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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS IN AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE

U. C. Osu, *PhD*

&

Isola Bose F.

Abstract

The job performance of community development officers is a key factor to the success of community development activities in LGAs. However, declining performance of community development officers in LGAs in Nigeria has become a source of concern and in fact, a major challenge of human service organisations. In view of this, the study investigated relationship between work environment and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State. The correlational survey design was adopted and a simple random sampling technique was used to select a total of four hundred and thirty-seven respondents for the study. Two structured questionnaires; Work Environment Scale (WES) with a reliability coefficient of 0.82 and Job Performance Scale (JPS) with a reliability of 0.84 were the main instruments used for data collection. Three hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression analysis. The study showed that autonomy ($r = .067$, $p < 0.05$), work pressure ($r = .071$, $p < 0.05$) and physical comfort ($r = .069$, $p < 0.05$) had significant correlation with job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. It was therefore recommended that the work environment should be made conducive to workers so that they can perform optimally. Officers should be given responsibilities backed up by commensurate authority.

Keywords: Work environment, Community development officers, Organisation and Job performance.

Introduction

The job performance of community development officers is vital to the success of community development activities in Local Government Areas. The productivity, growth and survival of a community based organisation depend to a large extent on the job performance of its workforce. In fact, the realisation of sustainable community development and community transformation, among others, depends on the effectiveness

and efficiency of community development officers. Maximizing efforts from community development officers is important in sustaining community development, executed community projects and keeping abreast with changes as well as promoting innovation. Shitu (2013) explains that a community development officer is a multidisciplinary professional who seeks to support and promote development at grassroots level. He provides key skills and competencies in community mobilisation, community projects management and evaluation as well as innovation diffusion. In the words of Abegunde (2004), community development officers are community-based resource persons who collaborate with other community based organisations to perform development tasks, help community members to obtain information and resources from service providers with the aim of learning how to progressively meet their needs, achieve goals, realise their aspirations and maintain their well-being. Community development officers often act as a link between communities and local government and other statutory bodies. They are frequently involved in addressing inequalities in projects planning and execution by community development groups and associations.

According to Adisa and Jibowo (2004), the community development officers can be seen as the link between the people and the government (local, national and international). They link communities and government agencies in the process of knowledge and technology transfer in the communities. Community development officers as an extension workers work in the local community to assist in bringing desirable changes. They are public servants or staff working for non-governmental organisations. They therefore, draw wage for their services from the organisation they belong to. The agent might be a community development officer, a health officer or a social worker (Abiona, 2009). Like in any other educational jobs, a community development officer's role is vital and fundamental and the efficiency of the organisation depends on his eagerness and interest in his work. Thus, knowing the factors influencing on job performance of community development officers in their work environment can enhance a clear understanding of these factors, and help them to improve their administrative skills in order to enhance job satisfaction level and their performances (Mohammadipoor, 1995) cited in Osu (2017).

Declining performance of community development officers in community-based organisations in Nigeria has become a persistent concern and in fact, a major challenge of human service organisations. It is, therefore, a problem that must be looked into knowing fully well that the place of job performance in any life blood organisation cannot be over-

emphasized. Because job performance of community development officers is so important to community-based organisations, numerous researchers and practitioners alike have attempted to solve the problem of low performance by application of various innovative management techniques and carrying out several relevant studies (Balas, 2010), it is worrisome to note that the problem of performance still persist in over 80% of organisations in the country. From the above, it seems increasing job performance is still among the most theoretically and practically important problems in organisational research. Among the factors that seem to influence job performance, work environment, however, have been found as major, although not the only determinants of job performance and success in any life-blood community-based organisation.

