

Levels of Job Satisfaction and Performance of Sports Officers in Lagos State Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to examine the relationship between job satisfaction levels of sports officers and sports performance of secondary schools in Lagos State. Data were collected from 200 subjects across 10 Local Education Districts. Job Descriptive Index was used to determine job satisfaction while performance in the Principals' Soccer Cup competition was used as a measure of performance. Results show that job satisfaction is not related to performance. Findings suggested that performance may not necessarily be dependent on job satisfaction; and that job satisfaction might be more dependent on psychological and social conditions of the job.

A primary objective of sports programmes in secondary schools is providing students with opportunities to excel and bring honours to their schools in various sports (Odegbami, 2005). The coordination of the programmes is handled by the schools' sports officers. They strive to ensure that students as well as schools perform well in achieving this primary objective.

The importance of the role of sports officers in the administration of school sports cannot be over-emphasised. The execution of the programme and the coordination of its activities are within the purview of the officers' responsibilities. However, the extent to which these duties are carried out is, to a large extent, contingent upon whether or not sports officers are satisfied with their job.

Secondary school sports are acknowledged as the pivot of sports development for any nation (Onifade and Keinde, 2002; Josiah, 2005). Apart from being an important phase of the curriculum that fulfills the major needs of youths today, sports in schools provide the opportunity for students with superior athletic ability to compete at an advanced level within the framework of carefully defined educational goals so that they can reach their maximum potential.

The term, sports officers, is used by the Lagos State Government of Nigeria to describe the category of secondary school teachers who teach physical education as a subject of instruction. From time to time, they also act as coaches and administrators of the schools sporting programme.

These sports officers are thus directly responsible for the sporting programme of their schools in terms of supervision and coordination. In most cases, their job includes coaching of school teams in preferred sports. Where outside coaches are invited for a particular competition, such coaches work under the close supervision of the sports officers in each school. Thus an average sports officer in Lagos State secondary schools not only teaches physical education as a subject of curriculum instruction, but also coaches school teams, and administers the schools' sports

Aiyejuyo (2004) had argued that a thorough and in-depth

understanding of sports officers is needed for motivating them towards higher performance. This argument is relevant when one considers that the type of work performance needed from these individuals mostly goes with a corresponding motivational behaviour exhibited by the organisation (the schools) in which they work.

In order for the sports officers to perform well there is a need to focus on their perception of personal and organisational stimuli (Keinde and Ayodabo, 2002). It is therefore important that a relative congruency exist between most of their needs and those of the organisation. Many studies have argued that if a worker is satisfied with his or her job, he or she will be motivated to perform his or her job well (Herrera and Lim, 2003). The school as an organisation therefore requires optimum performance from the expertise of their sports officers who are saddled with the task of achieving sports excellence for the school.

Sports officers in various secondary schools have the tendency to improve on work performance if only they are exposed to a conducive and job satisfying environment which has the tenets of contributing favourably to job performance.

For the purpose of this study, job satisfaction is defined in line with Aiyejuyo (2004) which states that job satisfaction is the totality of an individual's social and psychological well-being relative to his or her job and job performance. It therefore represents a feeling of relative pleasure or pain and expresses the amount of agreement between one's emerging expectations and the rewards that the job provides.

Several studies have examined job satisfaction of individuals employed in positions related to sport (Keinde, 1995; Onifade and Keinde, 2002; Keinde and Ayodabo, 2002; Herrera and Lim, 2003; Aiyejuyo, 2004). Most of these reflected varying degrees of job satisfaction especially as it relates to predictive variables especially performance. Some studies also examined job satisfaction of employees generally and in relation to performance (Brown and Leigh, 1996; Ching, 2001; Corbin, 2001).

Often considered a barometer of the health and effectiveness of an organisation, a higher level of job satisfaction is associated with a number of other factors. These include, for example, reduced rates of turnover and absenteeism, less undesirable work-related behaviours such as aggression, strikes, and theft (Keinde, 1995), and better job performance (Ayodabo, 1994; Aiyejuyo, 2004).

It should be noted, however, that research indicates general low satisfaction with some aspects of job in Nigeria especially with pay and promotion (Baridam and Nwachukwu, 1995; Onifade and Keinde, 2002) despite a relative higher performance index. It is more accurate to maintain that high job performance leads to high job satisfaction rather than the reverse (Aiyejuyo, 2004) and that positive relationship between job satisfaction and job performance is extremely complex (Snyder, 1990; Herrera and Lim, 2003).

