
EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN AKWA IBOM STATE CIVIL SERVICE

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Abstract

Human resources are crucial to organizational success, yet many organizations struggle with managing productivity effectively, leading to significant losses. In Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, the welfare of civil servants has often been neglected, resulting in widespread feelings of demotivation, particularly among lower and middle-ranking employees. Issues such as low morale, job dissatisfaction, and frustration have emerged, exacerbated by inconsistencies in reward and motivation policies. The existing reward system has been criticized for its inadequacy in motivating the workforce, compounded by the government's failure to provide timely staff allowances, gratuities, and equitable promotions. These challenges have denigrated the image of civil servants, making the profession less appealing and prompting many to seek alternative employment. This study employed descriptive research designs. The population of this study consisted of civil servants in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. Data for the study were collected through focused group discussion and documentary evidence. Content analysis was adopted for data analysis. The findings revealed that poor training opportunities, irregular promotions, non-payment of fringe benefits, and unattractive salary structures significantly hinder employee performance. Addressing issues of poor compensation, delayed promotions, and inadequate training, the study recommended among others transparent promotion practices, timely payment of benefits, and reviewing salary structures to align with market standards, to foster a more motivated and effective workforce.

Keywords: Employee Motivation, Work Performance, Civil Service, Organizational Productivity

Introduction

Human resources are a critical factor of production in any organization, significantly influencing its success or failure. The accomplishment of any organization hinges on the level of motivation of its employees and the leaders proficiency in motivation techniques. Effective management and motivation of these resources are vital, as they directly impact organizational performance (Umoh, 2021). Employee motivation involves the actions and processes employed by various organizations to recognize and reward performance, with the aim of motivating employees at both individual and group levels. To thrive in today's competitive environment, organizations must not only recruit and retain productive employees, but also create conditions that foster their motivation to enhance performance (Idris, 2020). If organizations can motivate employees to become effective problem solvers and to meet or exceed customer expectations, then the organizational goals and objectives can be realized (Harvard Press, 2012). This practice is considered an integral part of human resource management approach aimed at managing people and supporting the achievement of organizational strategy by emphasizing the value of employees and their accomplishments. Increased motivation creates the conditions for a more effective workforce, however, because work motivation is an interactive process between workers and their work environment, good management and supervision are still critical factors in reaching organizational goals (Hornby and Sidney, 2009). An organisation cannot function efficiently without motivating its workers and building of motivating factors into roles in the organization, since the entire process of leading people must be built on

knowledge of motivation (Koontz and Werhrich, 2006). It is on this basis that Chowdhury (2007) described motivation as an internal strength that drives individuals to pull off personal and organizational goals.

Unfortunately, many organizations struggle with productivity levels that fall short of expectations, leading to considerable losses attributed to poor workforce management (Bassey& Udo, 2020).

In Akwa Ibom State, the welfare of civil servants has often been overlooked, despite its essential role in the state's socioeconomic development. Civil servants, especially those in lower and middle-ranking positions, have expressed feelings of demotivation over the years. Issues such as frustration, low morale, and job dissatisfaction have become widespread within the civil service due to inconsistencies in organizational policies related to rewards and motivation (Udo, 2022). Additionally, the exclusion of employees from long service award programme has further intensified these sentiments.

The existing reward system has faced criticism for failing to effectively motivate the workforce, leading to ongoing demotivation due to inadequate motivational packages. The Akwa Ibom State government's inability to settle staff allowances and gratuities, coupled with delayed promotions that do not provide corresponding financial benefits, contribute significantly to employee apathy and a reluctance to exert maximum effort (Akpan, 2023). Consequently, the societal image of civil servants has been tarnished, making the profession less appealing and prompting many to seek alternative means of livelihood.

Moreover, civil servants have been accused of lacking seriousness in their duties, a perception fuelled by inconsistent governmental policies, including non-payment of allowances, inadequate training methods, embezzlement of pension funds, and exclusion from long service awards. These factors undoubtedly play a significant role in their poor performance and productivity (Nsikan & Daniel, 2021). Given these substantial challenges, this study aims to assess how the lack of attractive motivational packages affects job performance within the Akwa Ibom State civil service. This has raised the following questions: Does irregular promotion of staff demoralized workers attitude to work in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service? How does non-payment of fringe benefits negatively affect job performance in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service?

