

**GOOD CONDITIONS OF SERVICE: A NOSTRUM TO STAFF EFFECTIVENESS IN
NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE****BY****Rachel Ajumoke Owolabi: Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education,
University of Ilorin, E-mail: barnsonayo@gmail.com****Professor David Olorunfemi Durosaro: Department of Educational Management, Faculty of
Education, University of Ilorin****Dr. Saheed Oyeniran: Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, University
of Ilorin****&****Alexander Gbenga Ogundele: Department of Technical Education, Kwara State College of
Education (Technical), Lafiagi; Email: alexnig2003@yahoo.com****Abstract**

The need for improved staff effectiveness has become universally accepted and its dependent on good conditions of service is not less apparent. It has further become imperative in view of the ever increasing global nature of the public service sector, the competitiveness of the knowledge era and the need for organizational survival, for organisations to provide good working conditions for its staff. Thus the role played by good conditions of service can no longer be over-emphasized. It is against this backdrop that this paper addressed the concepts of conditions of service, public service and staff effectiveness; capture the government roles in enhancing staff conditions of services in the Nigerian public service; and examine the vital role of good conditions of service in enhancing staff effectiveness. The epitome of the paper is that good conditions of service create job satisfaction and where such conditions are inadequate, yield job dissatisfaction of employees; employees leave the organization and develop negative attitudes towards work, thus, affecting staff effectiveness. The paper suggests among others that, there should be comprehensive, attractive and tempting conditions of service, staff regulations and scheme of service in the public service that are adequately comparable with relevant organization across the globe.

Keywords: Conditions of Service, Staff effectiveness, Public service, Organization, Employees

Introduction

Globally the 21st century work place is a dynamic, complex, and fast paced with highly challenging environment. Given the ever increasing global nature of the public service sector, the competitiveness of the knowledge era, and the need for organizational survival with key players such as personnel are indispensable. This is because of the difference they make in the services provided. They can either deliver good or bad service and this is where the competitive edge comes from which will invariably affect all the stakeholders in the organisation. In order to have good services and high productivity, good working conditions within their duty post and the organization they work for is very important (Akande, 2014; Bello, 2015; Igbe, Okpa & Aniah, 2017). According to Ipole, Agba and Okpa (2018), conditions of service are the hygiene factors which and when properly manipulated by the management and leadership of such organization, does have the potential of creating job satisfaction among their employees. Hence, lack of favourable conditions of service provided for employees in any organization is sine qua non to the failures in the achievement of the desired goals or objectives. Invariably, the need for the implementation of favorable conditions of service in the public service in order to enhance staff effectiveness and that of the organization at large cannot be overemphasized.

The deteriorating level of staff effectiveness is fast becoming a serious threat to the effective functioning and survival of many organizations in the Nigerian public service. This might be as a result of the persistent industrial agitations of different intensities and magnitudes occasioned by unhealthy industrial

relations between labor union and government. Most of the industrial agitations in Nigeria public service bother mainly on poor conditions of services especially in the area of nonpayment of salary (Ali, Abdiaziz & Adam, 2013). As posited by Igbe, Okpa & Aniah, 2017; Ipole, Agba & Okpa, 2018, poor salaries, late payment of monthly salaries, inadequate or lack of bonuses and allowances, pensions and gratuity, poor staff welfare, inadequate working tools/facilities and non-conducive work environment among others lowers employees' morale, and lack of motivation to work as well as causes job dissatisfaction, which affect the effectiveness of staff in discharging their statutory duties and responsibilities. On the overall, it can impede the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. However, in order to enhance employee capacity; boost employees' efficiency; and on the overall enhance the effectiveness of an organization, good condition of service is vital.

Conceptualisations of Conditions of Service

Conditions of service also known as condition of employment according to Akande (2014) are the totality of things that must exist or be done before people perform their duties in the civil service (such as salary, promotion, fringe benefits, staff development, terminal benefits). This has to be spelt out and agreed upon by both the employee and employer at the beginning of worker's entry employment point. These conditions can also encompass certain benefits such as retirement plans and health insurance coverage. A condition of service may also include a contract that states that an employee is given employment for a certain length of time so long as the employee does not violate the terms of the contract (Nwankwo, 2014).

