

Full Length Research Paper

Staff welfare and productivity in Patani local government council, Delta State Nigeria

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The paper examined staff welfare and organization's productivity, using Patani Local Government Council in Delta State, Nigeria as a reference. The methodology was primarily qualitative and involved use of In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) to secure information from employees at the Council. Motivational models and conflict theory of Dahrendorf were used as the theoretical framework. The theory presupposes social changes as an inevitable outcome of activities of societal elements, typified in the contrasting positions of the management and employees that could retard motivation and employee performance. Data revealed general awareness about staff welfare among the employees and ability to identify the elements of welfare. There was absence of staff welfare in the council. The working environment was poor, in terms of office accommodation and furniture, paucity of working materials, scarcely available monetary incentives and unreliable health and safety facilities, which altogether reduce morale (job satisfaction) and efficiency in job performance. In recommendation, pragmatic efforts should be made to enhance employee's job capabilities through training; to improve working conditions of the employees and their general welfare in order to elicit job satisfaction and motivation for increased productivity.

Key words: Welfare, employees, motivation, productivity, Patani, job satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Welfare is a corporate attitude or commitment reflected in the expressed care for employees at all levels, underpinning their work and the environment in which it is performed (Cowling and Mailer, 1992). Specifically, Coventry and Barker (1988) assert that staff welfare includes providing social club and sports facilities as appropriate, supervising staff and works' canteens, running sick clubs and savings schemes; dealing with superannuation, pension funds and leave grants, making loans on hardship cases; arranging legal aid and giving advice on personal problems; making long service grants; providing assistance to staff transferred to another area and providing fringe benefits (such as payment during sickness, luncheon vouchers and other indirect

advantages).

Productivity, on the other hand, means goods and services produced in a specified period of time in relation to the resources utilized (Singh, 2009). It is, however, contended by Cohen et al (1995) to be more than a narrow economic measure, as it also measures how well the group performs its required tasks to satisfy its customers inside and outside the organization. In effect, productivity suggests effectiveness and efficiency of the employees.

Apparently, there are some scholarly works on staff welfare and productivity (Owusu-Acheaw, 2010; Osterman, 2010; Singh, 2009; Cowling and Mailer, 1992; Coventry and Barker, 1988), but they mostly dwelt on industrial settings to the neglect of service organizations typified in government ministries and parastatals. There is therefore the need to extend frontiers in knowledge on the aforementioned theme that this study focused on staff welfare and productivity, using Patani Local Government Council in Delta State Nigeria as references. Specifically, the study enquired into: (a) awareness of staff welfare components of staff welfare in the study area; (b) the

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existence of staff welfare in the study area and (c) the perceived effect of staff welfare on performance (productivity) in the study area.

The author suspects that most Local Government Councils in Nigeria are performing below set standard. The suspicion derives from the observed poor road networks in most of the 774 Local Government Areas in Nigeria; the inadequate state of health facilities (both in physical structure and equipment); the deteriorated state of school buildings (with walls noticeably cracked and the roofs destroyed) and furniture (table, desks and boards); absence of government-owned recreational facilities; little or no encouragement for increased agriculture productivity via timely provision of agricultural additives (fertilizers, improved seedlings, cassava cuttings) and agricultural loans: no visible effort to reduce the prevalent high rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria through job creations among others. The author argues that the below standard performance is a function of ineptitude of the management (local government officials) and a depressed staff morale owing to neglected attention to the welfare services of staff.

Research problem

Delay in the payment of worker's salaries could result to apathy that might hinder efficiency in work performance. It could lead to embarrassing circumstances typified in inability to pay rent and concomitant quarrel with landlord/caretaker; inability to pay for the schooling of his ward(s); poor dietary intake that might result to malnourishment; inaccessibility to adequate medicare; inability to meet with maturing social and financial obligations. The foregoing could eventually culminate into disaffection between the employee concerned and his/her employer, with consequences for poor attitude to work (low morale) and low productivity.

