

Employees' Needs and Compensation Strategies in the Ministry of Public Service, Uganda.

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Abstract. The paper analyzed the prepotency of needs and reward valence of employees in the Uganda's Ministry of Public Service. Specifically, the study aimed at determining the influence of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, that is; physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs esteem-needs and self – actualization needs on reward valence of the employees of the Ministry of Public Service in Uganda, comparing if there was a significant difference between male and female respondents as to: extent of prepotency of needs and level of reward valence; and establishing if there was a significant relationship between prepotency of needs and level of reward valence. Standardized - Self-Administered Questionnaires by Reasoner (1976) (SAQs) together with a Research Devised Questionnaire were utilized for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution to determine the demographic characteristics of all respondents of the study while the mean and standard deviations were used in determining the extent of prepotency of needs and level of reward valence. An item analysis was used to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses based on the indicators in terms of mean and rank. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized to test the difference between means of hypothesis one (Ho#1) at 0.05 level of significance. A multiple correlation co-efficient to test the hypothesis (Ho#2) at 0.05 level of significance using a t-test was employed. The regression analysis R² (coefficient of determination) was computed to determine the influence of the dependent variable on the independent variable. The study revealed that there was influence of; physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs esteem needs and self-actualization on reward valence was satisfactorily meant for both the male and female respondents. From the findings, it was concluded that the employees' physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs and self – actualization needs were fairly met in the Ministry of Public Service, Uganda. The study recommended that the government should set up policies and guidelines to identify and meet the needs of employees; find ways of rewarding employees by enhancing their salaries, allowances and other motivational strategies. All these should be gender sensitive.

Keywords: Prepotency of Needs, and Reward Valence of Employees

1. Introduction

Public service is a service which is provided by government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing provision of services. Globally public services are seen as so important that for moral reason there universal provisions should be guaranteed. In modern democracies public service is often performed by employee known as civil servants who are hired by elected officials, government agencies are not profit oriented and their employees are motivated differently. Public workers tend to make less in wages when adjusting for education although that difference is reduced when benefits and hours are included. Public workers have other intangible benefits such as increased job security. The public service may involve outputs that are hard to attribute to specific individual efforts and or hard to measure in terms of key characteristics such as quality, they often require high levels of training and education. They may attract people with the public service ethos who wish to give too give something to the wider public or community through their work McGregor (1982).

Typically, civil services perform three man roles in relation to the private sector as an agent of the state overseeing regulations and rules, as an operator of a wide range of public services, and as administering authority of macro-economic framework that is expected to provide a supportive environment for economic growth and social stability The first role is regulatory, the second is operational, and the third facilitating. All add up to the functions of the civil service as an enabler for private sector development It is the second of these roles that most often breeds direct competition and, in some ways conflicts, between the civil service and the private sector The civil service exercises a range of options in seeking to fulfill this role. It can deliver the service directly. Use an autonomous agency of the civil service, or contract the functions to the private sector. Until recently, scant consideration was given to the third option, except, of course, in the limited cases of construction, not operation, of roads, housing, infrastructures and utilities (Otobond).

2. Null Hypotheses

To this end, the study proposed these hypotheses:

Ho#1: There is no significant difference between the prepotency of needs and reward valence of employees in Uganda's Ministry of Public Service.

Ho#2: There is no significant relationship between prepotency of needs and reward valence of the employees of Uganda's Ministry of Public Service.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Public Service Reforms in Africa

Reform goals and strategies have been carried out since 1985. In implementing reforms government sought to (1) downsize the civil service to make it more affordable and to bring it into line with a new scaled down role for government in economic activities, (2) provide civil servants with appropriate incentives, skills and motivation and (3) enhance management and accountability Lienert, (1988).

Initially governments concentrated on “first generation” reforms – those contributing primarily to macro-economic stabilization. These focussed on quantitative adjustments to the wage bill, particularly by reducing staff or redeploying them to priority sectors. A first relatively painless step was to remove the “ghost” workers from the payroll. Governments also sought alternatives for delivery of public services such as subcontracting them to the private sector. Given the high level of government expenditures relative to tax revenues many countries opted to reduce real wages further.

“Second generation” reforms included, restructuring remuneration so as to harm differentials with the private sector changing promotion and personnel management policies that went and initiative are rewarded re-assessing the mix of wage and on wage spending particularly in priority sectors Lienert, (1988).

