ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATIONAL PACKAGES ON THE PRODUCTIVITY OF SECRETARIES IN AN ORGANIZATION

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Abstract
This work attempts to assess the impact of motivational packages on the productivity of secretaries in a public organization. The methodology adopted was the review of related literatures. The study examined the various theories of motivation, the extent and type of motivational packages (financial and non-financial) that could effectively impact on the productivity of secretaries vis-à-vis the prevailing challenges in the process of motivation. It was discovered that good motivation enhances job satisfaction, makes secretaries to display enthusiasm and loyalty to her boss and above all, increases in productivity. Based on the findings, we recommended that management should provide job security to their secretaries, create conductive working environment, encourage training and professional development opportunities.

Keywords: Motivational packages, productivity, secretary and organization

Introduction
Motivation means feelings, drives, commitment that makes somebody want to do something or something that causes such a feeling or influences choice of alternatives in the behavior of human beings. Thus, the concept of motivation is mainly psychological. It relates to those forces operating within individuals that compel them to act in one way or the other. Motivation is therefore concerned with why people choose a particular course of action in preference to others and why they continued with a chosen action, often over a long period and in the face of difficulties and problems. Analyzing this concept, Abafi and Haruna (2009) believed that highly
motivated individuals can bring about substantial increase in productivity and job satisfaction and substantial decrease in absenteeism, grievances and so on.

From a manager's perspective, a person who is motivated works hard, sustains the pace of hard work and has self-directed behavior towards the organizational goals. However, when a person's performance is low, motivation is often considered to be the problem that could affect that person's level of productivity. This is why Robbins and Coulter (1996) advised that since each organization has a distinct personality, managers should try and remove barriers from their organizations that can cause job dissatisfaction and are detriment to motivating employees. According to them, factors such as organization politics, unproductive meetings, withholding information and unfairness, lead to low morale and overall job dissatisfaction. Antomioni (1999) agrees with this view when he stated that “the amount of efforts people are willing to put in their work depend on the degree to which they feel their motivational needs will be satisfied. Thus, individuals become de-motivated if they feel something in the organization prevents them from attaining good outcomes.” The underlying concept of motivation, is therefore, regarded as a driving force within individual by which he/she attempts to achieve organizational goals in order to fulfill some needs or expectations.

From the above consideration, one can conclude that employees have higher levels of motivation when they perceive that management cares about their welfare. In this case, when a secretary feels that her boss treats her fairly and with respect, care about her welfare and appreciates her inputs, this will develop and stimulate her behavior in a positive direction towards higher productivity.

It should be noted, however, that motivation of employees is one of the greatest challenges leaders are confronted with in organizations. The question that is yearning for answer now is 'how employees in an organization can be motivated to work as a team in order to achieve organizational goals? In this respect the role or importance of motivation cannot be underestimated, particularly in the attainment of organizational objectives. Again, the link between motivation and organizational objectives as well as the roles leaders play are inseparable. In other words, leadership and motivation are closely tied together. Different employees in different organizations are motivated differently with varied motivational devices by leaders who inspire them to act towards achieving organizational goals. This again brings us to the need for determination of: “to what extent and which type of motivational package(s) (financial or non-financial) can impact on the productivity of a secretary in an organisation.
Conceptual Framework

Motivation
Rabey (2001) defines motivation as the internalized drive that is more dominant in an individual at a given moment, while Baron (1991) opined that motivation is the internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behaviour (especially goal directed behaviour). Similarly, Robertson and Smith (2005) share this view, when they assert that motivation is a psychological concept related to the strength and direction of human behaviour. On the other hand, Buchanan and Hueznusi (2004), sees motivation as the cognitive decision making process through which goal directed behaviour is initiated, energized, directed, and maintained. Rabey (2001) however argues that there is no way that a person can be motivated by another person. The only thing that a person can do to help a non – motivated individual is to be in a position to create an environment that is conducive enough to aid in that person’s realization of oneself by making a personal choice to respond to the inner motivation.

Productivity
Productivity can mean the inert achievement of rapid, sustainable as well as measurable improvements in operations. A system is termed as productive if on the average, the system is able to meet the set targets without failure. From an industrial perspective, productivity can be termed as the total profitable output that a machine or other equipments are able to make within a given timeframe. However, Agoro (1991) sees the word productivity as the “output per unit over a given period of time.” Analysing the term further, Adekoya (1991) emphasized that “productivity is a measure of how well labour and resources are brought together in a firm and utilized for accomplishing a set result.” Thus, productivity can be seen as the increase in output (goods and services) got from a given input by better management and utilization of human and material resources.

Again, looking at productivity from the perspective of human resources, it can be said to be the cumulative, evidential output that is both measurable and profitable. The productivity of an individual must be within the period set by the organization or the individual to achieve a certain goal. This period must be strict, as the project (work) must be undertaken within the shortest possible time (Reference Answers, 2010). From the foregoing, it could be deduced that productivity includes three major elements: output, resources and time.

