



QUALITY OF WORK-LIFE AND WITHDRAWAL BEHAVIOUR IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study examined quality of work-life and withdrawal behaviour in local government councils in Rivers State. The two measures of quality of work-life such as work incentive and job satisfaction were explored to determine their relationship with the predictors of withdrawal behaviour, like tardiness and turnover intention. The reachable population size for this study was 303 selected workers from 15 local government councils in Rivers State. The researcher applied a descriptive survey design and purposive sampling method which permitted the participants to use their personal experience. Taro Yamane's formula was used to select 172 employees as the sample size. Questionnaire was utilized as primary research instrument to aid collection of data and information from local government councils served as a secondary data. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses. The validity of the research instrument was successful through contributions from management intellectuals and professionals. The reliability instrument was illustrated through Cronbach's alpha test. The findings disclosed that work incentive has positive significant relationship with tardiness as well as an increase in job satisfaction may lessen turnover intention of workers. The researcher concluded, that quality of work-life has positive significant connection with withdrawal behaviour. Thus, it was recommended that local government councils should prioritize creating a supportive work incentive that addresses workers' needs so as to reduce tardiness or absenteeism among the workers.

Keywords:

Quality of work-life, tardiness, turnover intention, withdrawal behavior.

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Introduction

Employees who are working in the local government council are complaining bitterly because of poor salary and unpleasant condition of service. These poor working conditions contributed to high rate of employee's lateness, absenteeism, and withdrawal behaviour in the workplace. The subsisting economic hardship forced most of the workers to search for improve standard of living by abandoning their work and travel abroad. These employees pay little attention to their job, while seeking for a better organization to attain desired dream. Innovation and improved management in some sectors provided the opportunities for dissatisfied employees to seek for alternative employment. In an attempt to explore these opportunities, workers exhibit withdrawal behaviour in the form of absenteeism, turnover intention, and work slowness. These attitudes are counter-productive which are often not in the best interest of the organization. Ordinarily, the success or failure of an organization is subject to the type of behaviour each employee demonstrates in the organization, hence withdrawal behaviour is shocking to organizations (Llies et al., 2012). Withdrawal behaviour signifies employee's desire to leave his current job and the possibility that a person may change jobs within a specified time. Fugate et al., (2012) emphasized that withdrawal could occur in two different instances such as psychological (neglect) and physical way (exit). In view of the assertion of the author, psychological withdrawal involves actions that result in keeping away mentally from the work environment. Lim (2002) narrated that psychological withdrawal comprises daydreaming, socializing or chatting instead of working, moonlighting (using organizational resource for one's own personal assignments), cyber loafing (using the internet for something else other than the job employed for). Consequently, Blau (1994) claimed that physical withdrawal involves physical disappearance from work environment such as tardiness (tendency for lateness), long breaks beyond the specified time, and absenteeism.

Withdrawal behaviour refers to deliberate intention of the employee to engage in lateness, absenteeism, and quitting the job in search of alternative employment. When local government employees display absenteeism or withdrawal behaviour, it causes work stress, incompetent operations, staff tiredness, and threat to the comfort of the organization (Roche & Haar, 2013). Furthermore, Raina and Roebuck (2014) disclosed that withdrawal behaviour among employees could lead to emotional fatigue, low employee performance, and the compromise of organizational share value. From all indications, local government chairmen are worried over the rate at which council workers come to work late, embrace absenteeism, abandon their duty post doing something else, and quit the work for higher offer. However, no employee likes to suffer or become poor, as a coherent human workers have high desire for better quality of work life. Indeed, enhancing the quality of work life of workers may contribute to employee's positive behaviour and minimize negative or withdrawal behaviours among the workers. Bora and Mohammadhu and Atham (2018) declared that quality of work life is the favourable conditions in the workplace environment that supports and also promotes employee's satisfaction by providing opportunity for growth, job security, and stimulating rewards. Quality work-life relates to the firm strategy to promote employee satisfaction, improve work conditions, and organizational effectiveness. Employees deserve comfortable

life within and outside the organization. This induces the employer to seek for ways to boost the worker's satisfaction without jeopardising the effectiveness of firm. This paper examined the relationship between quality of work life and withdrawal behaviour in the local government councils in Rivers State.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between work incentive and tardiness of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

Literature Review

Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life (QWL) is a program designed to increase employees' satisfaction with their work environment likewise their productivity (Bora & Murthy, 2015). Quality of work life connotes a reflection of the way people see their work and organization, involving a concern for employees' wellbeing and organisational effectiveness (Daud et al., 2015). Correspondingly, Saraji and Dargahi (2006) described quality of work-life as a participatory organizational process in which job design and decision-making instruments are developed to address the needs of employees at the workplace. Quality of work life denotes organizational support which respond to the needs of employees and accomplishment of organizational growth (Lawler, 1982). Quality of work life signifies the benefits or job favourableness to workers and organizational effectiveness. The concept of quality of work life is based on the assumption that a job is more than working; it is the centre of employee happiness and survival. Schermerhorn (1996) claimed that the employees' behaviours are influenced by the way their works are designed, nature of organizational support program, and the way they are treated at the workplace. Quality of work life aims at integrating the socio-psychological needs of workers in the organization and concerned with the overall climate of the work. Ordinarily, quality of work life is recognized as a progressive indicator related to the function and sustainability of business organizations (Koonmee et al., 2010).