Job satisfaction is also positively related to a number of other

predictive variables (Kent and Sullivan, 2003). Irrespective of job context or the task environment, there tend to be higher levels of job satisfaction with upper level or more professionally oriented occupations (Ching, 2001), and with smaller organisations (Corbin, 2001). These studies have justified the need for additional investigation on job satisfaction because variability among individuals, organizations and communities has been found to affect many on measures of job satisfaction.

It therefore becomes necessary that any study on job satisfaction be focused on factors determining the feelings, values and needs disposition of the individual employee so as to tap the human potential more efficiently for higher human needs. This study examined the relationship between job satisfaction level of sports officers and sports performance. The study also examined the contribution of each job satisfaction facet to the overall job satisfaction as well as the influence of some demographic variables of age, sex, educational qualification and experience on job satisfaction.

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects for this study were 250 sports officers randomly selected from ten Local Education Districts (LED) in Lagos State. In each LED, ten schools were selected using a random sampling technique. There were 2 or 3 sports officers in each school. Out of the 250 sports officers selected, only 200 completed questionnaires were returned in usable form. This is made up of 144 males and 56 females. However, on the average, there were between 18 and 21 sports officers selected from each LED.

Instrumentation

The instrument selected to measure job satisfaction was derived from the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) questionnaire developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969). This instrument measures job satisfaction using the job's multi-facet approach. It is considered more appropriate for generalization and most suitable for measuring individuals' disposition to many aspects of his job (Ching, 2001; Aiyejuyo, 2004). This study considered the level of job satisfaction of a sports officer as being represented by the sum total of the JDI.

The JDI has two sections. The first section gathers information on demographic variables of gender, age, educational qualification, and experience. The second section contains 72-item statements measuring five specific job facets: present job, present pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and co-workers.

A respondent was required to respond to each item on a 3-point rating scale of Yes; No, and Not sure. Each facet's scores were added together for each respondent to obtain a JDI total score which reflects overall job satisfaction. The higher the score, the more satisfied an individual is considered to be with his or her job.

The test-instrument was validated through a delphi panel of two professional physical and health educators and two academics in educational management. The panelists rated each items on a 4-point modified Likert scale and a combined criterion score of 3.0 was needed for an item to be included in the final questionnaire. The panelists also reconstructed and added to the items to perfect

the validity. Being a standardized test instrument developed over a period of years, its suitability for use in Nigeria and in secondary schools has to be sought. The instrument was confirmed to be valid.

Previous validity on the JDI was established by Balzer, et al. (1997) and Keinde and Ayodabo (2002). Internal consistency was examined through a test-retest trial of four weeks' interval to 10 subjects in 5 schools in one of the LEDs. This yielded a mean reliability co-efficient of .86. This value is within the usual level of the JDI scales (Aiyejuyo, 2004), thus confirming that the instrument is reliable.

Sports performance was measured with the overall school's performance in the Principals' Cup which is a soccer competition among secondary schools in Lagos State. This measure of performance is considered most appropriate as the soccer competition not only cuts across all secondary schools in the state, but is also held annually. It is thus the most popular sports competition in the sporting programme of secondary schools in Lagos State.

For the purpose of this study, performance of schools in the soccer competition between 1997-2000 was used to measure sports performance. Performance was scored as follows: Gold-5; Silver-3; Bronze-2. Results of this competition were retrieved from the organisers (Lagos State Ministry of Education). A cumulative performance score for each LED was therefore computed.

Administration of Instrument

The test instrument was administered to all the 250 sports officers across the 10 schools in each of the 10 LEDs. The administration was through a research assistant in each of the LEDs. These were collected after a three-week interval through the research assistants. A total number of 200 duly completed and returned the questionnaire for a return rate of 80%.

Results

Computation of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of mean JDI scores and sports performance shows that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and sports performance ($r = 0.29$)

The mean JDI scores for the total sample ($x = 203.5$) presented in table 1 shows that sports officers in Lagos State are generally highly satisfied with their job. Supervision ($x = 53.43$) was rated as the highest contributor to overall job satisfaction. Job itself ($x = 53.36$) and co-worker ($x = 50.89$) were also rated as appreciable contributors. Pay ($x = 20.37$) was the least contributor to overall job satisfaction.

The mean scores for different subgroups are also presented in table 1 with relevant statistical test comparisons. The results show significant differences in the overall job satisfaction of the gender, age, and experience subgroups, while there are no significant differences in the educational qualification subgroup.

