

# The Effect of Perceived Work Environment on Government Employees' Motivation at Assosa Zone, Benishangul Gumuz Region, Ethiopia

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of perceived work environment on employees motivation at Assosa Zone, Benishangul Gumuz Region, Ethiopia. The study encompasses all employees working in the thirty offices of Assosa Zona in zonal and wereda level. From work environment indicators physical work environment and psychosocial work environment was selected and their effect on employees motivation is checked. In order to test whether these variables determine the employees motivation, multiple regressions was employed which is feasible model when there is more than one independent variable. Lastly, it was found that all factors are most predicting in the employees motivation. All alternative hypotheses are accepted.

**Keywords:** Employees' motivation, Physical work environment, psychosocial work environment

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

Employees are the main resource an institution cannot do without. They make a paramount contribution to an institution. Attention should therefore be given to their wellbeing in turn influence the productivity of the institution which eventually will lead to achieving the institutions vision and goals (EK & Karanja, 2013). Public service motivation (PSM) represents an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions. People are motivated to work in the public service as a result of altruism, a desire to serve, or a wish to have an impact on society is a long-standing one. Unless workers in public institutions are motivated they cannot serve as intended, if they cannot serve individual as well as organizational performance undoubtedly be decreased. (Perry, 1996)

The workplace environment plays a crucial role for the employees. Nowadays employees may have a large number working alternatives, and then the environment in workplace becomes a critical factor for accepting and/or keeping the jobs. The quality of environment in workplace may simply determine the level of employee's motivation, subsequent performance and productivity (Leblebici, 2012).

Making all the above studies benchmark, the aim of this research is to analyze the effect of perceived work environment (physical and psychosocial environment) on employees' motivation in order to contribute to theory and practice.

### 1.2 Problem Statement

The term of motivation derives from the Latin root which means Stimulate. Motivation is behavior; it isn't a thing or special event that can be observed directly. It is a compound which describes specific behaviors. Two aspects of the behavior described by the concept of motivation which consists justify the behavior or purpose of a behavior and appropriate consuming energy. Motivation refers to a process or a circulation which help us for motivating others. (Pakdel, 2013)

Though, employees motivation is this much importance for organizational goals to be achieved the public servant is being blamed with the very poor motivation to work which subsequently affect performance. As the result of our preliminary study speaks, the Benishangul Gumuz Regional state is well known by the civil servants low motivation to service as it is common complain of customers from many customers. To describe some of the symptoms for the low motivation on employees; Employees do not welcome customers, Service delay or making, customers come for lots of time for very simple issues, Absence and/ or coming late and/or going home early in work times, Employees prefer to spend working times at lounge talking each other than serving and High employees turnover.

There are studies which express the result of low motivation. (Cetin, 2013; Asim, 2013 & Kaur & Jain, 2014.) To this end, the public is even being hopeless with the government as a result of very offensive response of employees working in different levels.

In other cases studies found that those workers who perceive working conditions to be poor or bad are less motivated and consequently are not performing satisfactory. Considering the positive impact of work place environmental characteristics and work motivation on job performance, it is suggested that the management

should take initiatives to motivate employees and improve work environments. As employees have motivation, their job performance will increase. (Jayaweera, 2015)

However, as per the knowledge of researchers, there is no a single research which examine the impact of work environment to public service motivation in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State except the existence of plenty of roomers in the society. This triggers the researchers to see the effect of work environment, both physical and psychosocial, to the employees' motivation.

Hence, this study intends to examine the relationship between work environment and public service motivation in Assosa zone offices.

### 1.3 Research Hypothesis

Based on different literatures the following hypothesis is developed;

- H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a positive relationship between physical work environment and employees' motivation.
- H<sub>2</sub>**: There is a positive relationship between psycho-social work environment and employees' motivation.
- H<sub>3</sub>**: The physical work environment is significantly affect motivation of employees.
- H<sub>4</sub>**: The psychosocial work environment significantly affects employees' motivation.