Quality of work life may be painstaking as a complex organizational mechanism, since it concerns the challenge of creating positive interaction between the physical and mental wellbeing's of employees towards increased productivity (Lawler, 1982). When employees are dissatisfied with the work incentive and employee empowerment, they are likely to exercise negative behaviour or embark on withdrawal behaviour. High quality of work life (QWL) is essential for organizations and local government employees to be attracted to their job and minimized absenteeism (Sandrick, 2003). Quality of work life motivates employees to be loyal and increase their commitment (Wahlberg et al., 2017). In addition, Sanad and Jarrah (2019) identified work incentive, job satisfaction, employee empowerment, job design, work environment, health and safety, rewards, job security, and creativity as the measures of

quality of work life. Nevertheless, this study relied on two indicators of quality of work incentive which include work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Work Incentive

Work incentive denotes benefits or rewards that employee receive from their employer for completing a certain task beyond their salary, which are vital element for their motivation, retention, and increasing levels of productivity (Bratton & Gold, 2003). Work incentive entails awards and variable payments made to employees when predetermined objectives have been attained within an organization (Banjoko, 2006). Incentives represent recognition, cash, verbal or written praise, that attract the interest of the workers to boost job performance. When local government employees receive rewards or improved work incentives from their employer, they may express satisfaction and sense of belonging which lead to the achievement of organizational goals. George and Jones (2008) insisted that it is necessary for organizations giving out rewards to their employees to have an effective performance evaluation apparatus to ensure fairness, and high productivity. However, rewards could be divided into two distinct categories, namely extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards are tangible in nature given when a person achieves a particular task such as medal, trophy, certificate, and monetary reward. It is also external factors that originate from beyond the personal self. Intrinsic rewards are intangible in nature that includes sense of achievement, advancement, growth, and self-satisfaction, it originates from within the person (Falola et al., 2014). Furthermore, Matocchio (2006) narrated that if organizations have an effective rewards and recognition program, the morale of the workers may be high, feel motivated, minimize absenteeism, and beneficial to the organization in the long run. Ordinarily, a change in the reward system could have a direct effect on the motivation of employees. For instance, if the reward system is improved, it may have a positive impact on the satisfaction or motivation of employees and performance (Jolly, 2018).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience (Locke, 1989). Job satisfaction symbolizes the combination of positive feelings, advancement opportunities, nature of work, and work conditions that workers have towards their work (Aziri, 2011). Moreover, Anita (2011) supported that job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon with multi-facets which is influenced by the factors like salary, working environment, autonomy, communication, and organizational commitment. Opkara (2002) suggested that job satisfaction is the result of promotion opportunities in the organization. Similarly, job satisfaction refers to the achievement and favourable conditions that a worker enjoys from the organization (Nwinye, 2020). Customarily, job satisfaction is the fulfilment of the individual's needs and the ability of the job environment to meet those needs that increase employee gratification. Job satisfaction is activated by number of factors such as work itself, pay, promotional opportunities, supervision, co-workers, and working conditions. Spector (1997) noted that human values, behaviour of employees, and organizational activities are the three main important features of job satisfaction. Aziri (2011) asserted that when employees are happy with their work conditions, they respond with positive behaviour to achieve organizational goals, but

where the workers are dissatisfied with the work environment, they exhibit tardiness, absenteeism, and withdrawal intention. Murray (1999) claimed that job satisfaction improves employees' retention level, reduces the rate of withdrawal behaviour among workers and the cost of hiring new staff.

