

RE-EVALUATING THE RELEVANCE OF HERZBERG'S MOTIVATION-HYGIENE THEORY TO THE NIGERIAN WORKER: A POLITICAL ECONOMY PERSPECTIVE.

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ABSTRACT

The prevalent socio-economic conditions in Nigeria can be said to be anti-worker. With burgeoning unemployment of even tertiary institution graduates, a scandalously high level of under employment and a dependent peripheral capitalist economy, the worker is left at the mercy of the employer. As a result, employee motivation is ranked low in the employers' priority. This paper employed the political economy framework in examining the relevance or otherwise of hygiene factors in the highly competitive work environment in Nigeria. The study explored primary and secondary sources of data. Structured questionnaire were randomly administered to both teaching and non-teaching staff of the Federal University of Technology Owerri, Imo State in Nigeria with eighty five percent response rate. The data were analyzed, using descriptive statistics. The result showed that majority of the workers (about 60%) view increase in salary as the best way to improve staff welfare. However, 30% of the workers opted for improved office accommodation. The study suggested that in addition to increase in pay which does not only serve as a hygiene factor but also enhances recognition and workers self-esteem, the high level of infrastructural decay within the work environment in Nigeria should be addressed to reduce the incidence of status deflation, low morale, loss of integrity and the attendant lack of motivation among workers in Nigeria.

Keywords: Peripheral, Capitalism, Employment, Motivation, Nigerian Worker, Exploitation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a dependent peripheral capitalist country. As a result of the despoliation of the colonial enterprise, the productive forces in Nigeria have remained largely rudimentary and at the level of subsistence. Also, the selective location of the paraphernalia of colonial government, the various colonial trading and missionary posts with attendant infrastructural facilities affected residential patterns in Nigeria by dichotomizing them into rural and urban categories. While the latter is characterized by the availability of electricity, pipe-borne water, schools, macadamized roads and industries, the former is bereft of basic amenities. The stage was thus set for massive rural urban migration of mostly youthful population in search of real or imagined 'greener pastures'. This led to the collapse of the rural economy and neglect of agriculture which until the discovery of crude oil in the 1960s was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. (Perchonok 1994).

Thus in spite of her abundant human and natural resources, Nigeria remains a poor country with 70% of her population living below poverty line in both rural and urban areas (Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke 2003:6) Anikpo (1984:36) opines that the rural/urban dichotomy in Nigeria is not only similar

to the metropole/ periphery relationship which obtains at the international sphere but that the former is an integral part of the latter. The impact of a dependent peripheral economy manifests in poor growth rate, high level of inflation and external debt, poor policy enunciation and implementation and political instability. The colonial experience also disarticulated the Nigerian economy to the extent that little or no linkages exist between the various sectors of the economy and even the various regions of the country. Also, colonial urbanization turned Nigerian urban centers from areas of production of goods and services into areas of mercantilism and consumption of goods and services produced in the West and dumped on these urban centres of the South. This was achieved by directing production away from the initial aim of fulfilling the local needs of these Southern urban centres and their rural neighborhood. Rather local production was focused on assuaging the need for raw materials by the industries in the metropolitan capitals of Europe. Thus commercial agriculture of such cash crops as palm produce, cocoa and cotton was introduced to service industries in Europe. (Ake 1981, Perchonok, 1994). This is in line with the observation made by Perchonok (1994:111) that

The industries (in Nigeria) were decimated as a result of deliberate colonial policies. For instance cotton producers were prevented from selling their cotton in the local market and were forced to sell it to agents of British firms. Tin smelters on the Jos plateau were prohibited from smelting tin – they could only mine the ore and sell it to expatriate companies.