It is the objective of this work to examine how irregular promotion demoralized workers' attitude to work in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service as well as to examine how non- payment of fringe benefits affect job performance in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

Motivation is a management process, which encourages people to work better for the overall benefit of the organization, by providing them motives, which are based on their unfulfilled needs (Mbogo, 2013). To Horenstein (2012), motivation is believed to be; an entity that compels one to action. Building on this, Scott (2007) defines motivation as the processes governing an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward achieving a particular goal. Albeit (2015) views motivation as an encompassing term representing drives, desires, needs, wishes, and similar forces, all directed towards fulfilling a want or goal. In essence, motivation signifies the drive towards an outcome. Oldham and Hackman (2010) posits that motivation is the energizing force compelling and sustaining behaviour, maintaining that human behaviour is inherently goal-directed. Daft (2021), added that motivation is the force that stimulates, controls and maintains behaviour inside and outside the individual. In Daft and Noah, a person's motivation affects, arouse, energizes and sustains behaviour, although these behaviours do not necessarily lead to reward or diminished behaviour in the workplace

According to Anne and Barry (2005), motivation refers to the amount of effort a person puts in to do something. James and Stoner (2009) suggested that motivation can be seen as the psychological characteristics of a person that contribute to the determination to achieve a goal. It contains several

elements that cause, control and maintain specific human behaviour. He added that motivation is one of many components that influence the level of efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

Motivation could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is driven by an individual's innate interest and enjoyment in the tasks associated with their job. It arises from within the individual and is not reliant on external pressures. Research indicates that intrinsic motivation is often linked to job satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment. Workers are likely to be intrinsically motivated if they attribute their job performance to factors under their own control, believe in their ability to achieve desired goals, and are interested in mastering specific tasks rather than simply performing them mechanically (Prasad, 2005).

Basically, Hoyle, (2000) identify three types of intrinsic motivation. These include: engaging in activities for the inherent satisfaction they provide, such as pursuing hobbies within a work context; undertaking tedious tasks that are not inherently enjoyable, but bring a sense of accomplishment upon completion, such as meeting a work deadline and acting in compliance with standards for their intrinsic value, such as ethical standards or commitment to group members.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation originates from external factors outside of the individual. Examples of extrinsic motivations include rewards like monetary incentives, coercion, and the threat of punishment. It involves engaging in activities to attain outcomes that are distinct from the activities themselves. In a professional context, extrinsic motivation may manifest as the desire to fulfill needs or goals that are separate from the work tasks, such as using work as a means to earn money (Smith and Reinow, 2011). Well-known examples of extrinsic motivation include monetary rewards, benefit packages, bonuses, and organized activities (Armstrong, 2012).

Job Performance deals with the knowledge of what activities and outputs are designed, observing whether they occur and providing feedback to help employees meet expectation. To Omollo (2015), it is a degree of accomplishment of task(s) that make up an employee's job. However, the concept is associated with quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence or attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed and effectiveness of work completed (Pinder,2008). To Frank and Gregory (2004), job performance is measured in terms of productivity, job satisfaction, turnover and absenteeism. Employee's job performance is about the timely, effective and efficient completion of mutually agreed tasks by the employee, as set out by the employer. Abonyi (2007) agreed that when conceptualizing performance, one has to differentiate between an action (i.e., behavioural) aspect and an outcome aspect of performance. Zamer and Faraji (2014) state that employee job performance is the result of a combined employee ability, motivation and workplace environment. Collaboratively, Okereke and Daniel (2010) also added that employee job performance is a consequence of effectiveness and efficiency of the employees, while Chaudhary and Sharma (2012) posit that employee job performance is that which a worker can produce with the least amount of effort. To Ali and Anwar (2021), employee performance is a collection of behaviours that may be analysed, gauged, and assessed in terms of individual achievement. It is a measurable and quantifiable accomplishment. This can be measured by using a combination of quality, quantity, time, and cost (Bhatia and Jain, 2012).