Work environment can be described as those processes, systems, structures, tools or conditions in the workplace that impact favourably or unfavourably individual performance. The work environment also includes policies, rules, culture, resources, working relationships, work location, and internal and external environmental factors, all of which influence the ways those employees perform their job functions (Bindu and Rupa, 2012). In addition, work environment according to Akintayo (2006) referred to the immediate task and national environment where an organisation draws its inputs, process it and return the outputs in form of products or services for public consumption. Tripathi (2014) the work environment can be defined as the environment in which people work that include physical setting, job profile, culture and market condition. Each aspect is inter-linked and impacts on employees' overall performance and productivity. It is the quality of the employees' workplace environment that most impacts on their level of motivation subsequently performance. Although, researchers like Bushiri (2014), Nanzushi (2015) & Addaimanu (2015) in the past few years investigated the impacts of working environment with emphasis on policies, rules, resource that hinders employee performance. But in this research researcher was focusing on bridging the gap such as organizational culture, office design, and organization environmental factors, such as office space and lighting.

In order to gain insight into the specific pattern of relationships between work environment and job performance, a clear classification of work environment is of importance. In classifying work environment, therefore, Moos (1994) identified nine core components: involvement, co-worker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity, managerial control, innovation and physical comfort.

Meanwhile, the researchers only examined three out of the nine components which included autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort.

Job autonomy is one of the nine core components of work environment developed by Moos (1994). Job autonomy is defined as the degree to which an individual is given substantial freedom, independence, and discretion in carrying out a task, such as scheduling work and determining procedures to follow (Hackman, 1980). Researches in job autonomy have showed a consistent and positive association between job autonomy and performance. First and foremost, Gellatly and Irving (2001), Langfred and Moyer (2004) found the positive effects of job autonomy on job performance. According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), autonomy leads to the critical a psychological state of "experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work", which in turn leads to outcomes such as high work effectiveness and high internal work motivation. According to Langfred and Moyer (2004), job autonomy enhances job performance because they perceive themselves capable and more resourceful in performing the task. In a nut shell, this means that when employees are given the opportunity to maximize the use of their talent and ability for pursuing a clearly identifiable and worthy outcome or goal, they are more likely to consider their job as one that helps them meet their own personal goals and aspirations. Maintaining a comfortable physical environment in the workplace is vital, as it creates a healthier building with optimum environmental conditions which enable employees to be healthier and have a lower absenteeism rate, and hence be more productive. Ali, Lodhi, & Raza, (2018),

It is against this background that this study examined the relationship between work environment and job performance of Community Development Officers in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

There is a general consensus that the job performance of community development officers in Local Government Areas is vital for the growth of the organisation and the community. However, job performance of community development officers have been reported to be relatively low in various Local Government Areas of Oyo State, thereby, affecting their inputs in community development activities. This has become a persistent concern and in fact, a major challenge in the practice of community development. It is, therefore, a problem that must be looked into knowing fully well that the place of job performance in any life blood organisation cannot be over-emphasized.

Evidences from literature show that there is a noticeable dearth in the area of relationship between work environment and job performance of community development officers hence the need for this study.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between work environment and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i find out the relationship between autonomy and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- ii examine the relationship between work pressure and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- iii determine the relationship between physical comfort and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Hypotheses

In view of the problem raised above, the following hypotheses were tested:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- Ho₂: There is no joint contribution of work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- Ho₃: There is no relative contribution of work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Methodology

The correlational survey research design was adopted for this study. The target population of the study consisted of all the 437 community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 210 participants as the sample size for study. The instruments adopted were Work Environment Scale designed by Moos (1994) which reported internal consistency

reliability of 0.82 and Job Performance Scale (JPS) developed by Macan et al (1990). The study adopted 4-point modified likert response format ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.84 using Cronbach-Alpha Method. The data collected for the study were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression analysis.

