Workplace Envy and Turnover Intention among Employees of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria

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Abstract - This study investigated the relationship between organisational envy and turnover intention among employees of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, Lagos State. The study adopted the descriptive survey design using the census sampling technique. 103 responses from the 116 administered instruments were found valid and used for final analyses. Two hypotheses were stated and tested at 0.05 level of significance using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. The results show that there is significant relationship between malicious acts and turnover intention. Also, it was revealed that being envy is significantly related to turnover intention. Based on this, the study concluded that in creating a healthy organisation, management of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria should reduce the negative consequences of envy. Thus, the study recommends that a display of emotional intelligence in workplaces and effective communication should be instituted for educating employees of the effects and consequences on envy among organisation members.

Keywords - Envy, Turnover, Turnover Intention, Organisation, Public Sector

I. INTRODUCTION

One constant feature in the workplace today is the competition for scarce resources, which include time and attention of organisational authorities, and for preferred job assignments and promotions. Accordingly, there are always winners and losers in such competitions, which might invariably trigger the anti social work life behaviours such as envy in those who are losers. Feelings of envy can certainly be focused on perceived imbalances in financial outcomes, and they can also be about things of symbolic value which accounts for different forms of negative emotional display in the members of the organisation [1].

Negative emotions at work have received an increasing amount of attention in the field of industrial psychology and organisational behaviour due to their remarkable impact on employees and the organisation [2]. Envy as a distinct and negative emotion, is of particular interest to this study and, it has been historically recognized to have significant effects on human relationships in organisations [3].

However, in many circumstances the issues connected to envy are ignored by supervisors, due to their underlying bold assumption that business interactions should be grounded in rational economic decision-making [4]. Although, emotions and feelings are believed to have little place in business related interactions [4], however, recent researches suggests emotions, in this case envy, to have a considerable impact on individuals and organisations [1].

The experience in many Nigeria organisations is that, workers work with dual emotions otherwise called positive and negative emotions [5]. While positive emotions are associated with events that facilitate the fulfillment of an individual's objectives; negative emotions are associated with events that hinder the fulfillment of objectives [6]. For example, people feel angered when they are under rewarded or feel happy when they accomplish a task [5]. Consequently, envy as a primary outcome of negative emotions in individual, would affect interpersonal relationships and might lead to turnover intention of the envied employee(s).

Turnover intention refers to conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organisation [7]. Turnover intentions are triggered by anti social work behaviours among organisational members which have got to do with perceived unfair opportunities and benefits among organisation members. Turnover intention might br triggered by factors such as envy which has resulted in so many kinds of unpleasant and uncomfortable emotions that is associated with physical and psychological pain [8]. This pains foster job dissatisfaction and stress among employees in the work place and when it becomes difficult to cope or deal with such negative emotions effectively, turnover will be an attractive alternative for such employee most especially in the public sector [9].

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the study of Hoschild's (1983) there has been a tremendous growth of interest in research and theory in the arena of emotions in organizational life. In organizational behaviour field the impact of emotions on attitudes, behaviour, cognition and personality have been investigated. Scholars are fragmented and focus in а number of aspects of emotions (i.e. experiences, causes, and consequences) at work but few have consider emotions in line with envy. These disparities lead scholars to diversity of topics such as emotional labour, emotional intelligence, emotional capability, affective events theory, intergroup emotion theory and affects infusion theory. The diversity generates inconsistency for defining emotions in the literature however, Reference [9] was one of the first few to conceptualise emotion in line with envy at workplace but his study was limited in the area of corresponding attitudes of workers to envy in the workplace.

In spite of the aggressive efforts of organisations to achieve competitive advantage, envy among members in the organisation has been identified as one problem that is preventing the desired breakthrough [9]. In the same line, when members in the organisations find it difficult to cope with the outcomes of envy, they develops turnover intention, which because of its huge cost implications on organisation budget the human resource managers should not allow to happen. More importantly, when the sense of envy is repeated, it results in enmity among people and their intention for continual working relationship decreases [10].

Another angle to the study is that, the approach to manage envy in many Nigeria organisations has been subjective and this has constantly accounted for continual rise in the occurrence of envy in the workplace [5]. These problems were attributed to the facts that there are few local literatures and or enlightenment programmes that debates on how envy can be manage within the Nigeria work context [5]

One major problem that management of public organisations faced is the issue of perceived turnover intention by valued and talented employees which is a resultant of envious behaviours by co-workers. Thus, organisation envy become a necessary topic to be investigated across various industries and sectors, however, this study was limited to the public sector, using National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria in Ijanikin area of Lagos State as the study field.

