EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE ON PERFORMANCE OF HIGHER INSTITUTION: A STUDY OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study determined the effect of employee grievance on performance of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The study adopted survey research design and data were generated through the questionnaires administered to the respondents. The population of the study comprised 2637 academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The data generated in response to the questions was analyzed and hypotheses were tested using Simple Regression via SPSS version 20 at 5% level of significance. The result revealed that employee dissatisfaction and perceived unfair practices have effect on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State and this effect was statistically significant. The findings indicates that employee dissatisfaction, and perceived unfair practices has effect on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, and this effect was statistically significant. This study concludes that employee grievance on performance of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that employees that have job dissatisfaction have relatively negative emotions to their jobs, there is need for job satisfaction, hence, employees who have high job satisfaction have positive emotions to their jobs.
Keywords: *Employee dissatisfaction, Perceived unfair practices and Job commitment*

Introduction

Workers' grievances are as old as industrial societies, but the issue of addressing workers' grievances in Africa and South Sudan has received particular attention recently. This is because a quick response that leads to a quick resolution of a complaint improves employee morale and productivity and can prevent costly legal action. The term grievance described the breach of mutual trust between employer and employee (Nurse and Devonish, 2007). When you start working in a new place, a mutual expectation is created, which is the basis for future working relationships. In addition to what is written in the employment contract, both parties have expectations for the future. This working relationship sometimes goes wrong. If an employee is unhappy, it will probably be a complaint. Injured worker; who experiences a complaint against the manager or the whole company is an unhappy employee, and an unhappy employee cannot do an effective job. The employee becomes depressed, his morale is low and as a result efficiency decreases. Job

satisfaction in all conditions surrounding work is the key to high morale (Atem, 2022). Employee complaints do not generate positive reactions, as the employee may decide to give up their efforts, miss work, or even return to work late, among other unhealthy work habits. These are unhealthy behaviors that can affect organizational performance.

Organizational efficiency refers to the total output of the organization both in time and in products/services. Organizational effectiveness is affected by many factors ranging from employee behavior in the workplace, lack of resources and poor working conditions in the organization. Relatively, it can be said that employee complaints can have a significant impact on organizational performance, because employees can sometimes withdraw their contribution to the success of the organization. The grievances of workers can be shown at the union level when workers can react in union forums such as in federal institutions in Nigeria where unions end their services in tertiary institutions to inform the federal government of their dissatisfaction and grievances. Prior to this investigation, there had been cases of various unions in the university going on strike to express their grievances. These therefore affected the workflow within the system by delaying student graduation, disrupting the academic calendar and forcing students and faculty to rush the school's curriculum around the university's schedule. Complaints by employees in tertiary institutions such as Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Anambra state have affected the operating system. The stigmatization of the incessant reactions of both academic and non-academic staff unions has eroded trust among stakeholders in general.

Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, Anambra State has been slow, disrupted and affected by the actions of workers who have suffered through trade unions. This seems to be the case with many unsatisfactory indicators such as poor salaries, the unsustainability of the university system and even the failure of the previous agreement between the membership and the board of the university union. The issues giving rise to the complaints are common to all federal universities, but for convenience, the focus is on Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, because the federal institution was unstable like other federal universities in Nigeria. Grievances in the workplace are caused by small problems affecting employees in the workplace that have been allowed to accumulate over time, leading to dissatisfaction (Dipboye, Smith, & Howell, 2020). These factors that lead to employee dissatisfaction are ignored by both management and the previous administration because the problems that cause workplace complaints are longstanding issues that have been discussed with previous administrations without positive action from previous and current administrations. Dissatisfaction hinders an employee's ability to give their best at work, so employees may not be able to tolerate these factors that negatively affect work (Atafor and Ukam, 2020). Employee dissatisfaction in the workplace seems to affect the quality of work in the university system. The various workplace grievances of the staff of the Federal University

(Nnamdi Azikiwe University) are due to several factors, although these factors are based on the perception of the unions, such as non-revision of staff salaries or non-payment of staff salaries, financial resources to revitalize public universities and neglect the federal education system, which seems to be deteriorating (Merkin, 2021). Unfair practices identified by the government appear to have a significant impact on employee engagement, as workers respond to unfair practices by unionizing, warning strikes, and staying away from the workplace for long periods of time during continuous strikes.

