PRACTICES OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND JOB SATISFACTION IN FORESTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF NIGERIA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Employees' job satisfaction and healthy practices of employee relations are important factors for an effective organisational system. This study examined the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction in the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria. The data collected was primary and cross-sectional. A convenience sampling technique was used in selecting 190 participants in the organisation. The results showed that the perceived practices of employee relations include the creation of better working conditions ($\overline{x}$ = 3.77) and provision of opportunities for participation ($\overline{x}$ = 3.63). Letters ($\overline{x}$ = 4.56) and group meetings ($\overline{x}$ = 4.41 were the tools of employee relations used often ($\overline{x}$ = 3.62). The major employees' satisfaction on the job was job achievement ($\overline{x}$ = 3.97). There was a significant association between the frequency of use of tools of employee relations and job satisfaction and job satisfaction (r = 0.253; p < 0.05) and between the employees' perception about the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction. (r = 0.50; p < 0.05) and job satisfaction. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that the organisation should recognize its employees as its valuable assets and invest in the training of its employees on relations management.

Keywords: Employees, Organisation, Practices, Relations, Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Incorporation of issues such as collective bargaining, negotiations, employment legislation to more topical attention like the work-life balance, equal opportunities and managing diversity is a comprehensive term called "employee relation". Employees' relations management is a practice effectually used by corporations in handling employees' dealings to realize the establishments' objectives (Gazioglu & Tansel, 2006). Thus, the Human Resource

Department has greatly contributed to the training and preparation of administrators and supervisors on the traditions of efficiently fostering and inaugurating employees' relationships as a result of nursing and assessing the attained better relationships (Bakanauskiene *et al.*, 2010).

The focus of employee relations is on how to facilitate employees work together with their employers and colleagues by the assignation of both sides of the service relationship inputs and the management of employment connection platforms. This is aimed to align both parties' wellbeing and streamline the day to day functions of the business' workflow (Cohen, 1993; Kaliski, 2007). Organisations ascribe much importance to its clientele or supply associates for the gratification and accomplishment of the business. However, it is insufficient for the business to satisfy its external stakeholders (Wang, 2002). Employee-employer and employee-organisation connections are fragments of a company's interior affiliation administration. The exploration with regards to this in-house liaison management had focused on organisational behaviour and theory in human resource management (Cohen & Hudacek, 1998; Liao *et al.*, 2004).

In the context of human resource management, the social exchange theory advocates that human resource actions have an emotional impact on the development of employee trust. Worthy design of human resource events in building employee trust will significantly improve organisational effectiveness (Whitener, 1997). Employee job performance had always remained a major challenge in organisational management and embracing effective techniques to encourage employees to realize and deliver greater job performance as well as proliferation the organisational competitiveness is the core intentions of every corporate organisation (Lee *et al.,* 2011).

Rue & Byars (2003) opined that employee relationship management involves formal and informal relations between managers and individuals whom they manage. An operational employee relation flinches with clearly written policies that display the corporation guidelines, viewpoint and actions that discourses employee-related matters (Cohen & Hudacek, 1998). These are usually found in the collective bargaining agreement document that is discussed flanked by the employer and the union executives on behalf of the employees. These employee relations management practices include trade unionism, career growth/promotion opportunities, collective bargaining agreement, dispute/grievances settlement procedures, organisational culture and policies, compensation plan and rewards.

The employee-management collaboration aims to increase efficiency, promote industrial egalitarianism, circumvent conflict and gain aids for both parties, not to bargain over the

splitting up or sharing of gains (Seta *et al.,* 2000). Every party has to assist its peculiar concern by working with others. By doing this, the management and workers will find means to reduce expenditures and offer greater worth to clients (Lee *et al.*, 2008). These investments will create higher returns for the enterprise and enhanced treaty for the union. Human relations and behavioural authorities strongly suggest that productivity and industrial advancement hang on the friendly and comprehensive union-management affiliation. Both the management and employees are not unequal partners of industrial growth and success. Gatchalia (2012) contended that the workplace cooperation is a broad concept connoting mutual commitment between the labour and management to work smartly together.

There is more commitment, satisfaction, better overall performance and motivation for the employee (Mullins, 2005) when employee engagement deliberates the synergetic association between employees and the organisation. Employee engagement linked employee satisfaction and performance. Engaged employees have a level of obligation and responsive attachment to the organisation (Cohen, 2000; Niklas & Dormann, 2005).