The introduction of commercial agriculture disrupted the mostly small holder and communal land ownership pattern prevalent in Africa and Nigeria in particular. It also turned many Nigerians who were before now involved in subsistent farming into a mass of unemployed youth, men and women seeking employment with the Christian missionaries, European trading companies or the government. Thus the rudimentary and subsistent levels of the productive forces in Nigeria have made the public sector, the single largest employer of labour. On the other hand, the private sector is weak and dominated by multinational corporations (MNCs). It is pertinent to note that these MNCs are part of structures put in place by the colonialists at the end of the era of colonial empires to continue the exploitation of human and natural resources in the colonies. The MNCs have not helped in the transfer of production technology to their host countries despite such high hopes nursed as the aftermath of political independence. Despite the large number of Nigerians who depend on paid employment for livelihood, MNCs in Nigeria are characterized by contract staffing, wages that are so low that they do not represent the long work hours. These MNCs are averse to trade unionism aimed at equitable regulation of the work environment. In addition, government regulations and policies regarding expatriate quota, taxation and quality control for instance are flouted with impunity. Since the quintessential motive of MNCs is to maximize profit and repatriate same to their metropolitan headquarters, minimal investment in personnel and infrastructure required to keep the profit high is made by these MNCs. As a result, employee motivation ranks low in the employer's priority. This is more so in a poor, dependent, peripheral capitalist economy like Nigeria where too many workers can be said to be chasing too few employment opportunities. This is not only ironic but also contradictory in the sense that capitalism is all about optimal utilization of the productive forces in order to maximize profit. It is in the light of this seeming contradiction in theory and praxis that this paper critically re-examines the relevance of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to the Nigerian worker.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature relevant to the subject matter will be reviewed as they relate to the productive forces in Nigeria, the Nigerian worker, what actually constitutes motivation and how these concepts relate to and affect one another.

2.1 THE PRODUCTIVE FORCES

It has been said that the productive forces in Nigeria are rudimentary and at best sustain production at the level of subsistence. In order to appreciate the relevance of the productive forces within a given society, it must be understood that production is the basis for the existence of human societies. Thus the political economy paradigm posits that in order to sustain life, all human societies have to produce such basic necessities of life as food, clothing and shelter. This production involves the action of man on nature. This action consists in the union of labour, objects of labour and means of labour. Labour refers to those conscious human activities on nature with the aim of satisfying his needs. Objects of labour are those things in nature to which man applies his labour. A typical example is the earth's surface on which man cultivates crops for food. Extractive resources such as coal and crude oil are processed by man in the production of food, clothing, shelter and other necessities for human survival. The means of labour refer to those 'tools' employed by man to enhance or exploit the objects of labour. It is in this stead that they are also referred to as the instruments or implements of labour. Man's earliest instruments of labour are stone, axe, bow and arrow. The number and range of the instruments of labour increased in sequence with human evolution as the acquisition of bipedalism freed the hands and enhanced the use of tools. Today the instruments of labour include machines of various sizes and uses, various manufacturing installations and chemicals. A combination of the means and objects of labour make up the means of production. Left on their own, the means of production can produce nothing. They have to be put into operation by people. When people employ their competence in production to harness the means of production, this combination is known as the productive forces. The level of a society's productive forces indicates the degree of their control over nature. (Ryndina et al 1980:9-10).

The productive forces form only one aspect of social production and do not, on their own determine the level of productivity. The other aspect of social production which combines with the productive forces to determine productivity is the social relations of production. The industrial revolution of 18th century Europe socialized production and commodified labour. That is to say, unlike the guild system where production was family based and a product could be started and finished within the household, industrial production introduced complexities in the division of labour. This engendered property relationships between workers and the owners of the means of production. While the workers generally referred to as the proletariat do not own the means of production, they commodify their labour for livelihood. On the other hand, the owners of the means of production, known as the bourgeoisie do not engage in production but appropriate more than a fair share of the profit that accrues from production. These relationships which people enter into with each other in the course of production are referred to as the social relations of production. These relationships enhance or impede productivity, and have a direct bearing on the level of worker motivation in a particular work situations or organization.