Other benefits that the employee is entitled to in the form of leave allowance, transport, housing, overtime allowance, traveling allowances, Christmas bonus and so on, though not legally binding on the Organization as they are not covered by the Trade Dispute Acts of Nigeria, enhance psychological satisfaction of the employees. Denial of such benefits to employees, especially when it is traditional when there is precedence for the organization to give them could adversely affect. Closely related to this is the employees' right to enjoy health and safety and the right to be managed fairly, which Cowling and Mailer (1992) argue to be within the framework for welfare. Specifically, the right of employees to health and safety at work is one of the basic principles of the labour code (<http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/doing-business-responsibly/keepi>) such that when the health and safety of employees are not assured they apparently become "instruments of production". This prima facie suggests that the well-being of the employees is of little

importance to the organization and recognition of which could make them perceive self-actualization within the organization an illusion, with implications for decline in morale and productivity. Morale according to Mitchell (1978) is job satisfaction, which is, attitude dealing with one's overall feeling toward his or her job. There is no gain saying that the employees have an inalienable right to be managed fairly, except if under slavery. There are no pretences that several instances of industrial conflict arise from management's indifference to the working conditions of the union (employees). The popular need to maximize profit for the organization, subsumed under 'strong management philosophy', which is a subterranean justification to minimize expenditure including welfare of employees is relative. Curven (1974) argued that managers if left to their own devices will want to maximize their own welfare through a desire to maximize their salaries, their leisure or their progress up through the firm. This might not deviate remarkably from that of the officials in Patani Local Government Council in Delta State Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

Quality of Work Life (QWL), epitomized in staff welfare, is the degree to which the employees are able to satisfy important personal need through their experiences in the organization (Singh, 2009). It involves physical, mental, moral and emotional well-being of the employee (Aswathappa, 2004), conceptualized by Singh (2009) as occupational health which together with suitable working time and appropriate salary increase motivation and satisfaction.

Singh's positive correlation of working time and salary with productivity is doubtful. He generalized on what is rather sometimes the case, as if it is always the case. Gray and Starke (1988) argued that in spite of the assumption of the Hawthorne experiment that a positive work environment makes for an increased productivity, there is a proviso. There are intervening variables that include task and technology, individual group, organizational and environmental factors. Explicitly, if tasks to be performed are poorly designed, production will be low; if an individual's abilities with respect to the task are low; high motivation cannot lead to high productivity; informal groups within formal structures moderate compliance of their group members to task needs, in order to achieve group (employees' personal) needs; the existence of interactive entities (customers, clients, middle management etc) influence speed in the organization task performance. Correspondingly Trist and Bamford (1951), using the Longwall Shift Cycle method of coal-getting in a coalmine (which was a socio-technical system adjudged to be excellent as it had intrinsic good work practices), observed that it resulted rather to a decline in productivity. It neglected considerations for the

employees' needs, which are aspects of welfare.

In some organizations, job behaviours have a more direct relationship to rewards than in others (Gray and Starke, 1988), due perhaps, as argued by Gannon (1979) and Reynolds (1971) to the employees' needs (such as urgent need for money to meet certain obligations or the absence of this) and the comparison of his reward with that of his colleagues that perform similar task. The relativity of pay (salary and bonuses) in task performance has also been observed by other scholars such as Kohn and Schooler (1969), who observed that, as social class increases, the need for money declines. Similarly, Lawler (1971) asserts that the importance of pay decreases with age and it is more important to males than females. A part explanation to Lawler's findings is that younger persons have comparatively numerous needs to pursue than their elderly counterparts, so also with the males especially as they traditionally assume headship of their homes. Nevertheless, Mckersie and Hunter (1973) found that in comparison with American and Japanese industries, labour productivity in Britain was anywhere between one-half and one third, due to low remuneration (in Britain) amongst other reasons. This is a quintessence of a direct relationship between reward and productivity, which exists in several other articles.

