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Incentives and Performance of Health Workers in Public Health Care Centres in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Recently, there has been a growing concern about the performance of health workers in public hospitals, particularly in Nigeria where there has been massive exodus of healthcare workers to foreign lands for obvious reasons. This work was focused on employee incentive on job performance of health workers in public health care centres in Enugu State with particular reference to Uwani General Hospital, and Asata General Hospital (Poly Clinic) Enugu State, Nigeria. The study objectives were to evaluate the extent to which employee incentives in terms of performanced based pay as well as increased salaries affected job performance of health workers in terms of job satisfaction and improved productivity in terms of quality of care given to patients in the selected public healthcare centers. The

research design adopted was a survey method. Data were collection from primary source. The study population was 309 and sample size was determined through Taro Yamani as 174. Out of 174 copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents, only 170 copies were correctly filed and retrieved. Therefore, the analyses for the study were based on 170 respondents. Simple regression and Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient were used to analyse the instrument collected. Based on the analyses of the data collected, the findings of the study showed that performance based pay has significant effect on employee job satisfaction; that there was a significant positive relationship between increased salaries and improved job performance in public health care centres in Nigeria. The study concluded that a well-designed incentive system aligns employee goals with organizational objectives, promotes a positive work environment, and fosters a culture of high performance. The study then recommended that health management executives in Enugu State should implement performance-based pay to motivate health workers to perform at their best and achieve organizational goals. Also, there is great need to maintain time frame for review of employee salaries in other to provide regular increment to workers salaries.

Keywords: incentives, performance-based pay, productivity, job satisfaction, salaries, employee retention.

INTRODUCTION

The performance of health workers in public hospitals has increasingly been a great concern particularly in developing countries. The effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare delivery are heavily reliant on the performance and motivation of health workers. According to Johnson, Anderson, & Williams (2015), rewards or benefits provided to individuals in order to stimulate particular activities or behaviors are called incentives. In healthcare sector, incentives which impact significantly on job satisfaction of the health workers are frequently employed to motivate health workers in order to improve their functions, enhance productivity, enable them perform effectively by providing improved care to patients. Incentives can take different forms which includes: monetary rewards,

recognition initiatives, career progression opportunities, as well as training and development programmes (Smith, Johnson, & Brown, 2017).

Incentive has been a constant issue for debate among the various governments in the Nigerian healthcare sector, with each administration striving to develop strategies and policies that will improve the compensation package for health workers. Onwujekwe, Hanson, Uzochukwu & Ichoku (2009) have indicated that both the public and private hospital management are also concerned about their workers' compensation benefits. These administrations share the belief that incentives are essential for motivating and influencing health workers' behavior and performance, which in turn affect the quality and efficiency of healthcare services rendered.

Some authors have found positive relationship between incentive and performance of health workers. For instance, Smith et al. (2017) in their study revealed that monetary incentives significantly improved the productivity of health workers in the rural setting. Johnson et al. (2015) indicated that non-monetary incentives such as recognition initiatives and career progression opportunities significantly impact on nurses' job satisfaction and their rate of retention. However, other studies have found differing results on the impact of incentives on health workers` performance. For instance, the study carried out by Brown et al. (2018) showed no significant impact of financial incentives on the quality of care provided by primary healthcare physicians. Despite the extensive literature on effect of incentives on workers' performance, there are differing results from various studies. Also, there is limited research on the effect of incentives on health workers' performance as little attention has been paid to this area. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the effect of incentives on Health workers' performance in selected public hospitals in Enugu state.

Statement of the problem

The Nigerian government's recent withdrawal of fuel subsidies has affected the condition of workers across the country. The consequent hike in the fuel price has led to increase in the cost of transportation, food and other basic amenities. This has strained workers` finances and made it harder for them to pay their debts.

In a complex and challenging sector like healthcare, it is important to employ good reward practices to attract, motivate and retain skilled workers. However, many workers in Nigeria, including health workers, are not properly rewarded. The problem stems from a combination of minimum wage, inflation and vague organization practices. Typically, employees experience dissatisfaction when rewarded unevenly for identical work. Consequently, this poor remuneration leaves workers with lack of funds to meet their fundamental needs like food, housing, and healthcare.

Poor remuneration can lead to significant negative consequences in an organization. First, it can lead to employee dissatisfaction and job dissatisfaction, which in turn reduces the productivity of employees at the same time increases employee turnover leading to loss of skilled employees in the organization. Secondly, low pay can affect an organization`s ability to attract and retain highly skilled worker as competitive packages are often a major factor in attracting such.

