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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigated the relationship between recognition-based reward and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Methodology: The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary source of data was generated through self- administered questionnaire. The target population of this study consists of 253 employees of 7 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The sample size of 151 was determined using Taro Yamane sample size formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. Data generated were analyzed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypothesis was tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

Findings: The study findings revealed that there is significant relationship between recognitionbased reward and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Recommendation: The study recommends that management of manufacturing firms should be keen on the use of Recognition-based because it has proven to be a way of motivating employees. Implementing recognition-based programs would create a positive work environment, followed by reinforcing positive behaviours and motivating high performance.

Keywords: Recognition-Based Reward, Workplace Harmony, Manufacturing Companies

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are established with predetermined aims and objectives towards which efforts and resources are channelled to attain. The drivers of such organization are the key players – the managers and the subordinates, who constitute the workforce. The relationship between these human factors in the production chain determines the extent to which these aims and objectives are met. A harmonious work environment is critical to the success of an organization, especially the construction sector. Managers of both the private and public sectors are faced with the challenge of ensuring workers' satisfaction, commitment and loyalty, increasing productivity level and most importantly, sustaining harmony and mutual trust in the workplace.

Workplace harmony refers to a friendly and cooperative agreement on working relationships between employers and employees for their mutual benefit (Otobo, 2005; Osad & Osas, 2013). According to Puttapalli and Vuram (2012), workplace harmony is concerned with the relationship between management and employees with respect to the terms and conditions of employment and the work place. In effect, it is a situation where employees and management cooperate willingly in pursuit of the organization's aims and objectives. Industrial harmony in its ideal form, presupposes an industry in a condition of relative equilibrium where relationship between individuals and or groups are cordial and productive. Sayles and Strauss (2009) assert that with the inevitable differences among groups within an organization, conflict and differing objectives permeate modern organizations. This type of conflict prevents the existence of workplace harmony which reflects a state of organizational instability (Sayles & Strauss, 2009). On the other hand, Hanson (2006) opines that workplace harmony represents absence of strike by industrial unions in organization which is bound to result in effective and efficient organization. Workplace harmony enhances labour productivity and in turn improves performance in organizations, achieving economic growth, and enhancing living standards and quality of life. It creates a peaceful working environment conducive to tolerance, dialogue and other alternative (to strike) means of resolving industrial or labour disputes in Nigeria (such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration, conciliation and litigation or court adjudication). This creates a high level of employee satisfaction. A means of achieving this is through recognition-based rewards.

Motivating employees is a challenge and keeping employees motivated an even greater challenge (Levy, 2013). Today, organizations are under intense pressure to identify and implement programs that will prove effective in improving employee productivity (Deci, 2013). It is no longer enough to increase salaries and expect increased performance; it is more complex than that (George & Jones, 2013). Employees not only want good extrinsic compensation on the work but also want to be praised and valued for the efforts they put in on the work. Employee recognition is a judgment on a worker's contribution, in terms of the work process as well as dedication and motivation. It also involves evaluating and acknowledging the results of this work. In short, it looks at the unique contribution of each worker and stresses the value of his or her professional expertise and experience. By creating a culture of recognition, employees become more engaged. Engaged employees are happy, loyal, and productive. Everyday there is an opportunity to recognize someone for their service without spending a lot of money. Informal rewards are the icing on the cake that keeps employees motivated, engaged, and coming back for more. But it is also essential to study and understand the extent to which the above mentioned



factors have an impact on the work force considering all the positive and negative effects appreciations have on individual and organizational growth (Baskar & Rajkumar, 2013).

Effective reward management can help an organisation to achieve its business objectives by attracting and retaining competent people. However, the factors that prove to employees that their contributions are recognised, lies in a more informal approach to recognition, a key focus which is to make employees feel appreciated and valued (Deeprose, 1994). Effective recognition enhances employee motivation and increases employee productivity all of which contribute to improved organisational performance (Deeprose, 1994). Baron (1983) argues that there is a close relationship between motivation and job performance. The purpose of the study therefore was to examine the relationship between recognition-based reward and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. This study was guided by the research question: What is the relationship between recognition-based and reduced level of grievance manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?