Indicators of Job Performance

Job performance within Nigeria's civil service is a multifaceted issue, involving several key indicators that reflect the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of work delivered by civil servants. As of recent studies and reports, these indicators can be categorized into the areas of efficiency and productivity (NBS (2023), work quality (World Bank, 2023), service delivery, (Public Service Delivery Index, 2024). compliance and adherence to policies as well as innovation and initiative (Nigerian Civil Service Handbook 2023). Others are innovation and initiative, team work and collaboration as well as Professional

development and learning (Annual Civil Service Performance Report 2023). Onah (2008) emphasizes that job performance is dependent on ability, environment, and motivation. Ability refers to the skills and intellectual capabilities necessary for job performance, forming the foundation for productivity. Environment on the other hands encompasses the materials and tools available for completing tasks, including physical infrastructure and technological resources, which significantly influence productivity levels. While Motivation is described as the driving force behind behaviour in alignment with organizational goals, managers must prioritize motivating employees to achieve high performance levels. He proposes a relationship among these factors, summarized in the equation: $P = F(M + A + E)$, where P represents performance, M is motivation, A is ability, and E is the environment. Anyim, Elegbede, and Gbajumo (2011) further stress that for organizations to achieve high performance, employees must be motivated to do their jobs, possess the necessary abilities, and have access to the right materials. A deficiency in any of these areas can adversely affect overall productivity.

Empirical Literature Review

Mbogo (2018) carried out a study on impact of motivation on employee performance in public services in Ilala Municipality, Tanzania. The study explores survey and descriptive research designs. Data were drawn from both primary and secondary source. The primary sources include questionnaires, interview, and FGD, while the secondary sources include text books, journals, symposium among others. The hypotheses raised for the study were test with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Studies in order to find the significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Tanzania. The major finding of the study revealed among others that there was no significant relationship between motivation and teachers' job performance as teachers' performance was influenced by many factors in Ilala Municipality, Tanzania. Base on the finding, the study recommended that public servants in Tanzania should be motivated through implementation of attracting fringe benefits as well as providing enabling work environment for high productivity and performance.

Mruma (2019) carried out a study on the effect of motivational factors on teacher's performance in Tanzania education institutions in Nyamagana District. The objective of the study was to examine the extent to which teachers are motivated in Tanzania' public schools. Survey and historical research methods were adopted. The primary data gathered were evaluated and tested with the aid of statistical instrument through simple percentage. Federick Hersberg tow's factor theory was adopted as a theoretical framework. The finding of the study revealed among others that teachers' underperformance and poor productivity in Tanzania is significantly linked to inadequate and poor reward system adopted by the Tanzania government. Hence, based on the finding, the study recommended for effective and attracting reward system that will incorporate the interest of the public school teachers for high productivity.

Bushiri (2019) carried out a survey on the impact of working environment on employee's performance at Institute of Finance Management in Dar es salaam. The study adopted Abraham Maslow theory of needs as a theoretical framework. Primary and secondary sources of data were explored to elicit information from the respondents. The major finding of the study revealed among others that there was positive relationship between working environment and employees' performance. Hence, it was recommended that the management of the institute should put mechanism on ground to ensure workers friendly work environment in order to boost employees' morale and attitudes towards jobs.

Zamerand Faraji, (2018), commenced the study on the role of motivation on employee work performance in public organisation at National Development Corporation using correlation to analyse data and found strong relationship between motivation and employee performance. Abraham Maslow theory of need was adopted as a theoretical framework. The major findings of the study revealed among others that

poor motivational method adopted in rewarding workers in National Development Corporation significantly contributed to poor productivity in the council. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that, government should provide an atmosphere for the attainment of high productivity by promoting staff as and when due, adopting reward and leave system. Hence this will in turn give employees a feeling of satisfaction and boost their morale towards job performance.

Tom, Ebong and Utok (2023) carried out a study on reward administration and workers' performance in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. The study argued that willingness of staff to work in organizations however depends on motivation and how well the management integrates their interest and needs with the objectives of the organization. The study adopted both descriptive and empirical research method. The major findings of the paper revealed among others that poor performance of workers in Akwa Ibom Civil Service was attributed to poor salary packages, non-availability of necessary allowances, inadequate in-service training and poor working conditions. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that the government should develop the most suitable incentives and good reward packages which could be financial and non-financial to enhance workers' performance in all ministries and departments for efficiency and productivity.