2.2 MOTIVATION

A major difficulty in the study of motivation remains the lack of consensus on its definition. Brown (1961;24) expresses this difficulty thus 'the ubiquity of the concept of motivation is nevertheless surprising when we consider that its meaning is often scandalously vague... We thus find ourselves in the position of trying to deal with an allegedly vital factor in the face of violent disagreements as

to its origins, its essential nature and its particular roles as a behavioral determinant' While some definitions emphasize internal features that can be said to be phenomenological and /or physiological others stress functional processes involved in motivation such as energizing or directing the individual or group (Kleinginna and Kleinginna 1980) It is in this vein that Ryan and Deci (2000:54) opine that 'to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated.' The concept of motivation also implies that energy is involved to activate the individual to a level that enables or facilitates the performance or enactment of the appropriate behavior. Motivation is also assumed to be selective or directional. Thus the same quantum of motivation is not expected to drive or activate equal response tendencies in all individuals.. Rather it drives or energises particular behavioral responses peculiar to the situation an individual may find himself at the moment. Motivation also involves the ability to retain a particular line of action in the form of persistent behavior in time in order that the sustenance of the action will enhance the actualization of set goals in spite of real or imagined obstacles. (Jung 1978)

2.2.1 INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

For a better elucidation and attendant understanding of Herzberg's two factor theory it is necessary to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when an individual decides to undertake a particular action for the satisfaction derivable from the action itself rather than an attached instrumental value. On the other hand, in extrinsic motivation, the individual is compelled into action by the anticipated reward or sanction that either action or inactivity begets. Benabou & Tirole (2003:490) refer to intrinsic motivation as "the individual's desire to perform the task for its own sake". The focus of intrinsic motivation is accomplishment, development, personal satisfaction and self-esteem while extrinsic motivation is contingent on rewards. Extrinsic motivation emphasizes control while intrinsic motivation encourages autonomy. Ryan & Deci (2000) have expressed the view that extrinsic rewards do undermine intrinsic motivation because the reward shifts people's perception of the locus of causality from the internal to the external. "Not only tangible rewards, but also threats, deadlines, directives, and competition pressure diminish intrinsic motivation... on the other hand, choice and the opportunity for self-direction appear to enhance intrinsic motivation"(Ryan & Deci 2000;59) Extrinsic motivation can be delineated according to their levels or degrees of autonomy or self-determination. The least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is known as external regulation. Such actions are carried out to assuage external demand or obtain rewards that are externally imposed, and they have external perceived locus of causality, thus making individuals experience such externally regulated behavior as alienated and/or controlled. Task performance is completely controlled by the envisaged rewards and/ or punishments. A typical example is the "carrot and stick" type of motivation prevalent in the marketing departments of the Nigerian Banking Industry where the marketer's ability to meet set targets determine how rapidly the marketer is promoted. Conversely, the inability to attain the set target may lead to severe sanctions if not loss of job. The second in the line of less autonomous extrinsic motivation is introjected regulation. Introjection refers to internal regulation based on the actors perception of external pressure on the basis of pride, avoidance of guilt, or ego enhancement. For example, a cultist in a Nigerian university may not derive internal satisfaction from his cult activities, but is "pressured" by the guilt or shame he will feel if he let his cult peer group down. He therefore continues in his activities because of external influence. This type of behavior is characterized by external perceived locus of causality. Regulation through identification is a more autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. It is to a large extent, self-determined. Here, an individual

identifies with the personal importance of an action or behavior and accepts its regulation as his/her own. We can extend our Nigerian university student example to a non-cultist who cultivates the habit of regular usage of the library because he sees it as a means to achieving academic excellence. The student values academic excellence as the reason for his presence in the university community. Lastly, the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation. When identified, regulations are fully assimilated to the self and integration occurs. It is in this vein that Ryan & Deci (2000:64) opine that