During the 1980s, many Sub-Saharan African countries recognised that their civil services were not providing public goods and services in the most cost effective way. Wage bills were generally too high mainly because of excess staffing. Although governments had begun to reduce their role in economic development downsizing the civil service was slow in following suit. Ironically despite high wage bills, civil servants were often underpaid especially professional in the highest grades making it difficult for governments to retain their most competent employed Lienert and Davis (1997).

To remedy these deficiencies, governments sought the assistance of international donors and creditors in drawing up reforms programs. In particular the World Bank helped devise comprehensive strategies for civil service reform, the implementation of which was included in structural adjustment lending programs. Also, since civil service wage bills were absorbing a large share (sometimes more than 50 percent) of budgetary revenues, it was recognised that a reduction in the civil service wage bill would often need to play a crucial role in programs that called for a reduction in unsustainable fiscal deficits. Especially under its Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF), IMF

supported programs sought to ensure that “first-generations” civil service reforms - those macro-economic stabilisation- were an integral part of adjustment strategies. Increasingly IMF supported programs included structural benchmarks for the total nominal wage bill and occasionally these were supplemented by limits on civil service employment or by specific measures such as the completion of a census of government employees by a certain date Lienert and Modi, (December 1997).

The “first generation” reforms- that is those contributing primarily to macroeconomic stabilisation aimed to reassess the role government wished to play in “core” and “noncore” activities; decrease employment or redeploy staff to priority sectors following identification of non-essential functions and duplication within the civil service; verify that the number of civil servants is consistent with those in the payroll, and that budgeted outlays are adequate (i.e. no wage arrears for staff physically present), ensure that changes in real salaries are consistent with macroeconomic stability and restructure total remuneration particularly to make non-cash benefits more transparent.

The “second generation” reforms aimed to shift the focus from labour inputs to labour outputs of expenditure by emphasising the performance of each civil servant in achieving time-bound objectives, restructure remuneration in order to minimise the departure of skilled staff. This involved a narrowing of private/public sector salary differential; change, promotion and personnel management policies which along with the restructured salary scales ensured that merit and initiative were rewarded provided that there was training to upgrade skills of existing or new employees and to reassess the mix of wage and non-wage spending on productive activities. This required new budgetary practices to allow accountable civil service managers to choose the most appropriate blend of labour and non-labour inputs.

From the above discussion, it is clear that there are many intermediate objectives, all of which are designed to attain the above mentioned formal objectives of civil service reforms. Without accompanying the multiplicity of objectives by a clear prioritisation of the most urgent reforms, it is difficult to assess the “success” of civil service reforms, Lienert and Modi (1997).

3.2 Public Service Motivation Theory

This theory is attributed to the government employees that provide them with a desire to serve the public. The existence and extent of this service ethic have been examined many times in scholarly literature.

Public service motivation theory is important because it explains why some people choose careers in the government and non-profit sectors despite the potential for more financially lucrative careers in the private sector. Perry and Wise (1990)

argued that people with high Public Service Motivation (PSM) are more likely than others to choose government jobs, to perform better on the job, and to respond more to non-utilitarian incentives once in government. They carried out a study using multiple regression and logistic analyses on responses by 35,000 Federal white-collar employees to the 1991 survey of Federal employees and the 1996 merit principles survey of Federal employees. The study tested the link between Public service motivation and job performance in the Federal service. The results show that there is mixed evidence on whether public service motivation positively affected grades and performance ratings. There was clear evidence that employees who expected to receive a material reward for exceptional performance attained higher grades and performance ratings and no evidence that the link between material rewards and performance mattered any less to those with higher public service motivation. Early authors in the field of public administration described differences between public and private employees and concerns over motivating public sector employees (Perry, cited by James and Hondeghem 2008) in *Motivation in Public Management: The call of Public Service*. This theory did not cover the elements of Maslow's hierarchy of needs particularly in the public sector in the world country like Uganda and so this study will examine the gap not covered by the Public Service Motivation Theory on employees motivation to work in the public Sector.