Male sports officers were significantly more satisfied than their female counterparts ($t = 50.31, p < 0.05$); older sport officers were significantly more satisfied than younger sports officers ($t = 24.94, p < 0.05$); sports officers with more years of experience were significantly more satisfied than those with fewer years of experience ($t = 18.75, p < 0.05$). However sports officers who are

Table 1. Means and t/f Test Comparisons of Job Satisfaction by Subgroups

Job facets	All subjects	Gender		Age		Educational Qualification		Experience	
	N=200	M N= 144	F N = 56	25-35 N=77	36+ N= 123	NCE N = 68	Degree N = 132	1-10 yrs N = 97	11 yrs+ N = 103
Job itself	53.26	52.73	52.36	53.6	50.46	48.68	45.63	28.78	53.26
Pay	20.37	20.30	23.56	20.63	23.75	22.14	20.75	18.29	23.34
Promotion	25.45	25.72	23.23	24.64	26.82	19.27	22.34	20.37	24.48
Supervision	53.43	52.75	43.64	43.20	50.43	45.38	48.26	42.36	53.74
Co-worker	50.89	49.76	42.37	37.65	43.72	44.43	48.39	50.66	40.32
Overall (Total JDI)	203.50	201.26	185.16	179.72	195.18	179.9	185.37	160.46	195.14
t-test at 0.05		50.31*		24.94*		3.70		18.75*	

degree holders were not significantly more satisfied than those with Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) ($t = 3.70, p > 0.05$).

Discussion and Implications

From the result, there is no relationship between job satisfaction and sports performance. This finding supports earlier studies of Keinde (1995), Corbin (2001), Herrera and Lim (2003) and Aiyejuyo (2004) which contended that there was no direct link between job satisfaction and performance. A direct implication of this finding is that performance may not be dependent on job satisfaction.

A probable reason is that performance can only be determined when other factors rather than job satisfaction are involved. Any relationship between performance and job satisfaction may stem from the fact that both are related to a third factor but that the two factors themselves are not directly linked (Kent and Sullivan, 2003). The third factor might not have been considered in this study.

Herrera and Lim (2003) argued that it was impossible for individuals to be satisfied with all the numerous facets of the job; thus difficult to identify what can predict performance. This is reflected in the specific findings of this study that where there was a lower job satisfaction level, performance was relatively higher.

Another interpretation one could give to this finding is that many of those factors that actually influence performance might not have been considered in this study. A generally low satisfaction with some aspects of the job in Nigeria cannot affect performance especially in more professionally oriented occupations (Onifade and Keinde, 2002).

However, this finding contradicts those of McQuaery (1977) and Turner (2001) who found a strong relationship between job satisfaction and performance. They concluded that persons who are pleased with their job tend to be satisfied and work harder than those who are displeased. They contended that the more a person’s need is satisfied on the job, the more likely that he would increase performance.

This study also examined the contributions of job facets to total

satisfaction. Sports officers are more satisfied with job facets of supervision, job itself, and co-workers. These facets were rated higher than promotion and pay. The ratings could be explained by the fact that sports officers enjoy good inter-relationship and have positive feelings towards their immediate supervisors. These supervisors must have given the officers enough freedom to take initiatives thus acknowledging their competence on work.

That sports officers like their job as reflected in their rating of job itself, the second highest contributor to overall satisfaction is not surprising. Their job is reflective of their expertise and this explains why they didn’t even consider their pay and promotion as important contributors to job satisfaction. The findings on the influence of selected demographic variables of sex, age, and experience on the overall job satisfaction support previous studies.

This finding does not support Keinde (1995), Davis (2002) and Aiyejuyo (2004) who found no significant influence of gender on job satisfaction. Instead, it is more in line with what Corbin (2001) and Herrera and Lim (2003) have reported. These two studies found that gender was a significant factor among the variables that determined job satisfaction with the males reflecting significantly higher satisfaction on their jobs than their female counterparts.

The finding could be explained from the fact that male and female sports officers might have been saddled with different responsibilities within the school system. Also, the schools might have considered this as important to ensure higher performance level in the school sports system especially where higher premium is placed on the male’s soccer team.

The finding on the influence of age could be explained by the fact that age is usually considered for duties and responsibilities of sports officers in the school system especially where they have to go out with the students for competitions.

The finding on educational qualification could be explained from the contention of Corbin (2001) that if employees are satisfied with job characteristics of supervision and have positive feelings about interpersonal relationships with colleagues, then no significant influence of this personal variable should be expected

on job satisfaction level.

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