

Staff Welfare Package and Employee Service Delivery: A Study of Onitsha South Local Government Council

By

Nwachukwu Jeremiah Ugochukwu₁

Department of Public Administration,

Anambra State University, Igbariam

Campus freedomcity2018@gmail.com, +2348033446082

Aghadiuno Ijeoma Gloria₂

National Institute for Educational Planning and

Administration Ondo State, Nigeria ijeomag3@gmail.com,

+2347038529226

&

Okunola Omolola₃

National Institute for Educational Planning and

Administration Ondo State, Nigeria lolaok33@gmail.com ,

+2348033611363

Abstract

This paper sheds light on how staff welfare programmes could help to improve service delivery using Onitsha south local government council in Anambra state. The methodology was primarily survey and involved the use of questionnaires. A total of 211 questionnaires were administered on various categories of workers in Onitsha south local government council. Out of 211 questionnaires administered 180 were retrieved, chi-square

statistical technique was used to test the hypotheses at ≤ 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that staff welfare programme have positive effect on service delivery. They are capable of attracting and holding employees, assisting employees in meeting their needs, improving morale, increasing employee security and blunting the sharp edges of managerial autocracy. The paper goes further to advance suggestions for mending loopholes discovered in the administration of welfare programme for workers.

Keywords: staff, welfare package, employee, service delivery. Local government council

Introduction

One of the basic assumptions of management practice is that workers can be motivated through high productivity by satisfying their needs. This assumption presupposes that every worker has some internal urges which propel them in specific direction towards self-fulfillment and also towards realization of his central life's ambition (Urwick, Mapuru Nkohoboti, 2005).

The origin of fringe benefits to an employee in an organization date as far back as the 19th century. However, major attempts to the provision of fringe benefits to workers were made during the 1920's era of paternalism, it was this time that elaborate personnel programme were developed emphasizing such activities as company store, company home recreation facilities etc.

In developing countries like Nigeria, the growth of fringe benefits has been primarily influenced by the economy to provide the basic facilities to the citizenry. Ayeniyo (2015) emphasized the myth about the nature and work life of an average Nigerian public servant. It projects the picture of a

complacent individual whose sense of responsibility has been dulled by frustration and negativism.

Amaechi (1984) paints a very clear picture of the impact and relevance of employee welfare when he contended thus; it would be unreasonable to support that people would continue to find satisfaction in company affairs if no reciprocal interest is there to show in their individual needs and problems. This consideration offers the most direct explanation of management as regards to its employees as a people.

Staff welfare among civil servants is very critical and important for quality service delivery to the public. These services if inadequate will negatively impact on service delivery in the public sector. Therefore, proper mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that welfare services are adequately provided for to the civil servants. Finger (2005) asserted the improvement of employee morale and spirit can be done by addressing the issues of morale. Attitude survey, welfare measures, salary addition from time to time can be some other ways of improving financial performances and thus reducing employee turnover. Employee welfare measure relates to certain additional activities which may be provided by an organization like housing facilities, medical facilities, recreational facilities, cultural facilities, libraries, gyms and health club etc. This is offered by employers in the hope of winning the satisfaction index of an employee.

McGuire and McDonnell (2008) opine that the employee welfare programmes help significantly in enhancing the self-confidence and intellectual level of an employee. This will eventually increase employee productivity in the workplace leading to improved satisfaction making the employee to be challenged to take on more challenging tasks and responsibilities. This is a good indication of financial performance in the organization created through adding

greater value to employee's welfare. Torjman (2004) argued that welfare programmes and especially recreation services, account for healthy individuals besides increasing among their happiness and emotional quotient. Once employees are happy they will have a positive attitude towards work leading to higher service delivery within the organization. Kirsh (2009) was of the opinion that employee welfare programmes should be flexible and continuous innovation needs to be done to improve on those facilities hence create a more satisfying environment for the employee and the organization as a whole.

Ayinde (2014) advocated that employee welfare measures serve as an oxygen for motivation of the workers and increase not only the effectiveness of the workforce but also creative in solving unique organizational challenges, this will eventually lead to attainment of higher level of organizational performance and high service delivery of the employees. Staff welfare is one of the corporate commitments to demonstrate care for employees at all levels, underpinning their work and the environment in which it is performed (Cowling and Mailer, 1992).