Among other things, it is known that the poor welfare package has a long history, which explains the ongoing labor struggles of organized labor in public universities in Nigeria (Nkanu, Otu, & Utu-Baku, 2023). The imbalance between academic activities and our higher education institutions may not be related to the strike. In this context, a strike can also be defined as a process in which an organization has organized a stoppage of work by workers due to a wage settlement. There is also a refusal to work as a protest. It can also be a period when an organized group of workers in a company strikes due to disagreements over wage conditions. The broad objective of this study is to determine the effect of employee grievance on performance of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The specific objectives are;

1. To ascertain the effect of employee dissatisfaction on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
2. To investigate the effect of perceived unfair practices on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Conceptual Review

Grievance refers to any real or imagined feeling of dissatisfaction or injustice that an employee experiences about his work and its nature, management policies and procedures, which the employee expresses and brings to the attention of the management and the organization (Juneja, 2018).). Rose (2004) defines a grievance as any dissatisfaction with work and workplace that an employee formally expresses to their immediate supervisor. Grievances are signs of an individual member's dissatisfaction with how things are going in their workplace. Thus, employee grievance refers to any dissatisfaction of an employee caused by his immediate supervisor about his work and workplace (Rose, 2004). Grievances also refer to an issue raised by an employee to express dissatisfaction with the behavior of management and are an attempt to bring about change (D'Cruz, 1999). It is any dissatisfaction, expressed or not, and whether it is valid or not, arising from any circumstance related to the organization that the employee considers, believes or even feels unfair, unjust or unfair that he suffered (Dwivedi, 2009). Due to the changes that have taken place in various organizations, as well as the differences in people's behavior and opinions, there are chances that grievances and disputes will

arise in the workplace. An employee grievance represents a feeling of dissatisfaction or displeasure by an employee due to the actions or decisions of superiors or senior management (Obiekwe and Eke, 2019). It is any real or imagined feeling of personal injustice that an employee has in relation to an employment relationship. Hardeman (2004) defines a grievance procedure as a method by which employees make their voices heard about management practices and/or decisions so that they can be properly addressed. Jones and Gorge (2000) argue that disagreement is always an inevitable part of organizational life. However, management always establishes certain processes and procedures that can be followed to ensure that all such conflicts and complaints are resolved. Complaints are an important part of the organizational challenge. But not all complaints are bad. Performance can be used to identify problems affecting employee performance and work attitudes and address them in the overall interest of the organization (Obiekwe and Eze, 2019). It is counterproductive if management does not give opportunities to employees to express their dissatisfaction with their work. There are no hard and fast rules about how an organization should set up its complaints procedure. Field experience shows that different organizations have developed and adapted their complaint handling methods according to their HRM strategies. Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction in Work Organizations The term job satisfaction was first used by Elton Mayo (calling it job satisfaction) at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company in Chicago in the late 1920s and early 1930s to describe the feelings of workers that could affect their vitality feelings work behavior (Djoemadi et al., 2019). There appears to be no single definition of job satisfaction, job satisfaction, or employee satisfaction, as they have been interchangeably referred to in the literature. However, various researchers and authors have given many definitions of job satisfaction and some similarities are related to employee job satisfaction (Swmya and Panchanatham, 2011; Sageer et al., 2012; Ramoo et al., 2013; Yousef, 2017). However, the most accurate definition was given by Saman (2020), where according to him, job satisfaction should be understood as "the attitude of an employee who is either satisfied or not satisfied with the reward received, with his work, with his superiors, his colleagues and in matters related to environmental work.

Workplace bullying, indifference, physical violence is a 10-point continuum of organizational dysfunction. Discomfort ranges from 1 to 3, while harassment ranges from 4 to 9, which ranges from mild to severe harassment. Although the highest score is associated with murder, the negative consequences of the abused may perceive indifference as little or no harm. Bullying can cause minor or serious harm, while physical violence can result in death (Namie, 2017). It has been found that unfair treatment, bullying, violence and any form of dysfunction affects both employees and organizational performance.

Ntimba, Lessing, and Swarts (2021) investigated the impact of the psychological contract on employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in a South African

