

Opinion Article

Motivation as a Strategy for Overcoming Work Challenges on Women in Nigeria

Comfort Seki Alagoa (Ph.D)

Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State Nigeria.

E-Mail-Sekialagoa@Yahoo.Com. +2348023244387, +2348066675316

ABSTRACT: *Women face all types of challenges as workers, wives and as mothers, so would need motivation to overcome the challenges. Motivation theory of Expectancy of the Process theory is appropriate for this paper, so that there would be a possibility of reconciling work and family life for women. They should on seat the proverbial saying that there is a glass ceiling which is the societal prejudice against women which prevents even the best of women from getting to the peak of their career. Employers of labour should be encouraged to have where under aged children can be kept while women workers focus on their duties and also in giving learning opportunities to the women.*

Keywords: *Challenges, motivation, overcoming, strategy, work*

I. INTRODUCTION

The term motivation is derived from the Latin word *movere* meaning “to move”. It can be broadly defined as the force acting on or within a person that causes the arousal, direction and persistence of goal-directed, voluntary effort [1]. [2] stated that it is commonly believed that women’s duties are taking care of children and domestic work while men have their separate areas of influence which includes work and the outside world. However, that this traditional gender ideology is a curial determinant of working mothers which increases their challenges. In contributing, [3] stated that since the pre-colonial period, Nigerian women have been and are still engaged in diverse traditional economic activities, which are usually based on a division of labour that is rooted in a patriarchal tradition of male superiority and female inferiority. Women are exposed to conflicting expectations that arise because they occupy two positions simultaneously. The role of women in Nigeria has already changed drastically for the better as they are now pilots, educationists, company executives, and administrative heads in different spheres including banking and telecommunication services making tremendous contributions in each of the sector. These are the ones that have broken the so called “glass ceiling” to get to where they are. This is possible for women who are motivated positively to overcome challenges segregated to them. The motivation theory of Expectancy of the Process theory is much suitable for the topic. The paper would highlight the topic in two parts (i) the family and (ii) the work place.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this paper would be based on the theories of motivation. [4] stated that the theories can be categorized into Need and Process where Need emphasized internal and external process experienced by the individual. The Process theories are derived from belief that motivation is a rational cognitive process which is internal to the individual. The Expectancy theory by Victor H. Vroom and the Goal-Setting theory by Edwin Locks are appropriate for this paper since Goal-Setting affects the motivation of employees. This is so because to achieve challenging goals for workers they need specific performance goals that are more effective than those which they are told to “do your best”. The Goal-Setting theory is challenging and difficult to accomplish since a particular task may not be achievable. The researcher would use the Expectancy theory as illustrated below.

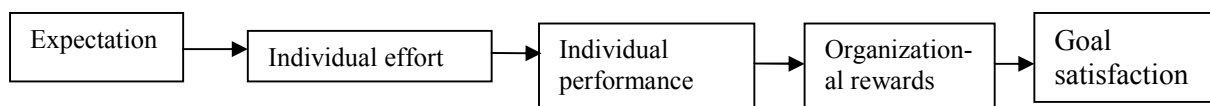


Figure 1: The Expectancy Theory Model

Source: Appi, S.S.N. (1998) [5]

There are three factors in this theory

The individual's ability to perform based on a conceived idea

The individual's performance

An attractive reward that satisfies the individual

This is a perception from the individual that performance will be rewarded or punished that would result in performance [6]. In practical terms, the expectancy theory has a relationship with motivation as a strategy for overcoming work challenges on women because the women who are working are expecting their pay, pay raise with promotions and other incentives as organizational rewards after putting in their best effort and performances. The goal satisfaction is when the worker is satisfied with the outcome.

III. CHALLENGES FROM THE FAMILY

[7] expressed that in an environment where there is need to deliver quality service and when there is a high level of competitive pressures on the weight of the employees are enormous. This comes with a lot of challenges and huge price as families, organizations and social lives are impacted in the process. There are more educated women who are in paid employment who provide family needs. The patriarchal society has made the burden heavier on working women where the husbands refused to help out with the house hold duties. This is one of the factors that subject working women serious stress affecting their motivational commitment as workers. Women put more time and energy to work with the imbalance of work and family in order to provide for their children and families, particularly single parents or divorcees according to [7]. Furthermore, the length of time as well as level of commitment that women workers put in to work is being affected adversely as stress from taking care of their children or wards, including social pressure impinge on their level of commitment. Married

women find it difficult to maintain work and household chores equilibrium because of increased responsibility. Parenthood adversely affects women than men as most of them cannot work late hours or overtime so that they can spend time with their families. The women have responsibilities of childbearing, rearing, cooking, home care and sometimes caring for elderly parents or in-laws.