In Nigeria today, there has been a lot of conflict between worker's union and government. The major cause of the conflict can be attributed to poor staff welfare packages. As a result of this poor staff welfare package, this nation has witnessed a number of strike actions by workers particularly in different organizations. In Nigerian situation, labour leaders hold the view that if workers' wages are sufficiently increased there would be effective service delivery. The agitation for the fulfillment of employee needs have culminated in many service dispute from the general strike of 1945, through the sheeting of coal mine at Enugu in 1949, the deck employee strikes of 1964 and the very recent minimum wage strike of 2013. However, Amaechi (1984) contends that sound and

equitable administered programme of staff welfare is an important and integral part of a well-balanced public service relations. Such welfare programme has the advantage of providing needed production of employees, improving morale, help to give a sense of loyalty and pride which adds to the company's reputation in the community as a good place of work attracting desirable applicants and provide incentives for quality performance on the job.

The motive of this study is to review the essence of welfare programme in our public sector. This welfare programme will help to motivate the employees for better job performance and also to reduce employer and employee crisis. By so doing, there will be improvement in the service delivery of the public sector.

Statement of the Problem

Human beings have needs which they expect to satisfy such as safety or security needs, social need, and the needs for advancement in life. These needs (welfare) influence their work performances or roles, social relation with their formal and informal groups, their attitudes towards the management and their efforts to meet organizational objectives. One of the functions of the organization is to motivate its workers. Motivating them entails making them to perform their duties by a dial of controversy over the issue of what motivates a worker. Some people have found that workers can be motivated through the use of money. These people are of the view that people work primarily for money. However, an opposition view advanced by the human relation movement, do not regard money as the primary thing that motivates workers, they lay great emphasis on "man as the producer". In other words, the advocates of the movement are of the view that a good working environment and the provision of social

facilities for the workers will be valued more by the workers than monetary rewards.

Most remarkably, there is a serious problem and argument about the issue of staff welfare. Adequate staff welfare package will have a powerful change in the workers' service delivery in any establishment. Some years back, due to poor incentive and lack of motivation ensuing from inadequate staff welfare package, staff of various establishments like Onitsha South Local Government Council was observed to be less dedicated to work and hard work became an old story. It was observed that delay in the payment of workers' salaries resulted in apathy that hindered efficiency in work performance in Onitsha South Local Government Council. It also led to embarrassing circumstances typified in inability to pay rent, school fees for their wards, poor dietary intake and ineffective service delivery. Other benefits that the employee is entitled to is in the form of leave allowances, Christmas bonus, transport, housing, overtime allowance, traveling allowances etc. though not legally binding by the organization as they are not covered by the Trade Dispute Acts of Nigeria. Closely related to this is the employee's right to be managed fairly, which Cowling and Mailer (1992) argued to be within the framework of welfare. Specifically, the right of employees to health and safety at work is one of the basic principles of the labour code. Such that when the health and safety of the employees are not assured they apparently become "instruments of production". This *prima facie* suggests that the well-being of the employees is of little importance to the organization and recognition of which could make them perceive self-actualization within the organization an illusion with implications for decline in morale and service delivery. There is no gainsaying that the employees have an inalienable right to be managed fairly. There are no pretenses that several instances of industrial conflict arise from management's

indifference to the working conditions of the union (employees). Staff welfare programmes are issues which every employer or organization must handle properly. No organization can function effectively without a productive staff and the staff can be productive when they receive motivational incentives. The problem of provision of welfare services has effects on the performance of Nigerian workers/staff of Onitsha South Local Government Area. Welfare here means fringe benefits that can spur employees to high performance. Most workers do not have the opportunity to enjoy work benefits such as decent working and living conditions, education, health, hygiene and sanitation. The welfare services if inadequate will impact negatively on the performance of the workers (Manasa and Krishnanaik, 2012). It is on this bedrock that this study is set to find out some staff welfare programme and their effect on employee service delivery.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine staff welfare programme and employee service in Onitsha South Local Government Council, Anambra State. The specific objectives of this study include:

1. To determine the extent to which the implementation of staff welfare programme has affected service delivery in Onitsha South Local Government Council.
2. To identify the various employee welfare programme available to staff of Onitsha South Local Government Council.
3. To examine the factors which hinders full implementation of the staff programme in Onitsha South Local Government Council?

Research Questions

1. To what extent has the implementation of staff welfare programme affected service delivery in Onitsha South Local Government Council?
2. What are the various employee welfare programmes available to staff of Onitsha South Local Government Council?
3. What are the factors that hinder full implementation of staff welfare programme in Onitsha South Local Government Council?