Occupational health as highlighted by Singh (2009) and Aswathappa (2004) amongst other scholars is inextricable from welfare, especially when the latter is perceived in the words of Cowling and Mailer (1992) as '...the support that can reasonably be expected by employees from their employer'. It appears a truism that the absence of health and safety at workplace makes the employees easy victims of occupational hazards that could depress morale and productivity. It is therefore, obligatory on employers by law to provide a safe workplace for employees (Cole, 1996) to increase efficiency and productivity of workers (Nwachukwu, 2007) and to guard against a possible accusation of negligence arising from injuries to employees (Okereke, 2007). It has been observed, however, that the relationship between safe workplace and increased productivity of workers is not direct, as was earlier put in this paper in respect of positive work environment and productivity. An interviewing variable, the authors argue in the form of motivation, could be identified. Mitchell (1978) points that there is consensus amongst most theorists that '*ability to work*' goes hand in glove with '*motivation*' to produce performance, as ability of the employees to do the job does not mean that they would do it.

Most managers have recognized the vital role job satisfaction (satisfaction of members of the organization) plays on productivity (Cohen, Fink, Gadon and Willitts, 1995; Mitchell, 1978), but job satisfaction and motivation whichever that precedes the other is akin to the riddle of the 'egg and chicken', which one that comes first. According to Ibbetson and Whitmore (1977), several researches suggest that people must find their work

satisfying in order to be motivated to do a satisfactory job. This contrasts with the wisdom of the foremost theorists on management and productivity.

Theory X of McGregor (Upton, 2001; Ibbetson and Whitmore, 1977) conceives an average worker as naturally lazy, hates work and might avoid work such that he has to be motivated through monetary incentives for increased productivity or negatively sanctioned (coerced, threatened with punishment) for poor task performance. In criticism, the thesis lacked hindsight of the influence of job satisfaction on production. It portrayed the employee as an 'economic man', whose motivation was attributed to a single phenomenon (money) and has therefore been faulted by Gray and Starke (1988) as "gross oversimplification of human motivation' with the orchestrated emphasis on money as a motivator widely criticized by scholars that include Lawler (1971) and Kohn and Schooler (1969). Yet, McGregor's Theory X is widely applied by several managers. It has been observed that employees in most organizations in Nigeria are denied wages or experience cuts in wages or threats thereunto for poor job performance (due to reasons that include inability to submit returns within specified timelines).

McGregor's Theory Y, on the other hand, assumes that people at work can be self-motivated (Ibbetson and Whitmore, 1977) as motivation is the basis for commitment to duty and is relative to environment (Upton, 2001). In support, Maslow (Cole, 2002) highlighted on a hierarchy of five needs (physiological, safety, esteem, social and self-actualization) each of which can motivate a worker towards increased output, depending on his circumstance at a particular point in time. Piven (2007) classified needs into existence, relatedness and growth in contrast to Maslow. Correspondingly, however, the 'existence needs' are in tandem with Maslow's lower level (physiological, safety and esteem needs) 'relatedness needs' are Maslow's social needs, while 'Growth needs' are Maslow's high-level needs (self-actualization or self fulfillment needs).

The constituents of the environment determine the level of productivity. Typically, Patterson et al. (2004) found that company production was more strongly correlated with those aspects of climate that had stronger satisfaction loadings. Invariably, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are intrinsic features of the climate/environment. According to Shafritz and Russell (2001), Herzberg argued that positive elements (the 'satisfiers') are job content factors such as a sense of achievement, recognition, interest in the work itself and advancement. Conversely, the 'dissatisfiers' or 'hygiene factors' are associated with the workers relation to the environment in which he performs his task, such as the company policies, ineffective administration among others. The balance between satisfaction and dissatisfaction determines the level of motivation the worker obtains. Herzberg's work suggested that the addition of motivators will lead to greater employee job

satisfaction (Gray and Starke, 1988), but Mitchell (1978) argues that numerous reviews of literature show that performance (productivity) are only weakly related and that very little evidence exists that satisfaction causes increased productivity. Accordingly, many people can be excited with a high remuneration, interpersonally pleasant job and yet lack the requisite skill for effective job performance. In brief, there should be an adequate blend of ability to do a work, job satisfaction and motivation for a satisfactory job performance. Consistently, Gray and Starke (1988) explain that satisfying an individual does not automatically lead to job motivation, but could make the employee to remain with the organization and to exhibit job behaviours that are indicative of job motivation.