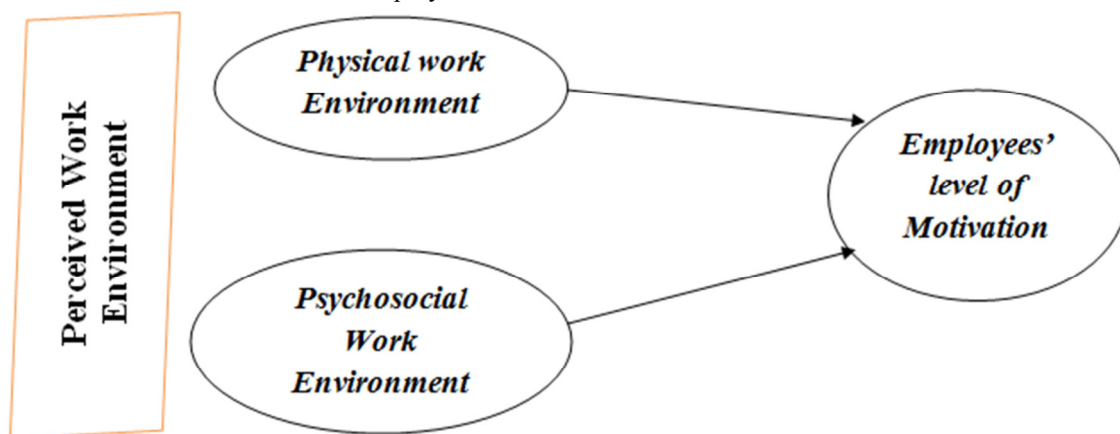
### 1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research is to analyze the effect of perceived work environment on public service motivation a case of Assosa zone offices. Specifically, the study is designed to:

- Examine the effect of physical work environment on employees' motivation.
- Identify the effect of psycho-social environment on employees' motivation.
- To find out which factor is dominantly affecting employees' motivation from the factors under consideration.

### 1.5 Conceptual framework

According to Atambo, Otundo & Nyamwamu (2013) & Leblebici (2012) Work environment constitutes the physical work environment and psychosocial work environment. Also, the physical environment and the psychosocial environment will affect employees motivation .



(Adapted from Atambo, Otundo&Nyamwamu 213)

### 1.6 Scope of the Study

Even though wide range of variables is readily available to be studied under, this study prefers to be delimited to physical, psycho-social environment and motivation of employees in Assosa zone. More specifically, this study gives more focus on examination of safety and security, working condition and employee welfare under physical work environment factors; reward, supervision, and interpersonal relationship under psycho-social work environment; and attraction to public policy making, commitment to the public interest, civic duty, social justice, self-sacrifice, and compassion is considered in motivation of employees.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1 Psychological work environment and motivation

According to Kaur (2013) Psychological wellbeing is becoming extremely crucial in today's era. It has become the need of the hour and organizations are seriously taking psychological wellbeing as a means of success for the organization as well as for the individual. We tested to what extent the Psychological wellbeing of the employee facilitates the motivational level and its contribution to the organization. Psychological wellbeing in the

organizations facilitates the employees to perform better, builds up the confidence, develops the talent, help in teamwork, increases employee commitment, high morale, productivity, efficiency, quality of service and also handles personal life well.

The results of our systematic review point to a relationship between psychosocial working conditions and the development of emotional exhaustion/burnout. Particularly high job demands seem to play a role in the development of emotional exhaustion. However, strong inter-correlations between workplace factors, as a matter of principle, make the identification of a single psychosocial workplace factor (being associated with an especially high or low risk of burnout) difficult. Seidler, Thinschmidt, Deckertl, Then, Hegewald, Nieuwenhuijsen and Heller (2014)

According to Hanna & Mona (2014) The psychosocial work environment is an important factor in psychiatric in-patient care, and knowing more of its correlates might open up new paths for future workplace interventions. Thus, the aims of the present study were to investigate perceptions of the psychosocial work environment among nursing staff in psychiatric in-patient care and how individual characteristics—Mastery, Moral Sensitivity, Perceived Stress, and Stress of Conscience—are related to different aspects of the psychosocial work environment.

