Pay Satisfaction: A Correlate of Tardiness and Absenteeism among Civil Servants in Delta State

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to evaluate the relationship among pay satisfaction, tardiness and absenteeism among civil servants in Delta State, Nigeria. Participants in the study were three hundred and eighty-nine (389) civil servants drawn from five ministries in Delta State civil service who comprised one hundred and sixty-six (166) males and two hundred and twenty-three (223) females whose ages ranged from 21 to 59 years with an average age of 36 years and standard deviation of 1.25. Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire by White and Ruh, [1]. Absenteeism scale by Uwannah [2] and Tardiness scale by Uwannah [2] were used as instruments for data collection across seven ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). Being a survey study, correlation design and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used as research design and statistics respectively to analyzed data. The analysis of result confirmed that pay satisfaction significantly and negatively correlated tardiness and absenteeism at r (1,389) = -.54, and -.63, p < .05 respectively tardiness and absenteeism. However, positive and significant relationship was found between tardiness and absenteeism at r(1, 389) = .79, p < .05. The finding validates that perception pay satisfaction has expected impact on employee job outcome e.g. tardiness behaviour and absenteeism. It is recommended that wage discrepancies among federal, state and local government civil service be harmonized to solve the problem created by state ownership civil service in the 1980s to enhance productivity and employee satisfaction.

Keywords: Pay satisfaction, tardiness, absenteeism, civil service, employee effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Human behavioural antecedents in homogenous organizations with homogeneous organizational climate are fairly the same [3, 4]. Several reasons account for tardiness and consequential absenteeism from the workplace. Hanebuth [5] noted that some workers are absent due to medical reasons whereas others do not show up because they are not satisfied with their work; just as many are late to work and close earlier from work (tardiness) due to several reasons emanating from domestic factors to factors beyond the control of the worker. Without option of doubt, real or imagined, tardiness and absenteeism reduce both employee and organizational efficiency [6]. Personal Finance Report [7] asserts that sickness, bullying and harassment, burnout, stress and low morale, child care and elder care, depression, disengagement, injuries, job hunting and partial shifts could be some of the causes of employees being absent from their duties while CIPD Absence report [8] saw stress as the most important cause of long term absence.

The focus of most work organizations is to maximize profit, reduce the cost of production and to remain relevant in the global competition for market share [2, 6]. To achieve this, organizations need their workers to maintain a consistent level of effectiveness and efficiency which can be achieved through the efficient maximization of production resources and minimization of operating costs. Usually, this level of effectiveness is affected in the presence of tardiness and absenteeism from work [6]. Although, a number of domestic factors come to mind as the direct causes of tardiness and absenteeism such as; child care, illness, stress, transportation challenges and other circumstantial factors peculiar with employees situation [2], certain dissatisfactory organizational climate may also influence employees’ behavioural attitudes towards work in such a way that tardiness and absenteeism
becomes consequential. In the instance of this kind of circumstance, this study is concerned on how to find out the relationship among the variables namely: pay satisfaction, tardiness and absenteeism.

Pay satisfaction in the study is viewed as the amount of the overall positive affects or feelings individuals (bank employees) have toward their pay. According to White and Ruh [1], it relates to employees mindset regarding the payment or compensation received from the services rendered for work done. Pay may include basic salary and any bonuses or other economic benefits that an employee receives during or as a result of employment. Pay satisfaction has to do with the employee’s contentment with his or her salary [9]. This emotional state (pay satisfaction) is usually influenced fundamentally by the 'interaction of one’s values and one’s perception of the pay and as well as its components’ [10]. In the views of the current researchers, pay satisfaction is being pleased with the financial outcome of one’s job. It is also positive evaluation of one’s reward as commensurate benefit to employee’s organizational effort. When pay is not satisfactory in organization, varying deviant and counterproductive behaviours may ensue as retaliation and the need to balance the effort and reward schema; in this kind of scenario, tardiness and absenteeism may become the commonest tools of retaliation and maintenance of equity.