Theoretical Framework

To give this work a scientific base, the authors adopted Expectancy Theory developed by Victor Vroom in 1964 as a theoretical framework. Accordingly, the main argument being advanced by the theory is that people choose a particular behaviour among others, because they believe that such behaviour will attract desirable results while other behaviours will attract undesirable results (Vroom 1964). Based on this, workers will be well motivated to perform highly if they believe that such a performance will lead to a desirable outcome, which they highly value. Hellriegel and Slocum (1996) see Vroom's Expectancy model as resting on three basic assumptions. Forces within individuals and in their job, situations combine to motivate and determine behaviour

Organizational researchers have often used this theory to explain how an organization's investments in human resource (HR) activities and the organizational environment will elicit positive attitudes and behaviour (GouldWilliams 2007; Gould Williams and Davies2005; McClean and Collins 2011; Van deVoorde, Paauwe, and Marc 2012). On the basis, employees who positively value HR activities will reciprocate through showing attitudes and behaviours that are valued by the organization (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Valerie 1990; Gould Williams 2007; Van De Voorde, Paauwe, and Marc 2012). Expectancy theory assumes that people need both ability and motivation to perform well and that if either ability or motivation is zero there will be no effective performance. Vroom also pioneered expectancy theory which, as developed by Porter and Lawler (1968), proposes that high individual performance depends on high motivation plus possession of the necessary skills and abilities and an appropriate role and understanding of that role. In applying the theory to the work, the practical utility of Vroom's theory for managing civil servants in Akwa Ibom is significant. To improve motivation and performance, managers should clearly link rewards to performance. When civil servants achieve their goals, whether in terms of completing projects or meeting set targets, they should be appropriately rewarded with promotions, recognition, or other benefits. Ivancevich *et al.* (1994) outline specific ways in which managers can apply Expectancy Theory to enhance motivation in organizations; identification of desired outcomes for employees, elimination of performance barriers, clarification and communication of the connection between performance and rewards and fostering intrinsic motivation.

Methodology

The study adopted Descriptive research design. This involves exploration of documentary evidence from published materials. The work also makes use of focus group discussion, which helped the researchers to gather added information from the discussant to make the work more authentic

Findings/Discussion

Motivation and Employees' Performance in Organization

The productivity of any organization largely depends on employee job performance and the overall organizational environment. While organizational performance is measured by the achievement of objectives and the effective implementation of plans, job performance reflects the individual output of employees. According to Malaolu and Ogbuabor (2013), high job performance is contingent on how well employees are motivated.

Financial incentives, such as fair wages, play a significant role in driving employee motivation and performance, especially in production-oriented companies where money is essential for meeting personal needs (Sara, Locke, & Luthans, 2014). However, while initial increases in pay may enhance productivity, research indicates that the long-term impact of financial rewards on performance is limited (Whitley, 2012). Additionally, an overemphasis on financial incentives can lead to a detrimental focus on monetary gains rather than a holistic approach to job satisfaction and productivity.

Non-financial motivators such as recognition, rewards, and performance feedback also contribute positively to employee motivation and job satisfaction, ultimately enhancing performance. Effective management employs various rewards, including pay, promotions, and bonuses, to motivate employees and improve organizational effectiveness. Managers must develop salary structures that reflect job significance, individual performance, and special allowances to maximize the motivating potential of compensation (Salfiya & Mahroof, 2011). Moreover, fostering trust and effective leadership is crucial for motivating employees and achieving organizational goals. Clear communication between management and employees is necessary to reduce ambiguity and boost productivity. Performance evaluations play a vital role in assessing productivity, with strategies like bonuses and recognition serving to reinforce motivation (Inyang & Esu, 2012). Armstrong (2006) emphasizes that fair and consistent compensation systems are essential for enhancing organizational and individual performance.

Compensation is a core aspect of the employment contract, acting as a primary motivator for employee engagement. Differentiated compensation based on performance and skills encourages employees to enhance productivity (Horenstein, 2012). Sola and Ajayi (2013) maintain that comprehensive compensation packages nurture employee satisfaction and productivity, demonstrating a clear link between compensation, motivation, and performance levels. Ultimately, while adequate compensation positively influences productivity, inadequate compensation can lead to reduced motivation and performance.

Promotion and Staff Performance in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service

In the complex administrative landscape of Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, the prevalence of irregular promotion and staffing practices casts a shadow over employee morale and work performance. Such irregularities not only inflict profound damage on the well-being of civil servants, but also serve as significant barriers to organizational effectiveness and service delivery.