Conflict theory of Ralph Dahrendorf

According to Ritzer (2000), conflict theorists are oriented toward the study of social structures and institutions. Dahrendorf and Simmel who were ardent proponents of the social conflict theory had opined that every society at every point in time was subject to processes of change. For them, many societal elements contribute to disintegration and change, but orderliness is maintained through power.

Dahrendorf was the major exponent of two faces of society (conflict and consensus) and the need for sociological theory to be split into two, namely conflict theory and consensus theory. He, however, constructed a single theory 'conflict theory of society' and argues that 'the differential distributing of authority invariably becomes the determining factor of systematic social conflict'. Naturally, the management and workers are often antagonistic to each other. The management through a strong management philosophy seeks to maximize profit (financial resources); to maintain the status-quo; to minimize the organization's expenses on running cost including wage bill etc. The workers, on the other hand, through Union Power make attempts to extricate themselves from a relative deplorable and oppressed state. The conflict is pursuit of incompatible goals for which one party gains at the expense of the other (Barelsion and Steiner, 1985) and an opposition that may not break out into open dispute or physical violence (Sanderson, 1989). The effect, however, of these contrasting positions in Patani Local Government Council depresses motivation and productivity in the Council.

METHODS

Patani Local Government Council is in Patani Town, Delta State. It is along the coastal region of the Niger Delta Area, between Longitude 60 to 6°23'E of the Greenwich Meridian and Latitude 5°6' to 5°21'N of the Equator. The Local Government is bound at the North by Ndokwa East, Bomadi at the South, Ughelli North at the West, and then Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State

at the East. The Local government was created on October 1, 1996 out of Bomadi Local Government by the Former President of Nigeria General Sani Abacha. The indigenous language of the people is Ijaw. Transportation is done through the use of cars, buses, motorcycles and boats/canoe, while the major economic activities are fishing, farming and petty trading. The study concentrated on welfare and productivity of workers in Patani Local Government Council of Delta State, Nigeria.

The study area was purposively selected mainly due to the following: (a) It is in the Niger Delta, which is a crises-ridden region in Nigeria; (b) It is typically Ijaw, which is the tribe notable for the crises in the Niger Delta; (c) To explore extent of crises in the Niger Delta, beyond oil. It has been observed that the furore of Niger Delta crises is traced to oil drilling in the area. In the civil service (particularly in local government activities) would accusation and counter accusation of activity and be laid on oil companies. The practical significance of this study is that Niger Delta should meticulously consider the role of certain endogenous factors in their emergent socio-economic and environmental problems.

The target population is the entire members of Staff of Patani Local Government Council ranging from the most Senior Management Staff to the most junior staff in the Council the total population of which is 554 as at 2009 (Patani Local Government Council, Updated Register of June, 2009).

The survey population was 80 (consisting of 72 junior staff involved in FGD and 8 senior staff used as key informants in the IDI. The sample was considered adequate due to constraints in time, finance and insufficient field assistants (fieldwork done by the authors) for an extensive study of all staff in the Council.

In-depth interviews (IDIs) and Focus group discussions (FGDs) (IDI/FGD Guide) were used to obtain information from staff. Six FGDs were held, consisting of 12 staff in each. Prior to the research, the staffs were informed through a letter about the research and the need for them to be physically present for a discussion. They were grouped into six and the discussion held during the recreation period. The selection was without any bias for gender or educational status. The responses were recorded verbatim and transcribed where necessary for better understanding. This was supplemented with IDIs with the key informants who were purposively selected by the researchers for their vast knowledge on staff welfare and productivity in the Council. The interview was conducted in a manner that enhanced validity and reliability of the methods and findings respectively.

