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## Employment Strain and Job Satisfaction in Nigeria: An overview

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### Abstract

Employment strain at work, hierarchical dedication and job satisfaction among employees have, as of late, become the general wonder that specialists are currently eager to contemplate. The quintessence of each organization's work is evolving as it is driven by rapid, creative developments, globalization and monetary interest for improved operational skills. These progressions also benefit both individuals and organizations as they appear to result in increased work pressure and decreased job satisfaction. Based on the assertions therefore, this study examined employment strain and job satisfaction in Nigeria. Employment strain model provided the conceptual framework. The designs were descriptive and exploratory, a qualitative methodology and secondary method of data collection were used to generate information. The study revealed that employment strain has immediate negative impact on job satisfaction. It indicates a conflict of interest between the employer, who wants the employee to work hard, and the employee, who wants the compensation with the minimum effort required. Employment strain has been seen as an antecedent of job satisfaction, which can be induced by work overload, competition, self-esteem and impossible responsibilities; high employment strain has created negative psychological effects (depression), physiological effects (headaches, heart disease) and behavioral effects (absenteeism, substance use) on employees; also a depreciation of job satisfaction will have an effect on the organizational engagement, which will have an impact on the efficiency of their jobs.

**Keywords:** Employment strain, Job satisfaction, Employee, Job dynamics

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### 1.0 Introduction

Employment strain and job satisfaction are significant factors that legitimately influence the results of any organisation. These factors can have either a positive or negative effect on the prosperity and by or large satisfaction of a person. Studies of Job Demand-Control have shown that the control of employees over how work is done and their remaining task at hand legitimately affects wellbeing

and that the cooperation between these two elements has a further effect on wellbeing (Lewchuk, de Wolff and King, 2003). Jobs set apart by low levels of workers' control and high psychosocial exertion consumption seem to subject workers to employment strain. Employment strain tends to result in lower long haul job satisfaction, tiredness, and depression, and stress-related disease. Work portrayed by significant levels of



control and consumption of psychosocial vitality is classified as "Dynamic jobs." "Dynamic jobs" incorporate challenges, opportunities and on-and-off-the-job discovering that can prompt positive wellbeing outcomes (Lewchuk, *et al.* 2003). Control of how work is done is known as giving a shield to workers from the negative wellbeing effects of stress identified with the outstanding task at hand. It provides the open door for individuals to adjust to their needs and circumstances as indicated by their needs (Wall, Jackson, Mullarkey, and Parker, 1996). The relationship between job satisfaction and Employment strain has been recorded in plenty of studies (Spector, 1997; (Rehman, Namra, Zara, Uzma and Ume, 2012; Bemana, Moradi, Ghasemi, Taghari and Ghayoor, 2013). Nonetheless, there is an absence of information on the effects of employment strain and job satisfaction, especially in developing nations such as Nigeria, this is a gap that this study intends to fill by looking at the nexus between employment strain and job satisfaction in Nigeria.

### **1.A brief review of the literature**

The possibility that stress in the working environment has a negative impact on wellbeing is broadly held by the overall population and various theories have been made to understand how the employee and work environment interact to produce tension.

### **2.1 Conceptualisation of terms**

This section's main objective is to review the study-related literature, including the conceptualization of terms.

### **2.2 Employment strain**

Lewchuk *et al.* (2003) bring into the word related wellbeing model the idea of "employment strain" which includes variables such as control and outstanding task at hand Employment Uncertainty,

association or collaborator support for employment relationships and personal support from friends and family. Lewchuk *et al.* (2003) accepted that "employment strain" captures a dimension of work association that has a wellbeing impact that is autonomous of the experience of employees with any working environment, that the vulnerability associated with precarious employment increases stress and conflicts among work and life, increases by and large consideration workers who have not realized how long ahead of time, or even whether they will work each week.