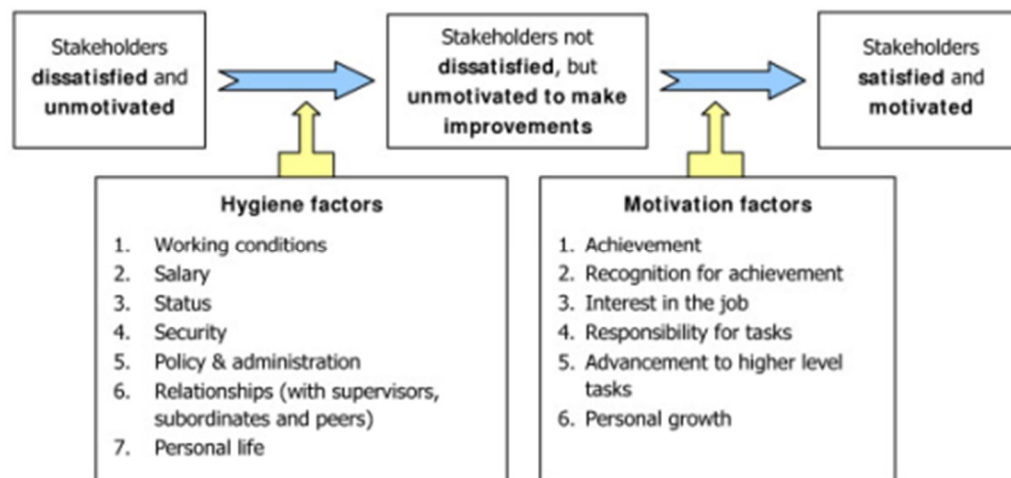
The more one internalizes the reasons for an action and assimilates them to self, the more one's extrinsically motivated actions become self-determined. Integrated forms of motivation share many qualities with intrinsic motivation being both autonomous and un -conflicted.

However, it must be noted that despite being volitional and valued, self-integrated forms of motivation remain extrinsic because motivation borne out of integrated regulation remains compelled by the anticipated instrumental value separate from the act or behavior.

2.3 HERZBERG'S MOTIVATION-HYGIENE THEORY

This theory has been variously referred to as the motivation-maintenance theory and the two-factor theory. It got popular as a result of original research conducted by Frederick Herzberg, a Psychologist who theorized that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction act independently of each other. The theory was developed from data collected by Herzberg from interviews with two hundred and three accountants and engineers in Pittsburgh, United States of America U.S.A. Herzberg's methodology in the study was unique. He did not use the usual objective questionnaire type of research method in developing his theory. Rather he asked people to describe in detail, situations when they felt exceptionally good or bad about their jobs. In other words, he wanted employees to recall those work situations which caused them high or low morale. Specific questions were asked about the situation and the effect the experience had on the employee over a period of time. From the analysis of the interviews, Herzberg found that job characteristics related to what an individual does, that is, the nature of the work he performs have the capacity to gratify such needs as achievement, competence, status, personal worth and self realization thus making him happy and satisfied. However, the absence of such gratifying job characteristics does not appear dissatisfaction is the outcome of such unfavourable job related factors as company policies, supervision, and technical problems salary, interpersonal relations on the job and work conditions. The theory thus distinguished between;

- (a). Motivation that give positive satisfaction, arising from intrinsic conditions of the job itself such as recognition, achievement or personal growth (eg challenging work, recognition, responsibility) and
- (b) Hygiene factors that do not give positive satisfaction, though dissatisfaction results from their absence. (eg status, job security, salary, fringe benefits, work conditions) These are extrinsic to the work itself and include aspects such as company policies, supervisory practices or wages/salary, while hygiene factors are needed to ensure that employees are not dissatisfied, motivation factors are needed to motivate an employee to higher performance. This is illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Roles of hygiene and motivation factors according to Herzberg's Theory of Motivation.

Source: www.openi.nlm.nih.gov/faq

Herzberg also classified worker actions and how and why such actions are taken. For instance if a worker performs work related action because he has to, then that is classified as “movement”, but if the worker performs a work related action because he wants to their it is classified as “motivation” (Herzberg 1966).