In the light of this, Iloabuchi, Abraham and Afangideh (2016) observed that every organization has conditions of service peculiar to it. The same conditions of service can take different nomenclature from one organization to the other. However, the commonly known items as enshrined in the conditions of service in public service include staff salary, bonuses, organizational pension schemes, official cars, loan for purchase of personal cars, subsidy for housing rent, education leave with pay, health benefits, vouchers scheme as an alternative to a direct cash bonus, promotion to the post of Administrative Head, Director-general or Tutors-general, special awards and certificates, leave of absence and stock optional commission (Bello & Adebajo, 2014).

The Public Service at a Glance

Osawe (2017) observed that, the public service consists of the civil service – career staff whose appointment, promotion and discipline are under the exclusive control of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), at Federal and State levels, the National Assembly Service, the Judiciary, Public officers in the military, police and paramilitary services, employees of parastatals, educational and health institutions. However, the concept of public cannot be explained in isolation, as it cannot be discussed without mentioning the civil service. The term civil service is normally used when referring to the body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and non-political career basis by the federal and state governments, primarily to render and faithfully give effect to their decisions and implementations (Olaleye, 2012). Such career officers normally derive their appointment from the civil service commission, which also exercises power of delegating duties and responsibilities to department in accordance with laid down rules.

Okeke, Nwele and Achilike (2017) stated that the civil service is commonly used as the synonym of the machinery of the government, especially in Britain and most common wealthy nations of sub-saharan Africa. In the British conception, the civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the decision makers. The civil service can also be seen as a complex organization with a body of seemingly permanent officials appointed in a capacity to assist the political executives in the formulation, execution and implementation of the government policies in ministries and extra ministerial departments within which the specific government works are carried out.

Staff Effectiveness

Staff effectiveness is of immense importance to the individual, work organization and the society at large. As observed by Northouse (2016), staff effectiveness involves quantity and quality of outcomes from individual or group effort attainment. However, the indicator for ascertaining actual productivity of staff has been controversial due to the type of assigned duties across different sectors (private or public) organizations, and entities. While some scholars equate staff effectiveness measurement with routine duties (Robbins, Judge & Sanghai, 2013), others stated that staff effectiveness can be measured with the skills and abilities displayed by the personnel/employee/worker (Nwankwo, 2014; Bello, 2015). However, Okeke, *et.al.*, (2017) noted that staff effectiveness in the public service can be evaluated through continuous assessment and measurement by using Assessment Performance Appraisal (APA) form whose content depends on the goals and objectives in which the organization intends to achieve.

Viewpoint of staff conditions of service in the Nigerian public service

From the colonial period to date, there have been series of reviews in terms of grading and wage structures as well as other conditions of services in the public service of Nigeria. These reviews were effected either by unilateral revision of rates of pay by employers, by series of tripartite provincial wages committees or through ad-hoc fact-finding committees and commissions of enquiry set up by government. Some of these are listed below:

1. Hunt's Commission (1934);
2. The Bridges Committee (1941) and the Provincial Wages Committees (1942);
3. The Miller Committee (1946);
4. Temporary Additions to Wages/Salaries (1950-1952);
5. L.H. Gorsuch Commission-(1954-1955);
6. Morgan Commission (1963/1964);
7. Edwood Panel (1966);
8. Adebo Wages and Salaries Review Commission (1970-1971);
9. Udoji Public Service Review Commission (1974);
10. Adamolekun Commission (1981);
11. Civil Service Reforms (1988);
12. The Justice .A. Fatai Williams Committee (1990);
13. The Longe Commission Report (1991);
14. The Allison Ayida Panel (1994);
15. The Report of the Vision 2010 Committee (1997);
16. The Committee on Harmonization of Remuneration in the Public Service (1998)

Source: National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission, 2010).

In spite of the various reforms and reviews of staff conditions of service in the Nigerian public service, Ali, Abdiaziz & Adam, (2013); Sule, Amuni, Obasan & Banjo, (2015); Igbe, Okpa & Aniah, (2017); Ipole, Agba & Okpa, (2018) have shown that the working conditions, morale, and productivity levels in the Nigeria public service is poor considering the frequent agitations of staff under the auspices of various unions such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU); Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP); Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU), National Association of Nurses and Midwives of Nigeria (NANMN); Nigeria Medical Association (NMA); Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC); Nigerian Union of Civil Service Secretarial and Stenographic Workers (NUCSSSW); Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ); Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT); Trade Union Congress (TUC); Non-Academic Union of Allied and Education Institutions (NASU); Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) for improved working conditions. This underscores the need for good and favorable conditions of service.