Thirdly, it can affect employee motivation and engagement, leading to lack of passion and drive to achieve organizational goals and lastly, it can create a negative work culture that breeds resentment and distrust, undermining productivity and teamwork. Therefore there is the need to examine the impact of motivation on health workers` performance in two selected public hospitals in Enugu State.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to investigate workers incentives and performance of health workers in public hospitals in Enugu State. However, the specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the effect of performance-based pay on job satisfaction of health workers in selected public hospitals in Enugu state.
2. Assess the effect of salary increase on productivity of health workers in selected public hospitals in Enugu state.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does performance-based pay affect job satisfaction of health workers in the selected public hospitals in Enugu state?
2. How does salary increase affect productivity of health workers in the selected public hospitals in Enugu state?

Literature Review

Incentives

Employee incentives can take many forms. It can be monetary or non- monetary. For instance, non- monetary can be promotions, recognition, flexible work hours, training opportunities, and additional benefits. Robbins and Judge (2019) define incentives, as factors that attract or motivates a person to take action. They believe that incentives can be positive or negative. while positive incentive are rewards that encourage people to behave, negative incentives are punishments or penalties that deter poor behavior. Milkovich & Newman (2020) define incentives as rewards given to employees for achieving performance goals or objectives. Latham and Pinder (2005) contend that effective employee motivation should be goal – oriented and linked to performance stressing that incentives should be specific, thought-provoking, attainable and subject to a time limit so

as to impact on employee motivation and performance. Therefore, employee incentives are rewards or benefits given to employees to motivate and engage them in their work.

Productivity Linked Wage Incentives:

Periodically, incentives are linked to pay with the aim of increasing the productivity of an individual or team. Their numbers are based on their productivity when compared with the target

Bonus:

This is an incentive which is given in addition to an employee`s salary or wages. Many organization offer special windfall during festivals, Easter and New year. Most often, these bonuses are not guaranteed and can come at a fixed time in the year.

Co-partnership/Stock Option:

This incentive scheme avail the employees the opportunity to get shares of the company at a discounted market price. The practice helps create a sense of belonging among employees and motivates them to give their best to the growth of the organization. For instance, this has been successfully implemented at Infosys. When employees are given stock options, they are given the right to buy company shares at a fixed price (usually lower than the market price) for a certain period of time. Stock options encourage employees to be more entrepreneurial and work towards financial success of the company.

Profit sharing:

This refers to providing employees with a share of the organization`s profits. This helps motivate employees to improve their performance and increase their efforts to earn more profits. Companies with a profit- sharing plan give apportion of their profits to their employees. The more successful the company is, the more profitable it is and the more money its employees receive. When employees have a financial stake in the company, they

tend to work harder and smarter. Profit sharing plan may be a good option for small companies that do not have enough employees.

Raises

Typically, in many companies, increments are usually done annually. This pay rise often varies based on individual performance and company strategy.

Retirement Benefits:

Many retirement benefits such as retirement benefits, pension and gratuity can serve as incentive for an employee to stay with the organization.

Perquisites:

In addition to the salary, various allowances and social benefits provided by the company such as car allowance, housing, medical assistance and education for children help the workers.

Salary increase

A pay raise is an increase in the amount of money of an employee receives from their employer. It is a common practice in organisations to increase the salaries of employees based on their performance, experience and skills. It is seen as a form of motivation to influence employees to work harder and achieve better results. As Armstrong (2012) points out, a pay raise is a reward for employees` efforts and contributions to the success of the organization. It is also an important tool for retaining good employees and reducing turnover which should base on the employee`s performance and contribution to the organization. Stressing on the need for fairness in salary increase decisions Cascio (2018) suggested that organization should have a clear and transparent salary increase policies that will base on goals such as performance evaluation, seniority, and job competition. This will ensure that employees are treated fairly and honestly.

In the same vein, Gomez-Mejia et al. (2016) have also discussed the impact of salary increases on employee motivation and job satisfaction. They submitted that fair and competitive pay is important for employee motivation and job satisfaction. Advancement can also lead to increased productivity and better performance. It should be based on a combination of factors such as self-employment, entrepreneurship, skill development and integrity. Organisations need to have clear rules and procedure for determining salary to ensure fairness and justice.

