



IMPACT OF DISCIPLINARY MEASURE ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, BIDA

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Abstract

The levels of indiscipline in the public sectors in Nigeria are found to be responsible for low productivity in government's desire to achieve higher living standard for the people. In spite the disciplinary measures taken by the management, however staff irresponsibility still continues to increase. This study examined the impact of disciplinary measures on employees performance in Federal Medical Centre, Bida. A survey research design was adopted and questionnaire with interview were employed to gather the relevant required data. The data collected were analyzed statistically using Pearson correlation, bivariate analysis and regression analysis. It was revealed that demotion, termination of appointment and withholding of financial benefits which are the proxies of independent variable has positive effects on staff conducts in FMC Bida. However, it was revealed that termination of appointment is the most effective disciplinary measure having the highest positive correlation coefficient, hence, the following recommendations were made, and that organization should in the first place make sure new and existing employees are made to understand the culture, policies and norms of the organization. This will make them to be adequately informed of the actions that are regarded as indiscipline act and that the management on its part should avoid practices that could cause rancor and apprehension like favoritism within the organization.

Keywords: *Disciplinary measures, Staff conduct, Favoritism, Training.*

Introduction

The task of management to get work done through and with people remains attainable in any organization through the co-coordinated effort of their disciplined and committed members towards achieving organizational goals and objectives. But in a situation where indiscipline overcomes the affairs or activities of the organization, this leads to disorderliness in which members of an organization conduct themselves without respect to the rules and regulations and subordinating their needs and desires to the overall needs of the organization, then productivity suffers.

Discipline therefore, is essential for the efficient running of an organization; it is the hallmark of respect for agreements between organizational management and staff members. The management must decide on the most appropriate form(s) of sanction in case of offences and breach of established rules and regulations guiding efficient operations of the organization.

In its most general sense, discipline refers to systematic instructions given to a person or an employee either to do or not to do something. In Nigeria, each organization has its own unique way of maintaining discipline within the organization which the health sector is not left out of this. Usually, the phrase 'to discipline' carries a negative connotation. This is because it is an enforcement of an order by ensuring that instructions are carried out. There are common methods of discipline that most organizations use like organizational rules, punishment, and guidance and counseling (Oyaro, 2005). All these methods to some extent have helped the organization to manage discipline problems which directly influences performance. For effective management of discipline, the cooperation between the management team and the employee is very essential. It is the instant willingness and obedience to all orders, respect for authority, self-reliance and teamwork - United States Marine Corps.

The human element in the organization 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. 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). Employees of any organization must reasonably conform to the codes of conduct or behavior established and administered by the organization and its managers so that order is maintained and common goals are accomplished (Smelterlzer, 2006).

Organization systems with high commitment and well-disciplined employees always experience larger output, financial routine, and efficiency than organization with low commitment or poor control systems (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Arthur 1994; Delaney 1996; Huselid 1996, MacDuffie, 1995; Ichniowski, 1997; Wood & de Menezes, 1998; Yond, 1996; Delery 1998).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In modern and large-scale organization be it private or public, a code of conduct for every staff is inevitable, so as to enable them find satisfaction in what they do while maintaining emotional stability. However, the individual employee in an organization has some responsibilities to himself and others because the attitude and feelings of each member of the group does not affect only the degree to which goals and objectives are achieved in organization but also the behavior of other members of the group. Management is therefore concerned with quality of the conduct and discipline of its entire staff. This is achieved through establishment of reasonable standards of conducts and educating the workers on these standards and enforcing them.

Lateness, tardiness and indiscipline of employees have always been a problem for employers from time immemorial. Against this background, no organization can succeed in achieving its set goals and objectives without using disciplinary procedures to curb such an unwanted behavior. In spite the disciplinary measures taken by the management, however staff irresponsibility still continues to increase whether in public or private organizations. This is of particularly important since the levels of indiscipline in the public sectors in Nigeria are found to be responsible for low productivity in government's desire to achieve higher living standard for the people (Adebayo, 2001).