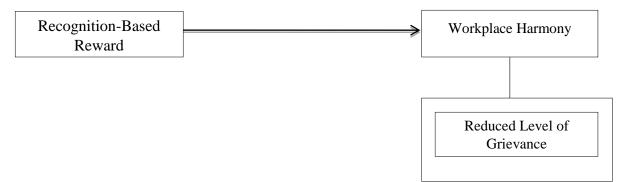


Fig.1 Conceptual framework for the relationship between and recognition- based reward and workplace harmony

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2020

The framework takes a linear relationship between the predictor variable on the left hand side and the criterion variable at the right hand side. The conceptual framework shows that workplace harmony is a function of recognition-based reward. From the conceptual framework, organizational effectiveness is the predictor variable and is measured by the level of reduced grievance. In the same vein, recognition-based reward is the predictor variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Need and Fulfillment Theory

Need/fulfillment theory was propounded by Lawler, (1973) where he stated that the basic happiness of workers is in satisfying their needs and demands (Celik, 2011). Need/Fulfillment theorists believed that employee's satisfaction is a function of how much of a reward or outcome they are receiving for their work (Chepkwony & Oloko, 2014). This suggests that the supporters of this theory measure satisfaction in terms of rewards that a person receives or the extent to which his/her needs are met. The concern of this theory is that satisfaction is depended on how much of a given outcome or group of outcomes an employee receives (Lawler, 1994). Hence,



Lawler (1994) argues that satisfaction is determined by the differences between the actual outcome a person receives (for example, rewards) and some other outcomes levels. In other words, employees become dissatisfied when what they receive as compensation is low compared to other outcome levels.

The weakness of this theory is that the theorists fail to take into account the individual-difference factors of a person. According to Lawler (1994) the individual difference factor has to do with how people feel about what they receive and what outcomes they feel they should receive for the work done. For example, an employee who expects to be paid more for his/her job is more likely to be dissatisfied than someone who feels that he is paid adequately for his work. Individual-difference factors suggest that the fulfillment-theory approach to job satisfaction is not effective; since this approach fails to take into account differences in people's feelings about the outcomes they should receive (Lawler, 1994). Thus, the inadequacy of this theory is that job satisfaction is not only a function of what an employee receives, but in addition what he feels he should receive as there could be a variance in the actual and expectations of employees.

Recognition-Based Rewards

The type of reward practices used by an organization plays an important role in motivating employees to perform (Beer & Walton, 2014). This ultimately affects the performance of the organization (Hansen, Smith & Hansen, 2012). Based on decades of research on operant conditioning and behaviour modification, it is commonly believed that if rewards are used effectively, they can motivate individuals to perform at higher levels, and the use of proper rewards culminates in firm performance at the organizational level (Giancola, 2011).

The hygiene-motivator distinction clearly maps onto the reward-recognition distinction. In fact, Herzberg himself made this point: In his motivation-hygiene theory, Herzberg stated that work motivation is largely influenced by the extent to which a job is intrinsically challenging and provides opportunities for recognition and reinforcement (Giancola, 2011). In other words, reward represents the application of hygiene factors, and recognition represents the application of motivator factors (Allen & Helms, 2011).

Positive reinforcement for workers often takes the form of tangible rewards as well as recognition and praise. A combination of recognition and rewards, along with informal praise, is likely to be the most motivational (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2016). In his popular book 1001 Ways to Reward Employees, Bob Nelson as cited by Giancola (2011), concluded that rewards must have a positive impact on performance, and he found that the most desired form of reward by employees was verbal appreciation or praise by their immediate boss. Many organizations have formal recognition and reward programs and these recognition programs usually include rewards because good performers are recognized with rewards (Deci, 2013). Among the rewards given are plaques, gift cards, jewelry and on the spot cast awards (Allen &Helms, 2011). More sophisticated recognition programs recognize behaviour that supports organizational values, so the awards are a reminder of what is important to the company (Aguinis, 2012). Teams, as well as individuals should receive recognition and rewards must be carefully planned, otherwise they may backfire and lose money for the company (Kinicki and Kreitner, 2016).