workplace. The effect of psychological contract violation and compliance on employee satisfaction with their work, co-workers, supervisor, and the organization as a whole was also examined in detail. Therefore, data for this study was collected by examining existing scientific articles/presentations, published/unpublished dissertations and theses, textbooks and other relevant information documents. This makes the research a starting point for a theoretical and analytical methodology. Thus, this article uncovers and presents and discusses in detail the devastating effects that psychological breach of contract has on the performance of South African organizations. The article also reveals employee dissatisfaction with the costs to organizations in the form of unplanned staff turnover. This article suggests strategies for organizations to adopt and implement to improve psychological contract fulfillment. The goal is to improve employee job satisfaction in the workplace and ultimately reduce employee turnover intentions. Therefore, this research has a very important and significant role to advance the literature and the general understanding of the psychological contract and the impact of the psychological contract on employee job satisfaction and, especially, dissatisfaction. Obiekwe and Eke (2019) investigated the impact of employee grievance management on organizational performance. The paper argued that effective management of employee grievances is essential for a harmonious working relationship, enhancing employee loyalty and commitment, and improving overall organizational productivity and efficiency. Conversely, lack of or poor management of employee complaints in organizations leads to negative organizational consequences such as reduced productivity, absenteeism problems, disobedience of orders, disciplinary behavior and reduced work quality. The study revealed that effective management of employee grievances is very important for effective harmonious management-employee relationship which helps to improve organizational performance. Among other things, we recommend that complaints are dealt with as soon as possible after they are reported to ensure that the negative consequences of an unresolved complaint in the workplace are significantly reduced. In addition, there should be a defined grievance management procedure that managers use as a guide for handling grievances in the workplace to ensure harmony and improve employee morale, which is essential for improving organizational performance. Zulkiflee, Khulida, and Shakizah (2019) investigated the influence of department heads on the choice of complaint handling styles. The study adopted a correlational research design and collected material through survey and interview. Data were analyzed using arithmetic mean and hypotheses were tested using simple regression analysis. The factor analysis revealed that the complaint handling styles used by the managers in this study are Integrative, Compromising and Controlling. Overall, the study revealed that extraversion has a negative and significant influence on the choice of integration style. Conscientiousness significantly influences the prediction of dominant style. Finally, emotional stability is positive and significantly affects the compromise style of handling complaints. Stephen (2013) conducted a study on the

effects of job dissatisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee engagement on public school teachers' intention to leave in South Louisiana. Teachers were described based on their psychological characteristics as well as demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, education level, years of education, years of employment in the current school system, and until retirement. The following instruments were used to collect the necessary data: Job Description Index/General Work, Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Utrecht Work and Well-Being Survey, three-item Intention to Leave instrument and a population survey. Participating teachers provided a total of 244 usable responses to these instruments. The results revealed that the largest group of teachers was the X generation age group. Most of the teachers interviewed were female, married, and had a bachelor's degree, with the largest group having more than 20 years of teaching experience. Gomathi (2014) investigated the role of complaint management in improving employee performance in a BAT company. The study introduced the use of descriptive statistics and a sample of 500 respondents, selected from a total of 1,000 employees, completed a questionnaire. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the collected data. Research has shown that effective grievance management can improve employee performance. The study revealed that the aggravation of industrial problems largely depends on the supervisor's approach and attitude to effectively deal with employee grievances. The study advised managers to approach the problem carefully and see the pros and cons of the situation.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design and the reason for adopting descriptive survey research design is because the study seeks to adopt a research design that supports the collection of data with the aid of structured questionnaire.
The population of the study comprised 2637academic of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane formula.

Source of Data Collection

Data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire components include; Strongly Agreed which was rated to be 5 points, Agreed which is rated to be 4 points, Disagreed rated to be 3 points, Strongly Disagreed rated to be 2 points and undecided rated to be 1 point.

Method of Data Analyses

The data generated in response to the questions asked was analyzed using five point likert scale and hypotheses were tested using Simple Regression on Statistical Packages for Social Science (version 20) at 5% level of significance used to test the hypotheses.

Decision Rule:
In relation to the decisions on the acceptance of hypotheses, Accept the Alternate hypothesis (H_a) if P-value is less than 0.05 (P-value < 0.05); otherwise accept the Null hypothesis (H_o).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data presentation

Questionnaire distribution and returns

347 questionnaires were distributed and 311 was completed and returned, this represents 90%.

Table 1: The summary of data collected from the respondents for question one

S/N	**Employee Dissatisfaction**	SA	A	Un	D	SD
1	I am not satisfied with the working conditions and current state of this university	100	103	2	97	9
2	The federal government has made failed promises about employee welfare, which has affected the quality of staff.	98	107	0	90	16
3	This job doesn't give me the income and privileges I need.	101	136	3	60	11
4	I am not satisfied with the state of the university because of the broken promises of the federal government.	99	130	2	77	3
	Perceived Unfair Practice					
5	I find that the higher ups in this organization favor some employees more than others.	99	111	2	90	9
6	This organization has workplace intimidating practices.	78	133	0	96	1
7	Some of my colleagues avoid the workload, which often leads to work and discomfort in this organization.	100	130	3	60	18
8	Rumors and rumors among staff often lead to unpleasant situations.	99	130	2	78	2
	Job Commitment					
9	We have worked hard for our roles in this organization.	99	115	0	87	10