The ramifications of irregular promotion and staffing reverberate throughout the civil service, permeating every facet of organizational functioning. When promotions occur sporadically or are based on opaque criteria, employees are left grappling with feelings of disenchantment and disillusionment. Such sentiments breed a pervasive sense of unfairness and injustice among civil servants, corroding trust in the

institutional machinery and eroding morale (Owoeye & Adeniji, 2018). Consequently, the workforce becomes disengaged, with motivation levels plummeting and enthusiasm for work waning.

Moreover, the deleterious effects of irregular promotion and staffing extend beyond individual morale to encompass broader organizational dynamics. As employee engagement dwindles, so too does organizational effectiveness, with productivity levels dipping and operational efficiency faltering (Ferdinand, 2020). The resultant atmosphere of despondency and apathy impedes collaboration, innovation, and the pursuit of excellence within the civil service. Consequently, the ability of the organization to fulfill its mandate and deliver quality services to the populace is severely compromised. A discussant observed

One major unattractive aspect of my work is irregular promotion. Sometimes promotions are delayed up to four years which create a sense of uncertainty and anxiety. This unpredictability makes it difficult for me to plan my finance effectively leading to constant state of worry. The stress of irregular promotion affects my overall performance and motivation as I find myself focusing on when I will be promoted instead of fully committing to my work responsibilities.

The prevalence of irregular promotion practices within the Akwa Ibom State civil service engenders a pervasive atmosphere of demoralization among its workforce. Such practices, characterized by inconsistencies or reliance on non-meritocratic criteria, breed a palpable sense of unfairness and opacity in the promotion process (Ngosso & Vanyoro, 2017). Employees, perceiving these promotions as arbitrary or unjust, experience a profound erosion of trust in the leadership and the system at large. This disillusionment undermines their intrinsic motivation, leading to a notable decline in job satisfaction and overall engagement (Aguinis & Pierce, 2008). Civil servants who perceive themselves as overlooked or unfairly treated find themselves grappling with heightened levels of stress, burnout, and a notable slump in morale (Akpa, 2019). As they struggle to reconcile their dedication and efforts with the perceived lack of recognition or appreciation, their commitment to their role wanes, and their enthusiasm for their work diminishes. Consequently, the Akwa Ibom State civil service grapples with a disheartened and disengaged workforce, significantly compromising its operational efficacy and its ability to fulfil its mandate effectively. This tends to align with comment made by one of the discussants who opined:

I distinctly recall when our promotion was delayed for several years. During that period, I noticed a marked decline in my own performance and that of my colleagues. The uncertainty about when we will receive our promotion created a significant amount of stress and anxiety. We were constantly worried about when we would be promoted which distracted us from our daily tasks. Meetings became less productive and deadline were often missed. The overall morale of the affected workers dropped with many employees expressing frustration and disillusionment.

The demoralization stemming from irregular promotion and staffing practices exerts a significant toll on work performance within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, as local scholars have illuminated. Disengaged and demotivated employees, as observed by researchers within the state such as discretionary effort or surpass their basic job responsibilities (Ekpenyong, 2018). This lack of commitment and enthusiasm, as evidenced by studies conducted by Professor Emmanuel Udoh of Akwa Ibom State University, invariably translates into diminished productivity, compromised quality of work, and decreased efficiency within the civil service (Udoh, 2016). Moreover, when civil servants perceive limited

opportunities for career advancement or professional growth, as highlighted by Dr. Ini Akpan of Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, they may adopt a stance of complacency or disinterest in pursuing excellence in their roles (Akpan, 2017). This collective disillusionment among civil servants not only undermines individual job satisfaction but also impairs the overall effectiveness and service delivery capacity of the civil service. Addressing these challenges necessitates a concerted effort to overhaul promotion and staffing practices, fostering a work environment that nurtures employee engagement, growth, and fulfilment, as advocated by local scholars in Akwa Ibom State.

In essence, understanding the profound implications of irregular promotion and staffing is indispensable for devising effective strategies to mitigate their adverse effects. By prioritizing fairness, transparency, and employee well-being, Akwa Ibom State Civil Service can pave the way for a revitalized workforce and a more resilient organizational framework capable of meeting the evolving needs of the state and its citizens.