## **2.2 Physical work Environment and motivation**

According to Toole (2011) the physical surroundings are often overlooked in discussions on learning in the workplace. The physical environment, however, may hold significant messages for organizational members in relation to what they need to know about the culture, structure and roles and routines of the organization. There are different dimensions of the physical work environment factors like working conditions, safety and security, legally prescribed provisions of employees' welfare, external atmospheric condition, and employees' awareness about prescribed provisions. Three of them are undertaking in this study are: safety and security, working condition and employee's welfare. Srivastava (2008)

The result of this study hence of the essence for the government at any levels to discover ways of improving and updating infrastructural facilities in order to make physical work environment more conducive for enhancement of civil servants productivity. Besides that, each public sector should also emphasize seriously on the physical environment to promote a healthy and harmonious work environment. The idea on the goodness of physical work environment will creating and maintains the productivity level among civil servants in an organization. By preparing and providing the good physical environment (comfort level, temperature) it is hope that all civil servants are willing to come to their office without any enforcement (dollar and sense considerations) but it is because of their self belonging, lovely and harmonies physical work environment place to work with. Ismail, Ladisma & Amin (2010)

According to Ry, Lee & Kim(2010) Structural equation modeling shows that the quality of the physical environment, food, and service were significant determinants of restaurant image. Also, the quality of the physical environment and food were significant predictors of customer perceived value. The restaurant image was also found to be a significant antecedent of customer perceived value. In addition, the results reinforced that customer perceived value is indeed a significant determinant of customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction is a significant predictor of behavioral intentions.

Physical layout and artifacts, despite being taken largely for granted in daily living, continually embody meanings and representations that are important to the people whom they surround. The implication here is that any exploration of culture or organizational life that does not include some degree of symbolic interpretation of the corporeal setting is omitting an important, though complex, store of meaning.( Toole,2001)

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Description of the study area**

This study is going to be conducted in Assosa zone governmental offices. Assosa zone is one of the three zones in Benishangul Gumuz Regional state, Ethiopia. It has 7 woredas and each woreda is having around 20 offices. Assosa zonal offices and Assosa wereda offices are found in the capital city of the region which is in Assosa but other wereda offices are existed.

### **3.2 Research Design**

There are several techniques which could be used to carry out research depending on the research problem area. When dealing with research problem, one can choose any of the three types of research (Yin, 1994): exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Our research purpose and research question reveal that this study is mainly explanatory and descriptive because data was collected through questionnaire to identify the effect of perceived work environment on employees motivation in Assosa zone. Explanatory research is a research type in which the primary goal is to understand the nature or mechanisms of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. This approach used when it is necessary to show that one variable causes or determines the

values of other variable Zikmund (1994). Hence, Explanatory was used to fulfill this study.

### 3.3 Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

A population is any complete group of people, companies, hospitals, stores, college students or the like that share some set of characteristics (Zikmund, 1994). The total population of this study is employees of Assosa zone zonal offices and offices of weredas in Assosa zone. But since employees are working in a much dispersed places and the population is also high, to increase manageability of the data we decided to use target population. Hence, out of seven weredas we select 4 weredas conveniently; Namely, Assosa woreda, Kuruk woreda, sherkole woreda and bambasi woreda. Then after, we select offices in each weredas having more employees than others. Therefore, 861 employees working in 30 offices which are selected from the four weredas and Assosa zone zonal offices are target populations of this study. From these numbers of employees, 273 employees was planned to be selected by using a formula given by Yemane (1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the total population and e is the error term.

Applying the formula the result is;

$$n = \frac{861}{1+861(0.05)^2}$$

**n = 273**, which means sample size for this study is 273

In this study, stratified random sampling technique was used because the population from which a sample is to be drawn does not constitute a homogeneous group. The population (offices) can be divided in to three groups; Administrative, social and economic sectors. We purposely select offices from each sectors. Hence, we considered offices as stratum. Then after, the researchers selected sample from each stratum in a proportion base because the physical as well as the psycho-social environment cannot be generalized from one office to the others. Therefore, we considered offices as stratum and individuals were selected by using simple random sampling technique from each office to give equal chance of being selected for all employees. (Zikmund, 1994).

