

CAREER SELF-MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION IN SELECTED PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of career self-management on employee job satisfaction in selected federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. The literature was segmented into four main sections namely; conceptual framework, theoretical framework, theoretical exposition and empirical review. However, the theoretical exposition was highlighted to reflect the specific objectives of the study being the main body of the literature. The study was designed as a descriptive survey for the purpose of generalizing the results for the entire population of interest. From the population of 6433 non-teaching staff identified from the selected universities in the South-South region, Nigeria, 1236 sample was estimated for the study. The main tools of analysis were frequency distribution and multiple regression analysis. All tests were based on 0.05 level of significance. Major findings from the study indicate that career self-management goal characteristics and career self-management strategies has significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction in the organization. It was concluded that employees who are involved in goal orientation and strategic career management gain significant satisfaction from their jobs. The study recommended among others that employees should be encouraged to play more significant roles in their career by guiding them on the process of attaining career goal and by incorporating individual career management ideology in its personnel management policy.

Keywords: Career, self-management, employee, job satisfaction.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Career management is well located in human resource management and its dynamics has grown beyond the traditional organizational performance appraisal process, career counselling and training to help match employee interest and capabilities with organizational opportunities (Eromafuru, 2010). In today's business, the technological innovation, restructuring, downsizing and the environment, have repositioned the minds of both employees and employers such that awareness has been created and things which were not known prior to this period are now available to them. More effective methods of managing the employees' career has been revealed and the parties involved are taking advantage of it.

The global market has created high mobility for the workforce, thus making the modern organizations to face great

challenges in managing their human resource. One of such challenges is in the area of managing the career of the employees to maintain organizational growth. The modern career now comprises both the paid job such as salary and wages and unpaid work that is, labour that does not receive any direct remuneration for example; cooking, cleaning, gardening, child care, then learning and life roles that people undertake throughout their life time (Zaichi and Igbal, 2012).

Apparently, organizations no longer feel an obligation to control and direct employees' career. So, people at all levels are taking charge of their own career management (Feldman, 2000). It is the role of organizations to provide opportunities, but individuals must take the initiative to utilize those opportunities and position themselves for future career success (Garger, 1999). Organizations must help their employee with career planning and skills

development. Eventhough some organizations are afraid that career planning might reveal to the employees that their job are at risk, it is the responsibility of the organization to do so. Instead, it can be tactically communicated by promising to invest in helping employees reach their potential in the organization (Moses, 2000; Merchant, 2001).

Career management has been identified as one of antecedents to career development (Saleem, Kamran, Sabir and Igbal, 2013; Rohamn, Rahman, Khan and Anwar, 2016). With career development, organizations can tap into their wealth of in-house talent for staffing and promotion by matching the skills, experience and aspirations of individuals to the needs of the organization (Kapel and Shepherd, 2004; Kaye, 2005). An organization that cannot fully utilize its human resource is at a loss in terms of productivity, growth and development. For organization to achieve growth, it must subscribe to career development through effective career management programs.

In this study, our focus is on career self-management in the organization. The study explores the effect of career self-management on job satisfaction in the organization. As it has been demonstrated elsewhere, employees feel satisfied in life and of course in the work environment if the work they do give them joy and a feeling of self-actualization. Therefore, the pertinent question is how does career self-management which involves effort toward continuous improvement in one's current job as well as efforts toward job mobility preparedness lead to employees' job satisfaction in an organization?

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the world of work today, employees are no longer keen with jobs that are time bound with promotions but they want jobs with stretched pull and challenges where they can take their destiny in their hands to search for and obtain relevant positions in their workplace through personal development (Harold and Kumar, 2011).

Many staff of Federal universities in Nigeria engage in both government sponsored as well as personal training courses to develop relevant skills to their functions. This notwithstanding, many of them have remained stagnant with little or no evidence of career advancement. In the light of the above, it becomes necessary to understand the extent to which career management has engendered job satisfaction of the employees.

Past studies in this area revealed that career management has great impact on employee job satisfaction (Adesola, Oyeniya and Adeyemi, 2013; Ndibe, 2014; Oni-Oji, Salau, Ohidayo and Abasilim, 2014 and Ofobruku and Nwakoby, 2015). However, it is not clear whether the studies referred to organizational career management or career self-management. This gap has therefore given impetus to this study which is poised to specifically determine the impact of career self-management on employee job satisfaction.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effect of career self-management on employee job satisfaction among non-teaching staff of the federal universities in the South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria. However, the specific objectives are to:

- (i) Examine the effect of career self-management (goals characteristics) on employee job satisfaction.
- (ii) Evaluate the effect of career self-management (strategies) on employee job satisfaction.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the objectives of the study:

- (i) What is the effect of career self-management (goals characteristics) on employee job satisfaction?
- (ii) What is the effect of career self-management (strategies) on employee job satisfaction?