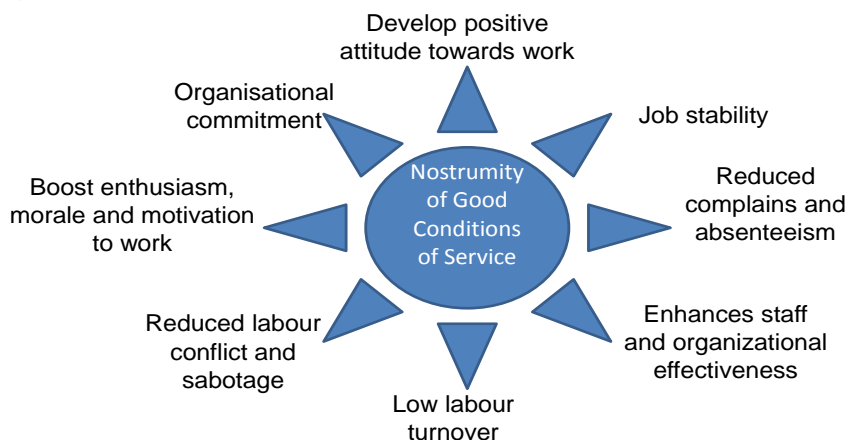
Good Conditions of Service to enhance Staff Effectiveness

The nature of conditions of service in any organization lays a basis for staff effectiveness. This is because poor conditions of service can cause stress, dissatisfaction and workplace conflict, which may lead to employees leaving their organization or profession altogether. Reiterating on this view, the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN, 2012) asserted that good conditions of service create job satisfaction and where such conditions are inadequate, yield job dissatisfaction of employees which warrant some to leave the organization while others develop negative attitudes towards work, thus, affecting staff effectiveness. This implies that good and favorable conditions of service for staff will make employees feel satisfy with their jobs and retain such jobs. In support of this claim, favorable, viable and sustainable conditions of services are associated with higher level effectiveness, while poor conditions of service are the result for low level of workers effectiveness.

Okoye, Mbagwu, Moneke and Abanum (2018) indicated that improving the working conditions like regular and improved salary payment and job security reduces complaints and absenteeism while it increases productivity. Okeke, Nwele and Achilike (2017) on the impact of effective wages and salary administration on civil service productivity in Nigeria revealed that employees need effective salary and wages administration to achieve high productivity in the civil service. Iloabuchi, Abraham & Afangideh (2016) revealed that, good condition of service among staff motivates them to work effectively. Fadeyi, Sofoluwe and Gbadeyan (2015) found that staff salary, promotion fringe benefit had a significant relationship with staff performance in an educational setting.

In a meta-analysis review on low income and diminishing productivity in Nigerian public sector, Obasaolu (2015) discovered that most countries with low productivity growth experienced this due to inadequate motivation of employees. While wages and salaries play an important role in determining productivity growth in less developed countries, low income ceases have a significant effect on productivity growth in highly developed countries due to other motivational incentives and modern technological facilities made available to their employees.

Figure 1: Nostrumity of Good Conditions of Service



Source: Authors' Design (2019)

The diagram in Figure 1 illustrates the indispensable roles of good or favorable conditions of service in enhancing staff effectiveness (that is the nostrumity of good conditions of service). From this diagram, it can be deduced that good and favorable conditions of service can leads to low labor turnover, reduced labor conflict and sabotage, boost enthusiasm, morale and motivation to work, organization commitment, positive attitude towards work, job stability, reduced complains and absenteeism and both staff and organizational effectiveness, if adequately provided and implemented in any workplace inclusive of the public service.

Conclusion

Healthy working condition is not just the concern of employees but a crucial factor that every employer should give a priority to ensure increased and sustained staff effectiveness. This suggested that, a good or favorable condition of service is a critical variable in enhancing the effectiveness of staff in the Nigerian public service. Contrarily, unfavorable conditions of service will bring about inadequate motivation and all these put together will attract low effectiveness, absenteeism, labor turnover and sabotage (like pilfering, image laundering, bribery and corruption) from staff.

