

# EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION OF WORK CONDITIONS AND JOB SATISFACTION IN NIGERIA BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

*This study has examined work conditions and job satisfaction in organizations. This was from a total of 365 respondents randomly selected from Guinness Nigeria Plc and Bendel Brewery, Benin City April to May, 2008. Job satisfaction was rated on Likert scale. Data were standardized, using percentages, to cushion the effect of the variation in the sample sub totals. It was revealed that the four most gratifying work conditions were schedule of duty, environment in the office, kind of people employees met/work with and salary/remuneration. It was, therefore, recommended that employees be given the chance to learn or try new things, have job security and have his/her initiatives/suggestions recognized by management. All these are with a view to increasing employee participation, loyalty and productivity in the organizations.*

*Keywords: Work conditions, Job aspects, Job satisfaction, Employee prevalence, Edo State.*

## INTRODUCTION

It has been suggested by Decker, Harris-Kojetin and Bercovitz (2009) that when employees are highly satisfied they will care about the quality of their work and become committed to the organizations. This includes having high retention rates and being more productive. They are also of the opinion that dissatisfied employees are more likely to say they will be leaving the organizations soon.

Also, such employees are not likely to recommend their work places to a friend, potentially making it more problematic for an organization to recruit fulltime employees. In Smith's (2009) arguments, optimizing employee satisfaction is key to success of any business. Also, direct data on job satisfaction can help to improve levels of productivity, job satisfaction and loyalty.

It was Maslow (1943) who first formally identified 'satisfaction' in his Hierarchy of Needs Theory that people seek to satisfy five specific needs in life. These included physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self esteem need and self actualization need. As noted rightly by Weiss and Gopanzano (1996), the 'Range of Affect Theory' by Edwin A. Locke was on what determines job satisfaction. That is, the discrepancy between 'what a worker expects or wants in a job and what he gets or experiences in a job' determines job satisfaction. Satisfaction is an 'affective' response of the worker to his job (Eze, 1980; Bamikole and Longe, 1994). Such response is conveyed by the worker's attitude, feelings, mood and emotions. In other words, job satisfaction is more of a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job.

Importantly, job satisfaction, in addition to absenteeism and work motivation is regarded as one of the 'work outcomes' in relation to job characteristics perspective or model of job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). Also significantly the Herzberg's Motivator Hygiene theory is important to this study. The

theory identifies the motivational factors and work conditions or job aspects that have provided employees with satisfaction in the organizations. The motivational factors included achievement in work, recognition and promotion opportunities that are ‘intrinsic to the job or work carried out’. The hygiene factors are the working environment such as pay, company policies, supervisory practices and other identifiable working conditions.

It is the motivator hygiene theory that has stimulated this study because organizations, as social realities, cannot function without employees. Social reality is the focus of attention in the behavioral sciences (Cohen, 1968; Coser and Resemberg, 1976) and humans give meaning to their social realities (Adams, 2002). In all, job satisfaction describes how content an individual is with his or her job. Thus, economists, sociologist and other planners require data also on employee perception, work conditions or job aspects and job satisfaction. This is towards improving productivity in organizations.

Consequently, this study has examined employee perception of some work conditions and job satisfaction in some organizations. These organizations included Guinness Nigeria Plc, and Bendel Brewery, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The study was restricted to these companies because they were identified as employing all categories of workers in the state.

## METHODOLOGY

Data were derived from a total of 365 randomly selected employees of Guinness Nigeria Plc and Bendel Brewery, Benin City, Edo State Nigeria comprising all cadre of staff from management to junior management staff level. They were selected irrespective of age, sex, status, religion, education and income. Each of the companies was oriented into departments. These included administration marketing, transport, security and unskilled workers. As in Table 1, the companies were categorized and the employee

population aggregated. Within each of the department, a corresponding sample size of 20% of the employees was randomly selected. Each of the selected employees was administered with a questionnaire.

Work conditions or job aspects referred to schedule of duty, salary/remuneration, acceptance of your initiative/suggestions, job security, chance to learn or try new things, kind of people you meet/work with, environment in the office, team work/project, level of consultation and delegation of responsibilities. Accordingly, respondents were asked to rate job satisfaction on Likert scale. Thus, job satisfaction was categorized into ‘very satisfied’, ‘satisfied’ and ‘not satisfied. Using percentages to cushion the effect of the variation in the subtotals, employee prevalence were calculated in which job satisfaction, employee’s department and employee’s area of specialization were the dependent variables. Employee prevalence is the proportion of employees responding to whether or not they were ‘very satisfied’, ‘satisfied’ or ‘not satisfied’ with work the condition or job aspect. Work conditions or job aspects were the independent variables. Consequently, highest employee prevalence per cent corresponding to each work condition and level of job satisfaction were obtained to ascertain those that were foremost of the work conditions.