Employment strain is a form of psychosocial stress that occurs in the workplace. One of the most common forms of employment strain, it is characterized by a combination of low salaries, high demands, and low levels of control over things such as raises and paid time off (Steptoe, and Theorell, 2012). Strain at work can be eustress, a positive type of stress, or distress, a negative type of stress (MentalHelp.net, 2019). Employment strain in the workplace has proved to result in poor psychological health, and eventually physical health. It has been a recurring issue for years and affects men and women differently. Examples of positive causes of stress in the workplace include starting a new job and receiving a raise. Both of these situations improve performance. On the negative side, one cause of Employment strain is low salaries (Imbert, 2019).

Low pay causes employment strain due to living expenses. Housing expenses are extremely high, which makes it difficult for minimum wage workers to afford housing. As the minimum wage increases, the cost of living increases as well. The second cause of employment strain comes from excessive workloads. Being exhausted from overworking is a common stressor in the



workplace and can often lead to poor communication between coworkers (Picincu, 2019). A lack of support from employers and employees may also cause strain. Making decisions and participating is a way of support from employers and (World Health Organization, 2019). When experiencing employment strain in the form of distress at work, people are subject to headaches, stomachaches, sleep disturbances, short temper, and difficulty in concentrating. Anxiety, insomnia, high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, and heart disease may occur if strain at work becomes more persistent.

Lewchuk *et al.* (2003) established the thought of "employment strain" as a technique that will take into account the assessment of the effects of customary work relations debasement and the spectrum of precarious employment that is increasing in the work market. While the thought of employment strain is based on precarious employment realities, they perceive that these uncertainties are also experienced by workers in so-called changeless jobs. In all actuality, most jobs called "permanent" never again have all the features of a customary employment relationship.

A 2012 meta-analysis found a positive association between employment strain and coronary heart disease risk (Landsbergis, Dobson, Koutsouras, and Schnall, 2013). A 2015 meta-analysis found a similar association between employment strain and stroke; the association was especially strong for women (Huang, Xu, Hua, Zhu, Liu, Hu, Liu and Xu, 2015). Employment strain has been found to increase the risk of higher blood pressure, but not obesity (Kivimäki, Singh-Manoux, Nyberg, Jokela and Virtanen, 2015).

Men and women respond differently when they are subjected to work conditions

involving stress. A study conducted by Canadian Community Health in 2012 found that women experience a higher degree of jobs than men. It also revealed that women feel that they have a lower degree of influence, but enjoy more coworker support than men do. Since women have lower levels of control at work, they are at higher mental health risks, such as depression and anxiety. Men tend to have higher positions at work due to physical dangers such as heart disease (Institute for Work and Health, 2019).

### **2.3 Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a widely discussed work experience in organizational behaviour. It shall create and indicate the disposition of the employee to his or her job on the basis of a personal evaluation of his or her work and environment. It is the satisfying enthusiasm of an individual that emanates from the appraisal of one's task; it is full of a feeling of response to the job and represents the employee's willingness to work (Franek and Vecera, 2008). Smith, Kendall and Hulin, (1969) saw job satisfaction as the degree to which an employee expresses a positive job direction." Job satisfaction is regularly defined as the nature of working life encountered by the employee and the state that could be advanced by the social responsibility initiatives of the organisation (Chimanikire, Mutandwa, Gadzirayi, Muzondo, and Mutandwa, 2007). Furnham (1992) categorizes variables in three classes that can affect job satisfaction: I. Hierarchical policies and procedures identified with the essence of the compensation plan, the executives, and decision-production processes, and the understanding of supervisory execution. ii. Aspects of the absolute remaining task at hand, the assortment of skills applied, self-governance, criticism and the physical idea



of the workplace iii. Personal aspects such as self-picture, capacity to deal with stress and by and large life satisfaction. Employee satisfaction in some structure, be that as it may, has been associated with variables such as turnover, absenteeism, efficiency, bunch cohesiveness, general cleanliness factors, job reward, work rights, unrest, and execution assessment (Barber, Dunham and Formisano, 1992).