RESULTS

Awareness of staff welfare and components of welfare

With respect to Question 1 in the FGD Guide: "Have you heard about staff welfare?", all the discussants both in the FGD and IDI affirmed having heard about staff welfare. The response gave fillip to enquiry into the factors that constitute welfare to the workers at Patani Local Government Council. (Question 2: What issues or factors comprise staff welfare?). Several factors were highlighted by the discussants. In the words of few of the discussants: Staff welfare includes training such as seminars, workshops, in-service training, on-the-job training and scholarships. (FGD, female, age, 40years).

It is the right of workers as stipulated in the Local Government staff regulation to have free medical treatment including members of their immediate family at

a Government Hospital or Health Centre. In case any staff spends his/her money in such treatments, the bill is forwarded to management for refund (FGD, male, age 46 years).

Furthermore, staff are supposed to be protected against hazards and external aggressors from within and outside the host communities of the staff. By this workers will have a sense of commitment to work without fear of intimidation especially at this period of militancy and unrest in the Niger Delta Area (IDI, female, age 43 years).

Some discussants argued on monetary allowances as integral aspects of staff welfare. As expressed by some discussants:

Members of staff are entitled to certain benefits/allowances such as 28 days hotel accommodation, packing, overtime and traveling allowances. The 28 days hotel accommodation allowance is meant for any staff who is on transfer from another station/council to any Local Government Council. It is assumed that any staff who is on transfer to a new Local Government, on first arrival has to lodge in an hotel for the first 28 days before securing accommodation, hence the Council to which that person is transferred, is duty bound to pay for such hotel bills. The amount to be paid is however dependent on the Grade level, Cadre or Rank of the officer concerned (FGD, female, age 52 years).

A follow-up to this is the packing allowance which is also meant for newly transferred officers. Council is also responsible for the amount used in packing the luggage and properties of any staff who is newly transferred to it from the former station (FGD, male, age 47 years).

There is consensus amongst most discussants that money is the major purpose for work and is a source of motivation. In the words of some of the discussants:

Good salaries/remunerations is the best welfare package any organization can give to its workers. When salaries are high/okay, workers tend to put in their best and when the reverse is the case, productivity is bound to be low (FGD, female, age 25 years).

If salary in-advance is granted to a staff who is in financial difficulty that staff automatically, will have a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction in the work place and will always love to work for the Council (FGD, male, age 31 years).

Granting of financial assistance by council to workers who are about to marry, organize burials and other ceremonies or activities that concern them will boost their morale to work efficiently (FDG, male, age 41 years).

Retirement benefits and pensions should be paid to retired workers who have served the commission diligently. The payment of such benefits to already

retired workers will motivate those still in service to work well, with the feeling that at least when they retire too, they will not face any stress at old age (FGD, male, age 57 years).

Paradoxically, the existence of convenience was seen as an integral aspect of welfare. In the words of a discussant:

Urinals, lavatories and waste disposal facilities both at the offices and residential quarters make life easy and meaningful for workers (FGD, female, age 29 years).

Closely related to this are recreational facilities. As summarized by a key informant:

Recreational facilities such as sporting facilities, staff club and other facilities of relaxation constitute welfare. After every day's work, members of staff need to relax their brains and body so as to appear refreshed for the next day's work especially on weekends. The absence of these leisure facilities could result to labour turnover and non-chalance to work, that can reduce productivity (IDI, female, age 33 years).

Against the foregoing on awareness of staff welfare and components of welfare, Question 3 (In your opinion, does staff welfare exist in Patani Local Government Council?) probed into the existence of staff welfare in the council.

Existence of staff welfare in Patani Local Government Council

There is consensus amongst both discussants and key informants on the non-existence of staff welfare in Patani Local Government Council. Some of their views are thus expressed: There is no staff welfare programme in Patani Local Government Council (FGD, male, age 32 years). staff welfare? No where! The Government/Top management officials do not believe that workers should breath (FGD, male, age 39 years).