2.4 THE NIGERIAN WORKER

The historical role of the working class with regard to the ability of this group of people to initiate progressive action aimed at changing the status quo for a better tomorrow has remained controversial. The Marxist view which portrays the proletariat as the revolutionary class in capitalist societies received a boost in Lenin’s conception of this class as the pre-eminent element in a revolutionary alliance with the poorest strata of the peasantry. In the same vein, Mao viewed the working class as the leadership cadre whose input is crucial in mobilizing the oppressed peasants into revolutionary action. (Sandbrook and Cohen 1975:1).

Fanon however doubts the revolutionary potentials of the proletariat in Africa. He assigns the potential to initiate revolutionary change to the peasants who in comparison to the proletariat suffer more exploitation in the hands of colonial and neocolonial forces. In Fanon’s assessment, the proletariat who enjoy paid employment will find it difficult to engage in any struggle aimed at changing the status quo. On the other hand, the peasants whom Fanon refer to as the ‘wretched of the earth’ are so impoverished that their only hope for a better tomorrow devoid of all the indignities of exploitation is through revolutionary action (Fanon 1963:86). These views about the capability of the working class to take rational action geared towards improving their conditions are germane today, as in the past and border on the political consciousness of the workers. The distinctive factor which transforms a docile work force into aggressive agitation for improved work conditions is therefore their level of awareness of their situation as paid labourers. This awareness is explained through Marx’s distinction between ‘class in itself’ and ‘class for itself’. Class in itself refers to a category of people whose social, political but especially economic situations in life are to a large extent determined by their common relation to the means of production. Members of this

category are however unaware of their common relation to the means of production. As a result, they are unable to locate the source of their misery. Therefore, they are unable to take action aimed at changing their situation for better. For instance, though the most universal characteristic of the underdeveloped countries is their poverty and consequent low standard of living, it is doubtful if the poverty stricken people of these underdeveloped countries have a universal view of the source of their misery. On the other hand, class for itself refers to a category of people who have a common relation to the means of production, that are aware of their position, thus organize themselves in active pursuit of their individual and collective pursuits.

The working class in Nigeria has degenerated below Fanon's assessment of the proletariat as a group that enjoys paid employment. In the face of massive unemployment and scandalously high level of underemployment which have impoverished the working class, the Nigerian worker is cowed into submitting to dehumanizing work conditions. In the private sector, some MNCs have banned trade unions. The workers are traumatized psychologically and in some cases physically brutalized by expatriate employers. It is ironic that in the face of the indignities of exploitation and brutalization the working class in Nigeria has remained docile. This docility is symbolized by the contract staff syndrome which surreptitiously crept into the Nigerian labour market a few years back but has blossomed to "acceptable" levels presently. Contract staffs are employees whose recruitment and stay on the job are dependent on specific jobs or duties that they are recruited to perform. They are laid off at the end of that contract. That is to say that it is not tenure appointment. They are therefore eased out of their jobs without terminal and other benefits, despite unfavourable work hours that exceed the stipulated eight hours in a day.

In Nigeria, most banks, construction and oil companies have embraced casualization as a way of cutting cost, securing cheap labour, reducing commitment to and expenditure on human capital development while maximizing profit. This is in spite of the fact that casualization is illegal in Nigeria. As a means of getting around this illegality these banks and oil MNCs engage the services of outsourcing companies which are mostly owned by top bank executives and/or the banks. The outsourcing companies take advantage of the parlous economic situation in Nigeria leading to paucity of employment opportunities, to exploit young graduates. The remuneration of the contract staff is fixed by these outsourcing companies. In addition to collecting ten percent of whatever the employer pays the contract staff, the outsourcing companies also short change the contract staff by paying them less than what is negotiated between the outsourcing company and those that engage their services for each staff. In order that the contract staff may not protest the dehumanizing treatment meted out to them, the outsourcing companies and the management of banks and oil MNCs ensure that contract staff are not eligible to engage in trade union activities. As a result these casual workers have no job security as they fall prey of staff rationalization or downsizing. (Adesuyan 2007, Adetokun, 2012).