Some observers have identified low morale, apathy, inefficiency and all forms of vices prevalent in the public sector to be linked to a large extend on lack of discipline among workers, which has arisen in part from lack of attention given to disciplinary measures enforced on workers which are done either wrongly or loosely (Adebayo, 2000). Most of the researches on the effects of disciplinary procedures on employees' performance have been done in the private institutions using different disciplinary measures, such as; probation, withholding of financial benefits, demotion and termination of appointment identified to be the major disciplinary measures. However to the best of the knowledge of the researcher, there are little empirical studies that deal with how

these disciplinary actions affects employee commitment in Public institutions in Nigeria. This study sought to fill the existing research gap by conducting and examining the relationship between disciplinary actions and employee commitment in Federal Medical Centre Bida in Niger State.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does suspension without pay as a disciplinary tool affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?
- To what extent does demotion as a disciplinary tool affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?
- To what extent does termination of employment as a disciplinary tool affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?

Research hypotheses:

- H₀: suspension without pay as a disciplinary tool does not affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?
- H₀: demotion as a disciplinary tool does not affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?
- H₀: termination of employment as a disciplinary tool does not affect employee's performance in FMC Bida?

Conceptual Framework

Concept of Discipline

Discipline and disciplinary measures in the public service has for a long time been a subject of discussion among observers, critics and policy analysts that are concerned with discipline. Public servants have been accused of having too much of freedom which allowed them to roam about, while others engage in the marketing of their merchandise. Fayol has emphasized that a sense of discipline should be present in all employees of the organization at all level so that the organization can perform and achieve its objectives in the best possible way.

According to Preston and Zimmerer (1978), discipline is behavior which is in compliance with the agreed upon rules and regulations. It also involves the steps taken by supervisors to correct the undesired actions of employees who violate rules.

Discipline can be defined as action or behavior on the part of the authority in an organization (usually management) aimed at restraining all employees from

behavior that threatens to disrupt the functioning of the organization (Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2007).

Adesina (1990) opines that the purpose of discipline is to create a committee of people who would freely and willingly learn the norms, principles and ways of life of that community.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action is any action taken by the company in response to an unsatisfactory employee performance. The primary objective of discipline is to bring an employee back, when possible, to an acceptable standard of performance and behavior rather than to punish an employee, Mintah (2011).

Disciplinary measure, in its essence, is designed to correct behaviour and to maintain balance in the employment relationship (Grogan, 2009). When undesirable behaviour or actions are noticed in the workplace, it is thus the prerogative of leaders and management to correct this behaviour and establish more acceptable norms or standards than those being corrected (Rao, 2009). Therefore, discipline and its subsequent rules and procedures form an integral part of the employment relationship between employer and employee. But, in order for discipline to be effective and yield its desired results, it needs to be substantially and procedurally fair (Bendix, 2005).

It is thus important that the principle of good practice be applied whenever disciplinary action is instituted on any employee or member of an organization. Good practice, though, is a term that many managers find difficulty with as it is a concept that is, at times difficult to define. "In the context of discipline at work, it is about acting with just cause, using procedures correctly, acting consistently, following the rules of natural justice and many more aspects" (Gennard & Judge, 2005).

The targeted goal achievement is easily achieved if there is good discipline at work. Freedman and Benjamin (2003) emphasized that discipline keeps strategies and vision from becoming an unmet aspiration.

Types of Discipline

There are different types of discipline. It is the specific function discipline performs that determines its type. The following types include; preventive, corrective and progressive discipline.

Preventive Discipline: it is regarded as preventive when organization design and put in place programs or measures that discourage or dissuade organizational members from coming late, absenteeism, redundancy, disobedience to superior officer, insubordination among others. Preventive discipline is meant to prevent violation or deviation.

Corrective Discipline; this form of discipline is an act against violators and nonconformist. It emanates as a result of organizational member flagrant disobedience to what the management frowns at in their rules and regulations or violating standards. Corrective discipline serves two purpose; (i) to reform or discourage further violation by sanctioning the violator and (ii) to prevent future or forestall future reoccurrence of the undesirable behavior among other employees.

