

JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG POLICE OFFICERS IN ENUGU URBAN.

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Abstract

Considering the theoretical assumptions of the affect model linking job characteristics to job satisfaction, this cross-sectional survey investigated job characteristics as predictors of job satisfaction among one hundred and ninety (190) police officers in Enugu urban comprising 125 males and 65 females between the ages of 20 to 59 years ($M = 36.83$, $SD = 6.07$) sampled using multi-stage sampling (cluster and systematic sampling techniques). The 21-item Job Characteristics Scale (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) and 20-item Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967) were administered for data collection. Application of multiple regression as statistical test revealed that job characteristics jointly predicted job satisfaction, $R^2 = .09$, $F = 2.63$, $P < .05$ level of significance, whereas only autonomy independently predicted job satisfaction, $\beta = .61$, $t = 3.42$, at $p < .05$ level of significance, hence the need for policy makers in Nigeria Police Service Commission to consider job characteristics especially job autonomy in order to enhance job satisfaction of police officers. The findings were discussed in the light of previous studies.

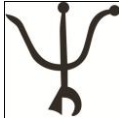
Keywords: *job characteristics, job satisfaction, police officers*

Introduction

In a multi-ethnic country like Nigeria which is threatened by crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, political violence and insurgency, responsibilities of the police do not only require professionalism but also designing job characteristics in a way which enhances job satisfaction resulting in higher performance, hence this study. Giving credence to this, several studies (e.g.

Bhatti, Syed & Shaikh, 2012; Kassen & Sarhan, 2013; Al-Tit & Hunitie, 2015) found job characteristics (Skill variety, task identity, task significance, task autonomy and feedback) to increase job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a broad positive emotional reactions and attitudes that an individual has towards his or her job brought about by a comparison between actual and desired or anticipated outcomes (Evans, 2001; Armstrong, 2006; Khanna, 2010). Similarly, it is a general attitude of an employee (Robbins, 2001) which is the result of many specific attitudes that emphasizes the specific task environment of the employee (Bashayreh, 2009) and influences the employees' attitude toward their jobs (George & Jones, 2008). Job satisfaction refers to the extent to which employees like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1997). And it involves evaluative, cognitive and affective components that contribute to higher performance and dedication to the organization (Ghazzawi, 2008). Building on this conceptualization, Hulin and Judge (2003) noted that job satisfaction includes multidimensional psychological responses to an individual's job, and that these personal responses have cognitive (evaluative), affective (emotional) and behavioral components. Cognitive job satisfaction is a more objective and logical evaluation of various facets of a job. Cognitive job satisfaction can be one-dimensional if it comprises evaluation of just one facet of a job, such as pay or maternity leave, or multidimensional if two or more facets of a job are simultaneously evaluated. Cognitive job satisfaction does not assess the degree of pleasure or happiness that arises from specific job facets but rather gauges the extent to which these facets are judged. Affective component of job satisfaction is a subjective



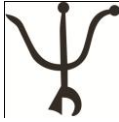
construct representing an emotional feeling individuals have about their jobs. Hence, affective job satisfaction for individuals reflects the degree of pleasure or happiness their jobs in general induce. Behavioral component of job satisfaction reflects the employees' psychomotor skills aptly used in performing the job. A skillful and dexterous employee tends to perform excellently, and become satisfied with the manner at which he/she performs.

Studies (e.g. Hulin & Judge, 2003) suggest that job satisfaction is a global concept that comprises various facets. And these facets examine the feelings of individuals (Akhtar, Hashmi & Naqvi, 2010) which focuses on employees' feelings and attitudes about variety of intrinsic and extrinsic elements towards jobs and organizations (Cowan, Johnson, Craven & March, 2008). These studies further categorized job satisfaction into intrinsic and extrinsic elements whereby pay and promotions are considered extrinsic factors and coworkers, supervision, and the work itself are considered intrinsic factors, and could be influenced by job characteristics (Djastuti, 2010). And this influence was also supported by (Ling & Loo, 2015). Moreover, studies (e.g. Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001) demonstrated positive correlations between job characteristics (Skill variety, task identity, task significance, task autonomy and feedback) and job satisfaction.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1980) skill variety is the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, involving the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person. Task identity is the degree to which the job requires completion of a whole identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with visible outcome. Task significance is the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives of other people, whether those people are in the immediate organization or in the world at large. Autonomy is the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedure to be used in carrying it out.