Withdrawal Behaviour

Koslowsky (2000) stated that withdrawal behaviour is the employee's late arrival, negative reaction to work, and early departure habits against poor working conditions. Withdrawal behaviour refers to employee decision to proceed on turnover and quit his current employment. It is also cognitive behaviour of workers to become less active for a number of reasons, while they stay at work. Withdrawal behaviour is manifested when there is early exit of employees caused by excess workload or responsibilities in their daily lives. Consequently, withdrawal behaviour focuses on how workers perceive or view their work. Withdrawal behaviour has some detrimental effects on organizational functioning especially the intention of the employee to leave may result in actual turnover, monetary, and intangible cost. The intangible cost appears to be more significant than the tangible cost, includes the effects of turnover on employee morale, social capital, and organizational culture (Adebayo & Ogunsina, 2021). The tangible cost includes recruitment, selection, training, and time (Takase, 2020). However, withdrawal behaviour troubles the organization's overall functioning and exposes it to the ongoing risk of training and recruiting, affecting high-quality employee performance (Hayes et al., 2022). The existence of work-family interferences, roles ambiguity, and work delay instigated by family responsibilities may lead to employee withdrawal behaviour or turnover intention (Hammer et al. 2003). Withdrawal behaviour of workers has a lot of cost implication on the part of the companies ((Yemi-Sofumade, 2014). For example, managers may decide to increase profit and efficiency while reducing the expenditure of the enterprise. Replacement practices reduce income and profitability in companies as employees miss hours of work by replacing missing staff, and their increase workload loads (Spector, 1997). Withdrawal behaviour could happen when workers do overtime and they are not paid properly.

Tardiness

Tardiness relates to arriving late or leaving work early before close of work (Schermerhorn, 1996). The lateness of employees is detrimental for the client and organization. Tardiness entails late arrival of employees to work which eventually extends into serious forms of absenteeism and turnover (Koslowsky, 2000). Tardiness signifies slow work and breach of the concept of punctuality which affect job performance. When employees do not come to work on the specified time or exhibit lateness to work, they may be accused of sabotaging organizational goals. Tardiness is associated with decreased operational performance, which is harmful to productivity. Besides, tardiness is connected to work delay and workers inability to accomplish work target. Koslowsky (2000) noted tardiness is a predictor of withdrawal behaviour that exposes workers bad behaviour and mentality that affects the performance of many businesses. Employee tardiness could emanate from several factors such as ignorance, accidents, sickness, low morals, and

unfavourable work conditions (Bratton & Gold, 2003). Organizations have to prevent tardiness behaviour or lateness by managing the demands of the employees effectively in order to avoid slow work and negative behaviour. Ordinarily tardiness has a negative implication on every company's success, since late hiring could lead to low efficiency, low moral standards, and expense. Furthermore, unforeseen tardiness may come from bad weather, epidemic, and injury, which are beyond the reach of the employee (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2007). Tardiness is generally instigated by underlying factors like laziness and carelessness in most cases (Peretomode, 1991).

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is the employees plan or desire to leave their job (Mobley 1977). Besides, Tuzun and Kalemci (2012) described turnover intention as employees calculated wish to leave the company or resign in the immediate future. Turnover intention connotes the final decision of the workers to proceed on quitting or leaving the current employment for certain reasons like poor salary and unpleasant condition of service. Employee turnover occurs when employees leave their jobs voluntarily, it is caused by job dissatisfaction, lack of confidence and lack of motivation ((Zuber, 2001). Although, workers desire for turnover is negatively associated with routine organizational working conditions. The willingness of workers to leave a job is a frequent phenomenon, particularly among skilful and dissatisfied staff (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2012). Turnover intention symbolizes an employee's decision to leave for another position so as to improve his standard of living. Turnover intention implies employees' conscious and deliberate aim to seek alternative job opportunities (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). These workers behavioural intentions emerge from beliefs, attitudes, and subjective norms. Employees' intentions to quit their jobs are made easier by their negative attitudes and beliefs about their organization. When organization lacks integrity, morality, and justice in upholding the employment contract terms, it creates opportunity for withdrawal behaviour of workers. The satisfaction or welfare of employees is a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development. Indeed, Tinehealth (2017) disclosed that several factors like lack of opportunities for promotion, lack of rewards or recognition for accomplishments, management insensitivity, work overload, lack of value or respect for job performance, career development, and unfavourable work environment are the reason for local government employees or nurses' intention to leave their jobs. Nevertheless, there are three components in the process of deliberate turnover which include idea of abandoning a job, strategy of pursuing alternative work option, and intention of resigning (Rahman & Nas, 2013). Turnover intention is categorized into two segments called unintentional or involuntary and voluntary turnover. Unintentional turnover applies to the termination of the employees by the employer. Voluntary turnover occurs when the employee quits, resigns, and abandon his job through voluntary retirement. (Gosh et al., 2013).