Progressive Discipline; it is a disciplinary system that employs the use of higher or stronger penalties for offences that are repeatedly committed. As the offender repeats the same offence, the subsequent penalty increases in severity until it gets to the most severe.

The concept of suspension without pay (Disciplinary Layoffs)

Suspension is the last corrective step in the disciplinary process and is normally preceded by a verbal reprimand and a written reprimand. In a few extremely serious cases, suspension maybe warranted as the initial step in the disciplinary process.

A suspension involves the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace for a specified period of time. The employee may not accrue vacatio and sick leave benefits during this non-working, non-paid priod of time. Again, the purpose of this disciplinary step is to correct the identified problem (Kabandize 2004).

A suspension is the strongest warning to the employee that the problem is, indeed, extremely serious and it is the last chance the employee has to correct the problem, for example, use of alcohol and drugs or similar personality related factors.

The concept of termination of Employment

This is the industrial death sentence. When employees are dismissed both the employees and the organization are hurt. Few employees are discharged because of incompetence. Most causes are related to work habits. Termination

of employment is the final step in the progressive disciplinary process and obviously is not corrective. It is critical that the employee be given an opportunity to hear the charges, understand the evidence and offer an explanation (Kabandize 2004).

The concept of Demotion

This is among the less desirable forms of punishment although it is used occasionally. Demoted employees losing pay over a period of time is along slow form of constant limitation. It causes employee to give up or lose motivation, this becoming disgruntled. Such attitudes and behaviour harm rather than help the organization.

The concept of Employee Performance

An organization consists of an employee who performs actions that should be in sync with the strategic goals of the organization. In theory, if the people within the organization are performing optimally based on the organizational goals, the organization should be a successful one.

Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behavior (Armstrong 2000). Kenney et al. (1992) stated that employee's performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organization. organizations measure performance by analyzing financial and non-financial metrics over time, and against benchmarks and targets to gauge success. There are a number of measures that can be taken into consideration when measuring performance for example using of productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, quality and profitability measures (Ahuja 1992) as briefly explained hereafter. Profitability is the ability to earn profits consistently over a period of time. It is expressed as the ratio of gross profit to sales or return on capital employed (Wood & Stangster 2002). Efficiency and effectiveness - efficiency is the ability to produce the desired outcomes by using as minimal resources as possible while effectiveness is the ability of employees to meet the desired objectives or target (Stoner 1996). Productivity is expressed as a ratio of output to that of input (Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert Jr 1995). It is a measure of how the individual, organization and industry converts input resources into goods and services. The measure of how much output is produced per unit of resources employed (Lipsey 1989). Quality is the characteristic of products or services that bear an ability to satisfy the

stated or implied needs (Kotler & Armstrong 2002). It is increasingly achieving better products and services at a progressively more competitive price (Stoner 1996). The ultimate purpose of measurement is to improve performance. Behn(2003), gives eight reasons for measuring performance; to evaluate, control, budget, motivate, celebrate, promote, learn and to improve performance. Performance measurement enables organizations to assess their progress and identify strengths and problems areas.

Empirical Review

The process of discipline, including how it is given, who enforces it, and the decisions made about it, sets the stage in an organization. The disciplinary process has an effect on the perceptions and behavior of both the employee disciplined and the observers or bystanders in the workforce.

Cooke (2006) studied the effect of disciplinary measures on performance of Nurses. He examined the disciplinary process using case studies in nursing. Interviews were conducted with 144 stakeholders in the discipline process (directors, managers, quality managers, human resource managers, union representatives, disciplined staff nurses or staff nurse observers). The study collected and analyzed 76 disciplinary case studies in nursing and found the following types of outcomes in their findings: “resignation(17), dismissal(12), moved/demoted(9), long term sick leave(9), verbal written warning(8), exoneration/case dropped(5), retraining(4), suicide(1), unresolved/unknown (11)” (Cooke, 2006). Additionally, the researcher found that outcomes were impacted by the way the hearings were conducted and led to 70 high rates of attrition among nurses. Cooke found “no clear evidence” that discipline improved the nurse’s performance and further discussed how the stress on nurses caused them to leave the organization due to “stigma of disciplinary action” (Cooke, 2006). However, Cooke (2006) reported a union representative saying that those in service level jobs feel the support among coworkers when they are disciplined but it is “not the same for nurses” (Cooke, 2006).