Job satisfaction is an individual's sensation of contentment on the job. This acts as a stimulus to work. It is not the self- satisfaction, happiness and contentment that matters but the fulfilment on the job. Oshagbemi (2000) stated that employees have some attitudes as regards their jobs due to their occupations diverse features, social status gained in the workplace and job environment involvements. This could also be a deleterious attitude towards work if the social status, economic benefits, the employees' job expectation and specific uniqueness of the job are information to the cravings of employees (Yousef, 2000).

Job dissatisfaction affects the enactment of respectable accomplishing organisations in the competitive business world. Poor relations between the employer and employees amid organisations functioning at the international and local markets had come to be the challenge (Kaliski, 2007). Aspects that encourage job dissatisfaction ranges from lack of ability of firms to apportion satisfactory means to train workforces, incapability to resolve disagreements on time and incongruous performance assessment modus operandi. On the other hand, it is obvious that organisations that uphold good relations with its employees are more likely to experience increased annual profits, enthusiastic and encouraged personnel who work to achieve organisational objectives (George & Jones, 2008).

Job satisfaction also causes chains of effects on numerous phases of the organisational life cycle. These include the influence of job satisfaction on employee productivity, loyalty and absenteeism. There are other several probable moderating variables such as the rewards on

the job. When employees receive their rewards, they feel justifiable, satisfied and this results in a greater job performance effort. Job satisfaction is a complex issue been faced today by managers when it comes to the supervision of their employees. Many studies have demonstrated few and far between impacts of job satisfaction and the motivation of workers, while the level of motivation has an impact on productivity and the performance of the business organisation.

There is a deficiency in facts at present on employees' relation practices of the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria since its establishment. This had made operating strategy a hard-hitting responsibility and arbitrations futile. It is nonetheless of significance to execute an investigation if the goals of the organisation are to be reached.

The ensuing intentions were measured to accomplish the general objective of the study which examined the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction in Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria. These specific objectives are to:

 i.   examine employees' perception of the practices of employee relations;
 ii. examine the frequency of use of tools of employee relations; and
 iii. examine the level of employees' job satisfaction in the study organisation.

The resulting hypotheses were proved in the alternative form.

H_{01}: There is no significant association between the frequency of use of tools of employee relations and job satisfaction.

H_{02}: There is no significant association between the employees' perception of the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction.

METHODS

Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria an organisation in Nigeria supervised by the Federal Ministry of Environment. The organisation has specialized research sections, support departments, outstations, service units and Diploma awarding colleges. The organisation's research focuses on conservation management and utilization, forest resources, forestry manpower development and general sustainable environmental protection (Adebayo, 2016).

The data collected at the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria was primary data and cross-sectional. The data was collected online using social media as the primary mode of reaching out to the study population. Social media in the context of this study included, WhatsApp and Telegram. Respondents were asked to click on a link in order to fill the online survey. Convenience sampling technique was used in selecting 190 participants in the organisation. The retrieved data set response was further used in the later examination.

This examination tool used reports embraced from preceding studies. Respondents were requested to agree on a five-point Likert-type scale the extent to which they decided with the annotations. A 15-item scale was used to measure the perceived practices of employee relations. This was adapted from the scale of Raghavendra, (2013). A 14-item scale was used to quantify job satisfaction. This was adapted from the study of Bendaravičienė & Bakanauskienė, (2012). Mean Score and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used subsequently used to analyse the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 depicts the employees perceived level of practices of employee relations in the organisation. The relations practices experienced among the employees include creating better working conditions ($\overline{x}$ = 3.77), providing of opportunities for participation ($\overline{x}$ = 3.63), enhancing of career growth ($\overline{x}$ = 3.31), educating institutional policies and programmes ($\overline{x}$ = 3.16), creating a healthy working atmosphere ($\overline{x}$ = 3.12) and creating comradelier ($\overline{x}$ = 3.11). The results from the table however indicated that the employees had a high perception on the practices of employee relations in the organisation. The implication of this is that employees will perform better when there are better relations practices amongst themselves in a conducive work environment (Ng et al., 2009; Samad, 2011).

