more respect etc.

No provision for promotions

In a job where there is no promotion available, employees would not feel like they've fulfilled their purpose in the organization. Promotions are seen as rewards for good performance over extensive periods of time and if an employee who is hardworking never receives promotions, they will not enjoy the job. Garcí'a, Moscoso and Ramos (2012) identified that perceptions of promotion systems affect organizational justice and job satisfaction. Regular promotions are necessary for job satisfaction and if they are not provided, employees are dissatisfied. Koch and Nafziger (2012) specified that promotions are desirable for most employees, only because they work harder to compensate for their "incompetence."

Unfriendly coworkers

In an organization, employees have to work together to achieve the organization's goals and if they decide to treat each other unfairly the work environment will be unstable, chaotic and unproductive. Cummins (2010) stated that employees who have a decent affiliation with their fellow workers are usually prosperous and very productive in the workplace even when their jobs are very stressful. Workers see each other as family and treat each other with respect making the job easier. Mayo, Sanchez, Pastor and Rodriguez (2012) as well agreed that co-worker support is vital in aiding productivity in the workplace. In an unfriendly workplace, success is not guaranteed for the organization.

Bad work environment

If a work environment is unstable i.e. messy, noisy, disorganized, etc., a worker may not be comfortable with his work. A favorable work setting guarantees the well-being of workers which invariably will encourage them to apply themselves to their responsibilities with a high level of morale which may transform into higher productivity (Akinyele, 2007). He pointed out some elements that constitute a bad work environment; lack of transparency in management, biased managers, administrative policies, work conditions, interpersonal affiliations and compensation. Yesufu (2000) claimed that the kind of condition a worker is subjected to physically in the work place is significant to output.

Poor Working conditions

Poor working conditions are stressful and make a job more difficult. Jung and Kim (2012), stated that good working environment and good working conditions can increase employee job

satisfaction and an employee organizational commitment. Similarly, Cheng Chen, Chen, Burr and Hasselhorn (2013), concluded that there were evidences of moderating effects of age on the associations between psychosocial work conditions and health. Poor working conditions can make the workers ill and unable to perform their jobs well.

Lack of appreciation

Mahazril, Zuraini, Hafizah, Aminuddin, Zakaria and Noordin (2012) indicated that organizations have the duty to appreciate their employees from time to time and offer other forms of benefits such as payment, which will help in employee motivation. In an organization where there is little to no appreciation from superiors, workers feel underappreciated and would have no reason to want to perform their jobs properly if there is no acknowledgement or approval of their work. Likewise, Kingira and Mescib (2010) define appreciation as the abstract of immaterial incentives; “employees giving immaterial incentives (appreciation, respect, etc.) as much as materiel incentives with working department” shows employees do not agree with this behavioral statement.

Job security

Job security is the assurance that a worker’s job condition will keep improving over time. According to Yamamoto (2013), if an employee perceives they will be getting rewards for good work and their job is a secured one, the performance will automatically be better. When there is no job security, there would be no reason to work harder. Zhang and Wu (2004) indicated that with job security, an employee gets confident with the future career and they put their most efforts to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Employee Motivation

Employee Motivation is a widely practiced exercise now across all organizational sectors, the idea of motivation is derived from a Latin word “movere” which means “to move” and motivation is what moves the employees from weariness to attention (Mohsan, Nawaz, Khan, Shaukat, & Aslam, 2004). Employee motivation is therefore an organizations way of making staff more comfortable and easy to operate in.

Strategies for motivating employees in the university system

Tella, Ayeni and Popoola (2007) stated the strategies of motivating workers as follows:

Salary, Wages and Conditions of Service: Personnel managers must consider four major components of a salary structures. These are the job rate, which relates to the importance the organization attaches to each job; payment, which encourages workers or groups by rewarding them according to their performance; personal or special allowances, associated with factors such as scarcity of particular skills or certain categories of information professionals or librarians, or with long service; and fringe benefits such as holidays with pay, pensions, and so on.