Results

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Table 1: Correlation analysis showing the relationship between Work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) and Job Performance

	Job Performance	Autonomy	Work pressure	Physical comfort	Mean	S.D
Job Performance	1				30.89	4.1325
Autonomy	.067	1			5.307	1.4413
Work Pressure	.071	.098	1		5.503	1.5132
Physical comfort	.069	.168	.036	1	5.029	1.6883

* $p < 0.05$

The result from Table 1 showed that the three independent variables, namely: autonomy ($r = .067$, $p < 0.05$), work pressure ($r = .071$, $p < 0.05$) and physical comfort ($r = .069$, $p < 0.05$) had significant correlation with job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

H₀₂: There is no joint contribution of work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Table 2: The Joint Contribution of the work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) and job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.305	.093	.043	4.0458			
A N O V A						
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	488.972	16	30.561	1.867	.035	Sig
Residual	4779.714	292	16.369			
Total	5268.686	308				

Table 2 showed the joint contribution of the three independent variables to the prediction of the dependent variable, that is, job performance. The table also showed a coefficient of multiple correlation ($R = .305$ and a multiple R^2 of .093. This means that 9.3% of the variance in job performance was accounted for by the predictor variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at $p < .05$. The table also showed that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded a F-ratio of 1.867 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

H₀₃: There is no relative contribution of work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Table 3: Relative contribution of work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Stand. Coefficient	T	Sig.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution			
(Constant)	11.676	2.092		7.324	.000	Sig.
Autonomy	.343	.168	.134	2.048	.041	Sig
Work Pressure	.437	.177	.152	2.465	.014	Sig
Physical Comfort	.339	.170	.132	2.811	.015	Sig

Table 3 revealed the relative contribution of the three independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights, viz: Autonomy ($\beta = .041$, $p < .05$), Work pressure ($\beta = .014$, $p < .05$) and Physical comfort ($\beta = .015$, $p < .05$) respectively. Hence, autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort made significant contributions to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Discussion of Findings

It was established that autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort had significant correlation with job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. In line with the findings of the study, Adebayo and Ezeanya (2010) found in their study that workers with high level of job autonomy experience higher degree of performance. In a similar fashion, Bremner and Carriere (2011) found that autonomy and job performance are significantly related. Odanye (2004) reported that physical comfort of work environment positively related to workers' job performance regardless of workers' background.

Hafiza (2011) explain that work environment contributes to increased staff performance. Over the last decades, conducive physical work environment and work system have become complex due to the changes in several factors such as the social environment, information technology and work processes (Hashim & Mahmood, 2011, Hope, Obianuju & Chibuzoh 2017). According to Cynthia (2015), where workers are mentally and ardently fit, their passion to work will be enhanced and their performance outcomes will ultimately be amplified. Kohun (2012) also stated that a proper workplace environment reduces absenteeism and as a result strengthens employees' performance in work place.

Akintayo (2004), Vischer (2006), & Cynthia (2015), reported that conducive work environment attenuated with good condition of service, opportunity for training and development, provision of adequate retirement benefits and interpersonal relations had significantly influenced workers' performance.

It was established that work environment (autonomy, work pressure and physical comfort) had a joint contribution to job performance of community development officers in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. In corroborating this, Ekundayo (2014) revealed that working environment had significantly influenced perceived performance in industrial organisations while Awan and Tahir (2015) affirm that Work environment plays an important role in an organization. Most of the problems faced by

employees are related to working environment. Productivity among workers could be achieved by creating a friendly conducive working environment in the organization. The finding implies that the working environment such as; political, economic, social, legal and technological are significant factors through which workers' performance could be enhanced in terms of achievement of organisational goals. Furthermore, Mohanty, Susmitaparija and Ghansyamsahu (2012) noted that working environment is an important determiner of employee performance and helps employees to concentrate on their job properly.

Conclusion

The importance of work environment in the day-to-day performance of development officers cannot be over emphasized. It is a well-known fact that human performance of any sort is improved by increase in the condition of work environment. Going by the findings of this study, it can be easily inferred that the environment where workers are discharging their duties should be conducive. In other words, when conducive environment are not provided to employees, they tend to express their displeasure through poor performance and non-commitment to their job. It is therefore imperative for the organization to consider the needs and feelings of its workforce and not just over look them because "a happy worker they say is a productive worker".

Recommendations

- i. The work environment should be made conducive to workers so that they can perform optimally.
- ii. Officers should be given responsibilities backed up by commensurate authority.

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