Table1: **Perceived Level of Practices of Employee Relations**

Practices of employee relations	$\overline{x}$
Creating better working conditions	3.77
Providing opportunities for participation	3.63
Enhancing of career growth	3.31
Educating Institutional policies and programmes	3.16
Creating a healthy working atmosphere	3.12
Creating comradelier	3.11
Creating a sense of belonging	2.96
Providing internal communication services	2.91
Bringing about a sense of bonding	2.87
Maintaining cordial relations with the employees.	2.82
Encouraging to actively participate in organisational activities	2.74
Developing internal communication	2.73
Recognizing others as organisational assets	2.71
Developing the grievances level out mechanism	2.66
Grand Mean	**3.04**

Source: Field Survey, (2020)

Table 2 presented the frequency of use of tools of employee relations. This includes letters ($\overline{x}$ = 4.56), Group meetings ($\overline{x}$ = 4.41), Circulars ($\overline{x}$ = 4.22), trade union leaders meeting ($\overline{x}$ =

3.99) and orientation programmes ($\overline{x}$ = 3.88). The results from the table showed that the tools of employee relations are used often ($\overline{x}$ = 3.62) in the organisation. The implication of this is that a regular usage in the use of tools of employee relations practices may enhance employees' performance thereby leading to their job satisfaction.

Table2: Frequency of use of tools of employee relations practices

Tools	$\overline{x}$
Letters	4.56
Group meetings	4.41
Circulars	4.22
Trade union leaders meeting	3.99
Orientation programme	3.88
Employees conference	3.79
Personal contacts	3.77
House journals	3.72
Training programme	3.71
Film and slide presentation	3.65
Joint consultative committee	3.64
Guidance and counselling	3.57
Opinion survey	3.45
Grievance committee	3.40
Backgrounders	3.35
Displays and exhibits	3.27
Suggestion system	3.26
Teleconferencing	3.23
Videocassette display	3.15
Closed-circuit television	3.14
Video conferencing	2.95
Grand Mean	**3.62**

Source: Field Survey

The information in Table 3 revealed the level of employee job satisfaction in the study organisation. From the table, the respondents major satisfaction on the job were achievement ($\overline{x}$ = 3.97), job complexity ($\overline{x}$ = 3.92), relationship with peers ($\overline{x}$ = 3.77), work itself ($\overline{x}$ = 3.55) and quality of supervision ($\overline{x}$ = 3.52). This implied that employees' have a resilient optimistic emotional reactions to their job (Adebayo, 2019).

Table 3: Perceived Level of Employee Job Satisfaction

Variables	$\overline{x}$
Achievement	3.97
Job complexity	3.92
Relationship with peers	3.77
Work itself	3.55
Quality of supervision	3.52
Growth	3.44
Salary	3.44
Advancement	3.31
Personal life	3.23
Responsibility	3.22
Recognition	3.20
Security	3.20
Organisation policy and administration	3.12
Relationship with supervisor	2.91
Grand Mean	**3.41**

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The result in Table 4 showed that there was a significant association between the frequency of use of tools of employee relations and job satisfaction and job satisfaction (r = 0.253, p < 0.05). The result corroborated with findings of Kaliski (2007) who found that effective employee relations enhance positive communication and attitude between the organisation and its employees. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This simply implied that the employee relation tools usage had a significant effect on their job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2001; Simmons, 2002).

Table 4: Association between the frequency of use of tools of employee relations and job satisfaction

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision
Employees' job satisfaction	0.253	0.013	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The result in Table 5 showed that there was a significant association between the employees' perception of the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction. (r = 0.504, p < 0.05) and job satisfaction. This implied that an association existed between employee relation practices and job satisfaction. The result corroborated with findings of Lee et al., (2011). Hence, the stated null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

Table 5: Association between the employees' perception of the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision
Employees' job satisfaction	0.504	0.000	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2020

CONCLUSION

This study examined the practices of employee relations and job satisfaction in the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria. Sequel to the outcome of the study, it was therefore concluded that a cordial employee relation exists among the employees in the institute. Also, the use of letters, group meetings, circulars, trade union leaders meetings and orientation programmes are mostly used tools of employee relations. However, employees main job satisfaction include job achievement, complexity, relationship with their peers, the work itself and the quality of job supervision. Nonetheless, a significant positive association exists between employee relation tools usage and employee relation practices vis-à-vis their job satisfaction.

Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that the organisation should recognize its employees as its valuable assets and invest in the training of its employees on relations management. This will, in turn, improve and maintain cordial relations in the organisation by ensuring better internal communication with the employees.

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