Job feedback is the degree to which carrying out the work activity required by the job provides the individual with direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his/her performance.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1980), the job characteristics model stipulates that the way jobs are perceived in terms of these five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) tend to impact on three particular psychological states in employees which include: experienced meaningfulness of work (i.e., the extent that the work is seen as making a difference to others), felt responsibility (that is, the extent that the worker assumes responsibility for his/her work), and knowledge of results (that is, the extent to which the worker is aware of the quantity of his/her work). These core job characteristics are responsible for each psychological state. For example, skill variety, task identity and task significance shape the experienced meaningfulness; autonomy affects experienced responsibility, and



feedback contributes to the knowledge of results. Consequently, these job characteristics motivate employees in their commitment to the organization and also are antecedents for organizations to ensure a high level of employees' job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), hence the need for this study to determine whether job characteristics will predict job satisfaction among a sample of Nigeria police officers.

Theoretical overview and hypotheses development

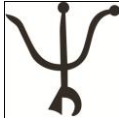
Locke (1976) affect theory is arguably one of the most famous models linking job characteristics to job satisfaction. The main premise of this theory is that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. Further, the theory states that how much value a worker has for a given facet of work (for example, the degree of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback in a job) moderates how satisfied/dissatisfied one becomes when expectations are/aren't met. When a person values a particular facet of a job, his satisfaction is greatly impacted both positively (when expectations are met) and negatively (when expectations are not met), compared to one who doesn't value that facet.

In support of these relationships, studies (e.g. Rabia & Adnan, 2010; Hunter 2006, Bhuian & Menguc, 2002) found job characteristics to be related to job satisfaction. For example, skill variety an aspect of job characteristics is

ostensible variety and intricacy of skills and talents required by a job to perform it (Buys, Olckers, & Schaap, 2007). Following this, employees who are proficient on the tasks demanded by the job and receive remunerations and wages that commensurate with the demand of the job, will perceive the job meaningful and would be satisfied performing the job. However, among the Nigerian Police, this is not the case because the structure of the organization is not designed to enhance job characteristics such as autonomy and skill variety. In addition, personnel of Nigeria Police are not properly equipped and remunerated. In line with this, Aremu (1998) suggested that the overall effect is that police personnel in Nigeria seem frustrated and helpless, and this makes the citizen to hold the police profession in low esteem. Research findings (e.g., Akinnawo, 1994; Aremu & Idowu, 2001; Aremu & Adeyoju, 2003; Aremu, 1996, 1998), have shown that all is not well with the present policing system in Nigeria, thus the need to consider job satisfaction of this segment of the Nigeria workforce.

Job characteristics and job satisfaction

The relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction has continued to attract the attention of researchers. For example, Rabia and Adnan (2010) investigated job characteristics as predictors of job satisfaction and found that skill variety, task significance and task identity were significant and positive predictors of job satisfaction whereas feedback was the only negative predictor of job satisfaction. In another study Hunter (2006) found four job characteristics (task significance, skill variety, task identity and feedback) as significant positive predictors of job satisfaction. Ling and Loo (2015) in a study found that the most important job characteristics that affect job satisfaction are work autonomy and