Based on these identified problems, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between organisational envy and employees' turnover intention using NPMCN as reference point.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between organisational envy and turnover intention. Other specific objectives of the study are:

- 1. To examine the relationship between malicious act and turnover intention.
- 2. To investigate the relationship of benign envy and turnover intention

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study will seek to provide answers to these questions through the findings from the study.

- 1. What is relationship between malicious act and turnover intention?
- 2. Is there any significant relationship between benign envy and turnover intention?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives and stated research questions, the following hypothetical statements are present to guide the analytical process of the study.

Hypothesis One

 H_o : There is no relationship between malicious act and turnover intention.

Hypothesis Two

 \mathbf{H}_{0} : There is no relationship between benign envy and turnover intention.

V. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Workplace Envy

Early research on leadership behaviour conducted by psychologist in 1950s-60s, revealed that many managers battled to get the work setting to operate in one accord [11]. The competition then was to have a better share of the limited resources available at the workplace and this in most cases result into negative emotions among members of the organisation [12]. Scholars used [13] list of discrete emotions (i.e., anger, anxiety, fright, guilt, shame, sadness, envy, jealousy, joy, pride, relief, hope, love, gratitude and compassion) for understanding the role of envy in organisational context. Envy is one of the meaningful construct in the workplace that has powerful emotional influence on employee's actions [9]. Envy is defined as a negative emotion felt and that occurs in a person when such is denied expected outcomes that are personally desired [13].

Since Aristotle's time, envy is classified as malicious or benign envy and both of them is the sensation of pain [11]. While malicious envy examines envy with negative attitudes and behaviours and refers to ill will and hostility as part of malicious acts, benign envy emphasizes motivating aspects of envy and identified as admiring and emulative [11]. The two views therefore confirm that envy two possible outcomes which are positive and negative consequences.

[14] Demonstrated the distinction between malicious and benign envy empirically. Envy is a pervasive emotion that has been found in most culture and is felt by most people [15]. The competition for scarce resources, for time and for promotions generates and triggers envy in most organisations. Employees compare their benefits, advantages and salaries with colleagues through formally and informally mechanisms which promote competition among co-workers and foster greater feelings of envy. [16] conceptualized workplace envy in three related ways. First, envy conceptualized as a situation which refers to reactional envy in an environment (e.g. workplace) based on the feeling that the other person is most fortunate; then as dispositional envy which indicates to be a tendency generalized across all situations and lastly as episodic envy that shows an emotional reaction to a specific event. In this study [16] first view is used as anchored.

Turnover Intention

Envy is a psychological state with negative individual, interpersonal and collective consequences [7]. One of the negative consequences is turnover intention. Turnover intention refers to conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organisation [7]. Employee turnover intention was reported to be a conscious, purposeful, deliberate and willingness to discontinue one's present employment [17]. It is thinking about quitting one's present occupation and it is the best indicator of real turnover behaviour. Different reasons have been advanced to be the motives behind turnover intention. For instance [18] concluded that investment in employee is adversely connected with turnover intention. Furthermore, absence of chances or a feeling of being deprived career advancement has additionally been pointed out as one of the essential elements influencing employee retention in the organization, [17]. Therefore, organisation that wishes to reinforce its bond with its employees needs to commit equal resources to their development; also training and advancement will diminish turnover intention and guarantee that performing employees does not leave the organization whether voluntary or unwillingly [19].

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURES

Envy at work is a negative emotion that has been found at all organisational levels and in most cultures [5]. Envy in the workplace ensue due to competition for scarce resources, lack of time, or promotions. All of these factors have consequences for interpersonal relationships, reducing friendship bonds and damaging the employees' exchange of knowledge. Also, envy in most cases result into mental health (e.g., depression and stress), generating health care costs in organisations. In fact, research has shown that more than fifty percent of organisations' total costs are associated with poor health [3].

However, [20] conceptualize envy as a social functional emotion. Envy can be adaptive because it helps the individual to be aware of personal limitations in his/her social-work status and take corrective actions. Envy therefore can develop when there is a sudden occurrence (e.g., personal and contextual features) out of which the employee perceives that a co-worker has what s/he wants in order to improve his/her social standing [7].

Causes of Envy in the Workplace

According to [5] recognizing what causes envy in the workplace is the first step to eliminating it. He presented the following as causes of envy in the workplace

1) Promotions: Although promotions are a necessary part of any work environment, when workers feel they were overlooked for a promotion or it was given to someone who is less qualified, it not only creates envy but it can also make the workplace toxic. If you have to choose to promote one of two employees who have similar backgrounds, help negate feelings of envy by explaining to the second employee the qualifications you were looking for and how you arrived at your decision. Suggest ways the employee can increase her chances of future promotions, such as getting further training or taking on more difficult tasks.