1.5 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the objectives of the study and strengthen the analysis:

- (i) Career self-management (goals characteristics) has no positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction.
- (ii) Career self-management (strategies) has no positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study has both theoretical and empirical significance. From the theoretical perspective, the study will add to the existing stock of literature in this area of study thereby expanding the frontiers of knowledge. Empirically, the findings and the policy dialogue that will follow from the findings will be immense benefit to the university authorities, the non-teaching staff

of the universities and the students or researchers who might want to carry out further studies in this area of study.

The university authorities and the staff will be better enlightened on issues surrounding employee self-career management thereby promoting high productivity in the organization. Also, the results will be a source of good starting point for researchers/students who might want to work further in the area.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this section of the study, related literature was reviewed under the following sub-heading: conceptual framework, theoretical framework, theoretical literature/exposition and empirical review. The theoretical literature being the main body of the literature was reviewed to highlight the specific objectives so as to put the study in the right perspective.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

In the opinions of Zaidi and Igbal (2012), career is the sum total of paid and unpaid work, learning and life roles one undertakes throughout one's life time. It can also be defined as a lifelong process that is made up of some patterned work-related experiences (Rahman, Rahman, Khan and Anwar, 2016). To Greenhaun et al (2010) cited in Kakui and Gachunga (2016), career is the pattern of work-related experiences that one encountered in the course of one's life.

Yilmaz (2006) cited in Dialoke and Nkechi (2017) defined the process as directly associating with individual and organizational goals that gives rise to a collection of experiences gained from the tasks, jobs, positions held by a person or from the transition such as promotions, transfers that the person has gone through in these positions held. To Hall (2002) it is

the individually perceived sequence of attitude and behaviour associated with work-related experiences and activities over the span of the person's life. From these views, the primary focus is the individual. The understanding assumption is that a person can shape his destiny through a well-planned and well-timed positive move.

In a related development, career management has been defined as all the actions an individual or an organization undertakes in order to improve on the career prospects of employees. It is further stated that career management is a continuous process of preparing, creating, applying and tracking career plans and techniques performed by the individual alone or in conjunction with the organization's career system (Greenhouse, Callanan and Godshalk, 2000). Career management can be grouped into career self-management behaviours and organizational career management programmes. Career self-management is a form of career management undertaken by the individual employee for his/her benefit either in the organization or as a self-employed person. On the other hand, organizational career management is the provision of opportunities for people to develop their abilities and their career in order to ensure that the organization has the flow of talent it needs and to satisfy the aspiration of the employees (Armstrong, 2009).

In another development, job satisfaction has been defined by Noordin and Jusoff (2009) as the satisfaction of the employees about the general aspects of job like pay, promotion, relationship with management job itself and career progression on the job. It is a positive

emotional state that gives the feeling of happiness to the employees when they successfully complete their work. Also, Janssen (2001) defines it as how an employee of an organization feels about work in his organization.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theory upon which this study is anchored is the super self-concept of career development. The theory which was developed by Donald Super in 1990 has since gained popularity in the study of career management. It has been rated as Super's one of the greatest contributions to career development. It emphasizes on the importance of development of self-concept. According to him, self-concept changes over time and develops as a result of experience. As such, career development is a lifelong experience. Super suggests that career choice and development are essentially a process of developing and implementing a person's self-concept. The self-concept itself is also a product of complex interactions among a member of factor's including physical and mental growth, personal experience as well as environmental characteristics and stimulation. However, self-concept is not a static entity as it continues to evolve as a person encounters new experience and progress through the developmental stages. Life and work satisfaction is a continual process of implementing the evolving self-concept through work and other life roles.

2.4 Theoretical Exposition

Available literature shows that career self-management has three dimensions or steps leading to career development of employees. By way of sequence, the steps comprise career exploration, career goal

development and career goal strategies (Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk, 2010; Harold and Kumar, 2011). However, our focus in this study is on career goal characteristics and strategies.

