

## **Effects of Job Evaluation on Workers' Productivity: A Study of Ohaukwu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*Job evaluation is one of the cardinal processes that functions to promote organizational efficiency. Previous studies on job evaluation focused on its processes and methods with little interest on its effect on organizational productivity. This study therefore, appraised the effects of job evaluation on workers' productivity in the Local Government System. Survey design was adopted. Herzberg Two Factor Theory provided the framework for this study. The questionnaire instrument which was distributed to 132 respondents focused on demographic characteristics of respondents and the effects of job evaluation on workers' productivity. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data while qualitative data were content analysed. Results indicate that job evaluation increases organizational productivity (69.2%), it impact discipline on the staff of Local Government system (92.5%) and promotion of staff in the Local Government system is strongly tied to job evaluation (73.3%). Respondents expressed satisfaction on the methods of job evaluation within the Local Government system (54.2%) and also result shows that training of staff is also tied to job evaluation in the Local Government system in Nigeria. job evaluation helps workers to improve on their jobs (69.2%). This study therefore recommends that job evaluation methods in the Local Government system should be reviewed periodically in order to achieve organizational goals and be in line with the global trend associated with job evaluation methods. Also, government should organize seminars for staff of the Local Government System periodically in order to keep them abreast with possible alternatives to work challenges. This will lead to increase productivity in the Local Government system in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Effects, Evaluation, Job, Performance, Productivity.

### ***1. Background and statement of the problem***

Job evaluation aims to appraise the activities of organizations over a period of time. It measures the employees' strength and weakness for an effective decision making by organizations (Ivibhogbe, 2005). It provides a framework for improving organizational development or productivity and employee performance by identifying employees' good managerial potentials (Abiodun 1999). Since employees are subject to unintentional errors, job evaluation helps in its minimization thereby enhances accuracy in duty performance.

Job evaluation is a regular periodic assessment by an immediate superior or subordinates under review. It is an annual evaluation exercise of employees. The United States (U.S.) Office of Personnel Management (1992) presents job evaluation as "all periodic written assessment of performance measure against responsibilities, goals and for task specific duties assigned and agreed to as well as identification of strength and weakness demonstrated by employees potential and tracing to development needs. This is corroborated by Ubeku (1975) and Wisner (2000).

Job evaluation is an essential instrument in organizational management that has been adopted to improve workers' productivity. It is used as a decisional technique to determine issues relating to personnel procurement, promotion, transfer, retrenchment, allocation of responsibilities, wages and salary increases and dispensing with rewards fairly and equitable. It gives the employee a picture of his current status, terms of corporate realization and it is used for growth and development (Abiodun, 1999). He went further to say that job evaluation must be objective if productivity should be obtained.

The focal point of evaluation is to determine specific achievements in all aspects of work and where assessment is objective, it assists to improve productivity of the organization. Effectiveness and efficiency of workers' job valuation increase employee morale; hence, it would not be easy to measure employee morale by the degree of performance and productivity. Employee morale could be measured by the attitude of the employee towards the organization like the degree of conflicts, accidents, labour turnover, absenteeism, sickness, etc. Moreover, morale could also be measured through organization's records, observation, attitude survey and performance counseling (Obisi, 1996). Employees are happy to see an objective assessment that reflects successfully their work performance. The employee has the chance to comment on his rating. When rating is objective, disagreements are reduced and performance evaluation can then solve the purpose of modifying performance. Wrong assessment can lead to negative performances of employees and thereby affecting organizational growth and development.

Job evaluation is to solve its developmental purpose of helping employees to improve on their current and future performances, it is imperative that employee must receive a feedback on their present performances. No matter the method of evaluation adopted, employees must be given the opportunity to know the results, the interpretations and recommendations of the evaluation so that they can have a clear understanding of their performance and how they stand in the eyes of their immediate supervisors and organization as a whole. They are of the opinion that unless employees know how they have performed relative to the expected standards, they will never know how much effort they are to put to work for improving their productivity (Flanaholtz, 1994). Since evaluation is conducted by human beings, job evaluation is a common area where human tendencies can appear in full force. This is because humans are subject to unintentional errors. Errors are introduced by man in a view to demonstrate the quality of clarity in standards, excessive leniency or strictness, the halo effect, similarity error and central tendency.

Similarly, on the problem of halo effect, Abiodun (1999) observes that there is a natural tendency for the rater to be influenced in rating the factor by the kind of rating he gives to another. In fact, if a rater has a general feeling that a man is good, he will rate him high in all factors and vice-versa. That is, the rater allows one outstanding negative or positive incident or trait to influence his rating of the employee. Concerning the problem of halo effect as it applies to evaluation, it reflects the tendency for the rater to be unduly or unnecessarily carried away or impressed by one particular trait or behavior in the employee. Rater's interest in such trait could cause him or she to give biased judgment that could be injurious to the whole process. On the problem of central tendency or error, this is a generalized judgment whereby all those assessed are commonly ranked as either "not good" or "not too bad" (Abiodun, 1999).