2) Lack of Recognition: Praise all employees for a job well done instead of just a select few. Everyone likes to know that the boss thinks they are doing a good job and that they are appreciated. When awards or bonuses are based on job performance, provide all employees with a list of the criteria you use for evaluation. It therefore means that any employees with high performance record impose a limit to the amount of times he is can be picked for recognition. This keeps other employees from resenting one person and gives others a chance to shine.

3) *Favoritism:* Inspite of any form of likeness, employers should avoid demonstrating obvious feelings to any favorite employee. Without mincing words employers do have certain employees that impress them and have more in common with. Notwithstanding, the reality it is still mandatory to still treat all employees equally. Ask the opinions of all your workers, instead of relying on a select few to guide you. You can prevent envy from occurring by making all employees feel that their ideas are appreciated and valued.

4) Lack of Teamwork: Resentment and envy often grow when one department appears to receive special treatment over another. As an example, one group might constantly have to stay late while another is allowed to leave on time. Emphasize a need for teamwork among the managers. Productivity soars when everyone is working as one team instead of pointing fingers and trying to outdo each other. This not only helps deflect envy, but it creates an atmosphere of "we're all in this together."

Consequences of Workplace Envy

Reference [21] argued that the experience of envy at work touches on who people are professionally, who they want to be, who they believe they are, and what they have failed to become (Smith, 2000). The majority of organisational envy research has focused on its attention here with interesting and at times paradoxical results. Some of the consequences of envy [21] in workplace are such;

1) Workplace Attitudes and Quit Intention: Perhaps the most easily identifiable outcomes of organisational envy are specific attitudinal outcomes including organisation-based self-esteem, satisfaction and intentions to quit. Because invidious reactions involve a threat to one's work-related identity [21], these emotions would seem to set the stage for lower levels of organisation-based self-esteem, defined as an employee's perception of adequacy and worthiness within an organisation. Organisation-based self-esteem is formed, maintained, and changed in part based on interpretations of external cues from the work environment, which include unfavorable social comparisons with others [22].

2) Co-worker Relationships: Organisation researchers have begun to explore what may be the most insidious

outcome of envy in organisational life. How the experience of envy serves to degrade organisational relationships [23], [24]. When a coworker receives a desired outcome and the emotion associated with an unfavourable social comparison is experienced, an individual may attempt to protect or restore his or her self image in any number of constructive or destructive ways. Individuals may choose to revise their psychological identification with the rival, by opting to diminish the personal importance of the social comparison by denying the legitimacy of an outcome that produces an unfavourable social comparison, or alter other perceptions of the unfavourable comparison [25]. Devaluing other coworkers may serve these purposes as well. For example, [25] found that promotion related envy among individuals rejected for promotion was positively associated with perceptions of reward injustice, which were associated with their perception that the promotee was less likable than they had reported before the promotion event.

3) Individual Performance: An interesting comparison can be made between the findings of [16] on envy and group level performance, and those of [25], who found a fairly strong positive relationship "between invidious reactions to being passed over for promotion and their future job performance. 4 months Envy explained 19% of the variance in performance, which was measured 4 months after envy was measured. The job performance of tellers was assessed by supervisors in terms of efficiency (e.g., cash drawer overages and shortages), conscientiousness, and customer service quality.

4) Sabotage: One 'of the most promising areas of envy research in organisational settings concerns the link between it and workplace antisocial behaviour. Although workplace antisocial behaviours come in many forms, the link between envy and social undermining behaviours seems to be especially robust [9]. Also [16] defined social undermining as behaviours directed at another coworker that are "intended to hinder, over time, the ability [of the targeted person] to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and a favorable reputation.

VII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Heider's theory of balance which evolved from the study of [26] on the management of social comparison among workers. The study of social comparison emphasizes on this assumption that workers through comparing themselves with similar individuals evaluate their abilities [26]. This theory established that this comparison can result into two possible outcomes, first it can spur up performance if it is done with objective mind set, however, if the comparison is done to identify who benefit more in the organisation then it could possibly results into envy. According to the Heider's theory of balance "the general form and source of envy" is intention for equalizing the rate of prosperity between person and other (person).

The balance theory of Heider states that when individual see himself/herself at the same class with the other person, there is a strong intention for this belief that they should have equal prosperity, such pressure for equality might be strong to be considered as a justice nature or a force pressure and according to the theory of true unity of purposes, in one organisation it is hopeful to provide a space resulting in one of the two following states:

Employees of organisation (managers and subordinates) perceive their goals similar to organisational purposes.

If goals are not the same and they are different, individuals in organisation individuals inside organisations see their goals achievable to achieve in organisational purposes. As a result, to the extent destinations and personal goals can be closer to organizational purposes, then organizational performance will be better and greater.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive survey method. The population of the study comprised of staff of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria (NPMCN), Lagos State, Nigeria. According to the Administrative Department, there were 118 employees at the College at the time of the study. Of these employees; 75% were senior staff which comprises of Executive Staff members (College President, Registrar and Deputy Registrars), managers and Head of department while the remaining 25% were junior staffs.