**Table 1:** Estimated Population of Employees and Selected Sample Size

Departments	Estimated Population size		Total Sampled	Selected Size
	Bendel Brewery Plc	Guinness Nig.Plc		
Administration	84	165	249	50
Marketing	217	433	650	130
Production	183	364	547	109
Transportation	108	214	322	64
Security	12	24	36	8
Others	7	13	20	4
Total	611	1214	1825	365

*Source: Field Survey, April – May, 2008.*

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 2:** Selected Characteristics of the Respondents

Employee Characteristics	N	%
<b>(a) Age</b>		
Young	48	13.2
Middle age	206	56.4
Adult	111	30.4
<b>(b) Sex:</b>		
Male	220	60.3
Female	145	39.7
<b>(c) Marital Status</b>		
Never married	80	21.9
Married	263	72.1
Others	22	6.0
<b>(d) Religion:</b>		
Catholic	121	33.0
Protestant	149	41.0
Islam	86	23.7
ATR	9	2.3
<b>(e) Education</b>		
Low	24	6.6
Medium	57	15.6
High	284	77.8
<b>(f) Income</b>		
Low	25	6.8
Medium	169	46.3
High	171	46.9
<b>(g) Area of Specialization</b>		
Engineering	53	14.5
Arts/Social/Management Sciences	107	29.3
Pure & Applied Science	103	28.2
Vocational/Technical Education	102	27.9
<b>(h) Departments</b>		
Administration	50	13.7
Marketing	130	35.6
Production	109	29.9
Transport	64	17.5
Others	12	3.3

*Source: Field Survey, April-May 2008*

**Table 3:** A Distribution of Work Conditions, Job Satisfaction, Area of Specialization and Departments of Employees

Work Condition	Job Satisfaction			Employees' Specialization					Employee Dept.			
	VS	S	NS	Eng.	Arts/Soc/ Mgt/Sci	Pure Sci	Voc/Tech Edu.	Admin	Mktng	Prod.	Others	
Schedule of Duty	22.4	7.9	2.1	16.7	17.9	16.6	15.7	18.6	18.4	15.6	16.8	
Salary/Remuneration	11.6	12.2	4.3	12.9	13.5	14.0	14.1	17.4	11.0	12.4	16.8	
Accept Your Initiative	4.9	10.4	14.1	4.7	5.4	6.3	6.9	4.7	6.0	7.6	4.1	
Job Security	9.9	11.2	7.7	11.6	12.1	10.8	10.6	9.7	11.0	11.9	13.9	
Learn new things	4.4	10.6	14.3	7.3	5.2	5.4	6.1	4.7	5.6	6.5	7.2	
People you work with	16.0	11.1	2.3	16.3	15.4	14.6	14.5	14.4	15.4	13.7	14.7	
Office Environment	20.2	9.0	2.1	16.7	14.8	16.4	15.7	16.1	14.	15.5	15.7	
Team work/project	3.8	9.7	16.6	4.7	6.8	6.2	5.5	4.7	7.8	6.5	4.1	
Level of Consultation	3.2	9.2	18.1	5.2	4.1	4.9	4.5	4.7	4.6	5.5	2.8	
Delegation of Duty	3.6	8.7	18.5	3.9	4.8	4.9	6.3	5.1	5.6	4.8	3.9	
Total (N)	906	1791	952	233	541	536	490	236	629	582	388	
(%)	24.8	49.1	26.1	12.9	30.1	29.8	27.2	12.9	34.3	31.7	21.1	

**Source:** Field Survey, April-May 2008. Note: VS = very sure; S = sure; NS = not sure

## **Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Respondents' age, sex, marital status, religion, education and income were first examined in this study. As in Table 2a, age was categorized into 15-29, 30-39 and 40 and above years. The bulk of the employees were ages 30-39 years, that is, in the middle ages. The preponderance of these middle age employees over their young or adult counterparts in these organizations was indicative of the low level of and delay in employment of young school leavers/graduates into the formal sector of the economy. It could also be explained by the practice of potential employees waiting to acquire more training and skills to qualify them for the competitive jobs.

From the sex structure of respondents (Table 2b), it was revealed that more than a half of the employees were males. These findings had tended to confirm the assertion of Ashford (2001) that gender equality in the workplace was still a long way from reality. On marital status, data (Table 2c) tended to suggest that more than two-thirds of the employees were married. Also on religion, respondents were categorized into Catholics, Protestants, Moslems and African Traditional Religion adherents. As in Table 2d, it was observed that there were more Protestants in these organizations than Catholics and had responded that there were Moslems and African Traditional Religion (ATR) respectively.