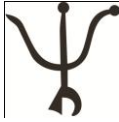
task significance. Bhuian and Menguc (2002), studying expatriate sales employees in Malaysian public service found that respondents reported higher level of satisfaction if they perceived their jobs provided higher levels of autonomy, identity and feedback. Conversely, task variety did not have a positive impact on the respondents' satisfaction level. Similarly, Bhuian, AL-Shammari and Jefri (1996) in earlier study found that autonomy, task identity and feedback have impact on job satisfaction, while task variety has influenced employees' commitment. Much earlier, Anderson (1984) examined the same variables and reported similar findings that job autonomy, task identity and feedback affect employees' job satisfaction. Further, Chang and Lee (2006) in a study of manufacturing, banking and service industries revealed that job characteristics have positive and significant influence on job satisfaction. Schneider (2003) also concurred that job characteristics have impacted managers' satisfaction. Similarly, Sanker and Wee (1997) conducted a study on job characteristics and job satisfaction association in three different countries and they reported that job characteristics influenced job satisfaction of the respondents in all of the countries. Ahmad and Taghrid (2015) in a study also found significant positive influence of job characteristics on job satisfaction. Interestingly, these studies did not consider African population especially Nigeria, thus the need for the present study focusing on Nigeria.

Nigerian Context

Relying on institutional theory (Scott, 2005), it is suggested that institutions and people in other national contexts especially developing countries may be exposed to different factors which influence their management practices. And these management practices in developing countries such as Nigeria may have implications for the outcome of studies involving Nigerian organizations; hence consideration of previous studies on job satisfaction of a developing nation such as Nigeria where this present study is located is vital.

In line with this need, Okpara (2004) in a study of a sample of 360 IT managers in Nigeria found personal characteristics as significant predictors of job satisfaction. In another study, Obi-Nwosu, Joe-Akunne and Oguegbe (2013) in a study of private sector workers in Anambra State, Nigeria found dealing with others and task identity dimensions of job characteristics to predict organizational commitment which is a concept related to job satisfaction. Similarly, Bello, Ajayi and Asuzu (2018) in a study found factors such as job autonomy to determine overall job satisfaction among doctors in public hospitals in Calabar, Nigeria. Iwu and Ukpere (2012) found differences in the levels of job satisfaction of Nigerian bank employees. Ayuba, Osagbemi, Dongurum and Danjuma (2012) found positive influence of sex, marital status and educational status on job satisfaction among employees of public sector in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Iwu, Ezeuduji, Iwu, Ikebuaku and Tengeh (2017) found pay or salary, growth opportunities and responsibilities attached to work dimensions of job characteristics as variables contributing to teacher job satisfaction in Nigeria.

Despite the fact that these studies have dealt with job characteristics and job satisfaction, there have, ironically, been no study on Nigeria Police Officers, specifically the previous studies have concentrated majorly on non-regimented



population such as ICT workers, doctors, teachers, and other private and public sector workers. This research gap is particularly important and calls for research involving a regimented population, hence this present study involving a sample of Nigeria Police officers. In the light of these it has been hypothesized that:

1. Job characteristics will independently and positively predict job satisfaction among Nigeria police officers.
2. Job characteristics will jointly and positively predict job satisfaction among Nigeria police officers.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A cross-sectional survey of 190 participants comprising 125 males and 65 females between the ages of 20 to 59 years ($M=36.83$; $SD=6.07$) served as participants. The researchers using multi-stage sampling technique (cluster and systematic) drew the participants from three (3) police departments and ten (10) police formations in Enugu urban.

In order to achieve this, a total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were administered within one month. Permission was sought from the Commissioner of Police Enugu State command after obtaining a letter of identification from the Head, Psychology Department, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Nigeria. More so, the researcher identified with the Heads of the three departments and the Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) in each of the

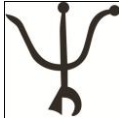
selected departments and formations for introduction and rapport. Upon acceptance, the researcher picked and trained one officer who served as a research assistant in each of the department and formations. Copies of the questionnaire were shared to the participants and instructions given. They were allowed to go home with the copies and return them on a later date. Two hundred and eighteen (218) copies (87.2%) of the questionnaire were returned and 28 copies (11.2 %) were discarded due to errors in completion, hence, 190 (76%) copies of the questionnaire were scored and analyzed in testing the hypotheses.