It is indicative of the low morale, lack of commitment and conspicuous absence of motivation under which contract staff operate that whenever there is fraud in the banks, these casual staff are suspected first. Going by Herzberg's two-factor theory, casualization or contract staffing in Nigeria fails to gratify such needs as achievement, status, personal worth and self-realization that are prerequisite to making the worker happy and satisfied. It is also pertinent to note that such job related factors as company policy, salary and work conditions are unfavourable to the contract staff. This can be seen as the absence of both motivation and hygiene factors. The workers therefore perform work related actions because they have to and not as a result of motivation.

Adetokun (2012) and Hamilton (2006) are of the view that the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria make job seekers accept jobs whose terms are dehumanizing while employers of labour

especially in the labour intensive construction industry employ contract staff as strategy to maximize profit.

The public sector is not left out of this brazen exploitation of workers. With the increased spate of privatization of public enterprises engendered by the deregulation of the economy, the attendant staff rationalization has threatened job security even in the public sector. Also, welfare packages hitherto enjoyed by workers in the public sector are withdrawn as part of deregulation. Perhaps as a result of these anomalies, there is a general low morale among the working class in Nigeria, leading to the numerous trade disputes that have characterized the Nigerian economy in the past five years. For instance, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), embarked on a prolonged strike of about six months in 2003 over improved funding of education in Nigeria. Other Unions agitating for improved work conditions include the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) and the Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANU) to mention but a few. The most glaring indicator of the low level of productivity is the fact that warehouses in Nigeria have become more lucrative as churches in the absence of goods. In a manner of speaking, instead of housing 'wares' they now house 'spirituality'.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHOD.

To collect primary data, a survey of both teaching and non teaching staff of the Federal University of Technology Owerri was conducted. One hundred and twenty structured questionnaires were administered on staff randomly selected from the University library, Office of the Registrar, the Directorate of General Studies, Schools of Science, Agriculture and Engineering of the University. The response rate was eighty five percent. Secondary sources of data were also used.

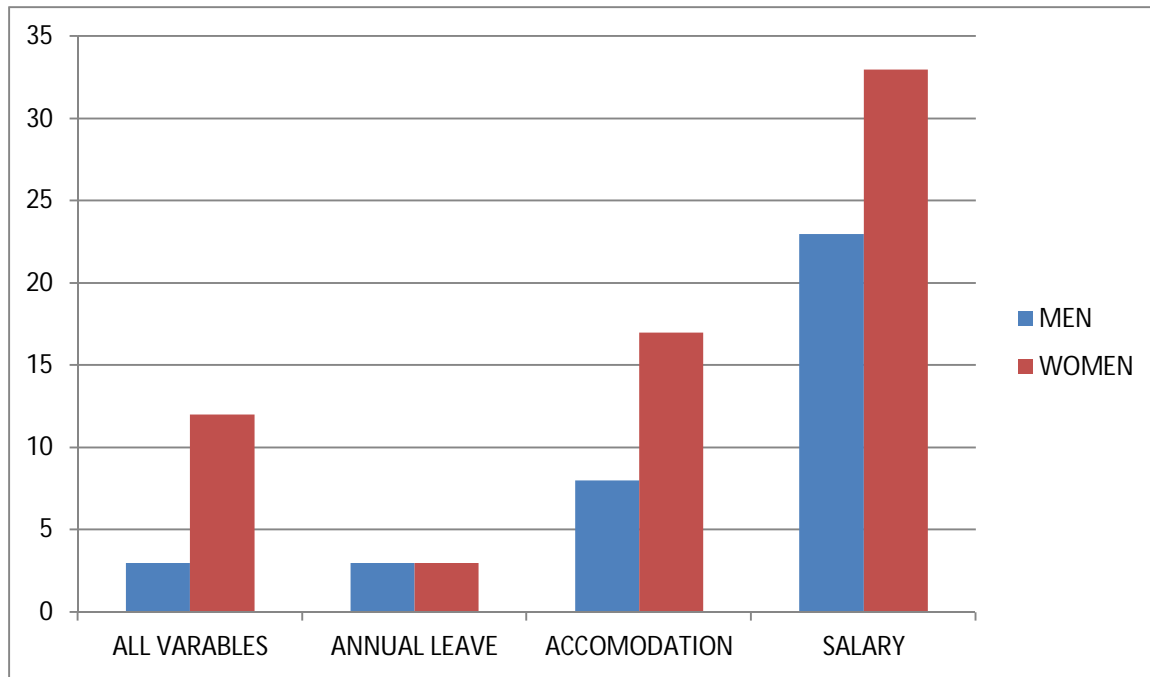
3.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC