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Increasingly, it has become clear that the battle for talent involves much more than highly effective, strategically designed compensation and benefit programs. While these programs remain critical, the most successful companies have realized that they must make a much broader look at the factors involved in attraction, retention, and motivation (Giancola, 2011) And they must deploy all of the factors—including compensation and benefits—to their strategic advantage (Hansen, Smith & Hansen, 2012). Praising workers for good performance is a major type of informal recognition (Allen & Helms, 2011). Although praise costs no money and only requires a few moments of time, many workers feel that they do not receive enough praise (Aguinis, 2012) managers therefore have a good opportunity to increase motivation by the simple act of praising good deeds (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2016).

Rewards reflect both personal and institutional goals, and stand to assist an understanding of what directs both individuals' engagement and workplace affordances (Allen & Helms, 2011). In this way, rewards capture the goals for both workplace and personal trajectories, and permit a consideration of the degree to which there is consonance between these trajectories (Judge and Ferris, 2013). Hence they richly inform the relational interdependence between the personal and social. In general, there seems to be agreement that recognition and rewards are important motivators for individual and for organizational performance (Hansen, Smith and Hansen, 2012).

Workplace Harmony

Industrial amicability alludes to a situation of peace in relative sense in any industrial organization, which includes; nonappearance of strikes, and doubt among work gatherings or unions, tranquil relationship amongst unions and administration of the organization, and additionally representative positive view of his or her commitment as member not as subject inside the organization. Industrial harmony is an exceptionally basic element of organizational profitability and execution. Industrial agreement in its optimal structure, presupposes an industry in a state of relative balance where relationship amongst people as well as gatherings are heartfelt and profitable. Sayles and Strauss (1981) noticed that with the unavoidable contrasts among gatherings inside an organization, struggle and varying destinations saturate cutting edge organizations. This kind of contention keeps the presence of industrial agreement which mirrors a condition of authoritative shakiness (Sayles and Strauss, 1981). Furthermore, as Hanson (1972) noted, industrial agreement speaks to nonappearance of conflict by industrial unions which will undoubtedly bring about viable and proficient organization.

Recognition-Based Reward and Workplace Harmony

Aktar, Sachu and Ali (2012) contend that nonmonetary incentives which are represented by recognition, learning opportunities, challenging work and career advancement, have been found to be an effective tool in motivating workers and consequently increase their performance. This incentive is highly appreciated probably due the opportunity it offers in terms of skill development of the workers which in the long run could be translated to higher monetary reward.

According to Sajuyigbe, Olaoye and Adeyemi (2013), if effective rewards and recognition are implemented within an organization, favorable working environment is produced which motivates employees to excel in their performance. On the other hand rewards also play a vital role in determining the significant performance in job and it is positively associated with the



process of motivation. This is according to finding by Njanja, Maina, Kibet and Njagi (2013) who stipulated that, wage differential between high and low income earners has a strong relationship with morale, lack of commitment and low productivity by employees.

Ajmal, Bashir, Abrar, Khan and Saqib (2015) found out that, employees will give their maximum when they are certain of reward of their efforts by the management. According to him, among all those factors which affect employee performance, motivation that comes with rewards is of utmost importance. External rewards can be in terms of salary/ pay, incentives, bonuses, promotions, job security, etc. Intrinsic rewards are intangible rewards or psychological rewards like appreciation, meeting the new challenges, positive and caring attitude from employer and job rotation after attaining the goal. Research has proven that, when human being are appreciated and praised they tend to improve their performance (Sajuyigbe *et al.*, 2013). Therefore recognition by rewards can be used to improve performance by setting targets in relation to the work given e.g. surpassing some sales targets. When the employee surpasses their target, he or she can be given an additional amount to their salary this will make them strive to achieve more. Personalizing rewards is another effective way of increasing workers output (Ajmal et al., 2015). This is because when rewards tend to be so general, employees do not value them. Organizations therefore can use rewards to improve employee performance by incorporating appraisal or promotion for employees who have a good record of performance (Ajmal et al., 2015).