3.3 Prepotency of Needs/ Motivational Needs

Koontz and Weirich (1988) stated that human motives are based on needs whether consciously or subconsciously felt. Some are primary needs such as the physiological needs, requirements for water, air, food, sleep and shelter. Other needs may be regarded as secondary, such as self-esteem, status, affiliation with others, affection, giving accomplishment and self-assertion. These needs vary in intensity and over time with various individuals. Motivation is a general term applying to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces. Motivation involves a chain reaction, starting out with felt needs resulting in wants or goals sought, which give rise to tensions (that is unfulfilled desires), then causing action, toward achieving goals and finally satisfying wants. The motivators are things that induce an individual to perform, while motivations reflect want; motivators are the identified rewards or incentives that sharpen the drive to satisfy wants. The employees in the three government ministries had the same needs as they vary in intensity.

They argued that motivators are also the means by which conflicting needs may be reconciled or one need heightened so that it will be given priority over another. Motivation refers to the drive and effort to satisfy a want or goal. Satisfaction refers to the contentment experienced when a want is satisfied. In other words, motivation implies a drive toward an outcome, and satisfaction is the outcome already experienced. From a management point of view, then a person might have high job satisfaction but have a low level of motivation for the job, or the reverse might be true. There is understandably the probability that highly motivated persons with low

job satisfaction will look for other positions. Likewise, those people who find their positions rewarding but are being paid considerably less than they desire or think they deserve will probably search for other jobs. They added that in theories of motivation, the inducements of some kind of “carrot” are recognized. Often, this is money in the form of pay or bonuses, even though money is not the only motivating force; it has been and will continue to be an important one. The trouble with the money “carrot” approach is a too often everyone gets a carrot regardless of performance, through such practices as salary increases and promotion, by seniority automatic “merit” increases and executive bonuses not based on individual manager performance.

This literature in human motives did not find out the issues regarding prepotency of needs and reward valence of employees in the public sector in Uganda, and so this study will assess the interplay between these two variables.

4. Methodology

The study used descriptive correlations survey mainly because the researcher was interested in the determination of whether or not and to what extent an association existed between physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs, self-actualization needs and reward valence were correlated. The two variables, the prepotency of needs which were operationalized as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and reward valence were itemized as quantifiable variables to determine how they are affected the employees in three government ministries. These were investigated by having a literature study, which was undertaken to identify motivational needs, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and reward valence.

The study utilized the Likert scale which consisted of the response modes of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. An empirical research study consisting of a survey was conducted using two questionnaires:

(i) The Standardized Questionnaires on prepotency of needs which was adopted from Reasoner (1976), which consisted of twenty (20) items referring to physiological needs (items 1,4,16,20), safety needs (items 2,3,9,19), belonging needs (items 5,7,12,17), esteem needs (items 6,8 and 17) and self-actualization needs (items 10,11,13 and 18). The response modes were strongly-agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

(ii) A Researcher Devised Questionnaire to determine the level of reward valence was used. This questionnaire had sixteen items with respond modes and scoring system similar to the standardized questionnaires on the influence of physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs and actualization needs. The researcher collected data from two quantifiable variables from the same group of

subjects that is the employees of three government ministries and then compared how they varied.

5. Hypotheses' Testing

5.1 Hypothesis One Testing

There is no significant difference between the prepotency of needs and reward valence among the employees of Uganda's Ministry of Public Service

Table 5.1: (Level of significance 0.05)

ANOVA TABLE

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F Statistic	Sig.
	19.402	43	.451		0.000
	27.612	191	.145		
Total	47.014	234			

Using the Analysis of Variance to establish whether there is no significant difference between the Prepotency of Needs and the Level of Reward Valence among employees of the Uganda's Ministry of Public Service, the results reveal a significant difference between the prepotency of needs and the reward valence ($F=3.21$; Sig 0.000) of the employees of the government ministry. To this effect, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the prepotency of needs and reward valence of the employees of Uganda's Ministry of Public Service is rejected and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis to the effect that there is a positive and significant difference between prepotency of needs and reward valence.

5.2 Hypothesis Two Testing

There is no significant relationship between the prepotency of needs and reward valence of the employees of Uganda's Ministry of Public Service.