Similarly, Rollinson, Handley, Hook, and Foot (1997) study suggested that employees with support of coworkers during corrective action did not feel the same shame and may be more likely to break more rules, especially when no stigma was attached to rule breaking.

Patrick (2015) carried out a research study on workplace discipline: A catalyst for organizational productivity in Nigeria; the objective of the study was to

empirically examine the relationship between workplace discipline and organizational productivity in Nigeria. The methodology employed for the study was cross sectional survey method. The 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 of 225 respondents which were drawn from a total population of 550 employees across the organizations. The study revealed that a high correlation coefficient between workplace discipline and organizational productivity in the organizations that were covered in the south-south region of Nigeria. The result shows that workplace discipline which is often neglected by some management is critical for the success of any going concern. The study recommended that management of organizations should demonstrate high level discipline to attract a reciprocal disciplinary behaviour from all employees. Also supervisors and leaders of organization are tasked to show committed discipline so as to achieve unalloyed loyalty from fellowship at work.

Chris and Saliu (2012) examined the attitudes of workers towards disciplinary actions in business organizations on one hundred and five (105) workers drawn from International Breweries Plc, Ilesha, Nigeria. The research design employed for the study is the survey research design. The study adopted stratified random sampling technique in the selection of the subjects. Fifteen subjects were drawn from each of the seven department of the company. Questionnaire method was used to collect relevant data for the study in which a 5 — point Likert type scale was used and ranges from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). Items 1-10 are positive statements and are scored from 5-1 in that order, while items 11-20 are the reversed (negative) statements of the earlier ones and are scored from 1-5 in that order also.

Copies of questionnaire were administered in each department / unit and the data collected were subjected to t-test statistical analysis. Each of the three hypotheses postulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance and the results showed that: There is no significant difference between workers sex and their attitudes towards disciplinary actions. There is a significant difference between job level and attitude towards disciplinary actions. There is no significant difference between marital status of workers and their attitudes towards disciplinary actions. On the basis of these findings, the study recommended that

employees should be adequately inducted concerning organization policies and rules.

Victor and Maurice (2012) carried out a study on the influence of staff discipline and attitude to work on job satisfaction of Lecturers in tertiary institution in Cross River State. A forty-item four point-Likert survey questionnaire was used for data collection. A total of 400 lecturers (200 males and females) out of a population of over 2,000 were chosen. Four (4) hypotheses were formulated for the study. The data generated was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the study revealed that lecturers who have high, moderate, or low perception of how a staff is disciplined do not differ in their level of job satisfaction. Also, lecturers' attitude towards classroom teaching, lecturers' attitude towards the tasks of disciplining students, lecturers' attitudes towards supervision of instructions and lecturers' attitude towards classroom management do not significantly relate to their job satisfaction. The result of the study showed a significant relationship between lectures recognition and their job satisfaction. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made, *inter-alia*: to ensure appropriate staff discipline there is need for enabling teaching environment to be created. Lecturers should be properly rewarded for their effort through improve conditions of service. In-service training for all lecturers should be made compulsory to enhance their job satisfaction.

This result is supported by the research work of Nwaogu (1980) and Udofot (2005) who opined that whether lecturers are involved in supervising students program may or not does not in any way affect their job satisfaction. The result of their forth hypothesis indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between lecturers recognition and their level job satisfaction. This implies that a lecturer's level of job satisfaction increase as they perceive increase in the level of their recognition. This result is in line with the work of Shama (2000), Nivenberge (2003) and Agba Kwuru (2004) who maintained that when lecturers are recognized and are properly motivated, their behaviour will change positively. They further explained that where lecturers show greater commitment in their job, it means that their efforts are being recognized and motivated too.

