Workplace Discipline: A Catalyst For Organizational Productivity In Nigeria

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Abstract: This is correlation study that empirically examined the relationship between workplace discipline and organizational productivity in Nigeria. An accessible population for the study comprises of 225 managerial and supervisory staff randomly drawn from a purposely selected 15 manufacturing organizations operating within the six states of the South-south region of Nigeria. Using Kretche and Morgan sample determination table 225 respondents were drawn from a total population of 550 employees across the organisations. Findings revealed high correlation coefficients between the two variables with discipline demonstrating a high mean score for it critical importance to organizational productivity. It therefore recommended that management should show some leadership discipline as a model for employees emulations and supervisors should also demonstrate discipline so as the attract discipline followership across organisations.

Keywords: Discipline, Productivity, Leadership, Employee Discipline, Organizational Culture

I. INTRODUCTION

The human element of the organization n is one very critical productive asset that needs special management. A rationally organized Social Structure involves clearly defined patterns of activity and discipline, which must be functionally related to the purpose of the organization. The social sciences are more fluid and human behaviour more difficult to explain and analyzed. Individuals are unpredictable, unique with distinct characters, attitudes, aspirations, objectives, perceptions, beliefs etc. Accurate and precise prediction of the mind or behaviour of an individual even to the nearest second is difficult. Organizational leaders are familiar with the complexities that are innate in handling the social structure. Issues that likely arose from the inability to organize the social elements embrace conflicts, disorder and failure in goals achievements. Major disconnect that lack of order poses for organization can be imagined in a struggle between two opposing ideas. With this existence, conflicts between a manager and an employee are most likely a continuous encounter in the workplace. Ensuring a sound relationship between the management and employees depends upon how it is regulated by management. One of the conditions for maintaining such relationship is that employees should uphold a particular performance and behavioral standards. (Jegadeesan G, 2008). Should the employees do not comply with these standards, it is assumed that disciplinary measures are enforced to improve their performance and maintain the healthy relationship. However, if the employees do not agree with the manner of implementing disciplinary actions, it can have an adverse effect on the rapport between management and the employees. Psychologists generally agree that people have different reasons for doing the things they do, or for behaving the way they do. This means in other words, that all human behaviour is designed to achieve certain goals and objectives. It is therefore, a deficiency of something within the individuals, which sparks chains of events leading the individual to engage in one kind of behaviour - good or bad, lawful or unlawful. Clearly, if a rule is unenforceable, it is not worth having. Standards of conduct must be maintained but they must be realistic so as to contribute to the proper functioning of the workplace. Rules governing insubordination, theft, vandalism, gambling on company premises, drinking on the job and taking drugs at work, are all related to productivity and the general wellbeing of an organization, (Eni, 2000). It is believed that the most

unpleasant role of an organizational leader is to institute a disciplinary action to an erring employee (Franklin and Pagan, 2006). Although the goal is to modify the employees undesirable behaviors, their decisions are often subjected to opposing personal interpretations. Discipline entails a process of learning. One of the positive contributions which discipline can make in our lives is that it brings about knowledge that is cumulative; knowledge that maintains and knowledge that restructures society when applied. And there cannot be an end to learning because society does not operate in a state of static equilibrium but in a state of generativity in terms of idea conception and development. Discipline is also a training process, but unlike training which is job oriented. The primary purpose of discipline is to teach responsibility rather than to evoke obedience. This means consistently helping employees to understand that life involves choices and consequences. Discipline in the organization consists of setting clearly defined limits for employees. The vast majority of workers in crises often claim to not clearly understand organization's limit, because most of them come from places where discipline was not consistent. Employees discipline for undesirable behaviours only tells them what not to do. It does not tell them what behaviours are preferred. It is the purpose of this study of disciplinary process to preserve a healthy relationship between employees and managers for an organization to perform well. Both parties are expected to abide by the prevailing regulations. Disciplinary policies are in place to serve as a guide to an orderly conduct in the workplace in order to achieve the organizational goal. (Gatchalian and Lumiqued, 2005). The situation in which the employee commits misbehavior may vary in the same way that the manager may also handle an individual situation in different ways that is commensurate to the situation. However, the method in which the manager executes the disciplinary action may produce various opinions from the employees.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Given the various motivational and inspirational training programs and development of positive work settings, it is obvious that not all employees perform according to the acceptable behaviors set by the organization. The occurrence of organizational misbehaviors is dependent on the opinions of employees towards the organization. When employees believe that their organization is fair, it is unlikely that they will be involved in misconducts (De Schrijver, et al 2010). Discipline is an action that must be constantly exercised to rehabilitate employees' misbehavior due to violation of work policy and standards. Disciplinary guidelines are used for maintaining the work standard that must be imparted to employees through proper communication. According to Franklin and Pagan (2006) culture is an influential factor in making disciplinary decisions. Other two factors that has causal effects can be tangible and intangible. The former describes the formal practices the organization wishes to follow and the latter provide indications why informal strategies appear as successful practices for getting things done. A recommended hypothesis using the idea of organizational culture was