On clarity in standards, it is observed that unless raters agree on what is meant by such term as "good" or "excellent", their final rating simply cannot be compared. George (1960) confirms this statement when he cited an extreme example where the rating scale in one hospital included "excellent", "very good", "fair", "satisfactory", several head nurses objected to using the term "satisfactory" meant better than "excellent". He further explains the problem of leniency or strictness by using students as an example. He states that every student knows that there is a big difference between hard and easy markers. Supervisors according to him often fear to give low ratings for fear of antagonizing their subordinates and making them less co-operative. Furthermore, the supervisor may be afraid that low ratings will reflect on his own ability; since there is always a chance that his boss will say, "if your subordinate is as bad as this, why don't you do something about it?" Some executives regularly rate new employees very low, then gradually raise them, thus, making the employee feel good and displaying to their excellence as trainers.

Similarity error is another evaluation problem. It is the effort we make when we judge those who are similar to us more highly than those who are not. Research has demonstrated that this effect is strong, and when similarity is based on demographic characteristics such as race, sex, it can result in discriminatory decisions. Another way this error can be interpreted is through in-groups and out-groups. In-groups can form based on personality similarities or common interests. Out-groups are those individuals that do not seem to fit with the norm or in-group. A manager may unknowingly rate a member of their in-group higher compared to a member of the out-group. It is evident to note that previous studies on job evaluation paid attention is assessing methods of job evaluation with little focus on its effect on workers' productivity. This study therefore, examined the effect of job evaluation on workers' productivity in the Local Government system.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is the Herzberg Two Factor Theory. Fredrick Herzberg, a psychologist, proposed a theory of motivation called the Hygiene Theory in the 1950's. According to Herzberg (1959), two conditions or factors affect individual's behavior on the job; these are maintenance and motivational factors, including (Extrinsic and Intrinsic factors).

Motivational factors include such psychological needs as drives to self actualization, to realize one's potential and develop a personal sense of growth. Hygiene or maintenance factors are largely environmental, and include: wages, fair treatment by supervisors and general working conditions. These factors according to Herzberg, do not act as motivators, but if withdrawn they create dissatisfaction and may result in lower performance. At least, the lack will hurt employee morale. It is also revealed that these maintenance factors are not ends in themselves in that they do not create motivation but they act to minimize employee's grievance or to prevent them altogether. To Herzberg (1959), motivating factors are: achievements, recognition, responsibility, growth, work itself, and advancement. To maintain these real motivators, Herzberg gave the motivation- hygiene factors as follows:

**Security:** this include both psychological and economic security- the confidence a manager has in being able to keep his job, fairness, consistency, security right, and grievance procedure.

**Social:** opportunity to help others and to develop close friendship, interest groups, social group (this would correspond closely with the need to affiliate).

**Esteem:** self esteem as well as the prestige enjoyed inside and outside the company keep in mind that prestige is a factor in the ability to influence others.

**Autonomy:** authority exercised by the manager together with his opportunity for independence and feeling of worthwhile accomplishment.

**Self- Actualization:** opportunity for personal growth and development, feeling of self fulfillment and feeling of worthwhile accomplishment.

The first two needs are largely concerned with extrinsic or hygiene type needs. The last three relate to intrinsic or motivator type rewards. Herzberg also believes that employees must be asked to examine the task or job they do if they are to be motivated. This thinking led Herzberg (1968) to examine the plausibility of applying his motivation- hygiene theory through what he calls "*job enrichment*" approach, as a way of boosting workers performance. Job enrichment involves changing the job content or enriching it by way of giving psychological rewards in order to increase output. Job enrichment experiments were conducted amongst laboratory technicians, design engineers, and sales representatives, inter- alia. It was discovered to have given the workers greater satisfaction from doing an effective job per se and this was to have positive impact on productivity. The applications of job enrichment approach is that workers will be directly involved with their jobs, and this will make them have confidence in their effectiveness as far as achieving organizational objectives is concerned. In the Local Government system, workers are bound to build confidence in their ability to perform when their performances are evaluated. Job evaluation is bound to strengthen their work roles and give them the opportunity of acquiring new skills that would boost their performance ability. In the main, job evaluation invariably helps organizations realize their target goals.