An investigation of compensation factors and job satisfaction of doctors in Pakistan by Yaseen (2013) showed that recognition and pay are factors of compensation management which have direct effect on doctors' job satisfaction among doctors in Pakistani hospitals. Similarly, Tausif (2012) investigated the relationship between non-monetary rewards and job satisfaction among teachers in public schools in Pakistan. The study used 200 samples (teachers) that were randomly selected for the survey. The respondents showed that non-financial rewards such as recognition and job security were the most powerful predictors of job satisfaction.

Study by Alam, Waseef and Murad (2015) on reward and recognition priorities of three public sector universities' teachers for their motivation and job satisfaction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Data was collected from 90 university teachers and was analyzed by using Pearson's correlation coefficient and the result revealed that the teachers ranked recognition fist followed by promotion respectively for their motivation and job satisfaction. This study also revealed that salary and relationship with departmental heads are also moderately related to teacher's motivation and job satisfaction.

This study thus hypothesized that:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between recognition-based reward and reduced level of grievance manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary source of data was generated through self- administered questionnaire. The target population of this study consists of 253 employees of 7 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The sample size of 151 was determined using Taro Yamane sample size formula. The simple random sampling technique was adopted in arriving at the sample size. The instruments



were validated by experts in the field and supervisor's scrutiny. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. Data generated were analyzed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The level of significance 0.05 was adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in (p > 0.05) or rejecting the null hypothesis in (p < 0.05).

			Recognition- based Reward	Reduced level of grievance	
Spearman's rho	Recognition-based Reward	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.718**	
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
		Ν	134	134	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
		Ν	134	134	
	Reduced level of grievance	Correlation Coefficient	.718**	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
		Ν	134	134	

Table 1Correlations Matrix for Recognition/Rewards and Industrial Harmony

Source: Research Data 2019 and SPSS output version 23.0

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between recognition/rewards and reduced level of grievance in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between recognition-based and reduced level of grievance. The *correlation* coefficient of 0.718 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.01. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between



recognition-based rewards and reduced level of grievance in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The hypotheses tested the relationship between recognition-based reward and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study findings reveal that there is a significant relationship between recognition-based reward and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. This finding agrees Gerald and Dorothee (2004); Rehman, Khan,Ziauddin and Lashari (2010) who argued that employees will be well motivated and will perform well if they are rewarded (Markova & Ford, 2011). There is a direct relationship between employee rewards and job performance. If the employees are rewarded, then the performance will increase. In this way, the employees think that they are being valued. Rewards systems can attract the right behaviour and outcomes in company (Manas & Graham, 2003). Therefore the employees will adopt that kind of behaviour that will lead them to better performance and rewards. As a result he employees will start working harder which is very beneficial for the organizations and the workers themselves. So even in the long run, the organizations will generate positive results and gain more (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson, 2009).

Furthermore, the study agrees with Saunderson (2004) that employees not only want compensation but also need to be valued by their supervisors. It will increase employees' morale. Employees will be well motivated if they are recognized by the supervisors. Recognition means valuing and caring about the employees contributions. It is essential for the companies to recognize their employees (McGregor, 1960). Other studies show that it is better to recognize employees rather than give incentives (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Employee recognition involves both monetary as well as non-monetary programs McAdams (1995). The example of employee recognition involves writing their names in the company's newsletter, letters of commendation, extra time off and verbal appreciation. This is a form of caring and appraising the employees. The non-monetary awards are more motivating than the financial award (Serino, 2002). In this way, the employees think that they are being valued.

CONCLUSION

Recognition programmes have the purpose of keeping employees motivated and productive and are seen to be effective methods of reinforcing company expectations and goals. Recognition-based significantly influences rewards workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

- i. The study recommends that management of manufacturing firms should be keen on the use of recognition-based because it has proven to be a way of motivating employees. Implementing recognition-based programs would create a positive work environment, followed by reinforcing positive behaviours and motivating high performance.
- ii. Management of manufacturing firms should adopt more recognition-based reward by organizing periodic recognition of performing employees whose picture would be



displayed at strategic entrances of the company. This would serve as a motivation for improved performance

iii. Management of manufacturing firms should give out rewards to its outstanding teams as well as individuals to enhance motivation using items such as plaques, gift cards, jewelry and on the spot cast awards.

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