Suggestions

From the submissions made on the good conditions of service towards staff effectiveness in both private and public services, the following suggestions were made to motivate workers among others:

1. There is need for a comprehensive, attractive and tempting condition of service and or scheme of service in the public service, which are adequately comparable with relevant organizations across the globe. This will not only broadens morale and enhance motivation to perform but the effectiveness of staff in the public service.
2. Various organizations in both private and public service should be mandated to put the welfare of their staff in high esteem.
3. Policy that will drastically reduce or eradicate incessant strike actions by the various trade and academic unions among public and private sectors be designed with much consideration on staff conditions of service for optimum satisfaction and productivity in the work place.
4. Both government and private organizations should provide a well conducive environment for their employee to avert the persistent industrial agitations of different intensities and magnitudes occasioned by unhealthy industrial relations between labor union and government.

References

- Akande, F. B. A. (2014). *Assessment of the relationship between conditions of service and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Kogi state, Nigeria*. M.Ed thesis, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Nigeria.
- Ali, A.Y.S., Abdiaziz, A.A. & Adam, A. A. (2013). Working conditions and employees productivity in manufacturing companies in Sub-Saharan African context: Case of Somalia. *Educational Research International*, 2(2), 67-78.
- Bello, B.B. (2015). *Personnel management practices and academic staff effectiveness in Kwara State colleges of education*. M.Ed Thesis, Faculty of Education, National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos.
- Bello, O.W. & Adebajo A.A. (2014). Reward system and employees performance in Lagos State (A Study of Selected Public Secondary Schools). *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 3 (8), 14 – 28.
- Igbe, J.E., Okpa, J.T. & Aniah, E.A. (2017). Working conditions and deviant behaviour of employees in the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(7), 74-83.
- Iloabuchi, E.N., Abraham, N.M. & Afangideh, S.T. (2016). Management of teaching staff for quality education delivery in secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 4 (8), 617-623.
- Ipole, P. A., Agba, A. O. & Okpa, J. T. (2018). Existing Working Conditions and Labour Unions Agitations in Cross River State Civil Service, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Social Sciences Studies*, 4 (1), 39-51.
- National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (2010). Historical Perspective on Salary and Wage Reviews. Retrieved on 24th November, 2019 from https://www.nsiwc.gov.ng/Historical_Perspective.php
- Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice (5th Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- NOUN (2012). *Courseware material on human resources management in education (EDA 821)*. Abuja: National Open University of Nigeria. Retrieved 30th September, 2019, from www.nou.edu.ng/courseware
- Nwankwo, J. (2014). *Management in education: modern approaches in education management*. Ibadan: Giraffe Books.
- Okeke, P. A., Nwele, J. O. & Achilike, N. I. (2017). Impact of effective wages and salary administration on civil service productivity in Nigeria: A study of Anambra State. *Asian Journal of Applied Science and Technology (AJAST)*, 1 (9), 421-438.
- Okoye, I. B., Mbagwu, F. C., Moneke, P. & Abanum, R. (2018). Indices of working condition as determinant of job performance of librarians in academic libraries in South-East Nigeria. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 10(5), 45-53. DOI: 10.5897/IJLIS2018.0830
- Olaleye, A. O. (2012). Implications of non- implementation of minimum wage in Ekiti State. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 16 (2), 121-129.
- Osawe, C. O. (2017). Time management: an imperative factor to effective service delivery in the Nigeria public service. *International Journal of Development and Management Review (INJODEMAR)*, 12 (1), 152 – 167.
- Robbins, S.P., Judge, T.A. & Sanghai, S. (2013). *Organizational management*. London: Pearson Prentice Hall
- Sule, O. E., Amuni , S. I., Obasan, K. A. & Banjo, H. A. (2015). Wages and salaries as a motivational tool for enhancing organizational performance. A survey of selected Nigerian workplace. *EuroEconomica*, 34 (1). Retrieved on 24th November, 2019 from:<http://journals.univdanubius.ro/index.php/euroeconomica/article/view/2466/2533>