Secretary
In view of the complexity of the job of a secretary, a secretary is described as the master of the office looking at the enormous roles he/she plays in an office. A competent secretary is expected to know, perform and able to guide the junior officers (typists, clerical officers or executive officers) on how to create and maintain a good
filing system, job routines etc. Encarta (2009) defines secretary as an employee who does clerical and administrative work in an office for a person or organization or somebody elected or appointed to keep the records of the meetings of an organization such as a club, society, or committee, and to write or answer letters on its behalf: Abaniwo (2009) citing Austine (1978) describes a secretary as: “a person who has acquired the basic secretarial skills of shorthand, typewriting, plus enough knowledge and practical experience in office work to be able to cope with filing simple office machinery and reception duties.” Again, Njoku (2011) sees a secretary as “the image maker and secret keeper of an organization or establishment.” This definition placed a secretary in an important position considering her role of presenting the good image of the organization and at the same time protecting the secret of the organization.

Roles Of The Secretary In An Organization
The role of the secretary cannot be over emphasized. She is the image maker of the office, information bank of the office, the wheel upon which the activities of the office rotates etc. In addition to communicating with people, the Secretary frequently provides the communication link between people and machine. However, the Secretary performs better if well motivated. Her role goes beyond the office routine as she serves as a link between the office and outside world. While assisting the boss/chief executive to succeed, a secretary performs the role of retaining and retrieving vital information to the boss as occasion demands. This helps the boss to be more effective, intelligent, and confident at performing his duties thereby resulting to the achievement of the organizational goals.
The Secretary sometimes performs psychological roles such as self-control, self-confidence etc. This is to say that she sometimes takes blames for some errors from other colleague's shortcomings. Yet she absorbs every kind of heat and shocks from the boss.
The secretary keeps secrets hence maintain the role of trust worthiness in the office. Where there is no trust, working relationship would be sore. This is not good for the secretary, her boss and the organization in general.

It should be noted that the above roles are not exhaustive and adequate motivational packages could make the secretary to perform at a higher level.

Theories Of Motivation
Several motivational theories have been developed by different scholars to enable us understand the methods involved in motivating employees working for an organization with a view to stimulating their productivity towards the achievement of organizational goals. It is, therefore, important to understand some of the basic theories of motivation as well as to be able to apply them appropriately.
Although these theories have been put forward to explain the motivational factors that affect or influence the performance and the perception of individuals and what this perception does to the organizational performance but the question is to what extent and which type is more effective – financial or non-financial. For example, in Lawrence and Jordan's (2009) equity theory, the perception that individual have about their compensation for their work, such that they perceive that they are underpaid as compared to the effort they put in their work. The response is more likely to be that the individuals will decrease their efforts accordingly regardless of whether they have high internal (intrinsic) motivation.

**Incentive Theory**

While Graffin and Ebert (1993) defines incentives as special pay programme designed to motivate high performance, Harstman, Kurtz and Moser (1994) see incentives as one technique by which employees carry out their end of employment contract. That is, compensating employee for their efforts. Financial incentives are designed to motivate employees to improve their performance – to increase effort and output and by producing better results expressed in such terms as objective for profit, productivity, sales turnover, cost reduction, quality customer service and on time delivery (Graffin and Ebert, 1993).

A reward, tangible or intangible, is presented after the occurrence of an action (i.e. behavior) with the intent to cause the behavior to occur again. This is done by associating positive meaning to the behavior. Experience has shown that if a person receives the reward immediately, the effect would be greater. Motivation comes from two sources: oneself, and other people. These two sources are respectively called intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Applying proper motivational techniques can be much harder than it seems. It was noted that when creating a reward system, it can be easy to reward A, while hoping for B, and in the process, reap harmful effects that can jeopardize your goals. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and exists within the individual rather than relying on any external pressure. Workers are likely to be intrinsically motivated if they: attribute their promotion to internal factors that they can control (e.g. the amount of effort they put in), believe they can be effective agents in reaching desired goals are interested in mastering the job, rather than just gain recognition for promotion.

Extrinsic motivation comes from outside of the individual. Common extrinsic motivations are rewards like money and grades, coercion and threat of punishment. Competition is in general extrinsic because it encourages the performer to win and beat others, not to enjoy the intrinsic rewards of the activity.
Goal-setting theory
In the goal setting theory, it is clear that the goals must be very specific as well as challenging that it will require more effort and input. This has been found to be a major boost to the behaviour as well as the performance of the individuals within the organization (Ordóez et al., 2009). In another analysis, Fried & Slowik (2004) did realize that, due to the fact that time, in all the proposed theorem, had not been considered prior to their research, then the motivational theories had generally failed to achieve the intended goals. It has been noted that time is among the most important variable that has a great influence on people's motivation.