In the analysis of data collected, such descriptive statistics as frequency distribution was used to represent the socio – economic characteristics of the sample. These were further presented in percentages and bar charts for better elucidation.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Majority of the workers (55%) viewed increase in salary as the best way to improve staff welfare. Some workers (24.5%) considered improved office accommodation as an incentive capable of improving staff welfare. Yet another group of workers (6%) prefer increased annual leave as a way of improving staff welfare. However 15% of the sample population is of the view that a combination of improvement in all the study variables, that is, salary, office accommodation and annual leave will be the best approach to improving staff welfare as shown in figure 2 below. The survey also showed that all but 3% of the respondents have such extended family dependents as aged parents, uncles, in-laws and siblings. This could be seen as an explanation of the respondents' inclination to monetary incentive as improvement of staff welfare. This is in spite of the poor state of office accommodation in the school as indicated by

Figure 2. Respondents Suggestion on Areas to Improve Staff Welfare.



Source: Study field survey, 2014.

the survey. The results of the survey show that 43% of the respondents considered available office accommodation, ‘BAD’ while 39% considered it, ‘FAIR’. Only 15% of the respondents considered the office accommodation, ‘GOOD’. In a different vein, only 10% of the respondents assessed their salary as ‘BAD’, while 26% considered it ‘GOOD’. As shown in table 1. As presented in figure 2 above, preferences for salary, office accommodation and annual leave as means of improving staff welfare did not indicate significant gender bias. As stated earlier, 6% of the respondents preferred increased annual leave as improvement on staff welfare. 3% of these were male while the other 3% were female. Also, of the 55% that opted for increase in salary, 23% were male while 33% were female. However, there is observed bias in rank. While majority of the senior and junior staff (44% senior and 10% junior) preferred increase in salary as improvement in staff welfare, no junior staff considered improved office accommodation. The 24.5% that took that decision were all senior staff.

Table 1. Assessment of Key Study Variables by Respondents.

	EXCELLENT		GOOD		FAIR		BAD		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
Accommodation	-	2 (1.9%)	6 (5.8%)	10 (9.8%)	18 (17.6)	22 (21.5%)	20 (19.6%)	24 (23.5%)	(n=102)
Salary	-	-	9 (8.8%)	19 (18.6%)	28 (27.4%)	36 (35.2%)	3 (2.9%)	7 (6.8%)	(n=102)

Source: Study field survey 2014.

5.0 CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that Herzberg's hygiene factor theory of motivation has informed increased attention given by employers of labour to improving the work situation. It has also provided room for creativity, self-actualization and fulfillment of higher order needs by workers. However, this study verifies the view that the factor of pay or salary is seen as important and ranked high among Nigerian workers. Thus pay is a source of dissatisfaction when it is low. On the other hand, high salary or pay can serve not only as a hygiene factor but also as a means of recognition which enhances workers self-esteem. In this way, it is also a satisfier. This is more so in a peripheral dependent economy like Nigeria where the productive forces have remained largely underdeveloped and the MNCs dominate the private sector. Perhaps this is why the reforms carried out in the Nigerian civil service over the years have focused mainly on increase in salary with little attention to infrastructure and equipment within the work environment.

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