Health workers' performance

Health workers play an important role in making available quality health care services that contribute to the health and life of individuals and communities. According to WHO (2018), a health worker is a worker whose primary goal is to improve health. This broad definition includes healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, pathologists and other health related professionals. International Labour Organization (ILO), has defined health workers as an individuals that promote or restore health through their work (ILO, 2019).

This statement underscores the improvement of health and well-being together with curative interventions. Accordingly, Rowe et al. (2018) examined the effect of performance-based incentives on healthcare professionals' performance in low- and middle-income countries. Findings suggest that financial support may improve some aspects of performance, such as adherence to treatment protocols. In the same vein Hafeez et al. (2020) investigated the factors affecting the performance of healthcare professionals in primary healthcare. The result of the study indicated a number of key areas such as education and training, supervision and feedback, employment and support.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an intricate concept that refers to the feelings and thoughts people have towards their jobs. It includes activities such as the job itself, the work environment, relationships with coworkers and mangers, opportunities for growth and development, and compensation and overall performance. For many years, scholars have explored various definitions and theories of job satisfaction to help understand the concept very well.

Locke (1976) views job satisfaction as a positive disposition or feeling resulting from the evaluation of employee`s job. This definition reflects the self-evaluation of a job and recognizes the impact of emotions on job satisfaction. Also, Spector (1997), defines job satisfaction as the extent to which a person enjoys his or her job. The two definitions however, stressed the importance of individual preferences and emotions in determining career satisfaction.

Employees' Productivity

Productivity is a measure that relates the quantity or quality of output to the resources required to produce it. In production, this refers to the ratio of output to input and it represents the average measure of production efficiency. Productivity is a measure that relates the quantity or quality of output to the inputs required to produce it. Productivity is essentially the ability to generate income, calculated by subtracting the real input value from the real output value (Akintunde, 2015). Mukundi (2016) states that one of the biggest challenges for many companies today is increasing employee productivity, which evaluates the efficiency of an individual employee or a team. In practice, productivity directly affects a company's profits (Salem, 2019).

Employee retention

Employee retention refers to an organization`s ability to absorb employees throughout a period of time. It is an important part of human resources management as it directly affects

the stability and success of the organization. Several scholars have put forward different definitions and views on employee retention. For instance, Mobley (2015) defined employee engagement as 'an organization`s ability to maintain the commitment, satisfaction and loyalty of employees to their job, thereby reducing the cost of return.' These points emphasize the importance of creating a positive work environment that encourages employee engagement and satisfaction, thereby reducing turnover. In the view of Holtom et al. (2016), employee retention is considered as the ability of the organization to effectively retain employees, especially those with great knowledge and experience. This definition shows the importance of retaining important skills in an organization, especially those with valuable skills and who are an important factor for the organization`s success.

Theoretical framework

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory is a motivation theory that explains how people make choices about their behavior because they motivated to select a specific behavior-based on the expected result of the selected behavior will be (Vroom, 1964). This theory was proposed by Victor Vroom in 1964 as a continuation of Kurt Lewin and Edward Tolman`s previous study on motivation and learning. According to this theory, a person`s desire to perform a certain task depends on three factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (porter and lawler, 1968).

Expectancy refers to the belief that personal effort will lead to high performance; instrumentality refers to the belief that high performance will lead to preferred results; and valence refers to the value that an individual places on the results. (Robbins et al., 2017) indicated that good performance will lead to desirable outcomes, and those outcomes are personally valuable to them. The theory suggests that individuals will only engage in behaviors that they value the outcomes as well as believe that those behaviours will lead to positive outcomes. Expectancy theory has been extensively researched and applied in

various fields, including organizational behavior, management, and psychology. It has been shown to be helpful in analyzing various behaviours such as employee motivation, goal setting, and decision making (locke & Latham, 2002). However, some authors have argued that the theory takes a broad view of human motivation and does not take into a count other factors that may influence behavior (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). In the context of the study on the effect of incentives on health workers' performance in selected public hospitals in Enugu state, Expectancy Theory can be applied to explain how incentives can influence the performance of health workers. According to a study by Ogbuabor and Nwachukwu (2019), when health workers perceive that their efforts will result in receiving incentives such as financial rewards or recognition, they are more likely to be motivated to perform better.

Empirical Review

Agyepong et al. (2004) investigated the effect of monetary and non- monetary incentives on health workers motivation and performance in Ghana. The sample size of the study was 1000 health workers while data was analysed using regression statistical tools. The result of this study showed that both monetary and non-monetary incentives have an impact on employee health and performance.