Tardiness is a form of lateness to work in various forms either arriving late, leaving early or both (arriving late and dismissing early). According to Fodluck, K. M. [11], tardiness is regarded as unauthorized single behaviour of “arriving late to work or leaving early”. The author views tardiness as daily absence from duty either at the beginning of work or in the closing hours due to some personal/domestic issues or organizational related errands without formal permission to do so from the competent superior of the organization. Tardiness may result as an effort to reward oneself with organization’s time in the absence of satisfactory organizational reward. Aggravated tardiness can also lead to full absenteeism from work especially, if the employee feels that in consideration to his or her benefits, s/he ought not to fulfill attendance obligation of work.

Absenteeism is a consistent pattern of absence from a duty or obligation without permission [5, 2]. It may be also seen as not been on the duty post or task irrespective of whether the employee comes for work or not without approved permission. Absenteeism may be intentional or unintentional but the critical factor of determining absenteeism is lack of permission from the relevant authority. In views of the authors, absenteeism may also be signs of eventual employee turnover or contract break as they defined it as unauthorized absence from work arising from disenchantment and discontentment from organizational rewards.

The above definitions consistently show that tardiness and absenteeism as forms of organizational deviance are also contract breaches which may have causative factors due to inherent organizational climate or individual factors. In the current research, the focus is to link these forms deviance to influences of organizational climate typically in consideration is pay satisfaction. The researchers conceptualize that given the peculiar organizational climate of State civil service in Delta State, Nigeria; pay satisfaction will negatively correlate both tardiness and absenteeism while positive relationship between tardiness and absenteeism is most likely among Delta State civil servants in Nigeria.

LITERATURE

Pay satisfaction may also be assumed on the basis of the assertions of the favourable view point or aspect of the pay or other associated incentives attached to it [12, 9]. Similarly, pay satisfaction can be viewed as the pleasurable emotional state resulting in either gratification or satisfaction about one’s pay. Locke [13] describe pay satisfaction as the state where one’s needs and one’s outcomes match well.

Green & Baron [14] perceive pay satisfaction as an individual’s cognitive, affective and evaluative reactions towards his pay and or job. Equally, employee satisfaction with pay as advanced by Cranny, Smith and Stone [15] is viewed as a combination of cognitive and affective actions to the differential perceptions of what an employee wants to receive compared to what he actually receives. In other words, employees’ pay satisfaction encompasses employees’ satisfaction with their salaries, wages, bonuses, financial entitlements and other socio-economic benefits which they enjoy or benefit as members of their work organizations.

Lawler [16] posits that pay satisfaction is also a function of two major perceptions of the individual employee. First is what amount an individual employee perceives that he should receive. Secondly, is the amount of pay he perceives to have actually received. Lawler argues that pay satisfaction or dissatisfaction is based on what an individual should receive and what he actually receives. According to him, the perceived amount one should receive is influenced by: (i) Perceived job inputs of the individual; (ii) Perceived job characteristics; (iii) Perceived non-monetary reward; (iv) Wage history of the organization; and (v) Perceived inputs and outcomes of referent others.

Lawler [16] further contends that the first perception depends on such things as how much the person believes to have contributed to the job, the nature of the job and the organization, and to a lesser
degree, the non-monetary outcomes from work and the person’s own pay history. To him, the second component indicates that perceived amount of pay received is a function of the perceived amount of compensation received by the relevant pay referents. The perceived amount of pay received by an individual is a function of actual pay rate, wage history and perceived pay when compared to that of others in an organization. If an individual has always experienced pay satisfaction and the organization has a history of employee pay satisfaction for his referent others, his perception of pay received could be satisfactory.

Katz [17] believes that pay satisfaction enhances employee effort on the job due to the greater cost to employees of losing the job because pay satisfaction is essential to employees in the organization as it makes them to be economically sound and balanced in life which enables them to meet up with the necessities of life. Thus, satisfaction with pay enhances an employee to work by putting in his best on the job and thereby reduces turnover intentions and actual turnover.