While the content theory emphasizes that man seeks through work to uphold his dignity in terms of achievement, recognition and so forth; the process theory points out that rewards are the key factors that dictate man's attitude to work. Money (good wage or good pay package) is the most significant element and it lays so much emphasis on the positive value of the intrinsic motivating factors. Nevertheless, Herzberg theory is relevant because it has given substance to the idea of job enrichment which seeks to design job in a way which will maximize the opportunity to obtain intrinsic satisfaction from work and thus, improve work/ life quality. This invariably has a role to play in minimizing error at work. It can also lead to the reduction of workplace stress.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Study Population and Sample Size

The study was carried out in Ohaukwu Local Government Area. Ohaukwu Local Government Area is one of the 13 Local Government Areas in Ebonyi State. It has a staff population of 204 as at 2015. This is made up of workers within the management, senior and junior cadres. The sample size for this study was drawn from the study population of 204 using Yaro (1967) formular of:

$$1 + N(e)^2 \frac{N}{N}$$

Where N = total population, 1 = constant and e = error margin.

Therefore,  $204 / 1 + 204 (0.05 \times 0.05) = 132$ .

### 3.2 Sampling Technique and Sources of Data

Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were utilized. The three categories of respondents within the management, senior and junior staff were taken as stratified units so as to ensure equal representation. Thus, simple random techniques were employed in questionnaire administration. There were two basic sources of data for this study: primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data collection was information generated through questionnaire administration. The secondary data includes all information gotten from the library (textbooks, journals, articles, documentaries) that is related to the topic under study.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative components of data were generated in this study. In view of this, the analysis is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Responses from respondents, as were generated through questionnaire administration were subjected to content analysis. On the other hand, the quantitative components of data generated were analysed at univariate level. At this level, data were presented using frequencies and percentages.

## 4. Result and Discussion

The questionnaires were distributed to one hundred and thirty two (132) respondents selected for the study. Out of this number, one hundred and twenty (120) respondents returned their questionnaire which formed the basis for this analysis and discussion. The response rate therefore is 90.9%. This analysis is divided into two sections. The first section presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents while the second section contains analysis on the effects of job evaluation in the Local government system.

### 4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Data were generated from respondents on their sex, academic qualifications, age, marital status and work status. Details are contained in table 4.1.1.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by sex, academic qualifications, age, marital status and work status**

| Variable                        | Frequency                 | Percentage |       |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|-------|
| <b>Sex</b>                      | Female                    | 48         | 40%   |
|                                 | Male                      | 72         | 60%   |
| <b>Marital Status:</b>          | Single                    | 56         | 46.7% |
|                                 | Married                   | 61         | 50.8% |
|                                 | Divorced                  | 3          | 2.5%  |
| <b>Academic Qualifications:</b> | BSc/HND & higher degrees  | 10         | 8.3%  |
|                                 | Professional certificates | 7          | 5.8%  |
|                                 | OND/NCE certificates      | 41         | 34.2% |
|                                 | WAEC/SSCE certificates    | 62         | 51%   |
| <b>Age of respondents :</b>     | below 20 years            | 4          | 3.3%  |
|                                 | b/w 21 years and 30 years | 56         | 46.7% |
|                                 | b/w 31 years and 40 years | 47         | 39.2% |
|                                 | b/w 40 years and above    | 13         | 10.8% |
| <b>Work status :</b>            | Management staff          | 19         | 15.8% |
|                                 | Senior staff              | 28         | 23.4% |
|                                 | Junior staff              | 73         | 60.8% |

(Field survey 2015)

Data in table 4.0.1 indicate that 60% of respondents were males while 40% were females. It implies that males respondents were more in number than the females. Findings show that among the respondents, 50.8% of them were married, 46.7% were single while 2.5% were divorced. Findings indicate that 51% respondents stated that they had WAEC/SSCE certificate while those who had OND/NCE certificates were 34.2%. It's only 5.8% respondents' who confirmed that they had professional certificates.

This is a strong indication that those with lower certificates were higher in number than those with higher certificates. Concerning the age distribution of respondents, 46.7% were between 21 and 30 years. This is followed by 39.2% respondents who were between the ages of 31 and 40 years. However, 10.8% respondents were between the ages of 40 years and above while those who were below 20 years were only 3.3%. The implication is that majority of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30 years which is an indication that there are more young people in the services of the Local Government system.

On work status, 60.8% of respondents were in the junior cadre, 23% were in the senior cadre while only 15.8% were in the top management level. The implication is that majority of the respondents constitute the junior staff. This is reflected in the age distribution as 46.7% of them were between the ages of 21 and 30 years. It is an indication that majority of the workers were within the young age and therefore have longer years to serve before their retirement. Relating this with their academic qualifications, it is glaring to note that 51% respondents had their school certificates only which are strong indication that they were also young in academics too.