Methodology

The study adopted survey method which was used to access respondents' perception about staff welfare package and service delivery. The population of the study was drawn from the entire staff of Onitsha south local government council. The population of the study comprised of 447 staff of Onitsha south local government council. For this study, Taro Yamane sample size determination technique was applied. Questionnaire was adopted as the research instrument for data collection. The stability of the instrument was ensured using test- retest method. The data collected was analyzed using chi-square.

Results

Table 1: Extent to which implementation of staff welfare programme affected service delivery.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	109.320a	12	.010
Likelihood Ratio	142.711	12	
Linear-by-Linear	6.556		
Association	180		
N of Valid Cases			

Source: SPSS Version 21.0

Since the Pearson chi-square value of 109.320 at 12 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha levels, we reject the null hypothesis. This implies that implementation of staff welfare programmes enhances effective service delivery of workers in Onitsha South Local Government Council.

Table 2: Various employee welfare programmes available to Staff of Onitsha south local government council.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	113.743a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	147.575	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear	8.829		.003
Association	180		

N of Valid Cases			
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Source: SPSS Version 21.0

Since the Pearson chi-square value of 113.743 at 12 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha levels. We accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that provision of recreational activities, Christmas gifts; free medication and provision of accommodation are not some of employee welfare programmes in Onitsha South Local Government Council.

Table 3: factors that hinder full implementation of staff welfare programme in Onitsha South Local Government Council.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	435.35& 252.778	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	136.976	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	180		
N of Valid Cases			

Source: SPSS Version 21.0

Since the Pearson chi-square value of 435.354 at 12 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha levels. We accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that lack of fund; corruption, poor leadership style etc. are not some of the factors which hinder full implementation of staff welfare programmes in Onitsha South Local Government Council.

Discussion of Findings

From the study and test of hypotheses, it was understood that high productivity of staff is as a result of effective welfare programme. The findings of the study revealed that the implementation of employee welfare programme has greatly increased the service delivery of workers in Onitsha South Local Government Council. The Pearson chi-square test revealed that implementation of staff welfare programmes increase service delivery on the part of the workers. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This finding is consistent with (Ayinde, 2014) who contended that employee welfare programmes should be used as a panacea for effective labour productivity or service delivery. The finding also agrees with Okereke and Daniel (2010) that staff welfare programmes should be implemented in Patani local government so as to ensure quality service delivery.

The study also found out that provision of recreational activities, Christmas gifts, free medication, provision of accommodation are not some of the employee welfare programmes in Onitsha South Local Government Council. The result indicated that there are various staff welfare programmes that are made available by Onitsha South Local Government Council. The null hypothesis was hereby accepted. This

finding concurs with Manasa and Krishanaik (2015) that the cement corporation of India has provided various facilities to their employers as per the rules and regulation of India. This finding is also consistent with Thomas, Keter, Geoffrey and Kemboi (2013) that staff welfare programmes such as wages and good working conditions available to civil servants in Nandi County Kenya contributed a great deal to service delivery.

Lastly, the finding revealed that lack of fund; corruption, poor leadership style etc. are not some of the factors which hinder full implementation of staff welfare programmes in Onitsha South Local Government Council. The result indicated that a number of factors pose as a barrier to the implementation of staff welfare programme. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The findings agree with Ayinde (2014) who pointed out a number of factors that works against the implementation of staff welfare programmes and that many employees are ignorant of welfare programmes in their place of work.

Conclusion

This study looked at the effect of staff welfare programme on employee service delivery in Onitsha South Local Government Council and also to the public sector at large and no organization can function effectively without a well-motivated employees and this can only be possible when there is adequate employee welfare programmes in the organization.

This study went further to make some recommendations which if adhered to, will go a long way in removing obstacles associated with the implementation of staff welfare programme in the public sector, or increase its motivational impact on the employees. Also employees should

try and put in their best for the organization when they are being provided with these welfare programmes.

Recommendations

1. Authorities in the public sector should establish a staff management welfare committee to deal with all matters concerning the implementation of staff welfare programme. The more the welfare programmes are implemented, the higher the productivity (service delivery).
2. Employers in the public sector should be aware that satisfied employees may not be motivated employees. They should find out the needs of the workers and use them as motivators to arouse the employees to perform effectively for the achievement of organizational objectives.
3. Employers should try their best to organize workshops, seminars and conferences on the issues of staff welfare programme available to their workers because some workers are ignorant of some welfare programmes.

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