

ASSESSMENT OF WELFARE EXPECTATIONS OF WORKERS IN REDEEMER'S UNIVERSITY, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the perception of the workers' of Redeemer's University towards staff welfare package in the institution. Structured questionnaires were administered on a cross section of the institution's workforce to elicit relevant information about the subject matter. Data collected were employed in testing the formulated hypotheses, using the Chi-Square statistical method. The result at 0.05 level of significance reveals that, the institution is doing relatively well in staff remuneration, but many issues relating to staff welfare were either poorly addressed or taken for granted. Many of its workers could perceive many benefits enjoyed by their counterparts in other organizations but are lacking in their institution - which may explain why many of its workers, particularly the academic staff members, are leaving the University for other Institutions. The study recommends that management of the institution should look beyond robust salary and create a work environment that respect the social needs of the workers and promotes the welfare of its workforce in general if it must attract and retain the right type of manpower needed to achieve its ambitious vision and mission.

Keywords: Perception, remuneration, expectation.

Introduction:

People are the most important resources of any organization, be it small or big, manufacturing or marketing, production of tangible products or rendering of intangible services. Without men, there is no labour power, and without labour power, there is no production or rendering of meaningful services. Without production of goods or rendering of any service, societal needs cannot be met. If societal needs are not met, then you are not in business; and if you are into any 'business' at all, the grave of that 'business' is dug already, waiting for owner's burial ceremony. Organizations must therefore recognize the need for adequate investment on their manpower, since investment in employee amounts to reward able business investment. According to Brenner (2010), "employee benefit programs are an integral part of an investment in human capital. They should be tailored to the needs of the mature worker who is staying on the job longer, retiring

later, or moving into an "encore" career after retiring from a long-term profession". He further noted that "businesses that provide benefits that align with the needs of this desirable, highly knowledgeable workforce segment position themselves to become "employer of choice" for the best employees". To gain a productive and positive behaviour through its employees, management needs to create a sound motivational environment within the entire organization (Nawaz, 2011). Studies reveal that many employees in developing countries suffer greatly from inadequate welfare package. IDB Report (2004) recorded that large number of labourers in developing countries grappling with poor working conditions. Available estimates indicate that about half of all employees have no state-sponsored protection against unemployment, work-related injuries and diseases, or old age. Furthermore, many work in unsafe environments. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the reported occupational fatality rate was

recorded as 0.135 per 1,000 workers (Giunfrida, Iunes, and Savedoff 2002), more than three times the comparable rate for the United States. These poor working conditions, according to Ronconi (2010) are not as a result of lack of legislation on employees' welfare but result from the lack of compliance by corporate institutions. It becomes imperative therefore, to wake up management on the need for adequate performance of its expected legal responsibility towards workers' welfare.

Statement of the Problem:

Workers' perception of their welfare package and benefits has a significant impact on their job satisfaction and commitment to their organizations. Equity theory proposes that employees compare their own output/input ratio (i.e. the ratio of the benefits they receive from workplace and the inputs they contribute) to the output/input ratio of another worker. This comparison is not limited to fellow workers within the same organization alone. It extends to workers in other organizations as well. Fajana (2002: 329) noted that "equity theory seeks to relate employees' behaviour to their perceptions of equity or inequity in their compensation". He explained that models suggest that behaviour reflects the degree to which people perceive rewards as equitable in comparison to their perceived capacities and established norms of equitable payment. Thus, where management fails to satisfy employees' welfare expectation, or in cases where its workers perceive that there are many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their present organization, the tendency is that many of the workers will gradually reduce their inputs into the organization, while some will be more willing to leave the organization for other organizations where they perceive their expectations can be better satisfied. This study examines the employees' welfare package in Redeemer's University and sees how this may have impacted on employees' job satisfaction and commitment to the institution. Attempt was also made at proffering solutions to the identified lapses in employees' welfare administration in the educational institution.