2.4.1 Effect of Career Self-Management Goal Characteristics on job satisfaction

Setting specific goals with clear expectations both in terms of quality and quantity, will reduce the ambiguity or confusion that usually arises among employees. It follows that by so doing, the employee can put forth more effort and concentrate on the process of achieving a well-defined output. Findings from studies have revealed that setting specific performance goals is a better motivator that achieves better results than asking employees to do their best in general. May-Chiun, Ramayah and Lim (2013) note that the exercise of goal setting is the shortest possible way to achieving targets and that such fulfillment leads to job satisfaction in the organization.

To Ward (2017), goal is the process of making decisions about desires to be accomplished and making plans to achieve them. As Bradley (2007) has noted, certainty about career goal, process of attaining career goal and career goal achievements are the components of the characteristics that are quite outstanding and when properly harnessed, they will lead to confidence and unimaginable degree of pleasure and happiness which arises from specific job facets which the holder of job considers very satisfactory.

2.4.2 Effect of Career Self-Management Strategies on Job Satisfaction

Evidence from literature strategies are very crucial to managing individual's career successfully (Kahnweiler, 2006). To Harold and Kumar (2011), career strategies

come in form of development of skills, building network of friendships to help further career progression, building network of contacts for obtaining information about career issues and development of qualities of leadership in work areas where there appear to be no leadership. In the opinions of Ogaboh and Uche (2010), career self-management strategies involve the development of requisite skills necessary to attain career goals, network of friendships, network of contacts both within and outside the immediate environment and leadership in work areas where there appear to be no leadership to guarantee job satisfaction for the employee.

2.5 Empirical Review

Jens (2007) investigated the effect of career exploration on training and performance by exploring the impact of 16 dimensions of career exploration. Result showed that career exploration predicted subsequent training and job satisfaction. Also, Bartley and Robitschek (2011) investigated the multivariate relationship between career exploration and its predictors in a sample of 156 female and 162 male college students. Combining all predictors career exploration accounted for less than one-third of the variance. Results showed that the broad construct of ego identity exploration cannot be substituted for the specific construct of career exploration. Kamil and Giengor (2014) examined the impact of career strategies on job satisfaction for small and medium size companies (SMEs) in Turkey Service Sector with an empirical analysis. The result shows that employee training, education, employee relation and team work are the most dominant factors of job satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this section, the procedures and methods used in carrying out the study were discussed under the following sub-headings: research design, area of the study, nature and sources of data, population, sample size determination, sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validity and reliability of the instrument, method of data analysis and model specification.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design because a part of the population was being studied for the purpose of generalizing the results for the entire population of interest.

3.3 Area of the Study

The study is taking place in the South-South of Nigeria, covering three public universities in the area. In terms of content, the effect of career self-management goals characteristics and career self-management strategies on job satisfaction is being explored.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

The data is principally primary in nature but it is complemented with secondary data sourced from textbooks, journal publications and other academic works.

3.5 Population of the Study

The population comprised 6,433 non-teaching staff identified from the university of Benin, university of Calabar and University of Port-Harcourt all located in the South-South Zone of Nigeria.

3.6 Determination of Sample Size

A sample of 1,236 respondents was determined through the application of a formula developed by Borg and Gall in 1973. The sample was considered adequate for the

study. In terms of method of selecting the units of observation, systematic sampling technique was used.

3.7 Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was both face and content validated and the reliability test was carried out through a test re-test method which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.92. Thus, showing that the instrument is 92 percent reliable.

3.8 Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected through direct administration of the questionnaire and the data was analyzed through correlational and multiple regression analysis. All tests were carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

3.9 Model Specification

Two models were considered in the study and they were specified thus:

3.9.1 Career Self-Management Goal Characteristics

$$EJS = f(CCG, PACG, CGA) \quad (1)$$

Econometrically, the equation becomes:

$$EJS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 CCG + \alpha_2 PACG + \alpha_3 CGA + \mu_t \quad (2)$$

Where:

EJS = Employee Job Satisfaction

CCG = Certainty about career goal

PACG = Process of attaining career goal

CGA = Career goal achievement

α_0 is a constant or intercept while α_1 , α_2 and α_3 are the coefficients of the

explanatory variables. μ_t is the stochastic error term.

3.9.2 Career Self-Management Strategies

$$EJS = f(DS, NF, NE, LWA) - \quad (3)$$

Econometrically, the equation becomes:

$$EJS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 DS + \alpha_2 NF + \alpha_3 NE + \alpha_4 LWA + \mu_t - \quad (4)$$

Where:

EJS = Employee job satisfaction

DS = Development of skills needed to attain career goal

NF = Building of network of friendships in the division that help further

career progression .