Akerlof [18] opines that pay satisfaction increases employee efforts to be loyal to his organization because it will not be easy for pay satisfied employees to turnover their job or sabotage their jobs since they derive pay satisfaction in the job. Employees’ satisfaction with their pay reduces the organization’s labour turnover, deviance, Recruitment costs and other forms of negative employee work attitudes and behaviours [19, 20]. In other words, when employees are pay satisfied, there is likelihood that such employee will remain in the organization for a long time and the organization will save cost of recruiting capable hands to handle tasks in the organization.

A number of other studies have also linked pay levels and satisfaction to a number of behavioural attitudes/outcomes in the organization; for example, William, Carraher, Brower and Mc Manna [12] contended that pay satisfaction influences the overall job satisfaction, motivation and performance, organizational citizenship behaviour, and improved work attitudes. If employees are not satisfied with their pay it results to pay dissatisfaction and according to Banjoko [21] such situation could lead to many dysfunctional behaviours such as decreased job satisfaction, lower morale, poor performance, high rate of tardiness and absenteeism.

TARDINESS

Tardiness regards to clumsy attitude towards employee’s presence in the work. It is also negative and effective behavioural disposition towards coming to and leaving the workplace. According to Fodluck, K.M. [11], “arriving late to work or leaving early” from work can be harmful to the organization. When people do not show up on time, they are guilty of tardiness. Tardiness is associated with compromised organizational efficiency which negatively affects production. Other workers may try to imitate the tardy employee by coming late to work themselves if not well tamed by the management. The work of Kalejaiye and Adeyemi [22] and Gervasini, [23] has shown that tardiness negatively affects the success of every organization and organizational efficiency. Unresolved crises occasioned by tardiness may aggravate to other worse employee’s outcome usually absenteeism or long term absence from work.

ABSENTEEISM

Absenteeism is a habitual pattern of absence from a duty or obligation without permission [5 2]. According to Fodluck, K.M. [11], absenteeism is not showing up for work. For Uwannah [2], absenteeism signifies the absence of an employee from work without any explanation, without authorization and intentionally. The current researchers conceptualize absenteeism as intentional and unintentional Patrick [6] affirm that unexcused absences lower productivity, results to low morale and is an added stress for other employees; consequently, absenteeism in the workplace affects both the employee and the employer.

Some researchers like Hanebuth, [5], Saez [24] attest that absenteeism is negatively related to job satisfaction and commitment especially satisfaction with work itself and could be an indication of managerial issues like toxic work environment. The Australian Faculty of Occupational Medicine [25] viewed absenteeism as an indication of poor performance. Bayram, Gursaka and Bilgel [26] assert that absenteeism at work is a breach of contract between employer and employee. It is also a production deviation [27] and a manifestation of problems at work [28]. Several reasons account for absence in the workplace. Hanebuth [5] noted that some workers are absent due to medical reasons whereas others do not show up because they are not satisfied with their work. In like manner, Personal Finance Report [7] submits that sickness, bullying and harassment, burnout, stress and low morale, child care and elder care, depression, disengagement, injuries, job hunting and partial shifts could be some of the causes of employees being absent from their duties while CIPD Absence report [8] saw stress as the most important cause of long term absence.