Levels of educational attainments were categorized into low, medium and higher signifying primary, secondary and post secondary respectively. Data on Table 2e suggested that all employees had formal education in these organizations. More than three quarter of the respondents had post secondary education, while less than one quarter had secondary and primary education. The preponderance of the better educated people in these organizations lent credence to the earlier observations of Bowen and Finegan (1966), Standing (1982) and Ette (1995) that education and greater access to

knowledge were positive influences on effective participation in the labour force. This is also in consonance with Obadan (2008), that ‘heavy investment in human capital, especially education and health’, was required by the country ‘to succeed in the new global economy’.

On Table 3f, income was categorized into less than N20, 000 per month, N20, 000 to 49,999.00 per month and N50, 000 and above per month. Statistics on income tell a similar story to that of education because of relative preponderance of medium income and high income earners in these organizations. Specifically, data (Table 2f) suggested that the number of employees in production or marketing earning medium income per month tripled their counterparts’ in administration. Also, the number of employees earning higher income per month in marketing was in excess of their counterparts in production followed by administration and transport.

On employee’s departments or ‘actual work doing’, data (Table 2b) tended to suggest that the organizations have more hands in marketing, followed by production than in transport and administration. Employees in marketing are often those entrusted with promotion, advertizing and sales of products (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2000). More hands are, therefore, needed not only in marketing but production, for instance, to persuade customers to switch brands. As further observed by Abercrombie, et al (2000), such large share of employees may be required to contribute to the formation of a consumer culture.

With respect to employee’s area of specialization, data also tended to suggest that the respondent’s main areas of specialization were engineering; arts/social/management sciences, pure and applied sciences and vocational/technical education, suggesting that these organizations have a fair representation of disciplines in their workforce.



## **Work Conditions and Job Satisfaction**

Employee prevalence (percent) corresponding to each work condition and job satisfaction level was ascertained. The responses given by the respondents on Table 3a suggested that all job aspects were considered by the respondents. However, job satisfaction varied with the job aspects or work conditions. The highest employee prevalence were observed for respondents who indicated 'very satisfied' with schedule of duty, environment in the office, the kind of people met/worked with and salary/remuneration respectively. Conversely, highest employees prevalence were observed for their counterparts who indicated 'not satisfied' with delegation of responsibilities, level of consultation, team work/project, chance to learn or try new things and acceptance of your initiative/suggestions respectively. For the employees who responded 'satisfied' with the work conditions, corresponding highest employee prevalence were obtained in favour of salary/remuneration and job security. On job satisfaction and employee's area of specialization, as on Table 3b, it is observed that the four most gratifying work conditions and highest employee prevalence were schedule of duty, environment in the office, kind of people you meet/work with and salary/remuneration. Specifically, each area of specialization replicated this trend or pattern except that in arts/social/management sciences slightly more employees appeared motivated by kind of people you meet or work with than environment in the office.

Also, on Table 3c, statistics on work conditions, employee's departments and job satisfaction tell a similar story to that of areas of specialization. In other words, highest employee prevalence were observed for respondents who indicated 'satisfied' with schedule of duty followed by salary/remuneration, environment in the office and kind of people you meet/work with. Interestingly, delegation of responsibilities, level of consultation, team work/project, among others trailed far behind the four foremost work conditions.

**Table 4:** Results of Computation of Employee Prevalence for Corresponding Work Conditions and Level of Job Satisfaction in Organizations

<b>Work Condition/ Job Aspect</b>	<b>Highest Employee Prevalence (%)</b>	<b>Corresponding level of Job Sat.</b>
Schedule of duty	22.4	Very satisfied
Salary/Remuneration	12.2	Satisfied
Acceptance of your initiative	10.4	Not Satisfied
Job Security	11.2	Satisfied
Learn or try new things	14.3	Not Satisfied
People you work with	16.0	Very Satisfied
Office Environment	20.2	Very Satisfied
Team work/project	16.6	Not Satisfied
Level of Consultation	18.1	Not Satisfied
Delegation of Responsibility	18.5	Not Satisfied

*Source: Computed from Field Survey, April – May 2008 Data*

## CONCLUSION

This study has examined Employees Perception of some work conditions and job satisfaction in Nigerian Business Organizations. Out of the ten work conditions enumerated, the four most gratifying of them were schedule of duty, environment in the office, kind of people you meet/work with and salary/remuneration. This implies that people work for purposes other than pay.

Based on this, it is therefore recommended that schedule of duty would help the worker to control the work process; salary/

remuneration, kind of people you meet/work with, job security, accepting initiative/suggestion are also required for a high level of satisfaction in the work place. Furthermore, employee should be given the chance to learn or try new things. All these are required such that the employee is not isolated, self-estranged or meaningless in the workplace. The acceptance of these packages will increase employee participation, loyalty and productivity in organizations.

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