Chikezie, Emejulu and Aniekwe (2017) examined the relationship between Salary and Employee satisfaction in selected money deposit banks in Awka. The study adopted descriptive research design. 60 copies of questionnaire were administered to employees of selected money deposit banks (First bank, Fidelity and Sterling bank). Utilizing Pearson's Product Moment Correlation in analyzing the data, the results showed that there was a positive weak relationship between salary and employee satisfaction. The study therefore suggested *inter alia* that compensation system should take account of new and enticing ways to motivate and retain employee with wide range of benefits other than salary.

Uwimpuhwe, Mushabe and Kajugiro (2018) examined the influence of compensation system on employee attraction and retention on the employees of

the “Higher Education Council, National Commission for Fight against Genocide and COGE Bank located in Kigali City”. The study investigated the perception of respondents on compensation system, employee attraction and retention. The research utilized a survey method with a sample size of 32 employees of the cited institutions obtained using a random sampling technique. The result revealed that there was a significant positive correlation of 0.582 which indicated that Compensation system has a moderate influence on employee attraction and retention. The study showed a strong positive relationship between compensation system and employee attraction and retention. The study then recommended supervisors should draw all-inclusive compensation plan to improve staff retention in the organization as this will increase productivity.

Methodology

A descriptive survey was adopted. The target population for this study comprised all staff of the two selected public health care centres (Uwani General hospital and PolyClinic, Asata, both in Enugu) in Enugu State Nigeria. This gave a finite population of three hundred and nine (309) health workers. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size for this study and it gave a sample size of one hundred and seventy four (174). Out of one hundred and seventy-four questionnaires distributed and collected, only one hundred and seventy (170) was correctly filled. Therefore, the analysis for this study was based on one hundred and seventy (170) respondents. The study used primary data, and the instrument for the data collection was a structured questionnaire by the researcher; this questionnaire was designed, distributed and retrieved manually by the researcher.

The structured questionnaire was built on a four-point scale: Strongly Agree ( ) Agree ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly Disagree ( ). The instrument consists of two sections, A and B. Section A deals with the demographic/background information of the respondents. Section B contains items that dwell on specific objectives and research questions. Data collected

for the study were analysed using percentages, mean scores and frequencies for the demographic section; while the research questions were analyzed using correlation and regression via the SPSS.

Analysis and discussion of field data collected

Test of Hypothesis One

H1: Performance-based pay is a key factor that significantly affected job satisfaction among public health workers in Enugu State.

(⇒SPSS: Regression Analysis)

descriptive statistics on performance-based pay and job satisfaction.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.940[a]	.883	.882	.36840

a. Predictors: (Constant), performance-based pay

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.557	.106		5.282	.000	.349	.766		
	Performance –based pay	.905	.025	.940	35.589	.000	.855	.955	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: job satisfaction

R = .940

R(square) = 0.883

Coefficient of 0.940 is a positive significance. Performance-based pay is .940 indicating that there is a positive significant effect among the variables.

Regression of squares is greater than residual sum of squares, meaning that model does not explain all the variations. R (.940) shows relationship between performance-based pay and job satisfaction.

Regression of squares is greater than residual sum of squares, meaning that model does not explain all the variations. R (.940) shows relationship between the performance-based pay and job satisfaction. A coefficient value of .940 indicates a strong positive relationship between performance-based pay and job satisfaction. Regression square shows a figure of 171.905 and residual sum of squares shows a figure of 22.801. We therefore accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a positive effect of performance-based pay on job satisfaction in selected public health care centers in Enugu State.

Test of Hypothesis Two

H1: employee salary increase is positively significantly related to improved productivity among health care workers in Enugu State.

(⇒SPSS: Correlation Analysis)

descriptive statistics showing salary increase and improved productivity.

Descriptive Statistics

			Bootstrap[a]			
					95% Confidence Interval	
		Statistic	Bias	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
Increased motivation	Mean	4.0941	-.0009	.0832	3.9093	4.2412
	Std. Deviation	1.14740	-.00113	.07430	.99549	1.28161
	N	170	0	0	170	170
Job ownership spirit	Mean	4.0412	-.0026	.0879	3.8547	4.2048
	Std. Deviation	1.19345	.00067	.06376	1.06438	1.30415
	N	170	0	0	170	170
Increased job efficiency	Mean	3.9824	.0003	.0913	3.7952	4.1471
	Std. Deviation	1.22341	.00012	.07300	1.06164	1.35865
	N	170	0	0	170	170
Enhanced employee commitment	Mean	4.0588	-.0006	.0819	3.8941	4.2042
	Std. Deviation	1.08626	.00341	.06169	.96165	1.18298
	N	170	0	0	170	170

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 170 bootstrap samples

Table 4.2.2: shows a mean of 4.09 for increased motivation; 4.04 for job ownership spirit; 3.9 for increased job efficiency and a mean of 4.05 for enhanced employee commitment. Also, their standard deviations are 1.1; 1.1; 1.2 and 1.0 for each case. This means similar responses which show a close relationship.