The current authors are therefore of the opinion that in consideration of the views of Banjoko [21], that the instance of lower morale occasioned by dissatisfaction of pay may be the major cause of employee tardiness and absenteeism as opined by Cascio [29], Scott and Judge [30], Bolton, Becker and Barker [31]. Consequently, the current researchers have
conceptualized that tardiness and absenteeism may be associated with pay dissatisfaction as depicted in both conceptual and theoretical models.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Equity theory (Adams, 1965)

Adams’ [32] equity theory is basically concerned with the perceptions people (employees) have about how they are treated in their organizations as compared with others. The theory assumes that employees seek to maintain equity (fairness) between the input they bring in to a job (education, time, experience, commitment and effort) and the outcomes they receive from it (promotion, recognition and increased pay) against the perceived inputs and outcomes of other employees. Adams [32] proposed that perception of inequity in the distribution of organizational resource (rewards, benefits or punishments) in comparison with others precipitates dissatisfaction which could pay or job dissatisfaction. The author went further to posit that inequity precedes attempts to restore equity which is the foundation of varying negative outcomes, some of which may be tardiness and absenteeism. The major strength of this theory is hinged on its recognition that individual’s inputs such as education, experience and effort should be recognized and appreciated in such a way that there is equitable distribution of organizational resources. It also reveals that individual employees are part of the larger system in any work sector from which comparison about working conditions can be made. However, the weakness of the theory is that it relies only on measurable indices for comparison as it does not account for immeasurable factors.

The above theoretical framework suggests that there may be connection between tardiness and absenteeism with unfavourable organizational climate such as pay dissatisfaction. This connection is considered in view that tardiness and absenteeism is one of the commonest workplace counterproductive workplace behaviour which may often be triggered by inequity in the treatment of employee in relation to both internal and external comparison. Mayer, Chirasha and Mahapa [33]. Fagbohungbe, Akinbode, and Ayodeji [34] contended that as forms of organizational deviance, tardiness and absenteeism poses very serious problems for organizations. Fagbohungbe, Akinbode, and Ayodeji [34] further reported that between thirty-three and seventy-five per cent of all workers have engaged in one form of deviant behaviour or the other. In two other different studies, Griffin and Lopez [35], Charisha and Mahapa [33] observed that all individuals in workplaces have the tendency of engaging in counterproductive workplace behaviour the commonest being tardiness and absenteeism.

The works of Jones [36], Brooks G [37], and Onuoha and Ezeribe [38] further revealed that individuals who are unfairly treated are more likely to engage in deviant or counterproductive workplace behaviour such as tardiness and absenteeism especially when they perceive a sense of entitlement associated with perceptions of unfairness. Organizational deviant behaviour could also arise as a result of breach of contract by the employer [39], perceptions of maltreatment and abusive supervision [40], feelings of not being respected, frustration, pay dissatisfaction, injustice and threats to self [35] and when the employee is in financial trouble or feel slighted [41]. Most deviant behaviour among employees manifest in various dysfunctional and negative ways such as decline in productivity, tardiness or excessive absenteeism and favouritism [42, 41]. Tardiness or excessive absenteeism as forms of deviant behaviours are disruptive and costly both financially and emotionally [43] and as a reaction to frustrating working conditions e.g. pay dissatisfaction [44], employees withdrawal behaviours physically and emotionally from the organization [45]. Also, a study carried out by Kalejaiye & Adeyemi [22] submit that organizational misbehaviour occur among non-academic staff of universities in Nigeria especially among long tenured workers who take rules with levity because of their years of experience leading to chronic tardiness and excessive absenteeism.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The relationship model of the study shows that pay satisfaction can influence tardiness and absenteeism behaviour with expected relationship between tardiness and absenteeism among employees as depicted in the diagram below.

To test the above model, three hypotheses have been formulated namely;

- Pay satisfaction will significantly and negatively correlate tardiness among Delta State civil servants.
- Tardiness will significantly and positively correlate absenteeism among Delta State civil servants.
METHOD
Participants in the study were three hundred and eighty-nine (389) civil servants drawn from five ministries in Delta State civil service who comprised one hundred and sixty-six (166) males and two hundred and twenty-three (223) females whose ages ranged from 21 to 59 years with an average age of 36 years and standard deviation of 1.25. Simple random sampling technique was used to select both the participants’ ministries across seven ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and to select the participants from those MDAs. Demographic information of the participants shows that two hundred and twenty-nine (229) participants were married while one hundred and sixty (160) participants were unmarried. In terms of educational qualification is 3 had Doctorate degree (Ph.D.), 41 had Masters’ degree, 97 had Higher National Diploma, 63 had National Certificate in Education and while 26 had Ordinary Diploma and 37 had Ordinary Level Certificate. In terms of rank and grade level, 108 senior officers equal or above grade level 8 whereas 281 are junior officers below the rank of grade level 8.