Job dissatisfaction is associated with disparity and usually affects negative actions in the workplace. While most workplaces seek to rehearse the fairness of workers, the observation remains, as well as the truth of the imbalance. As a result of increased job dissatisfaction, there is a reported propensity for inadequate employment, social problems and regular aggression in actions such as retrenchment of the work environment (Kumar, Bakhshi and Rani, 2009). Existing writing shows that job dissatisfaction results from the lack of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Mir, 2012). Mir (2012) further points out that business-related natural characteristics, such as physical working conditions, salaries, job security, standard of supervision and relationships with others, trigger job dissatisfaction. Furthermore, current writing indicates that inability to achieve work-life balance can lead to frustration, fatigue, loss of motivation and, ultimately, job dissatisfaction, and that a person with a lack of work-life balance is at higher risk of general stress and related job strains (Noor, Nilai and Sembilan, 2011).

#### **2.4 Discussion on the Nexus between employment strain and job satisfaction in Nigeria**

The higher prevalence of job strain among Nigerian employees may be due to pressure to meet strict deadlines and to correct decision-making. This makes employees a

priority for job stress management programmes (Ofili, Tobin, Ilombu, Igbinosun and Iniomor, 2014). Employment strain remains a challenging concept to characterize, with researchers utilizing a number of models to illustrate workers' aversive experiences (Watts and Robertson, 2011). Employment Strain is the ambiguous reaction of the body to some negative change or modification request as a result of the work performed. Employment Strain may be physical, emotional, as well as enthusiast; interest may be any combination of business-related dissatisfaction, struggle, pressure, and self-imposed stress. Employment Strain-related work experience is regularly referred to as stressors, whereas stress-related consequences are referred to as stress (Lawrence and Kacmar, 2012).

Employment Strain was also identified as experiencing negative, passionate conditions such as anger, anxiety, nervousness, and depression due to business-related factors (Kyriacou, 2001). The phenomenon of the Employment Strain is very human. Studies show that the individual employment response change depends on stressors and distinctive ecological and personal factors (Iqbal and Kokash, 2011; Jackson and Rothmann, 2006). Most individuals have increased levels of work Pressure tolerance and perform very well despite various natural stressors.

The prevalence of employment strain among employees in the Nigerian labour market may be due to the high demands of their jobs in general. Long changes, overload work, performance pressure and perceived lack of funding for the achievement of organizational goals were sources of employment strain in this research, corroborating the results of the employment strain model proposed by (Lewchuk, *et al*, 2006a), the theoretical framework presented



focuses on employment relationship ambiguity, employment relationship and personal support from friends and family, all in relation to job satisfaction.

### **2.5 Employment relationship uncertainty and job satisfaction**

Uncertainty in the employment relationship involves threats to the possibility of future employment for individuals seeking employment in an organisation, industry or country encountering economic hardship or high unemployment (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, and Van, 1991; Mohr, 2000). Employment relationship uncertainty can, therefore, be stressful for both utilized individuals who can't foresee whether or when they might be laid off (Dunlap, 1994) and jobless individuals who can't anticipate whether or when they will come back to work. Uncertainty in the employment relationship is a subjective encounter that represents the contrast between one's desired degree of assurance and one's expectations of the present place of employment opportunities (Dekker and Schaufeli, 1995). Individuals who are exposed to the same degree of risk or unusualness about the fate of their work may have various interpretations of the potential negative consequences (Heaney, Israel, and House, 1994; Sverke, Hellgren, and Na'swall, 2002).

Employment strains and job satisfaction theories contrast closely with theories that describe human motivation. It is a common place to assess the degree to which workers are unsure or uncertain as to how changes in their workplace cause an employment strain, thus impacting their job satisfaction. Dispositional approach suggests that job satisfaction is closely linked to personality (Judge, Locke, and Durham, 1997). It postulates that a person has a strong predisposition to a certain degree of

satisfaction, and that they remain reasonably consistent and stable over time. Transactional theory on the other hand implies that the employment strain is the direct result of a transaction between a person and their environment that could tax their resources and thus jeopardize their well-being (Lazarus 1986, Lazarus and Folkman 1987).