Based on the findings of this study, the result revealed that teachers' job satisfaction is not dependent on their level of discipline. Also, their job satisfaction cannot be determined through their attitude towards classroom

teaching. Their job satisfaction is also no dependent on lecturers attitude towards supervision of students program me. In addition, their job satisfaction can be determined through recognition of their person and efforts.

On the basic of the result, the study recommended that a proper disciplinary enforcement mechanism should be set up to ensure compliance to school rules and regulations. This creates a safe and apply environment for job satisfaction and Lecturers attitude to work should be recognized by constituted school authority to enable job performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts The Red-Hot-Stove-theory. The Red-Hot-Stove-theory which comprises of four basic elements is a devise for rational discipline credited to Douglas McGregor, (1967). Heinemann and Hilgart (1977) as cited in Mataimaki (2007). He described the Red-Hot-Stove rule as thus: The rule that draws a comparison between touching a hot stove and experiencing discipline. When once one touches a hot stove, the reaction is immediate and with question of cause and effect

There was warning since everyone knows what happens if one touches a stove when it is hot. The result is consistent; every time a person touches a hot stove, he gets burnt. One gets burnt because of what he/she has done by touching a hot stove, not because of who he is but the act. The comparison between a hot stove and discipline is apparent. Discipline should be directed against the act and not against the person. Following these four basic rules will help the superiors reduce the resentment inherent in the disciplinary actions.

Research Methodology

The study used survey research design, the design was employed due to the fact that the data for the study were collected from the primary sources using questionnaires. The data were collected using a four point Likert scale questionnaire. The population of this study constitutes the entire full time staff of Federal Medical Centre, Bida which is made up of 2,709 personnel (2019 data survey). However, for the fact that all the staff of FMC, Bida cannot be understudied; Taro Yamane formula was employed to select a sample size of 400 staffs that were randomly selected for the study. A total of 360 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned and used for the study. The dataset were extracted from the questionnaire and were subjected to statistical

analysis. The data were analyzed using Pearson correlation, bivariate analysis and regression analysis.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation

	Suspension without pay	Termination of appointment	Staff demotion
Employee performance	.508(**)	.577(**)	.780(**)

Table1 explains the direction and strength of the relationship between all understudy variables. From the table, it is shown that there exists a positive relationship between Suspension without pay and employee performance and the strength of this relationship is 50.8%. Staff demotion and employee performance are related positively and the strength is 57.7%. And the positive correlation between termination of appointment and employee performance is 78% strong. All the relationships are significant at 1% level of significance for two tailed test.

Table2: Regression Analysis

Variables	Constant	Coefficient	R2	T	P-Value	F
Suspension without pay and employee performance	1.052	.582	.501	8.58	.000	33.57
Termination of appointment and employee performance	.385	.833	.404	2.33	.001	54.63
Demotion and employee performance	.266	.867	.760	9.28	.005	86.23

Table 2 provides the results of constant, coefficients, coefficient of determination, T-value and P-value and F test. Constant or y-intercept explains that if independent variable is zero then what will be the value of dependent variable. Coefficient is the slope of regression line and it explains that 1 unit

change in independent variable will bring about much change in dependent variable. The value of Coefficient of determination (R²) explains that how much variation in the dependent variable is explained by the identified independent variable. T-value shows that how the regression model results as a good predictor of the dependent variable. P-value explains the significance of all the coefficients. While F-test shows the total strength of the model.