It has become arguably clear that organizations have been and continue to employ goal – setting theory as their fundamental strategy to get their employees working, and has dominated the motivational theory (ies) that have been put forward for organizational use (Fried & Slowik, 2004). It is also believed that the goal setting motivational theory has been the leading theory that has incorporated time as a major factor because the employees are required to meet their deadlines within a given period of time. This in return points out that the goal setting theory has and still remains to be the most successful theories put forward as it deeply incorporates time as a main determinant.

Importance Of Motivation
Shadare & Hammed (2000) noted that motivated employees have a greater influence on the organization's performance. When the leadership is efficient enough, it will be able to influence the organization performance. A leader is like the father in a family and the rest of the members seek to emulate what they see in their father. Employees will follow what their leader says and does. If the leader is kind, caring and approachable, then the employees are more likely to feel safe in the presence of their manager. In return, the employees will demonstrate their respect and trust in their leader by having an increased output. This go along with the perception that when a secretary feels that he/she is being treated fairly by her employer, who equally cares about her welfare, will develop behaviour in a positive direction towards increasing productivity.

Having examined the need for motivation and its impact on the productivity of employee, it is pertinent to outline the purpose and few motivational techniques used and how it could be implemented to achieve the desired results.

Purpose of Incentive Schemes in Organizations
The general perception is that incentives are given to increase productivity in the organization. By relating compensation to output, an employer is attempting to induce workers to turn out a greater volume of work thereby lowering the cost of producing a single unit of output. Specifically, the purpose of incentives to both an employee and the organization is to:
- Improve performance/productivity
- Recognize differences in employee performance
Increase competition among employees
- Attract and retain productive employees
- Reduce absenteeism, idle time and control costs
- Utilize equipment more effectively
- Relate increases in compensation to increases in productivity
- Avoid additions to employees
- Create uniform processing costs
- Direct efforts toward achieving organizational objectives and so on.

Furthermore, the following have also been advanced as good reasons why workers are motivated in an organization:
1. It creates good human relations between staff and management.
2. It enhances job satisfaction.
3. It makes workers display enthusiasm and loyalty to the management.
4. It increases esteem (ego) and cooperation among workers in the establishment.
5. It reduces tension and conflicts between management and staff and helps to solve disciplinary problems.

Motivational Techniques
Generally, motivational techniques or incentive schemes are classified into two types: material incentive and non-material incentives, otherwise known as financial and non-financial. According to Hongoro and Normand (2002), material incentives are those provided for specific group of workers to motivate them for a specific behavior, while Non-material (non-financial) incentive schemes on the other hand are directed at moral motivation to serve in the interest of the community. Non –material incentives to employee especially in the public service attract a certain kind of person that more readily identifies with the mission of the organization (Paul & Marc 2007).

For the purpose of stimulating the secretary towards higher productivity, the following motivational packages are identified:

Job Security
Work environment/conditions, occupational health, safety, recreational facilities, Good remuneration/ direct financial benefits, scholarship, accommodation, allowances Status, prestige, and recognition Training/career and professional development opportunities, Sabbatical appointments/leave, study leave, holidays, vacation, etc.

Conclusion
Incentive schemes are fast becoming increasingly a popular technique in attracting, motivating, developing, and retaining secretaries in organizations in Nigeria. Experience has shown that organizations that provide effective incentives are more likely to have satisfactory job performance from their secretaries. Hence, lack of motivation of secretaries in any organization is pre-requisite to the failure in the achievement of its desired or designed goals or objectives. From the review, it could
be concluded that incentive schemes do have significant correlation with secretaries motivation and productivity in organizations in Nigeria and since there are numerous motivational schemes/packages it is the responsibility of the management to identify and determine what motivational tool will actually be effective in their organization towards satisfying their secretaries thereby achieving the organizational goal through the secretaries performance and productivity.

Recommendations

- As motivation of employees is both a prerequisite condition for any organization to achieve its objectives and greatness. It is, therefore, imperative to recommend that:
- Management must give maximum job security to their secretaries.
- It is high time organizations desist from squeezing the secretary into a corner space. Management should therefore provide good, conducive working environment to their secretaries.
- Chief Executives should see their secretaries beyond people who can only process documents. Secretaries should be respected and given due opportunities like other employees.
- Organizations should also give opportunities to secretaries to develop themselves academically by granting them adequate sponsorship.
- Good and fair remuneration is highly recommended for the secretaries. This is because, they most at times perform the job of others and hardly will others perform her job.
- Management should seek and obtain feedback on how employees perceive incentives.
- Adequate facilities should be provided to Secretaries to energize their commitment towards satisfactory performance and enhance increased productivity

References