NC = Building network of contacts within the division for obtaining

information about events, changes or activities within the division.

LWA = Leadership in work areas where there appear to be no leadership

The coefficients are: α_0 is a constant or intercept while α_1 , α_2 , α_3 and α_4 are the coefficients of the explanatory variables. μ_t is the stochastic error term.

A priori Expectation:

$\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3$ and $\alpha_4 > 0$

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this section all data generated in this study were presented and analyzed using the appropriate statistical methods.

4.2 Analyses of the Status of Career Management and Job Satisfaction Levels of Employees

Table 4.1: Status of Career Self-Management Practices in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Variables	Very High Extent	High Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	No Extent	Remarks
Career Goal Characteristics:							
1.	Certainty about career goal	71 (6.1%)	611 (49.4%)	363 (29.4%)	171 (13.8%)	19 (1.5%)	High extent
2.	Process of attaining career goal	541 (43.8%)	349 (28.2%)	266 (21.5%)	75 (6.1%)	6 (0.5%)	Very high extent
3.	Career goal achievement	404	529	200	77	14	High extent

	(32.7%)	(42.8%)	(16.2%)	(6.2%)	(1.1%)	
Cumulative Average Response	27.5%	40.1%)	22.4%)	8.7%	1.3%	High extent

Note: Very High Extent (VHE) = 5; High Extent (HE) = 4; Moderate Extent (ME) = 3;
Low Extent (LE) = 2 and No Extent (NE) = 1

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS Frequency distribution

Table 4.2: Status of Career Self-Management Practices in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Variables	Very High Extent	High Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	No Extent	Remarks
	Extent of Career Strategies Engaged						
1.	Development of skills needed to attain career goal	200 (16.2%)	589 (44.4%)	336 (27.2%)	132 (10.7%)	21 (1.7%)	High extent
2.	Network of friendship	200 (16.2%)	407 (32.9%)	611 (49.4%)	20 (1.6%)	0 (-)	Moderate extent
3.	Network of contacts	200 (16.2%)	541 (43.8%)	337 (27.3%)	138 (11.2%)	20 (1.6%)	High extent
4.	Leadership in work areas where the re appear to be no leadership	9 (0.7%)	132 (10.7%)	267 (21.6%)	761 (61.6%)	68 (5.5%)	Low extent
	Cumulative Average Response	(12.3%)	(33.0%)	(31.4%)	(21.3%)	(2.2%)	High extent
	Grand Cumulative Average Response	(19.9%)	(36.6%)	(26.9%)	(15.0%)	(1.8%)	High extent

Note: Very High Extent (VHE) = 5; High Extent (HE) = 4; Moderate Extent (ME) = 3;
Low Extent (LE) = 2 and No Extent (NE) = 1

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS Frequency distribution

The description of nature of career self-management in federal universities in south-south, Nigeria is show on Tables 4.1 and 4.2. The results are presented for two variables of career self-management and they are goal characteristics and career strategies as well as the grand cumulative average of the two variables. As could be seen from the Table 4.2, the grand score indicates that there is a high extent (36.6%) of the practice of career self-management programs by employees of federal universities in south-south, Nigeria.

4.3 Model Estimation and Test of Hypotheses

Re-Statement of Hypotheses

4.3.1 Effect of Career Self-Management (Goal Characteristics) on Employee Job Satisfaction

Table 4.3: OLS Regression Results of the Effect of Career Self-Management Goal Characteristics on Employee Job Satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error			
(Constant)	0.26	.012		2.246*	.025
Certainty about career goal (CCG)	0.568	.014	.570	41.197**	.000
Process of attaining career goal (PACG)	0.159	.002	.000	.004	.997
Career goal achievement (CGA)	0.426	.014	.428	30.919**	.000

Coefficients of determination (R-Squared) = 0.986

F-Statistic (F-probability) = 47154.270 (0.000) ***

Durbin-Watson (Stat) = 1.861

Dependent Variable: Employee Job Satisfaction *significant at 5%

** Significant at 1%

The regression result shows that coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.986. This implies that career self-management goal

The following hypotheses were formulated for testing to determine relationship between variables:

1. **H₀:** Career self-management (goal characteristics) have no significant effect on employee job satisfaction

H₁: Career self-management (goal characteristics) has significant effect on employee job satisfaction

2. **H₀:** Career self-management (strategies) have no significant effect on employee job satisfaction.