Measures

Two scales were used in this study. They include 21-item Job Characteristics Scale (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) and 20-item Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967).

Job Characteristics Scale

Job characteristics were measured using 21-item Job Characteristics Scale (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) validated for Nigerian use by Omoluabi (2000). The scale has seven subscales measuring seven (7) principal job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback from the job, feedback from agents and dealing with others). Sample item for skill variety reads 'The job requires me to use a number of complex or high level skills'. Task identity reads 'The job provides me the chance to completely finish the pieces of work I begin'. Task significance reads 'The outcomes of my work can affect other people in very important ways'. Autonomy reads 'The job gives me almost complete responsibility for deciding how and when the work is done. Feedback from job



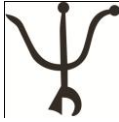
reads 'The job is set up so that I get almost constant "feedback" as work, about how well I am doing'. Feedback from agents reads 'People almost always let me know how well I am doing on the job'. Dealing with others reads 'Dealing with other people is an absolutely essential and crucial part of doing job'. There are both direct scoring and reverse scoring items. Each of the sub-scales could be scored separately. Ratings were made using 7-point scale, ranging from 1(very inaccurate) to 7 (very accurate) with internal consistency values of .71, .59, .66, .66,.71, .78 and .59 for the seven subscales reported by Hackman and Oldham (1975). The researchers reported Cronbach Alpha of .54.

Job Satisfaction Scale

Job satisfaction was assessed using 20-item Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967) measuring intrinsic, extrinsic and general job satisfaction.. Sample item reads 'The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities'. There are only direct scoring items. Ratings were made using 5-point scale, ranging from 1(very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) with concurrent validity of .71 and test-retest reliability of .70 reported by Weiss et al (1967). Mogaji (1997) revalidated this questionnaire for Nigerian use and reported reliability and validity check of 0.91 and 0.71 respectively. The researchers reported Cronbach Alpha of .79.

Table 1: Multiple Regression analysis showing Job Characteristics as Predictors of Job Satisfaction

Model	B	Beta value	t-value	P-value
Skill Variety	.014	.006	.081	.935
Task identity	.005	.005	.069	.945
Task Significance	.265	.114	1.381	.169
Autonomy	.610	.248	3.420	.001
Feedback from Job	.042	.014	.186	.853
Feedback from Agents	.119	.057	.733	.465
Dealing with Others	.025	.012	.143	.886
	.092			<i>R</i> ² value
	.057			Adjusted <i>R</i> ²
	2.625			<i>F</i> -value
	.013			<i>P</i> -value



According to the results in table 1, the R^2 (.092) indicated that the predictor variables (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback from the job, feedback from agents and dealing with others) accounted for 9.2 percent of the variance in the criterion variable (job satisfaction). The table also shows that the predictor variables (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback from the job, feedback from agents and dealing with others) jointly and positively predicted job satisfaction, F -value of (2.625) at $p < .05$, hence acceptance of hypothesis 2.

Table 1 also shows that among the job characteristics, only autonomy independently and positively predicted job satisfaction with a β value of .61 and $t = 3.42$ at $p < .05$, therefore part confirmation of hypothesis 1. Whereas, skill variety, task identity, task significance, feedback from job, feedback from agents and dealing with others, independently did not predict job satisfaction with β values of .014, .005, .265, .042, .119 and .025, t values of = .081, .069, 1.381, .186, .733 and .143 respectively at $p > .05$.

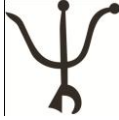
Discussion

In partial confirmation of the first hypothesis, the findings revealed that among all the job characteristics, only autonomy independently and positively predicted job satisfaction; hence part confirmation of the first hypothesis. In the light of these findings, the police officers' expression of job satisfaction was associated with the degree of freedom (autonomy) they enjoyed in performing their job.