Hypothesis 1: Effect of Suspension without pay on employee's performance

According to table 2, the regression results show that the value of constant 1.052 explains that if emphasis on Suspension without pay is zero, employee's performance will be 1.052. The value of x in the regression table is .582 that indicates 1% change in predictive variable (Suspension without pay) can change outcome variable (employee's performance) up to 58.2%. Hence, if Suspension without pay is increased by 1%, this will result in increase of employee's level of performance/discipline by 58.2%. This relationship is positive and significant as shown by small p-value. The value of R² is .501 that explains that Suspension without pay accounts for 50.1% variation in employee performance and this can be viewed that there might be other factors that bring variation of 49.9% in the outcome variable (employee's performance). The P-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$) indicates that the null hypothesis will be rejected at 99% confidence interval, and therefore conclude that suspension without pay has significant effect on employee's performance. The T-value for this hypothesis is 8.58 that represents that suspension without pay is good predictor of employee's performance. The value of F-test shows that the model's strength is 33.57.

Hypothesis 2: Effect of Staff Demotion on employee's performance

The results show that the value of constant is .385 that explains if emphasis on Staff demotion is zero, employee's performance will be .385. The value of x in the regression table is .833 that indicates 1% increase in Staff demotion brings 83.3% increase in the level of employees' performance. This relationship is positive and significant. The value of R² is .404 that explains that staff demotion accounts for 40.4 % variation in employee's performance and this can be interpreted as, there might be other factors that bring variation of 59.6 % in the outcome variable (employee's performance). The P-value of 0.001 ($p < 0.01$) indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected and therefore conclude that staff demotion has significant effect on employee's performance. The T-value for

this hypothesis is 2.33 which represent that Staff demotion is a good predictor of employee's performance. The value of F-test shows that the model's strength is 54.63.

Hypothesis 3: Effect of Termination of Appointment on employee's performance

The results show that the value of constant is .266 that explains that if emphasis on termination of appointment is zero, employee's performance will be .266. The value of x in the regression table is .867 that indicates that 1% increase in termination of appointment brings about 86.7% increase in employee's performance. This relationship is positive and significant because p-value is less than 0.01. The value of R² is .760 that explains that termination of employment accounts for 76.0 % variation in performance and this can be viewed as there might be other factors that bring about a variation of 24.0% in the outcome variable (employee's performance). The null hypothesis is also rejected, as the P-value shows that termination of appointment has significant effect on employee's performance. The T-value for this hypothesis is 9.28 that represent Termination of appointment as a very good predictor of employee's performance. The value of F-test shows that the model's strength is 86.23.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, it was found that the major causes of staff indiscipline are: favoritism on the part of managements and heads, lack of proper communication of policies and norms of the organization and lack of good leadership. It was also found that suspension without pay, demotion and termination of appointment has negative influence on the staff indiscipline.

Indiscipline could pose a serious challenge in the productivity and quality of services rendered in an organization. Based on the findings of the study it arrives at the following conclusions:

When management is not seen by employees to be equitable and apply the principle of justices in its dealings with employees, a sense of perceived favouritism will arise which could lead to cases of indiscipline. Again, another factor considered to be a serious contributing factor is when an organization fails to properly inform its employees of the policies and norms of the organization, thus resulting in the breach of those policies.

It is also conclude that, the use of disciplinary measures like suspension without pay, demotion and termination of appointments reduces cases of indiscipline which directly increases performance but this might not be able to reduce cases of apprehension and low morals which on the other hand in the long run are capable of reducing the quality of services provided by the employees.

In line with findings of this study, the study makes the following recommendations:

- i. The organization should in the first place make sure new and existing employees should be made to understand the culture, policies and norms of the organization through training. This will make them to be adequately informed of the actions that are regarded as indiscipline act. The management on its part should avoid practices that could cause rancor and apprehension like favoritism.
- ii. While the use of disciplinary measures like suspension without pay, demotion and termination of appointments could be effective in curtailing cases of indiscipline, this is likely to be effective only in the short time. In the long run, employees could become used to it and find ways of avoiding them. Thus management should employ other diplomatic approaches like sanctions, and non-promotion of the employees in the required time.
- iii. Employees are advised to strictly obey the code of conducts of public civil service as there are dangers in falling victims of disciplinary measures, hence, they should be careful in their day to day official activities.

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