It also implies that the evaluation of this transaction provides a causal pathway that may better express the essence of the underlying psychological and physiological processes that underpin the overall process and experience of strain (Lazarus, Cohen-Charash, Payne, and Cooper, 2001). In this sense, any part of the work environment can be viewed as a stressor by a person. However, the individual evaluation of demands and capabilities can be affected by a variety of variables, including personality, situational demands, coping skills, previous experience, time lapse, and any existing stress conditions that have already occurred (Prem, Ohly, Kubicek, and Korunka, 2017). As such, the perception of employment strain, based on transactional theory, is correlated with exposure to specific situations in the workplace, and a person's evaluation of difficulties in dealing with them. This experience is typically followed by efforts to deal with the root problem and changes in psychological functioning, behaviour, and work (Aspinwall and Taylor 1997, Guppy and Weatherstone 1997). In order to understand these external and internal elements of the employment strain, Cox (1993) described the causes of employment strain, as the interpretations of these stressors in relation to their ability to cope, the psychological and physiological changes associated with the identification of employment strain, including perceived ability to cope, the effects of coping, and all



the general input that occurs during this process.

Interactional theory emphasize the interaction of the environmental stimuli and the related individual responses as the basis of the employment strain (Lazarus and Launier 1978). For example, the Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) theory claims that work effort is expended as part of a psychological contract, based on the norm of social reciprocity, where work effort is remunerated with incentives and opportunities (Siegrist 1996). Here, the disparity in this contract will lead to employment strain.

### **2.6 Employment relationship effort and job satisfaction**

On the off chance that an employee's effort is costly, it should have an immediate negative impact on job satisfaction. It suggests a conflict of interest between the boss, who wants the worker to work hard, and the employee, who wants the minimal effort of pay. This dispute is the basis for economics writing on the relationship between agents and principals (Hart and Holmstrom 1987; Holmstrom, 1979). There is however, limited strong observational evidence, apart from the earlier research alluded to by Clark and Oswald (1996), that effort is a cost that makes staff less happy. Work satisfaction research, which use engagement as a context, continue to discover a positive effect on job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson, 1994).

The perception of getting a job but not knowing it is safe has been listed as one of the most stressful pressures that an employee can bear. Change is a constant phenomenon in today's workplace; thus, improving employee job satisfaction and efficiency requires consideration of the expectations of change and the provisions of individuals related to change (Kristin,

Bryan, Wm, Kevin, 2014). Uncertainty in the employment relationship can have negative effects on the work environment of workers, including their attitudes and performance. Uncertainty in the employment relationship is a subjective encounter that reflects a contrast between one's desired level of assurance and one's perceptions of the actual position of employment opportunities. Individuals who are subject to the same degree of danger or unusualness regarding the fate of their work may have different perceptions of the possible negative consequences.

Organizational Support Theory argues that workers shape global views of the degree to which their organisation provides sufficient services and supports them as individuals, including the probability that the organization will reward their success and help them in times of uncertainty (Shore and Shore 1995; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Developing a favourable impression on the staff support they receive from their employer would contribute to positive results for both workers and the organization. When workers receive good organizational support, their socio-emotional needs are met and they are likely to report more positive employment behaviours, including job satisfaction.

On the basis of the concept of reciprocity, workers would often want to compensate their organization for the help they earn by taking care of the organization and doing their job well (Blau 1964). However, if workers do not feel valued by their organization, they will withhold efforts (resulting in lower levels of performance) and report more negative job attitudes. Rhoades and Eisenberger's meta-analysis (2002) showed a clear positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction and a positive



relationship between perceived organizational support and job efficiency. The employment strain produced by organizational change is primarily due to perceived uncertainty about changes in the working environment (Rafferty and Griffin 2006).

When coping with transition, workers extract environmental clues to make sense of a case. In this sense, employees' expectations and behaviours are influenced by their awareness of the changing situation and the effect that changes would have on them (Lau and Woodman 1995). Ambiguity or lack of knowledge causes workers to feel ambiguity, frustration or doubt as to what transition means for them (DiFonzo and Bordia 1998). Rafferty and Griffin found that regular and poorly planned changes contribute to higher levels of change-related uncertainty. Indeed, instability is a widely observed state of affairs during organizational change (Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois, and Callan, 2004a). Empirical evidence suggests that ambiguity is negatively correlated with a variety of organizational behaviours, including job satisfaction (Rafferty and Griffin 2006).