10	We have a standard of performance that we have maintained over the years.	108	117	0	70	16
11	We ensure that our contributions to this organization contribute to its success.	100	127	3	67	8
12	The focus of organizational staff is to achieve goals.	97	129	0	65	14

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H_{O1}: There is no significanteffect of employee dissatisfaction on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.998[a]	.996	.995	15.91038

a. Predictors: (Constant), EMD

In table 2, a regression analysis was conducted to test the employee dissatisfaction and job commitment. Adjusted R squared is coefficient of determination which provides the distinction in the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variable. From the findings in the table 2, the value of adjusted R squared shows a value of 0.99, an indication that there was variation of 99% on job commitment due to changes in employee dissatisfaction. This implies that only 99% changes in job commitment could be accounted for by employee dissatisfaction, while 1% was explained by unknown variables that were not included in the model.

Table 3: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	188831.379	1	188831.379	745.956	.000[b]
	Residual	759.421	3	253.140		
	Total	189590.800	4			

a. Dependent Variable: JBC
b. Predictors: (Constant), EMD

Table 4: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-4.613	11.693		-.395	.720
	EMD	1.019	.037	.998	27.312	.000

a. Dependent Variable: JBC

In table 3 it reveals that the p-value is 0.000 shows that the hypothesis is statistically significant at level of significance (5%); hence p-value of the test statistic is less than alpha value (0.000<0.05).

In table 4, the regressed result shows that an evaluation of the employee dissatisfaction of the explanatory variable shows positive statistically significant, hence coefficient value = 0,998 and t-statistics is =27.312, showing that employee dissatisfaction is positively statistically significant on job commitment at 5% level of significance.

Decision:
Since p-value of the test statistic is less or equal to alpha, we therefore, reject null hypotheses and uphold alternative hypothesis which state that there is a significanteffect of employee dissatisfaction on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two
Ho_2: There is no significant effect of perceived unfair practices on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.994[a]	.988	.984	20.16925

a. Predictors: (Constant), PUP

In table 5, a regression analysis was conducted to test the perceived unfair practices and job commitment. Adjusted R squared is coefficient of determination which provides the distinction in the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variable. From the findings in the table 5, the value of adjusted R squared shows a value of 0.98, an indication that there was variation of 98% on job commitment due to changes in perceived unfair practices. This implies that only 98% changes in job commitment could be accounted for by perceived unfair practices, while 2% was explained by unknown variables that were not included in the model.

Table 6: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	101876.803	1	101876.803	250.435	.001[b]
	Residual	1220.397	3	406.799		
	Total	103097.200	4			

a. Dependent Variable: JBC
b. Predictors: (Constant), PUP

Table 7: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.301	14.581		.364	.740
	PUP	.729	.046	.994	15.825	.001

a. Dependent Variable: JBC

In table 6, it reveals that the p-value is 0.000 shows that the hypothesis is statistically significant at level of significance (5%); hence p-value of the test statistic is less than alpha value (0.000<0.05).

In table 7, the regressed result shows that an assessment of the perceived unfair practices of the explanatory variable shows positive statistically significant, hence coefficient value = 0,994 and t-statistics is =15.825, showing that perceived unfair practices is positively statistically significant on job commitment at 5% level of significance.

Decision:
Since p-value of the test statistic is less or equal to alpha, we therefore, reject null hypotheses and uphold alternative hypothesis which state that there is a significant effect of perceived unfair practices on the job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The study determined the effect of employee grievance on performance of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 2637 academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The data generated in response to the questions was analyzed and hypotheses were tested using Simple Regression on Statistical Packages for Social Science (version 20) at 5% level of significance. According to the hypotheses, employee dissatisfaction, and perceived unfair practices have effect on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State and this effect was statistically significant.

The findings indicates that employee dissatisfaction, and perceived unfair practices has effect on job commitment in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, and this effect was statistically significant.The result is in line with that of Ngetich (2021) who shows that the organization's grievance handling mechanism provided the employees with judicial protection and avenues to present their problems peacefully and in an orderly way. Gomathi (2018) who revealed that effective management of grievances can improve employee performance. The study

concluded that to a great extent aggravation of industrial problems depends on manager's approaches and attitude in effective handling of employee grievances.

It can be said that job satisfaction determines organizational performance and organizational performance does not determine job dissatisfaction. This study states that Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, Anambra State has employee grievances. Based on the results, the study recommended the following:

1. Employees with job dissatisfaction have a relatively negative attitude towards their work; the need for job satisfaction arises, so employees with high job satisfaction have positive feelings about their work.
2. Unfair treatment and negative workplace should be completely avoided and the work motivation of employees should be ensured due to the weakening of their sense of psychological empowerment.

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