Money: This is done through the process of rewarding employees for higher productivity by instilling fear of loss of job (e.g., premature retirement due to poor performance). The desire to be promoted and earn enhanced pay may also motivate workers.

Staff Training: Staff training is a substantial strategy for motivating employees.

Information Availability and Communication: Information availability brings to bear a strong peer pressure, where two or more people running together will run faster than when running alone or running without awareness of the pace of the other runners. By sharing information, subordinates compete with one another. Today organizations from all around the world struggle to motivate its employees in order to survive and compete in dynamic organizational environment successfully as motivation puts the human resource into action, improves level of efficiency of employees, enables the organizations to attain sustainable competitive advantage and ultimately leads to attain organizational goals (Mohsan, Nawaz, Khan, Shaukat, & Aslam, 2004).

Consequences of motivation on employees in the university

It may seem that something as positive as employee motivation will have no flaws but there are several negative effects that arise because of it. Failure to build such relationships in any organization will have an adverse effect on members of the workforce which may lead to productivity gaps (Vineet, Sinha & Bajaj, 2013).

- **There could be employee rivalry**

Employees could feel envious of their coworkers because they are receiving some benefits or more benefits that is usually given to others. This could cause gossip, resentment, arguments, physical brawls, conspiracy against fellow coworkers etc. which is not suitable for a work atmosphere. This could result in chaos in the workplace and no work would be real work progress achieved.

- **Employees only seek the benefits they derive from their work without real interest in their jobs:**

When there are benefits the employees can gain from work they only go to work for them that is things like free Wi-Fi, healthcare benefits, childcare allowance, promotions, etc. will be the only things on the workers minds and they will take advantage of these benefits without focusing on the real work. In schools, the salary bonus may be the focus of the lecturers and they would use any means to achieve it without consideration of their work ethics or the students' wellbeing. Workers may use underhanded tactics to outdo their colleagues or manipulate their work output and this would disorganize the workplace stability and performance.

CONCLUSION

The paper concluded that the human resource department and management should treat their employees as human beings and not as slaves. There should be a cordial relationship between the employee from various units to the management level. Top management should find out and

know their employees' personal challenges and proffer solutions to them. Money is not everything. An employee satisfied with his work and his coworkers will be a productive one. Employee motivation is necessary to promote the success of an organization. It leads to productivity, high performance and eventually greater profit for the organization. Employee-management relationship can contribute to the progress of the organization. Where there is no such relationship, the university system may be characterized by chaotic elements and can bring about low productivity.

The Way forward to Motivate Employees in the University

For the university to improve on the aspect of motivation of employees, the following solutions can serve as a way forward:

- The employee should be recognized, appreciated, trained and retrained on the job.
- There should be fringe benefits, job security, career advancement and promotions, good attitude from employer and policies that will favour the employee in the university system.
- There should be a cordial relationship among employees, co-workers and the management to bring about increase in productivity.
- The employee should be having meetings with his/her staff every morning before the start of the day and closing to discuss the progress of the organization and commend good work behaviour.
- An employer should celebrate important events/occasions such as birthday celebrations, marriages, etc. of employees. He should also be there for them in times of loss of loved ones.
- During meetings, the opinions of the employee should neither be cut short nor should his ideas be looked down upon. There should be cross fertilization of ideas in the organization.
- Communication should be a day watchword from the employer to the employee on regular basis to make the organization work out effectively.
- There should be a good interpersonal relationship between the employer and employee, how often do you as an employer greet, hug and or shake your employee's hand in the work place in order to motivate him or her?
- There should be a reward for hard work and honesty.
- Employers provide a good working environment and facilities and equipment for your employee to work with in order to motivate him or her to achieve the objectives and goals of the organization.
- An employee should be encouraged to be attending seminars and conference with adequate financial support to motivate the workers.
- The management should encourage their staff to work as a team.
- An employer should not use provocative words or foul words on his employee, where the employee has done something wrong, the employer should just call him or her to order.
- Recognition, appreciation, job security. Train and retrain, factor technological factor, Career, Advancement, Promotion, Good policies.

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