### 3.4 Method of Data Analysis

First the data was presented by using tables, charts and pie charts. Then after, descriptive statistics and inferential analysis was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics allows researchers to present the data acquired in structured, accurate and summarized manner (Collis & Roger Hussey, 2003).

The data collected from the returned questionnaire has been entered into SPSS (Statistical package for social science software) version 20 for analysis and sorted to group questions according to applicable constructs under test. Finally, a multiple regression analysis was conducted by using all dependent and independent variables in the dataset.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Reliability analysis

According to Zikmand (n.d), generally speaking, scales with a coefficient between  $\alpha$  0.80 and 0.95 are considered to have very good reliability. Scales with a coefficient between  $\alpha$  0.70 and 0.80 are considered to have good reliability, and an  $\alpha$  value between  $\alpha$  0.60 and 0.70 indicates fair reliability but an  $\alpha$  value between below 0.60 indicates poor reliability. The result of reliability analysis of all variables in this study is 0.934 which is in a range of very good reliability. No significant change is shown to be appeared if an item is deleted.

### 4.2 Analysis of demographic information

**Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of demographics**

No.	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
1.	Offices	Zonal level offices	6	0.2
		Wereda level offices	24	0.8
		Total	30	100

The table also shows that 6(20%) respondents are from zonal offices, 24(80%) respondents are from wereda level offices. This implies that majority of the respondents are from wereda level offices.

#### 4.2.1 Regression result analysis

The value of multiple correlation coefficients between the predictor and the outcome variable is indicated by adjusted R square. Adjusted R square value is found 0.21 shows correlation between predicting factors and employees motivation.  $R^2$  is the measure of how much of the variability in the employees' motivation is accounted for by predictors. In this study, adjusted  $R^2$  is found 0.209. This value indicates that independent factors contribute 21% of the variation in employees' motivation while the rest 79% is predicted by the other extraneous variables. In addition, for these data F change is 36.11 which is significant at  $P < 0.001$  tells us that the regression model overall predicts record sales significantly well.

**Table 4.5 Coefficients of the dependent variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.770	0.114		6.752	0.000
Physical environment	0.243	0.076	0.241	3.182	0.002
Psychosocial environment	0.289	0.083	0.263	3.476	0.001

**Source: SPSS own computation, 2017**

The above table show that positive significant relationship is observed between physical work environment and employees motivation (Beta=0.241,p<0.05). So, the first alternative hypothesis is accepted. Also, since the Beta value of psychosocial work environment is 0.263 at p<0.05 the second alternative hypothesis is accepted.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of the study enable us to conclude that physical as well as psycho-social work environment of work organizations extend significant effect on employees' motivation of its employees of Assosa Zone. The findings of the present study are also in consistent with the observations of earlier studies on the effect of perceived work environment on employees' job behavior and organizational effectiveness (Srivastava , 2008).

The results also specified that among the two dimensions of work environment (physical work environment and psychosocial work environment) psychosocial work environment play dominant role in determining the level of employees motivation.

Concerning significance of the effect of predicting variables under study, both physical work environment (p<0.005) and psychosocial work environment (p<0.005) has significance effect on employees motivation. On the base of the findings/conclusion derived; the following recommendation was made by the researchers in order to improve employees motivation of Assosa Zone

- As it was explained psycho- social work environment play significant role on employees motivation Assosa zone leaders should give emphasis on those components; on reward, supervision, & interpersonal relations.
- Under physical environment components; safety & security and working conditions has a positive impact and it is better to improve it by making the work environment more encouraging.
- Make the offices safe and comfort by paying attention to the needs and desires of human resource (since they are important assets owned by every organization) to perform their work effectively and efficiently.
- Make the employees to Participate or involve on the common issue of the employees like decision making so that employees' develop belongingness, commitment and share the values for implementing the objectives and strategies of the institution.
- Create a good work environment by encouraging relationship among employees, with colleagues, and immediate supervisors so that they are motivated in performing tasks/activities in the institution.
- The regional government should consider employees' work environment while making policies, rules and regulations in the respective offices like reward packages.
- Give recognition for employees to increases their job satisfaction, motivation and subsequent performance so that effectiveness in Assosa Zone will be enhanced.

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