Fringe Benefits and Job Performance in Akwa Ibom State Civil State

The non-payment of fringe benefits in the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, has profound implications for job performance and employee well-being. Fringe benefits, encompassing allowances, bonuses, healthcare coverage, and retirement benefits, constitute a significant portion of employees' compensation packages and play a crucial role in enhancing motivation, satisfaction, and overall productivity (Osemeke & Aigbavboa, 2012). However, when these benefits are not disbursed as promised, it engenders a host of challenges that undermine organizational effectiveness and employee morale.

In the context of Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, instances of delayed or non-payment of fringe benefits have been well-documented. For example, a study conducted by Ekpo and Inyang (2016) examined the effects of delayed payment of allowances on employee performance in selected government agencies in the state. The research revealed that the non-payment of allowances resulted in heightened financial strain and stress among civil servants, leading to decreased morale and job satisfaction. Similarly, Ewetan and Effiong (2018) explored the impact of non-payment of fringe benefits on job satisfaction in public organizations within Akwa Ibom State. Their findings indicated that employees who experienced delays or non-payment of benefits reported lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment to their roles. This dissatisfaction often translated into decreased productivity and increased turnover intentions among affected employees.

For example, a discussant asserted:

I start to feel like my hard work isn't being recognized or rewarded, which makes it harder to stay focused and committed. Knowing that the organization is failing to meet its responsibility in providing these benefits leads to a sense of frustration and demotivation. The lack of support makes me feel less valued, and it lowers my commitment to the job. When employees don't receive what they're entitled to, it creates an environment of dissatisfaction. Over time, this can result in reduced productivity, as workers become less willing to go above and beyond. (Source: field work, 2024).

Furthermore, Etuk and Udoh (2017) conducted a study on the relationship between fringe benefits and employee performance. The research highlighted how the non-payment of benefits adversely affected employee morale and motivation, resulting in decreased job performance and organizational effectiveness. High turnover rates and talent drain were also observed as a consequence of dissatisfaction stemming from delayed or non-payment of benefits. Additionally, Udoh and Ekong (2014) investigated the impact of fringe benefits on employee commitment within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. Their study revealed

that employees who perceived their benefits as inadequate or subject to delays were less likely to demonstrate commitment to their roles and the organization as a whole. This lack of commitment translated into reduced teamwork, collaboration, and organizational cohesion, further hampering the achievement of collective goals. Concurring, as it were, with Udoh and Ekong a discussant declared:

“Not receiving the expected fringe benefits greatly diminishes my motivation. It’s disheartening to work hard and not be rewarded with basic allowances that would ease daily burdens. This constant juggling of multiple responsibilities causes’ physical and mental exhaustion, negatively impacting morale and productivity creates a stressful environment, which impacts job performance. Employees are forced to deal with personal financial pressures that distract them from their duties. Benefits creates a positive work environment where employees feel appreciated, which boosts morale, in turn, this translates into better teamwork, collaboration, and overall job satisfaction, creating a win-win situation for both employees and the organization. (Source: filed work, 2024).

Research conducted by Etim and Udofia (2018) illustrates the detrimental effects of delayed fringe benefit payments on employee morale and motivation within government agencies in Akwa Ibom State. Civil servants who experience delays and inadequacy of such as housing allowances, medical insurance, and transportation subsidies often express frustration and dissatisfaction with their employment conditions. This dissatisfaction can manifest in decreased job satisfaction, lower levels of engagement, and reduced commitment to organizational goals. Moreover, the absence of transparent and consistent disbursement processes exacerbates distrust and communication breakdowns between management and employees (Udoh & Inyang, 2019). When civil servants perceive a lack of fairness or transparency in the administration of fringe benefits, it erodes trust in organizational leadership and fosters resentment among workers. This breakdown in trust can hinder collaboration, teamwork, and overall organizational cohesion. This aligned with what one of the discussants alerted. She lamented:

It’s disheartening to see how financial worries can seep into our work life, ultimately affecting our productivity and the quality of our contributions. This disparity makes me feel undervalued and demotivated, leading to a decline in enthusiasm for my work. The overall morale of the team dropped, with many employees expressing frustration and disillusionment. Many of my colleagues openly expressed their dissatisfaction, feeling undervalued for the work they were doing. The motivation exceed expectations dwindled significantly, for instance, I observed that team members began to arrive late for work and lacked the enthusiasm to engage in collaborative projects. I personally felt less motivated, which reflected in my performance; I found it challenging to focus on my tasks. As a result, my motivation diminishes, and I may even consider looking for opportunities elsewhere.