H₁: Career self-management (strategies) has significant effect on employee job satisfaction

characteristics explained about 99% of employee job satisfaction in federal universities in the south-south, Nigeria. The

result of the F-statistic (47154.270) and Prob = 0.000, shows that overall, the test is significant and the model is good and fit for any predictive purposes. Therefore, the study posits that career self-management goal characteristics have significant effect on employee job satisfaction. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected while the

alternative which suggests otherwise as re-stated above was accepted.

Also, the results of t-statistic shows that certainty about career goal (CCG) and career goal achievement (CGA) have a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction while process of attaining career goal does not have significant effect on job satisfaction.

4.3.2 Effect of Career Self-Management Strategies on Employee Job Satisfaction

Table 4.4: OLS Regression Result of the Effect of Career Self-Management Strategies on Employee Job Satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.029	.012		2.457*	.014
Development of skills needed to attain career goal (DS)	-.012	.007	-.013	-1.755	.079
Building of network of friendships (NF)	.665	.011	.664	62.920**	.000
Building network of contacts (NC)	.008	.007	.009	1.200	.230
Leadership in work areas where there appear to be no leadership (LWA)	.332	.010	.336	31.867**	.000
Coefficients of determination (R-Squared) = 0.987					
F-Statistic (F-probability) = 36641.168 (0.000)***					
Durbin-Watson (Stat) = 1.742					
Dependent Variable: Employee Job Satisfaction *significant at 5% ** Significant at 1%					

The regression result presented in Table 4.4 shows that coefficient of determination of the model of effect of career self-management strategies is 0.987. This implies that career self-management strategies explained about 99% of changes in job satisfaction of the employees in federal universities in south-south, Nigeria. The

implication is that career self-management strategies have high explanatory power on job satisfaction of the employees. The F-value of 36641.168 and Durbin-Watson of 1.742 is also an indication that overall, the model is significant and there is no autocorrelation respectively.

Consequently, null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative which suggests otherwise as restated was accepted. Similarly, t-statistic result showed that building of network of friendships (NF) and leadership in work areas where there appear to be no leadership (LWA) have significant effect on job satisfaction. However, development of skills needed to attain career goal (DS) and building network of contacts (NC) with P.values greater than 0.05 level of significance indicated that they have no significant effect on job satisfaction.

4.4 Discussion of Research Results

In this section of the analysis, we made efforts to discuss the research findings. The results of the test of hypotheses formed the basis for the discussion. Accordingly, the following sub-headings guided the discussion: career self-management goal characteristics and job satisfaction and career self-management strategies and job satisfaction.

4.4.1 Career self-management (Goal Characteristics) and Job Satisfaction

The result of the first test of hypothesis showed that significant and positive relationship exists between career self-management goal characteristics and employee job satisfaction. Goal oriented employee will most likely be satisfied with his/her job. This comes from the act of determination of his actual goal in life (career aim), and examination of his/her achievements at intervals. Also, employees' network of friendship and ability to take up leadership challenges are helping in encouraging a satisfied workforce. Career self-management (goal characteristics) involves certainty about career goal process of attaining career goals and career goals achievement criteria. Employees tend to

love their jobs and job environment if they get what they believe is an important attribute of a good job. Thus, career goal characteristics when well self-managed, leads to employee job satisfaction.

4.4.2 Career Self-Management (Strategies) and Employee Job Satisfaction

The result of the second test of hypothesis shows that significant and positive relationship exists between career self-management strategies and employee job satisfaction. Career self-management strategies involve structure approach for developing capabilities, abilities and tools for resource utilization in an organization. Through the approaches, it would be relatively easier for the employees to personally navigate through their career journey successfully. Career management strategies involve concerned efforts directed at assessing worker's potentials, identifying likely career paths, designing and implementing the various forms of training and experience to prepare the employee for more advanced job. For this reason and more, career self-management strategies are very essential because of the role they play in enhancing employee job satisfaction in an organization.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

The analysis of data in this study and the discussion of results show that career management has positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction. It goes to show that employees who are involved in goal orientation and strategic career management would significantly gain satisfaction from his/her job than those who rely on organizational career management programs. Thus, it is quite safe to infer that job satisfaction is better achieved and more

effectively driven through self-help in an organization.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings made from the study, the discussion of findings and the conclusion, we made the following recommendations:

1. Employees should be encouraged to play more significant role in their career by guiding them on the process of attaining career goal and by incorporating individual career management ideology in its personnel management policy.
2. Organizations should help the employees to develop skills needed to attain career goal, emphasize engagement with network of friends as well as network of contacts and leadership where there appear to be none.

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