#### 4.2: Effects of Job Evaluation on Workers' Productivity in the Local Government System

This section deals with the presentation of specified variables which are related to employee job evaluation and organizational productivity. The specific objective of this study is geared towards examining the effects of job evaluation on workers' productivity in the Local Government system. Data generated on this are contained in table 4.2.1.

**Table 2: Respondents responses on the effects of job evaluation on workers' productivity in the Local Government System**

| VARIABLE  | CERTIFIED  | NOT CERTIFIED |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Job evaluation increases organizational productivity                        | 83 (69.2%) | 37 (30.8%)    |
| Local Government's Job evaluation system impact discipline on staff         | 111(92.5%) | 9(7.5%)       |
| Promotion of staff is strongly tied to the evaluation of their jobs         | 88 (73.3%) | 32 (26.7% )   |
| Local Government Council's job evaluation methods are satisfactory to staff | 65 (54.2%) | 55 (45.8%)    |
| Training of staff is an after effect of job evaluation system               | 82(68.3%)  | 38 (31.7%)    |
| Job evaluation helps workers to improve in their jobs                       | 83 (69.2%) | 37 (30.8%)    |

**Source: Field survey, 2015**

Data in table 4.2.1 indicates that 69.2% respondents were of the view that job evaluation increases organizational productivity. On the contrary, 30.8% stated that it does not increase productivity in organizations. The implication is that respondents confirmed that it increases productivity in formal work organizations.

On whether job evaluation in the Local Government system impacts discipline on staff, this was the opinion of 92.5% respondents. Those who were on the contrary were on 7.5% respondents. Results also reveal that promotion of staff in the Local Government system is strongly tied to job evaluation. This is the position of 73.3% respondents while 26.7% stated otherwise.

Staff satisfaction on the nature of Local Government Council's job evaluation methods was sought. Result indicates that 54.2% respondents admitted to have satisfaction in the system of job evaluation in the Local Government system. In line with this, Flaniholtz (1994) believes that employees are happy to see an objective assessment that reflects successfully their work performance. What it implies is that respondents would be satisfied with the methods of job evaluation in the Local Government system only if the evaluation is objective and transparent. Those who were on the contrary were 45.8%. According to this set of respondents, they did not derive satisfaction in the methods of evaluating the Local Government staff. From findings, it can be deduced the fact that majority of the respondents attested to their satisfaction of the methods of job evaluation in the Local Government system. It is pertinent to state that in-service training functions to promote productivity in the Local Government System. This training is important because it keeps staff abreast of the new dimensional approaches in Local Government administration in Nigeria. In view of this, 68.3% respondents certified that training of staff is as a result of job evaluation in the Local Government system in Nigeria. Those who countered this view were only 31.7% respondents.

Job evaluation helps workers to improve in their jobs. This is the position of 69.2% respondents. According to them, evaluation helps workers to improve their skills and work techniques which functions to promote increase productivity. However, 30.8% respondents stated otherwise. In their own view, job evaluation does not help workers improve on their jobs. Thus, the position of majority of the respondents is that it is helpful in making workers improve on their jobs. This perception of respondents affirms the view of Abiodun (1999) that job evaluation is an essential instrument in organizational management that has been adopted to improve workers' productivity. Accordingly, it is used as a decisional technique to determine issues relating to personnel procurement, promotion, transfer, retrenchment, allocation of responsibilities, wages and salary increases and dispensing with rewards fairly and equitable.

## 5. Conclusion

Findings of this study reveal that job evaluation is very significant to organizational growth and increase productivity. In the Local Government system, job evaluation is vital to the sustainability of the system. Results indicate that 69.2% respondents certified that job evaluation increases organizational productivity. It has been viewed by 92.5% respondents as a process which instills disciplines on the staff of the Local Government system. Significantly, promotion of staff in the Local Government system is strongly tied to job evaluation. This was confirmed by 73.3% respondents. Despite all the benefits associated with job evaluation as attested to by respondents, record reveals that 45.8% respondents stated that they were not satisfied with the methods of job evaluation in the Local Government system.

## 6. Recommendations

From the foregoing, this study recommends as follows:

1. That job evaluation method in the Local Government system should be reviewed from time to time. This is significant in order to achieve organizational goals and also be in line with the global trend in work evaluation.
2. That government should organize seminars for staff of the Local Government System periodically aimed at inculcating basic work ethics, values and skills that will enhance productivity in the Local Government system. This will help to keep workers abreast with possible alternatives to work challenges. This will foster good work relations and increase productivity in the Local Government system.

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