Sample of responding staff was drawn from all the departments in the college where census sampling technique was used. The study employed the census sampling method because the population is relatively small. The research instruments adopted for the study was a four likert scales (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree) questionnaire and administered to all members of the college.

Table 1: Staff Spread in NPMCN	

Categories	Numbers of Staff	Numbers Sampled
Management staff	8	8
Senior Staff	71	71
Junior Staff	39	39
Total	118	118

Source: Admin Record NPMCN (2019)

The questionnaire used to capture the perceptions of respondents regarding the two employed dimensions of organisational envy and turnover intention was adapted from the study of [27], items related to malicious acts (5 items) and benign envy (5 items) while, turnover intention items (5 items) were taken from the studies of [7].

The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the aid of (SPSS) computer software for the analysis.

From the one hundred and sixteen (116) instrument administered to the participants one hundred and nine (109) were actually retrieved but only one hundred and three (103) copies of the instruments were properly filled and which was then used for the analysis..

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses stated earlier are empirically tested using the responses from the research instrument administered.

Hypothesis One:

 \mathbf{H}_{0} : There is no relationship between malicious act and turnover intention.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of the relationship between malicious act and turnover intention				
		Malicious Acts	Turnover Intention	
Malicious Acts	Pearson Correlation	1	.822**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	103	103	
Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	822 ^{**} .000	1	
	N	103	103	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

From Table 2 above, the correlation coefficient for employee unpleasant emotion is significantly related with employee turnover intention. This is demonstrated by the correlation coefficient r = 0.822, which demonstrates that there is a strong significant and positive relationship between malicious act and employee turnover intention. The result implies that malicious acts have significant relationship with employee turnover intention. Therefore the stated null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis Two:

 H_0 : There is no relationship between benign envy and turnover intention.

Table 3: Correlation analysis of the relationship between benign envy and turnover intention				
		Benign Envy	Turnover Intention	
Benign Envy	Pearson Correlation	1	. 813**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	Ν	103	103	
Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation	813 ^{**}	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	Ν	103	103	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Results of the analysis indicate in Table 3 that, correlation coefficient for benign envy is significantly related with employee turnover intention. This is demonstrated by the correlation coefficient r = 0.813, which is demonstrates that there is a strong significant and positive relationship between benign envy and employee turnover intention. The result implies that benign envy have significant positive effect on employee turnover intention. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Relationship between Malicious Acts and Turnover Intention

The relationship between malicious acts and employee turnover intention was examined and the result showed a positive relationship with turnover intention. Results indicate that when organisational members begin to nurse negative emotion to each others as result of unequal distribution of opportunities and resources the pressure to feel unwanted become relatively high. The results of findings corroborates with the studies of [9] that stated that unpleasant emotion are proven to be sources of strain on the individual and occur when the pressure on an individual exceeds the individual's capacity to cope [28]. Unpleasant emotion can affect people in different ways, and the long-term effects that unpleasant emotion has on an organisation in most cases include absenteeism and turnover, distrust of management, lack of commitment and reduction in performance [28].

Relationship between Benign Envy and Turnover Intention

The second hypothesis which tested the relationship between benign envy and employee turnover intention shows a significant relationship. According to the findings, there is a positive and significant relationship between the variables. The finding was in accordance with the studies done by [29]. Many employees, who are more commitment to the organisation, try to find out their competence and abilities in an optimal way. Good employees tend to be better and to this end they attempt to catch opportunities by which to be trained and developed and finally promoted in their position. When an organisation offers programs for employees' development and promotion and invest to this end, employees attempt to gain opportunities for their development and promotion [20]. If organisational climate is not optimal for employees, envy will be substituted with empathy and it results in enemy among individuals and humanism will be lessened among the members [29].

X. CONCLUSION

The study investigated the relationship between organisational envy and employees' turnover intention among employees of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria. The study indicates that in order to create healthy organisations, it is necessary to reduce the negative consequences of envy. Management of organisations has important role to play in moderating the effect of envy on employees' behaviour at work. On the basis of the findings reported in this study, envy is one act that need to be eliminated from among organisation members by providing a model for management of envy in organisations. This would be helpful in increasing commitment. Therefore, the following recommendations are made which are as follow:

It is suggested that to create a conducive working environment management must promotes cultures that is accommodating and that will reduce envy among members of the organisation. It is also suggested that management of National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria be objective and transparent in their decision policies. Lastly, it is recommended that management should ensure fair benefits and opportunities even if it is not equal due to diversity in qualifications and specialization.

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