The issue of staff welfare has been a major source of discontent in the Local Government Council. It does not exist. Workers suffer endlessly as their welfare is largely neglected (IDI, Male, NULGE Secretary, age 30 years).

The above responses made imperative Question 4 (What is/are the factor(s) responsible for the non-existence of welfare schemes in the council?). The views of most discussants were summarized by a discussant as thus: It is selfishness on the part of the management. They have no regard for the junior workers, whether they are alive or not (FGD, Male, age 46 years).

Staff welfare and productivity in Patani Local Government Council of Delta State, Nigeria

The twin concepts of welfare and productivity are seen to

be intertwined and very difficult to divorce, as one leads to the other. Question 5 enquired into the opinion of discussants on the effect of staff welfare on performance (productivity). In the words of a discussant:

Staff training in terms of seminars, workshops, in-service training, on-the-job training and scholarships has been a mirage to us. Since my employment as a Higher Executive Officer in the year 2001 till date, I have been hearing of such, but has not seen or even taken part in such schemes. This to me is a major cause of inefficiency because workers are not trained and exposed to any modern working technique (FGD, male, age 31 years).

Consequent upon the above response, probes were made into the possible reason(s) for absence of staff welfare. (What is/are the reason(s) for the absence of staff welfare in the council?). There is consensus amongst both the discussants and key informants on the reluctance of the management of the Council to spend money in the development of the Council. In the words of some discussants:

Patani Local Government has been the worst I have ever seen in terms of accommodation in the whole Delta State. I have worked in almost all the Councils in the State, but have not seen any Council that could not provide offices for its workers, let alone residential accommodation. Let us forget about residence, let us talk or pray that they provide offices and furniture for us so that we can do our job well (FGD, male, age 53 years).

Workers buy working materials themselves especially the watch nights and labourers. We have cried severally for the provision of working materials, but all to no avail (FGD, male, age 26 years).

The foregoing emphases on poor working conditions at the Council eventually gave fillip to probes into accessibility of the employees to monetary incentives. (Question 6: To what extent does the Council assist employees (staff) financially, whether in terms of salary, bonuses or other forms of financial assistance?). The views of some of the discussants are given below.

The salaries are too meager. Hence we can hardly feed and pay tuition fees of our children; take care of other responsibilities as health, transport, accommodation and lots more (FGD, male, age 42 years).

Salary advance? Ha! A people or management who could not pay us our normal salaries as at when due. How do you expect them to pay or grant salaries in advance to staff? For me I don't even think in that direction. Imagine, they said the Chairman of Council placed a ban on it. Something meant to assist workers who are in difficulty (FGD,

female, age, 46years).

Financial assistance to workers is also facing same ban as salary advance. So we need not talk about it at all. It is an illusion that we hope will come to pass one day. (FGD, male, age 51 years).

Though I am not retired yet, but from observations those who are retired spend years pursuing their retirement benefits. Some even die in the process. The issue of godfatherism and nepotism too play a major role as to when a person gets his/her benefits (FGD, male, age 58 years).

Correspondingly, there is consensus amongst all the discussants that allowances (traveling, packing, 28days hotel accommodation, over-time and others) appear to be the exclusive reserve for political office holders. As surmised by a discussant:

Allowances! For political office holders? Yes. But for career civil servants? No. Since I joined this job right from Bomadi Local Government from which Patani Local Government was created till today, I have not seen any civil servant being paid allowances, except may be the Heads of Departments. In fact, if this is not addressed promptly, we will have to leave the job for the Politicians and HOD's to do (FGD, female, age 51 years).

In terms of protection against occupational hazards, Question 7 enquired into the health and safety of the employees (What do you say about health and safety that is, protection of staff against occupational hazards?). Some views of the discussants are expressed below:

Our health matters are left to us to handle. Management/Council does not feel concerned as far as our health issues are involved (FGD, female, age 26 years).