INSTRUMENTS
Three instruments were used for data collection in this study namely: Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire by White and Ruh, [1]. Absenteeism scale by Uwannah [2] and Tardiness scale by Uwannah [2]. Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) is a 5-item questionnaire developed by White and Ruh [1]. It measures employees’ perceptions of satisfaction with their pay in the organization. Also, on a 5- point Likert type format ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. A sample item from the scale states thus: ‘I am paid fairly for what I contribute to this organization’. For its validity/reliability - White and Ruh [1] reported a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient reliability of.89. For Nigerian sample, Obikeze and Olukoye [46] obtained reliability coefficient of .78 for general scale while Ndukaie [47] reported a reliability coefficient of .71. For its use in this study a pilot study using 50 participants was carried out and Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained.

Tardiness Scale was developed by Uwannah [2]. The scale consists of 3 items including item like “came to work late without permission” and the respondents were asked to tick their responses on 5 points ranging from never to everyday on how often they have done each on their present jobs. Cronbach alpha of .71 was obtained showing it is suitable for this study.

Absenteeism Scale was developed by Uwannah [2]. It consists of 6 items which were self-developed including items like “took a longer break than you were allowed to take” and the respondents were asked to tick their responses on 5 points ranging from never to everyday on how often they have done each on their present jobs. A cronbach alpha of .80 was obtained and that shows that the scale is suitable for the study.

STATISTICS
Being a survey study, correlation design and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient were used as research design and statistics respectively to analyzed data. Statistical analyses were performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS version 21.00.

RESULT

Table-1 Shows descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviations and number of participants for the variables of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness</td>
<td>7.052</td>
<td>1.084</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absenteeism</td>
<td>15.464</td>
<td>1.245</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay satisfaction</td>
<td>11.295</td>
<td>1.859</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-2 Relationship among pay satisfaction, tardiness and absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tardiness</th>
<th>Absenteeism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares and Cross-products</td>
<td>88.776</td>
<td>39.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariance</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay Satisfaction</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.029*</td>
<td>.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares and Cross-products</td>
<td>39.851</td>
<td>2162.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariance</td>
<td>.482</td>
<td>.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The result from the correlation table above (table 2) confirmed that pay satisfaction significantly and negatively correlated tardiness and absenteeism at \( r (1, 389) = -.54, \) and \(-.63, \) \( p < .05 \) respectively tardiness and absenteeism. However, positive and significant relationship was found between tardiness and absenteeism at \( r (1, 389) = .79, \) \( p < .05 \). The finding validates that the conceptual model that pay satisfaction has expected influence on employee outcomes e.g. tardiness behaviour and absenteeism.

**DISCUSSION**

This study examined pay satisfaction as correlate of tardiness and absenteeism among Delta State civil servants. Consequently, the tested model predicted that both tardiness and absenteeism will negatively and significantly correlate pay satisfaction while there is expected positive relationship between tardiness and absenteeism. Hypotheses I and II confirmed that pay satisfaction significantly and negatively correlated tardiness and absenteeism respectively whereas hypothesis III confirmed that tardiness correlated absenteeism. The correlation result of the tested model confirmed that the model is acceptable with theoretical support found in Adams [32] Equity theory.