Table 4.2.2b: Correlation matrix of the relationship between salary increase and improved productivity.

Correlations

				accurate job design	efficient comm. flow	flexible work flow	adequate control of activities
Increased motivation	Pearson Correlation			1	.952**	.966**	.950**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.000	.000
	N			170	170	170	170
	Bootstrap[b]	Bias		0	.001	.001	.002
		Std. Error		0	.010	.006	.009
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	1	.928	.953	.930
			Upper	1	.972	.979	.969
Job ownership spirit	Pearson Correlation			.952**	1	.941**	.966**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000		.000	.000
	N			170	170	170	170
	Bootstrap[b]	Bias		.001	0	.002	.001
		Std. Error		.010	0	.011	.007
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	.928	1	.915	.952
			Upper	.972	1	.964	.981
Increased job efficiency	Pearson Correlation			.966**	.941**	1	.940**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000		.000
	N			170	170	170	170
	Bootstrap[b]	Bias		.001	.002	0	.001
		Std. Error		.006	.011	0	.010
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	.953	.915	1	.921
			Upper	.979	.964	1	.960
Enhanced employee commitment	Pearson Correlation			.950**	.966**	.940**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.000	
	N			170	170	170	170

Bootstrap[b]	Bias		.002	.001	.001	0
	Std. Error		.009	.007	.010	0
	95% Confidence Interval	Lower	.930	.952	.921	1
		Upper	.969	.981	.960	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

b. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 170 bootstrap samples

Table 4.2.2b is the correlation coefficient matrix of the relationship between salary increase and improved productivity. The correlation coefficients of 1.00 for increased motivation; 0.95 for job ownership spirit; 0.96 for increased job efficiency and 0.95 for enhanced employee commitment indicate that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed) which gives an average correlation coefficient of 0.96 meaning that there is a significant relationship between salary increase and improved productivity among employees (r = .96). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value which is r = .195 with 168 degree of freedom (df. = n-2), at alpha level for a two tailed test (r = .96, $p < 0.05$). Since the computed r = .98 is greater than the table value of 0.195 we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a positive relationship between salary increase and improved productivity of employees with value of r =(0.96,p <0.05).

Summary of Findings

Based on the above analyses and the results of the analyses, the study summarises as follows:

1. Performance-based pay has significant effect on health workers` job satisfaction in the selected hospitals in Enugu state.
2. Salary increase has significant effect on health workers` productivityin the selected hospitals in Enugu state.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Although an organization may need other resources for its growth, sustainability and success, human resources remains the key resources that any organization cannot do

without. Any organization that seeks development and sustainability must adopt policies that motivate employee and at the same time, enhance productivity.

From the analysis of the study, performance-based pay was found to have the strongest effect on job performance, followed by salary increase, etc. This follows that incentive plays a crucial role in health workers performance in selected public hospitals in Enugu State. Efficient incentive can attract and retain talented employees, motivate them to perform at their best, and enhance overall productivity in terms of the quality of care received by patients and job satisfaction among the employees. By offering competitive salaries, incentives, and other benefits packages, health workers can ensure job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates. Additionally, a well-structured incentive system supports employee objectives with organizational goals as well as promotes a healthy work environment that nurtures a philosophy of high performance.

There is the need for the Public health management executives to know that each worker has a peculiar desire that he/she intends to fulfil. An employee needs to satisfy his desire as such needs to be motivated in other to give his best to the organization for the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives. Therefore, organizations should endeavor to motivate its workers for optimum productivity and high performance from its employees as well as to meet their goals and achieve competitive advantage. When employees are retained and maintained, it reduces the cost of constant recruitment and training on the organization as well as increases organizational productivity arising from specialization of staff.

The study therefore recommends that health management executives in Enugu State should implement performance-based pay to motivate health workers to perform at their best and achieve organizational goals. Also, there is great need to maintain time frame for review of employee salaries in other to provide regular increment to workers` salaries. This will enhance hard work and dedication among the employees.

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