We are like chicks exposed to the hawk, without protection. Anybody from any where can come into the Council and molest a staff without the Council taking any drastic step to deal with such person (IDI, male, age 46years).

One needs to be very careful not to be incapacitated or die in the course of performing his/her duties or while in active service or else your children and loved one's behind will live to regret ever having their parents as civil servants because nothing will be done to assist them (IDI, female, age 30years).

Since 1996 we have cried for staff canteen to be built. In mid 2007 our dream came through, but as we speak now, the canteen is still non-functional. In fact, it has now been allotted to Delta State Ministry of Works for official use. Our hopes are again dashed (FGD, female, age 48 years).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There is a general awareness amongst discussants about staff welfare. The components of staff welfare

identified by the discussants included training, free medical treatment, protection against occupational hazards, provision of traveling allowances, monetary incentives, recreational facilities and convenience. Consistently, Cowling and Mailer (1992) and Coventry and Barker (1988) have pointed that welfare is a resume of a corporate attitude or commitment to the care of their employees. Yet, it is largely neglected in Patani Local Government Council, due greatly to selfishness on the part of management of the Council. Curwen (1974) argues that the managers if left to their devices will want to maximize their own welfare.

Data show that staff training is strange to workers at the Council. This is worrisome in light of its possible negative effect on employee productivity. Staff development policies and training programmes enhance employee capabilities and efficiency (website <http://ajol.info/index.php/glj/article/view/33975>) as they are designed to ensure that employees acquire sound technical know how (internet:<http://www.atmltdonline.com/staffwelfareandtraining.aspx>). The absence of staff training apparently results to mediocrity and poor job performance. This becomes complicated with the existing poor working environment revealed by data, in terms of inadequate office accommodation, furniture and insufficient working materials that could reduce morale or job satisfaction. Correspondingly, the provision of an enabling work environment serves as catalyst for productive human resources (website:<http://www.atmltdonline.com/staffwelfareandtraining.aspx>).

Data reveal absence of protection against occupation hazards (health and safety facilities), for which the discussants said they would not be committed to duty. Nwachukwu (2007) reiterates that to induce workers towards efficiency and high productivity, the employer must ensure that the environment in which employees work must be free/safe from hazard. According to Cowling and Mailer (1992), the right to enjoy health and safety is within the frame work of welfare. Similarly, the right of employees to health and safety at work is one of the basic principles of the Labour Code (internet:<http://ec.europa.eu/your.europe/business/doing-business-responsibly/keepi>) and negligence of which prima facie suggests the expediency for a limit in commitment to a job and an increase in risk of easy exposure to occupational hazards. Most discussants decried the absence of monetary incentives to meet their social and financial obligations. Some scholars (Gannon, 1979; Reynolds, 1971; Lawler, 1971) have contended that money as a motivator for increased productivity is relative. In contrast, McGregor's Theory X (Ibbetson and Whitmore, 1997) argues that monetary incentives motivate workers towards increased productivity, in support to the views of the discussants at the Council. Although low productivity (performance) amongst the

workers was not visibly pronounced by the discussants, it was obviously embedded in their lamentations over the absence of notable elements of staff welfare at the Council. Consistently, Starlake and Grant (1999) argued that most state sector monopolies are unlikely to achieve productive efficiency.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings the following conclusions were made: There was general awareness about staff welfare amongst employees at the Patani Local Government Council. The components of Staff welfare included training, free medical treatment, protection against occupational hazards, provision of recreational facilities and convenience. Staff welfare was grossly neglected at the council. The working environment was poor in terms of office accommodation and furniture, working materials, monetary incentives and reliable health and safety facilities. Morale or job satisfaction was low among the employees which could result to low productivity (performance).

In recommendation, pragmatic efforts should be made to enhance employee job capabilities through training; to improve working conditions of the employees and their general welfare in order to elicit job satisfaction and motivation for increased productivity (performance).

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