suggested to confirm the validity of the supposed influence of culture on decisions pertaining to employee discipline.

Greer and Labig (1987) stated that limited researches were made about employee reactions to disciplinary actions. Their exploratory study about employee reactions to disciplinary actions revealed that the manner in which the disciplinary action is instituted seems to greatly influence emotional response and affect the manager-employee relationship. The foregoing positive relationship will seem to deteriorate due to the implementation of a disciplinary action. However, when the discipline is instituted in a pleasant way, it is unlikely that adverse employee reactions will occur. In a qualitative study made by Atwater, Leanne E., Waldman, David A., Carey James A., and Cartier, Priscilla. (2001), on recipients and observers of disciplinary process, results showed a positive perception about discipline from the two categorized groups but they may also lose respect for the one who instituted the discipline, following development of negative attitudes towards the organization as a result of the discipline. They have also the tendency to regard the experience as unfair, when it is used for informal rather than to formal rule violations. In an exploratory study using the internal dynamics of disciplinary process made by Rollinson, Handley, Hook and Foot (2007) about the disciplinary experience and its effects on Behavior, it was tentatively concluded that half of those formally disciplined will internalize the rules and the other half have the inclinations of breaking the rules. These behaviors were said to be caused by first; 'conditioning by punishment' paradigm, where punishment stimuli is ineffective in influencing the behavior. The second cause is attributed to the managerial styles that have created impressions of motives of retaliation on the disciplined person.

The severity of disciplinary measures may depend on such considerations as whether the employee is a first-time offender, prior tract record, length of service etc. For the minor offenses, the following are included: Failure to obey safety rules, sleeping on duty, smoking in prohibited areas and concealing one's defective work, work output below standard, loafing, leaving job or work area without authorization, quarrelsome manifestations, unexcused absence from work, while for serious offenses embraces amongst others; willful and malicious damage of company property, indecent conduct, stealing, attacking another with the intent of maiming or causing serious injury, gambling, repeated tardiness and falsification of any kind and drunkenness or found with hard drugs or under its influence. It is not easy to establish the frequency of the occurrence of each of these forms of offenses in the organization. However, it appears that some of these forms of indiscipline or offenses occur more frequently than others and their effects also more noticeable than others. One of such is absenteeism.

III. METHODS

Data for the study is generated through the personal administration of questionnaires using the cross sectional survey method. The accessible population for the study comprises of 225 managerial and supervisory staff randomly

drawn from a purposely selected 15 manufacturing organizations operating within the six states of the South-south region of Nigeria. Using Kretche and Morgan sample determination table 225 respondents were drawn from a total population of 550 employees across the organizations. All companies were cross checked to be registered high profile organisations in Nigeria with profits after tax positions of over N100m in 2014. The Questionnaire scaling is as follows:

WORKPLACE DISCIPLINE:

Number of items: 6; Cronbach reliability alpha: 0.862; Scale: Likert (5) method of (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) Undecided (4) agree (5) strongly agree.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Number of items: 6; Cronbach reliability alpha: 0.968; Scale: Likert (5) method of (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) Undecided (4) agree (5) strongly agree.

FINDINGS

The analysis revealed high mean scores for each variable as evident in table 1 and table 2. Indicators showed a tendency for agreement in all six (6) instances of workplace discipline and organizational productivity with the highest scale for workplace discipline at $x = 4.2889$ and the lowest at 3.5244. For organizational productivity; the highest mean score is $x = 4.0533$, while the lowest mean value lies at $x = 3.8800$.