Methodology

The researcher espoused a descriptive survey design for this study to aid the systematic approach in collection of data. The reachable population size for this study was 303 selected workers from 15 local government councils in Rivers State. The information regarding the

number of participants and councils were received from Rivers State local government service commission. The categories of staff that were interviewed include senior administrative officers, finance officers, and social welfare officers of various local government councils. Purposive sampling method was adopted which allow each member of the population to use their personal experience to achieve accurate result. To determine the sample size, the researcher utilized Taro Yamane's formula which the population size of 303 gave a total sample size of 172. Questionnaire was used as a primary source for collection of data and the information from local government council served as a secondary data. The questionnaire was structured within the purview of quality of work-life and withdrawal behaviour (Bryman, 2015). The questionnaire was divided into three parts such as section A, B, and C. The section A, was for demographic's representation of the respondents like gender, age, marital status, educational qualifications, and tenure in the organisation. Section B represents the independent variable known as quality of work-life while section C, consists of withdrawal behaviour or dependent variable. The researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient to test the hypotheses. The measures of quality of work-life applied in this study were work incentive and job satisfaction. While the proxies of withdrawal behaviour were tardiness and turnover intention. The researcher also adopted ordinal scale and 5-point Likert's scale ranging from 1-5. Where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree 3 = neutral 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The reliability instrument was illustrated through Cronbach's alpha test with 0.999, which indicated that the result was reliable. The ethical consideration of this study reveals that the information provided by all the participants were confidential and justified.

Table 1

Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test

Variable		Reliability	Number of Items
Quality of Work Life	Work incentive	0.999	5
	Job satisfaction	0.999	5
	Tardiness	0.998	5
Withdrawal Behaviour	Turnover intention	0.998	5

Results and Discussion

Test of Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between work incentive and tardiness of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

HA₁: There is significant relationship between work incentive and tardiness of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Work Incentive and Tardiness

Correlations

		Work Incentive	Tardiness
Work Incentive	Pearson Correlation	1	.996**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	172	172
Tardiness	Pearson Correlation	.996**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	172	172

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of Table 2 demonstrated the relationship between work incentive and tardiness of workers in local government councils in Rivers State. This implies that the relationship was statistically significant. The r- value was 0.996 and p – value 0.000 which indicated that work incentive relates meaningfully with tardiness. Where $p - \text{value} = 0.000 < 0.005$, the null hypothesis was rejected while alternative hypothesis was accepted. The positive significance r- value of 0.996 showed that 99.6% increase in work incentive could lead to a decrease in lateness and absenteeism of local government employees.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

HA₁: There is significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State.

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Correlations

		Job satisfaction	Turnover intention
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.998**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	172	172
Turnover intention	Pearson Correlation	.998**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

N	172	172
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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of Table 3 verified that the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State, was statistically significant.

The r -value was 0.998 and p -value 0.000 which specified that job satisfaction has significant relationship with turnover intention of workers. Where p -value = 0.000 < 0.005, the null hypothesis was rejected while alternative hypothesis was accepted. The positive significance r -value of 0.998 showed that 99.8% change in job satisfaction may reduce the rate of turnover intention of employees in local government councils in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in hypothesis one shows that there is a significant relationship between work incentive and tardiness of workers in local government councils in Rivers State. This result discloses that when organization offers rewards and bonuses that give workers sense of belonging, the employees become excited and depart from tardiness and withdrawal behaviour. The finding is in accordance with Matocchio (2006), who narrates that if organizations have an effective rewards and recognition program, the morale of the workers may be high, feel motivated, minimize absenteeism, and beneficial to the organization in the long run. Similarly, this finding is also consistent in the contributions of George and Jones (2008), who insist that it is necessary for organizations giving out rewards to their employees to have an effective performance evaluation apparatus to ensure fairness, and high productivity. The second hypothesis illustrated that there is positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State. The findings reveal that employees are happy with the favourable working conditions in the organization. This result in agreement with Aziri (2011), who asserted that when employees are happy with their work conditions, they respond with positive behaviour to achieve organizational goals, but where the workers are dissatisfied with the work environment, they exhibit tardiness, absenteeism, and withdrawal intention.

Conclusion

The findings proved that quality of work-life measures such as work incentive and job satisfaction were positively associated with tardiness and turnover intention of workers in local government councils in Rivers State. This indicates that employees who experience higher levels of quality of work-life in their organization are more likely to think less of withdrawal behaviour. When employees receive beneficial rewards and work in favourable work environment, they are likely to be satisfied and it deteriorates their connection with turnover intention. The researcher observed that availability of positive work incentive or job satisfaction are capable of reducing lateness and turnover intention of workers in the local government councils. Furthermore, local government councils should prioritize creating a supportive work incentive that addresses workers' needs so as to reduce tardiness or absenteeism among the workers. The chairmen of local government councils

should increase workers salary that could attract satisfaction and discourage the workers from turnover intention. The chairmen should ensure that there is conducive work environment to promote employee quality of work life and minimize withdrawal behaviour.

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