Correlation between the Prepotency of needs and reward valence among employees of Uganda’s Ministry of Public Service

Table 5.2

		Prepotency of Needs	Level of Reward Valence
PREPOTENCY OF NEEDS	Pearson’s correlation	1	.441 ^{xx}
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.000
	N	236	236
LEVEL OF REWARD VALENCE	Pearson’s correlation	.441 ^{xx}	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	
	N	235	235

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Using Pearson’s linear correlation coefficient test, to test for the relationship if any, between prepotency of needs and level of reward valence among the employees of the ministry, the results revealed a positive and significant relationship at the 0.05 level of significance (prepotency of needs $p = .441$ $r = .000$ and level of reward valence $p = .441$ $r = .000$). To this effect, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between prepotency of needs and level of reward valence is rejected and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis to the effect that there is a positive and significant relationship between prepotency of needs and the level of reward valence among the employees of the three government ministries.

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that as per study findings the respondents of the study in the ministry of the public service responded that their safety needs were fairly met. This point to the level of reward valence which states that the value of the reward positively affects the employees to satisfy their needs for security which had a mean of 4.24 interpreted as satisfactory and ranked 5. This is also supported by Maicibi (2007) who stated that to reward employees is to build a feeling of confidence. Rewards are usually administered to make employees develop a feeling of confidence for instance managers can decide to pay workers, salary and wages on the every 25th of the month.

It is established from the study that the respondents from the ministry of Public Service had their esteem needs fairly rewarded by the management of the ministry. This is not however, confirmed by the level of reward valence which states that each individual in the ministry believes that the value of a reward meets the need for some esteem which had a mean of 3.7 interpreted as unsatisfactory. This is possibly because the respondents were not sure of their esteem needs being met by the ministry. This argument is further elaborated by Klein (1987), Long(1978) and

Morgan (1991) who have stated that all humans have a need to be respected, to have self- esteem and self –respect. Esteem in this sense presents the normal human desire to be accepted and valued by others. People need to engage themselves to gain recognition and have an activity or activities that give a sense of contribution to feel self-valued, whether it be in profession or hobby. The study found out that public service respondents had an average mean of 2.04 on this item and it was interpreted as very unsatisfactory.

The study also concludes that the respondents of the Ministry of Public Service that took part in the study did not have their self- actualization needs met by the value of the reward. This is what Maslow had predicted to be a summit of his motivational theory as supported by Vroom (1990) when he stated that it is about the quest of reaching one’s full potential as a person. Unlike lower level needs, this need is never fully satisfied as one grows psychologically there are always opportunities to continue to grow. Self-actualized people tend to have motivators such as truth, justice, wisdom and meaning.

The study discovers that generally the level of reward valence following the findings was satisfactory. The rewards in terms of salaries, allowances and other benefits were satisfactory to the respondents that participated in the study. Maicibi (2007) in spelling out the type of rewards has stated that satisfying work content includes all that Herzberg in his two factor theories suggests to motivate a worker on the job. Maicibi (2003:50) provided some of the methods to satisfying work content, that is achievement, recognition, challenging work and advancement (promotion).

The study further concludes that the respondents in this ministry are satisfactorily rewarded for the effort that the employees put at work. These findings affirm to Maicibi (2007) who has put forward employees’ expectations from reward system. Among these are: a-take-home-pay that can take them up to the end of the month, a fair reward system that echoes Adams equity theory of motivation. A reward system that provides a fair day’s work with a fair day’s pay, that is pay that is commensurate with output, it should be similar with or better than those that are paid to do similar jobs in other similar organizations, they expect regularity in pay in terms of date and quantity and they expect certain minimum benefits from the organization, which are outside the conventional pay package

7. Recommendations

From the foregoing, the following recommendations are made:

- Senior administrators in the Ministry of Public Service should explore ways and means in which the employees can be motivated so that they would want to give their best on the job. Furthermore, government should create policies that are conducive to the working environment of employees and also identify new approaches to the work ethics, which would then introduce new technologies making the job more

exciting and enjoyable. This would improve upon the Maslow's hierarchy of needs which are satisfactorily met by the Ministry of Local Governments.

- Government should establish systems in the Ministry of Public Service that can make or help the employees have pride in their work, ways and means of motivating the employees, remunerate them and provide the necessary benefits by way of facilitation.
- The management of the Ministry should encourage and adopt a system of having an individual incentive bonus system, which will improve the performance of employees. These incentives should be provided to employees who show an exceptional commitment to their responsibilities on the job. The ministry should have policies that can enhance motivation at work.

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