Research Objectives:

The general objective of this research was to carry out an assessment of welfare expectations of workers in Redeemer's University, and draw out some useful conclusions that will hopefully help improving the current situation in the University. In order to achieve this the following specific objectives were arrived at which include;

- 1) To appraise the attitude of Redeemer's University workers towards the state of employees' welfare in the University.
- 2) To examine the state of the workers' welfare package as made available in the University.
- 3) To identify how the management of the institution may improve on its welfare package in order to promote job satisfaction, build employees' morale and stimulate workers' higher level of commitment and productivity.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed by the study:

- 1) Are workers in Redeemer's University generally satisfied with their welfare package in the institution?
- 2) What is the trend of attitude exhibited by workers of Redeemer's University?
- 3) Could many Redeemer's University staff perceive many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their own institution?
- 4) Are many employees leaving the Redeemer's University for another organization because of their perceived low score card in people's welfare?
- 5) In what ways can management in Redeemer's University improve on its welfare package in order to promote job satisfaction, build employees' morale and stimulate workers' higher level of commitment and productivity?
- 6) How adequate is the workers' welfare package made available in the University?

Research Hypotheses:

The study tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis One:

Most employees in Redeemer's University cannot see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution.

Hypothesis Two:

It is not true that many employees are leaving Redeemer's University for another because of the perceived low score card in people's welfare.

Literature Review:

Employees' welfare in general, refers to those benefits that an employee must receive from his/her organization, like allowances, housing, transportation, medical, insurance schemes, sick leave, lunch breaks, bonuses, 13 month pay, to mention but a few. A recent survey showed that salary had only a 20 percent impact on job satisfaction. Employees need a range of motivators in order to remain engaged in their work. In response to this demand, employers are looking at how to satisfy their employees on both an extrinsic, financial level as well as an intrinsic, psychological level (Sadri & Bowen, 2011).

Humanitarian principles seek to promote the welfare of humanity through the elimination of fear, pain, suffering and anxiety (Madumere, 1999: 202). According to her, the principle is concerned with the issues of workers' welfare and well being of individuals in the organization. It is a democratic principle of good human relationship, principle of justice, principle of equity of opportunity and principle of security. While the democratic principle says that those affected in any decision should participate in the making of that decision, principle of good human relationship insists that good human relations will make for improved production, integration and personal satisfaction of workers. The principle of justice protects individuals and groups from unfair treatment and ensures that other principles are not violated. While the principle of equality of opportunity demands that every individual should have

right to the privileges enjoyed by others without any form of discrimination, either on ground of sex, colour, religion, tribe or race, the principle of security states that adequate protection be given to all lawful members of a group. Within the organizational setting, this principle will include security of life, security of job, security of the future, physical and mental security. Where an organization fails to guarantee the aforementioned, employees job satisfaction, commitment and cooperation will be negatively affected.

Business organizations are expected to be to be concerned not just with the interest of company owners alone but that of the corporate insiders. Proper concern for employees' interest involves the creation of a healthy business environment that will enable employees satisfy not just their economic needs but other needs such as security, social, achievement (esteem) and self actualization needs. It involves proper treatment of workers in accordance to sound labour principles and practices.

Methodology:

The study employs questionnaires containing open and close ended questions. The close ended was developed in line with Likert five point scales to elicit information from 32 staff members of the Redeemer's University, Ogun State, Nigeria. Questions were drawn to know their perception about the existing staff welfare package of the institution. Respondents were draw from all categories of workers in the University. They were required to either tick 'Strongly Agree', 'Disagree', Un-decided', 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' to some statements on the practice of social responsibility among businesses in Nigeria. Data collected were adequately presented and well analyzed. The empirical work employed chi-square statistical technique in testing two (2) related hypotheses. The results of the tests and study findings were presented accordingly.