### **2.7 Employment relationship support from a union or co-workers and Personal support from friends and family and job satisfaction**

The employment relationship is an important prerequisite for working together in the board of directors and employees' offices. One would not be too glad to even consider going to work consistently if an employee could not coexist with his/her boss or his/her co-workers. The way in which organizational or corporate success regularly depends on the working relationship cannot be ignored (Ramjee, 2018). The worker would be happy to do his/her job in the event that he/she knows that there are co-

employees around to support him/her. It is a fact that job satisfaction benefits from an employment relationship and as such, job satisfaction can have an impact on the nature of the company (Bakotic, 2016).

Organisations that do not have a decent employment relationship will generally have a high turnover in the workforce. In general, individuals and workers will avoid unpleasant environments and seek a superior place to be comfortable and to work calmly. High turnover is always going to hurt company productivity in particular. Job inspiration is not about cash, but it also depends on the workplace. Therefore, in the event that they are confident with each other and that the employment burden does not become a weight when various workers believe they can support each other. It is also the greatest achievement of the business when an employee sees one they found to be their "best companion" at work (Abun, Magallanes and Tabur, 2018).

### **2.8 Employment Strain model**

The "Employment Strain model" (Lewchuk, *et al*, 2006a) is the theoretical model adopted in this paper. This definition is based on several principles of the Karasek "Employment Strain" model. This model is commonly used to analyze how job organization influences well-being outcomes, and how perceptions, controls, and work-by-work outcomes influence well-being outcomes (Karasek 1990). In comparison to the smaller emphasis on the controls identified and the various problems identified with the job organization, the Employment Strain model focuses on the uncertainties, control and support factors affecting the employment relationship itself. The three core indicators of the model are (1) work uncertainty; (2) work-related effort; and (3) union or co-worker support for employment relationships, and friends





and family support. These three measures are what the "Employment Strain" model is alluding to right now.

The accompanying outline presents the core components of the Employment Strain Model and how the employment relationship can influence job satisfaction. The "employment relationship Uncertainty" control component involves uncertainty about future employment, uncertainty about the terms and conditions of future employment, and uncertainty about work schedules. The effort aspect, "Employment Relationship Effort," involves an effort to continue working, shuffling the demands of several employers and various workplaces, and effort to understand that future employment is reliant on the business' continuous appraisal of the behaviour and nature of an employee. The support component alluded to as "Employment Relationship Support" includes support from established organizations such as employers, co-workers, and friends and family at home that an employee receives at work.

### **3.0 Methodology**

This article adopts a qualitative approach to accomplish the goals of this study, and a secondary method of data collection has also been used. This article includes data collected from previous literature on employment strain and job satisfaction. Data from published and unpublished sources including journals, the Internet, etc. are the secondary sources of data. The analysis of relevant literature offered a wide range of scientific reflections and arguments on the article's subject. To this end, the paper is essentially a concept paper that reflects on scholarly perspectives on employment strain and job satisfaction in Nigeria.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

This study's qualitative approach provides an in-depth understanding of employment relationship uncertainty and employment relationship effort experiences among workers and job satisfaction. Employment strains has also been shown in this study as an antecedent of job satisfaction, which can be induced by overloading employment, competition, self-esteem and impossible responsibilities. High employment strains have detrimental psychological effects (depression), physiological effects (headaches, heart disease) and behavioural effects (absenteeism, substance use) etc. on workers.

It also emerged that job satisfaction deflation has an effect on organizational engagement, which ultimately affects work performance and can contribute to labour turnover. Job satisfaction is thus potentially capable of boosting or destroying any company where product quality is primarily dependent on the individual skills and motivations of key staff. This study recommends that the ability of workers to cope with employment strains due to job-related ambiguity in the cause of performing their job can significantly improve their job satisfaction as well as positive individual outcomes such as efficiency.

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