3.1 Challenges from Work Place

Working men are usually given unfair advantage compares to working women since the society is male dominated. Men are considered more hard working, intelligent and better employees than women. Women are also sometimes been harassed by men colleagues and bosses at work. This goes beyond the single workers to the married women as the men take advantage of their challenges as home keepers and workers as they absent themselves due to caring for their families especially when someone is sick. Employers are supposed to provide places according to [8] so that women workers with under aged children especially those children still breastfeeding during work periods can safely keep their children. It is also stated that employers avoid married women still in their reproductive years as much as possible. Where the woman is the best alternative, conditions are attached to the job offer such as avoiding getting pregnant for at least two years from the start of the job. The women are also confronted with problems of achieving their career prospects of getting to the top which they ought not to get to according to the society. They should not get to the top of most positions termed the glass ceiling because their official duties would conflict with their family roles which is supposed to be their primary responsibilities. For this reason, their merited positions in the office are denied them. The unmarried women's condition is even more precarious. They are deemed to be irresponsible to handle certain positions. All these are against the International Labour Organization (ILO) of 1995 conference paragraph 6 of 1975 in discriminating against women workers on grounds of marital status, age and family responsibilities [9].

3.2 Remedies

Family: There should be support from family members to women workers for them to achieve their goals. The women should be highly motivated to stick to their daily plans by getting hired house helps, friends or family members to assist with household duties.

Work: The idea of motivation in managing people as well as making them committed to work principally has to do with how people are offered incentives and inspired to perform better in order to actualized the goals of such organization. A lot of management practitioners have identified this by offering incentives called the carrot and stick principles. In an effort to manage especially women workers in an organization according to [7] these are some items to be done - job safety, rewarding merit, job improvement/promotion, training and development, shared and distributed leadership, horizontal communication, collective involvement and bargaining, child support and occupational therapy. [3] stated that these would make women workers who do most of the juggling to ensure that there is limited rift between work roles and family roles to ascertain a balance between family time and work time.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

When women workers go to work their main aim is to train their children, see to the needs of the family and to excel at their work. The challenges of women workers can be minimized if the government would ask Town Planners to consider putting crèches, schools, health clinics, banks and markets nearby to office blocks or housing estates. Employers of labour can play a significant role in motivating their employees by attending some educational conferences or undergo educational programmes on how best to manage their workers especially women. The employees also should be given learning opportunities to enhance

their skills which can be used as retention policy for the organization. The modern world of automated teller machine (ATM) have made banking easier for women workers especially to carry on with their daily duties as daughters, sisters, wives and as mothers.

V. CONCLUSION

There should be individual commitment to work by women workers as the consequence would impact negatively on the organization. This entail women workers to be highly motivated as the Expectancy theory stated to achieve and accomplish a set task. This would help in overcoming work challenges as women workers in the society.

REFERENCES

- [1]Barnet,T., Motivation and motivation theory, motivation and motivation theory level, system,2016. model-www.referencefer business.com.Retrieved 2/5/2016.
- [2]Modi C., and Ojo S.I., Work life practices in the banking sector: insights from Nigeria, *Ifè Psychologia*, 19 (2),2011, 285-295.
- [3]Ajayi M.P., Work-family balance among women in selected banks in Lagos state, Nigeria, Doctoral diss., Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria, 2013.
- [4]Alagoa C.S., Evaluation of the determinants of students opting for the National Open University of Nigeria, Doctoral diss., Abia State University, Uturu, Abia State, Nigeria, 2012.
- [5]Appi S.S.N., Environmental factors, location, human, school plans and job satisfaction of principals in four L.G.A is of Bayelsa and Rivers State. Post graduate diploma diss., Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, 1998.
- [6]Wikipedia, Motivation, the free encyclopedia, en-wikipedia. org/wiki/ motivation, 2016.Retrieved 2/5/2016.
- [7]Nwagbara U. and Akanji B.O., The impact of work-life balance on the commitment and motivation of Nigeria women employees, *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Science*,2(3),2012,38-45.
- [8]Nnorom C.C.P., Women in Nigeria formal sector: challenge and coping strategies, the 2nd International Conference of the National Association of Women Academics (NAWACS), University of Abuja, September 2000.
- [9]International Labour Organization (ILO), ABC of women workers rights and gender equality (ILO, Geneva, 2007).