Instrument for Data Collection:

The study employed the structured questionnaire containing 10 statements relating to employees' welfare packages in organization. Respondents were expected to tick Strongly Agree, Agree, Un-decided, Disagree, and or Strongly Disagree to each of the statements. In addition to the structured questions, respondents were also requested to supply answers to three (3) other related open-ended questions in which they were at liberty to freely express their views on the issues raised in their own words. The basis of introducing these open-ended question is to enable the researcher elicit more vital information that the well structured question may not be able to elicit. The research questionnaire was validated by experts in psychometrics to ensure that it measures what it is expected to measure. The questionnaire was administered on 36 staff members of the Redeemer's University, Ogun State, Nigeria. The sample cut across the male, female, senior, junior, academic and non-academic staff of the institution. Out of the 36 respondents questionnaires administered, only 32 were properly filled and

returned. The returned questionnaires were presented and analyzed using tables, simple percentages and the chi-square statistical technique method.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	14	43.75
Female	8	25.00
Gender Not Specified	10	31.25
Total	32	100

Source: Data Collected from Questionnaires Administered, Dec. 2011.

Table 1 above reveals that 43.75% of the respondents were men while 25.00% were women. About 31.25 % did not specify their gender status. Both men and women were well represented in the sample.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Cadre

Cadre	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Senior Staff	18	56.25
Junior Staff	13	40.62
Cadre not Specified	1	3.13
Total	32	100

Source: Data Collected from Questionnaires Administered, Dec. 2011.

Table 2 above shows that 50.0% of the respondents fall within the senior staff cadre, while 35.0% fall within the junior staff cadre. Six of the respondents failed to indicate their status in the institution. In all, both the senior and junior staff cadres of the population were amply represented in the sample selected.

Interpretation of Data:

Analysis of the responses presented above shows that about 68.7% were of the opinion that there is a well established and highly responsive unit responsible for staff welfare matters in the institution used as case study, while 31.3% could not see a well established and highly responsive unit responsible for staff welfare matters in the institution. Less than 45% of the respondents admitted that management has listening ears and encourages employees to make useful suggestions on matters affecting them and the institution. About the same percentage of workers sampled agreed that management has listening ears and encourages employees to make useful suggestions on matters affecting them and the institution. 12.5% were undecided on the issue. 62.2% could see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution. 31.3% could not see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution. The remaining 6.3% could not tell whether there were many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution. About

Table 3: Responses to the Structured Questions (Section B) in the Questionnaire

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1.	Adequate attention is being paid to the welfare of all categories of staff in your institution.	2 (6.3)	10 (31.3)	8 (25.0)	12 (37.5)	0 (0)
2.	There is a well established and highly responsive unit responsible for staff welfare matters in your institution.	0 (0)	10 (31.3)	0 (0)	18 (56.3)	4 (12.5)
3.	Management in your institution balances their concern for the work with their care for staff welfare.	0 (0)	12 (37.5)	8 (25.0)	12 (37.5)	0 (0)
4.	Employees generally complain less about management tactics in handling employees' cases and welfare in your institution.	4 (12.5)	12 (37.5)	6 (18.8)	10 (31.3)	0 (0)
5.	You will strongly recommend your institution for your close relation in other University who want a change of job as we enter the new year.	0 (0)	18 (56.3)	14 (43.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)
6.	You <i>cannot</i> see many benefits your counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in your institution.	0 (0)	10 (31.3)	2 (6.3)	16 (50.0)	4 (12.5)
7.	You strongly feel a sense of job security in your current institution and entertain no fear of sudden job loss.	2 (6.3)	14 (43.8)	12 (37.5)	2 (6.3)	2 (6.3)
8.	Many employees are leaving your institution for another because of the perceived low score card in people's welfare.	4 (12.5)	16 (50.0)	2 (6.3)	10 (31.3)	0 (0)
9.	There is adequate and affordable housing, transportation, and health care facilities for all categories of employees in your institution.	6 (18.8)	14 (43.8)	4 (12.5)	8 (25.0)	0 (0)
10.	Management has listening ears and encourages employees to make useful suggestions on matters affecting them and the institution.	0 (0)	14 (43.8)	4 (12.5)	14 (43.8)	0 (0)

Source: Data Collected from Questionnaires Administered, Dec. 2011.

Note: Figures in bracket (in the table above) represent the percentage of the numbers immediately above them.