Addressing these challenges requires proactive measures to ensure timely and transparent disbursement of fringe benefits. Research by Ekanem and Basse (2017) emphasizes the importance of implementing robust systems and procedures for managing fringe benefit payments, including clear guidelines, regular communication, and accountability mechanisms. By prioritizing fairness, transparency,

and consistency in benefit administration, organizations can rebuild trust, enhance employee satisfaction, and improve overall organizational performance. Furthermore, learning from case studies and best practices can inform effective strategies for addressing the non-payment of fringe benefits within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. For example, lessons from successful interventions in other organizations or jurisdictions can guide the development of tailored approaches that meet the specific needs and challenges faced by civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

The research findings highlight four critical factors: poor training exercises, irregular promotions, non-payment of fringe benefits, and unattractive salary structures that significantly undermine worker performance within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. The study summarized that Poor training exercises significantly lead to notable skill gaps among employees in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, impeding their ability to meet performance expectations effectively. This inadequacy in training not only limits the skills necessary for fulfilling job responsibilities but also fosters a lack of confidence in employees' abilities to perform optimally.

Furthermore, the study also argued that irregular promotion practices within the state civil service create a culture of frustration and dissatisfaction among workers. When promotions are inconsistent or perceived as unfair, employees may feel undervalued, which in turn diminishes their motivation to excel in their roles. This perception of inequity can have profound implications for employee engagement and commitment, leading to a decline in overall productivity. More so, the issue of non-payment of fringe benefits compounds these challenges, as it significantly contributes to job dissatisfaction. When employees do not receive the benefits they expect, their morale is adversely affected, resulting in lower productivity levels. This lack of financial security can lead to increased absenteeism and turnover rates, further destabilizing the workforce.

Finally, the study underscores that unattractive salary structures play a crucial role in demotivating employees. Inadequate compensation packages discourage workers from investing effort into their roles, which ultimately reduces their commitment to the organization. When salaries do not reflect the value of the work performed, it fosters a sense of disengagement and dissatisfaction among employees. The findings of this study are consistent with existing literature in the fields of human resource management and public sector performance, which emphasizes the necessity of employee development, equitable promotion practices, adequate compensation, and appropriate incentives for enhancing worker performance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the effective management and motivation of human resources are crucial for organizational success, particularly within the civil service sector of Akwa Ibom State. Despite the vital role that civil servants play in the socioeconomic development of the state, their welfare has been largely overlooked, leading to widespread dissatisfaction and demotivation among employees, especially those in lower and middle-ranking positions. The persistent issues of poor salary packages, lack of essential allowances, inadequate training opportunities, and delayed promotions have created an environment of frustration and low morale, ultimately impacting productivity and performance.

The existing reward system has failed to meet the motivational needs of civil servants, resulting in apathy and a reluctance to engage fully in their duties. Furthermore, negligence in addressing staff allowances and gratuity, coupled with inconsistent governmental policies, has tarnished the societal image of civil servants, rendering the profession less appealing and driving many to seek alternative livelihood sources. These challenges highlight the pressing need for a thorough assessment of how inadequate motivational packages affect job performance within the Akwa Ibom State civil service.

Recommendations

i. Regular and Transparent Promotion Practices:

To combat the demoralization stemming from irregular promotions, it is crucial to establish a transparent and consistent promotion system. The civil service should implement a framework where promotions are based on clear meritocratic criteria, including performance evaluations and professional development achievements. Regular communication about promotion criteria and outcomes can foster a culture of transparency, incentivizing employees to enhance their productivity and commitment.

ii. Timely Payment of Fringe Benefits:

The state government should prioritize the timely payment of fringe benefits, such as housing and transport allowances, to support employee welfare. Establishing a reliable schedule for these payments can significantly impact employee morale. Implementing an automated payment system could streamline the process, ensuring prompt provision of benefits that are essential for maintaining high motivation levels and reducing absenteeism.

iii. Review of Salary Structures:

To ensure that salary structures are competitive and reflective of current market standards and the cost of living, the government should conduct a comprehensive salary review. This review should involve consultations with employee representatives and market analysis to determine fair compensation levels. Implementing periodic salary adjustments based on inflation and economic conditions can further support employee retention and satisfaction.

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