This is perhaps because when employees are left to perform on the task independently with significant freedom and discretion, they tend to develop positive attitude resulting in fulfillment and positive feeling towards their jobs. And this positive relationship was previously supported by studies (e.g. Anderson, 1984; Bhuian, Al-Shammari & Jefri, 1996; Bhuian & Menguc, 2002; Ling & Loo, 2015) which found positive correlation between autonomy dimension of job characteristics and job satisfaction.

The significant positive association between autonomy and job satisfaction in this study may not be a surprise as the positive outcome could be attributed to the freedom given to the Nigeria police to determine the strategy and discretion necessary in checkmating and curtailing criminal activities in the country. This autonomy also reflects in the officers' daily policing of the country as they approach criminal activities with high level of discretion, and arrest situations with ingenuity irrespective of the training given to them. This also lends support to Locke (1976) affect theory which holds that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job and that how much one values a given facet of work (i.e., the degree of autonomy in a position) moderates how satisfied/dissatisfied one becomes when expectations are/aren't met.

In line with the second hypothesis, the findings revealed that job characteristics jointly and positively predicted job satisfaction, thereby confirming the second hypothesis. Hence, the police officers' expression of job satisfaction was found to be positively associated with their job characteristics. This is in congruence with



previous studies (e.g. Sanker & Wee, 1997; Chang & Lee, 2006; Rabia & Adnan, 2010; Ahmad & Taghrid, 2015)) which found positive association between job characteristics and job satisfaction. This also gives support to Hackman and Oldham (1976) job characteristics model which argues that the way jobs are perceived in terms of job characteristic dimensions tend to impact on three particular psychological states (experienced meaningfulness of work, felt responsibility and knowledge of result) in employees and this perhaps accounted for the positive relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction among the police officers.

And this positive association between job characteristics and job satisfaction in this study could also be attributed to the relative stability on transfers as enjoyed by the Police officers in recent times as against the previous situation where they would not be allowed to serve in a state command more than four years. This also brings to the fore Herzberg (1959) two-factor theory's view on the roles of working conditions in job satisfaction.

Implications of the study

This study has made theoretical and practical contributions to existing literature. First, positive predictions of job satisfaction by job characteristics have given credence to the contributions of job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), affect theory (Locke, 1976) and Herzberg (1959) theory to the

understanding of the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction.

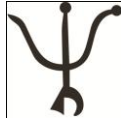
Second, the study has paved way for the understanding of the attitude and behavior of personnel of Nigeria Police Force in terms of job characteristics and job satisfaction. These positive predictions of job satisfaction by job characteristics especially autonomy are clear indications of the need to enhance workers' sense of fulfillment and positive feelings towards the job by designing the work environment in a way that workers will enjoy certain levels of feelings that their jobs provide freedom and discretion while doing the job. Following these, the workers will experience pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences.

Considering these, the Nigerian Police Service Commission and other organization saddled with management of human resources should design jobs to give workers autonomy in order to enhance job satisfaction.

The positive outcome of this study particularly the aspect of autonomy will help to debunk the belief among Nigerians that Nigeria Police Force is highly regimented to the extent that the personnel enjoys no iota of freedom.

Limitations of the study

Due to time and financial constraints, it was not possible to study all the staff of the Nigeria police force in Enugu state command. This led to the relative small sample size used in this study. Future studies in this area should be properly funded and more time dedicated in order to broaden the scope of these studies.



The use of cross-sectional survey and self report could not allow cause-effect relationship. Longitudinal studies and experimentation are likely to provide better data and more robust findings.

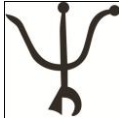
Conclusion

Job characteristics especially autonomy positively predicted job satisfaction, hence the need to pay attention to job design in order to enhance job satisfaction among personnel of Nigeria Police force

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