62.5% of the respondents believed that many employees are leaving the institution for another because of the perceived low score card in people's welfare, while only 31.3% were of contrary opinion. The remaining 6.3% could not tell whether employees are leaving the institution for another because of the perceived low score card in people's welfare. It is interesting to note that half of the respondents will be willing to recommend Redeemer's University to their close relations in another University who are willing to change job in the New Year. We infer from this that Redeemer's University is performing better than many Universities around in some respect. The position of the respondents might have been informed by the fact that the University has opted long ago to pay 10% higher than the highest salary paying University in the nation. Over the years also, the salary of workers were being paid regularly and as at when due. This is not the case with some private, and even public Universities owing the workers three(3) to six (6) months salary arrears.

Some useful information were gathered from the open-ended question in the questionnaire. From the elicited information, the researcher gathered that the major complaints of workers in the institution include the following:

- 1) Insufficient and unbecoming housing facilities for workers;
- 2) Lack of well equipped and well staffed health center;
- 3) Irresponsiveness of supporting staff to staff requests for office cleaning, furniture repairing, maintenance of IT equipments, and the like;
- 4) Lopsided workload;

- 5) Absence of overtime allowances;
- 6) Denying workers right to observe government declared holidays;
- 7) Selective promotion policy.
- 8) High tax incidence. Lecturer II staff members, for instance, are paying between twenty seven thousand (N27, 000. 00) and thirty thousand naira (N30, 000. 00) as monthly tax.

The suggestions of the respondents on ways management can improve on employee welfare in the institution include the following:

- 1) Provision of car loans;
- 2) Unconditional sponsorship of staff going for conferences;
- 3) Substantial fund advancement to staff proceeding on higher learning;
- 4) Genuine complaints of staff should be listened to and be acted upon promptly;
- 5) Involvement of staff members in taking any decision relating to staff welfare;
- 6) Addressing the problem of accommodation which are, in many cases, quite inadequate, and in short supply;
- 7) Encouraging employees to openly make known their challenges;
- 8) Establishing a dedicated Unit whose responsibility will include hearing and addressing workers grievances;
- 9) Improving on health care facilities in the institution;
- 10) Cultivate a harmonious relationship with host community to reduce their hostility against staff members.
- 11) University policy on staff welfare should be well contrived and be well communicated to the entire staff.

Test of Hypotheses:

Two (2) hypotheses were formulated and tested for purpose of the study. The basis of these tests was to empirically ascertain the degree of workers satisfaction with their welfare package and how that may have impacted on their preparedness to stay on the job. The Chi-square (X^2) statistical method was adopted to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The tests were carried out as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The hypothesis here is closely linked with question six (6) of the administered questionnaire.

Ho: Most employees in Redeemer’s University cannot see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution.

Hi: Most employees in Redeemer’s University could see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution.

Table 4: Contingency Values & Chi-Square Computation

Response Options	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
SA	0	6.4	6.4	40.96	6.4
A	10	6.4	3.6	12.96	2.03
UN	2	6.4	4.4	19.36	3.03
D	16	6.4	-9.6	93.16	14.4
SD	4	6.4	2.4	5.76	0.9
TOTAL	32	32			X²=26.76

Source: Researcher’s computations.

Degree of freedom (V) = n-1 = 5-1 = 4

From the chi-square table, 4 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance gives 9.488, while the calculated $X^2 = 26.76$

Decision:

Since the cal X^2 of 26.76 is greater than the tabulated X^2 of 9.488 at 0.05; we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that says “Most employees in Redeemer’s University could see many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution”.

Hypothesis 2: The hypothesis here is closely linked with question eight (8) of the administered questionnaire.

Ho: It is not true that many employees are leaving Redeemer’s University for another because of the perceived low score card in people’s welfare.

Hi: It is true that many employees are leaving Redeemer’s University for another because of the perceived low score card in people’s welfare.