Adams’ [32] equity theory laid the foundation for understanding how feeling of injustice or dissatisfaction can fuel organizational deviance or contract breaches such as tardiness and absenteeism as an attempt to restore equity or compensate for it. Accordingly, it follows that habitual tardiness may aggravate to absenteeism as time goes on in line with Adams [32] proposal that perception of inequity in the distribution of organizational resource (rewards, benefits or punishments) in comparison with others usually precipitates dissatisfaction which is identified in this study as pay dissatisfaction since negative correlation were obtained. Mayer, Chirasha and Mahapa [33], Fagbohungbe, Akinbode and Ayodeji’s [34] study supported both the theoretical model of the current study in line with Adams’ [32] assertions that various forms of organizational deviance such as tardiness and absenteeism poses very serious problems for organizations in the presence of organizational inequity and injustice.

Fagbohungbe, Akinbode, and Ayodeji [34] further reported that between thirty-three and seventy-five per cent of all workers have engaged in one form of deviant behaviour or the other as a form of compensation for poor conditions of work or inequity in the organization. Griffin and Lopez [35], Charisha and Mahapa [33] observed that in the presence of unfavourable organizational climate; most individuals in workplaces have the tendency of engaging in counterproductive workplace behaviour; the commonest being tardiness and absenteeism. The works of Jones [36] Brooks Gordon [37], [38] further revealed that individuals who are unfairly treated are more likely to engage in deviant or counterproductive workplace behaviour such as tardiness and absenteeism especially when they perceive a sense of entitlement associated with perceptions of unfairness.

Furthermore, Finn [41] found that frustration, pay dissatisfaction, injustice and threats to self are the antecedents of counterproductive workplace behaviours are the leading factors of tardiness and absenteeism. Finn’s [41] finds compliments that of Bolin and Heatherly [39] which found that organizational deviant behaviour such as: tardiness and absenteeism could also arise as a result of breach of contract by the employer in the form of equitable pay. Maufi [43] found that tardiness or excessive absenteeism as forms of deviant behaviours are related and could be disruptive and costly both financially and emotionally and as a reaction to frustrating working conditions e.g. pay dissatisfaction [44], employees withdrawal behaviours physically and emotionally from the organization such as turnover and affective commitment [45].

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Organizational climate predicts a wide range of organizational behavioural antecedents including organizational deviance and contract breaches which may be represented in this study as tardiness and absenteeism. Feelings or perceptions of inequitable distribution of organizational rewards such as pay may instigate retaliatory behaviours in forms organizational deviance or counterproductive workplace behaviour such as tardiness and absenteeism. These may also occur as a form of compensation for inequity or as means to restore equity. Implications emanating from such behaviours (tardiness and absenteeism) cover a multitude of antecedents such as production deviance, effectiveness, compromise to organizational standards, sabotage to organizational efforts and loss of organizational integrity at a huge cost to the organization, materially and otherwise.

Tardiness and absenteeism can also be infectious to other employees who may feel cheated out by the coworkers who frequently come late to work or who are habitually absent from work. Such employees may in the bid to restore equity occasioned by absent coworkers learn the counterproductive behaviour to the detriment of the employees and organization as organizational sanctions may befall them. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism may culminate to suspension, contract termination, dismissal and frequent employee turnover in an organization which can affect steady productivity in quantity and quality of service.
CONCLUSION

The antecedents of unsatisfactory pay in Nigeria civil service is well documented since the takeover of civil service by the State Government. The conditions of service with challenges such as lack of housing, education benefits to employees’ children and proper retirement benefits have made the civil service in Nigeria a nightmare. Consequently, pay satisfaction is central to the satisfaction of civil servants in any State in Nigeria without which various forms workplace deviance ensue as a compensation to pay dissatisfaction. The commonest forms of this deviant behaviour are tardiness and absenteeism to work. The empirical evidence found from the data analyses of the current study validated the claim from literature that the State Civil service of Nigeria is primarily bedeviled by pay dissatisfaction which has been associated with varying deviant organizational antecedents such as tardiness and absenteeism. It is recommended that wage discrepancies among federal, state and local government civil service be harmonized to solve the problem created by state ownership civil service in the 1980s to enhance productivity and employee satisfaction.

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