	Discipline1	Discipline2	Discipline3	Discipline4	Discipline5	Discipline6
N	225	225	225	225	225	225
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Mean	3.5244	3.8533	4.0978	3.5289	4.2889	3.6400
Std. Deviation	1.13018	.84558	.99519	1.00014	.87684	.90593

Source: SPSS output, 2015.
Table 1: Descriptive on Discipline

|	Product1	Product2	Product3	Product4	Product5	Product6
N	225	225	225	225	225	225
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Mean	3.9556	3.9333	3.9022	3.8800	4.0089	4.0533
Std. Deviation	1.08471	1.16879	1.15312	1.11755	1.14561	1.11275

Source: SPSS output, 2015
Table 2: Descriptive on organizational productivity
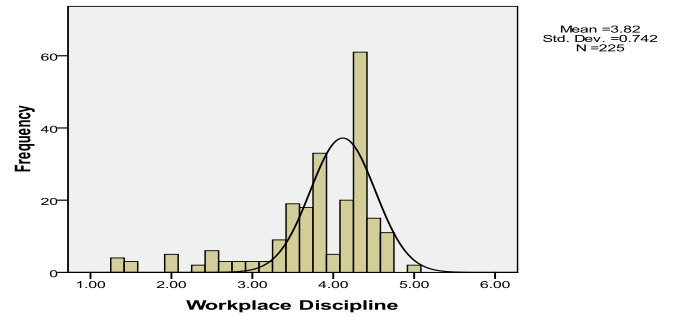
Source: SPSS output, 2015.
Figure 1: Descriptive histogram on Workplace discipline

Illustrated in figure 1 is the summary of the descriptive statistics for the predictor variable which is workplace discipline with mean score ($x = 3.82$) and standard deviation ($s = 0.742$). The figure 1 indicates average response implying agreement with variable (workplace discipline) practice within the workplace.
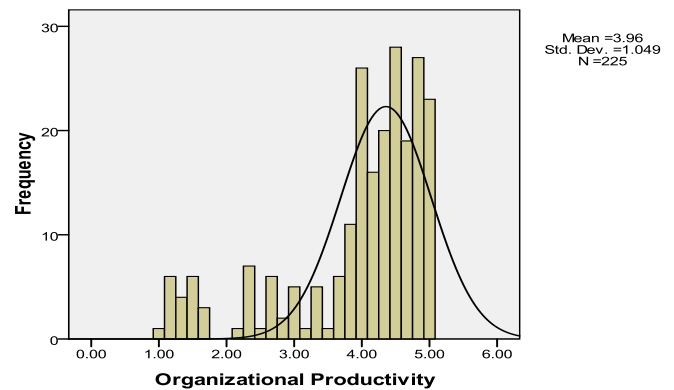
Source: SPSS data, 2015.
Figure 2: Ddescriptive histogram on Organizational productivity

Figure 2 shows the summary of the descriptive statistics for the criterion variable which is organizational productivity with mean score ($x = 3.96$) and standard deviation ($s = 1.049$). The figure 2 indicates average response implying agreement with variable (organizational productivity) practice within the workplace.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

		Spearman's rho	
		Discipline	Productivity
Discipline	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.149*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.026
	N	225	225
Productivity	Correlation Coefficient	.149*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.
	N	225	225

Source: SPSS output, 201.
Table 3: Test for hypothesis

Table 3 above shows the output for the test of the relationship between workplace discipline and organizational productivity at a 95% confidence interval, signifying a 0.05 level of significance. Results indicate a significant relationship between the study variables (rho: 0.149; p<0.05). Therefore based on this finding we therefore reject the previously stated null statement of no relationship between the study variables.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed a high correlation coefficient between workplace discipline and organizational productivity in the organisations that were covered in the south south region of Nigeria. The shows that workplace discipline which are often neglected by some management is critical for the success of any going concern. It is therefore recommended that management of organisations should demonstrate high level discipline to attract a reciprocal disciplinary behavior from all employees. Supervisors and leaders of organization are also tasked to show commited discipline so as to achieve unalloyed loyalty from followership at work. Employees in their quest to get job satisfaction should be encouraged to show discipline that traverse the entire length and breadth of the given organisations. These are expected to earn for companies the needed level of productivity.

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