Table 5: Contingency Values & Chi-Square Computation

Response Options	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
SA	4	6.4	-1.6	2.56	0.4
A	16	6.4	9.6	92.16	14.4
UN	2	6.4	-4.4	19.36	3.03
D	10	6.4	3.6	12.96	2.03
SD	0	6.4	-6.4	40.96	6.4
TOTAL	32	32	0	168	X²=26.26

Source: Researcher’s computations.

From the chi-square table, 4 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance gives 9.488, while the calculated $X^2 = 26.26$

Decision:

Since the cal X^2 of 26.26 is greater than the tabulated X^2 of 9.488 at 0.05; we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that says “It is true that many employees are leaving Redeemer’s University for another because of the perceived low score card in people’s welfare”.

Research Findings:

The following findings were discovered from the study:

- 1) It is obvious that many employees in Redeemer’s University are not fully satisfied with staff welfare package in the institution.
- 2) Many staff of the University, particularly those within the academic staff bracket, are leaving the University because of the perceived low attention being paid to the welfare of its staff.
- 3) Notwithstanding the enhanced salary structure of the institution, a good number of them could perceive many benefits their counterparts in other organizations are enjoying but are lacking in their institution.
- 4) Failure, on the part of management, to observe government declared holidays is provoking more anger, in many staff members, than the management appear to know. The argument that the University observes holidays during special mission programs in the Camp may not carry much weight, especially when considering the numbers of man hours usually ‘enjoyed’ by workers in public Universities during staff strikes and student unrests.

Conclusions:

Based on the research findings the following conclusions are made:

1. That Redeemer’s University is doing well in terms of the quantum and regularity of salary payment to its workers when compared with the situation in many private and even some public Universities in the nation.
2. Since man is not just an economic animal but also a social being, many employees of the University are not satisfied with their jobs owing to the unsatisfactory welfare package being advanced to them. Employees generally are looking forward to a healthy business

environment where both their economic, as well as their social needs will be well met.

3. That the perception of a more robust benefits in other organizations partly account for movement of employees, majorly the academic staff cadre, from the University to other institutions.
4. That if management could improve its staff welfare package the University would be a better place to work. The institution will better attract and retain more qualified staff required to accomplish its corporate objectives.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations are made:

- 1) The University should take a careful review of its staff welfare policy and make it more enriching to both its academic and non-academic staff brackets.
- 2) The problem of staff housing in a University located in rural community, with its usual accommodation problems, must be seriously addressed. Getting good accommodation around the University premises is a hard nut to break. Management should therefore give staff accommodation a priority attention in its programs.
- 3) Housing loans could be given to its staff to enable the build their own houses – thereby reducing the pressure on the University for Staff Accommodation.
- 4) There should be post exit interview being conducted on staff leaving the University to ascertain the areas of job dissatisfaction among those leaving the University.
- 5) The University Health Centre should be well equipped and well staffed with seasoned medical professionals that are motivated to do the work. The idea of hiking charges on health services, as recently planned, will be counterproductive. A healthy worker is a productive worker, and vice versa.
- 6) Allowances such as overtime, work hazard, workload, and the like, should be introduced as obtain in many serious organizations that hope to promote higher productivity and reduce job dissatisfaction.
- 7) Employees' workload should be eased off by recruiting adequate number and quality of workforce to run the growing University.
- 8) Promotion criteria should be stable, uniform, clearly spelt out, and base on equity and fairness.
- 9) Staff attending academic Conferences and those pursuing their PhD programs and other relevant higher education should be supported with robust financial assistance by the University.
- 10) It is a mark of obedient to constituted authority and being a law abiding corporate entity when organizations, be it private or public, mission or non-mission, observe

public holidays as declared by the government. To do otherwise will always spark some negative reactions, not only from the workers, but from the students also. The University should avoid facing litigation that may possibly arise where it punishes members of its staff who observe public holidays.

- 11) All supportive staff of the University should be re-orientated on their role in helping the core academic staff achieving its teaching, studying and research goals. All unhealthy competition and acrimony among staff factions should be laid to rest to promote peaceful and cooperative existence among its staff members.
- 12) Management should not only have listening ears, they should also consult regularly with its staff while taking decisions that will affect their general welfare or work.

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