PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF DOWNSIZING ON SURVIVOR-MANAGERS IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT: *Despite the importance of psychological wellbeing of survivors to the attainment of the envisaged goal of the downsizing practice, research on this group of workers is still limited particularly in Nigeria. The study aims at exploring the psychological impact of downsizing on survivor managers in Nigeria using a qualitative research approach. More specifically, unstructured and semi-structured interviews were carried out at different stages with a total of 20 interviewees. Data were analysed and coded using a data-driven thematic analysis. The finding revealed that anxiety, a feeling of uncertainty, insecurity of job, reduction in individual motivation and poor communication influenced the survivors* negatively. *These negative psychological and emotional impact exhibited by the survivor employees are linked to lack of jobs, high rate of unemployment, and lack of social security and culture. The outcome of the study would provide implications for human resources managers in Nigeria who often deal with downsizing and engaged in psychological contract breach.*

KEYWORDS: psychological impact, downsizing, survivor-managers, developing economy, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The constant change in organisations has made the contract agreements of continuing job security in return for hard work and loyalty unsustainable. Because of the changes in organisation's stability, job securities of the workforce are no longer attainable. Employees are now reconsidering and discussing their employment terms (Sels et al, 2004). The approach in the workplace today centres on innovations, employability and skills compared to the traditional method of employment. According to Anderson and Schalk, (1998), this approach has not only affected the employers and employees but also the nature of their work relationship. Changes in the workplace are most likely to increase the chances of perceived psychological contract breach because it often leads to abandonment of responsibilities and adjustment of contract agreements. This happens when the workforce perceive that the organisation they work for has failed to deliver promises made satisfactorily (Rousseau, 1995) leading to breach. Downsizing has become a common feature in management practice as modern organisations try to cut costs because of increasing competitiveness caused by volatile

nature of business environments. Downsizing refers to an intentional reduction in the organisations' human capital (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002). While breach is the understanding of an employee that the organisation has failed to meet some of the obligations within a psychological contract in a way that is proportionate with the employees' contributions (Wolfe-Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Organisational downsizing has also been described as a set of activities that are geared towards reducing the workforce aimed at improving performance and competitiveness (Kulkarni, 2008).

Organisational downsizing is not a new concept in the practice of human resource management however; studies in this area are developing and gaining momentum in Nigeria recently due to the existence of some unmanageable organizational and workforce issues. Several studies both in the public and private sector (*see* Oluba, 2008; Ayinde, 2011; Omoruyi et al, 2011) have examined organisational downsizing. These studies include reforms in public and private sector of 1975 and 1984, the consolidation of the banking sector and the prevalent downsizing caused by the recession and global financial predicaments (Oluba, 2008; Ayinde, 2011; Omoruyi et al, 2011). The outcomes of these studies led to mass layoffs and cost-cuttings with the negative psychological and emotional impact on both those that have been laid-off and those retained in the organisation. However, despite the prevalent nature of downsizing in Nigeria, researches on the impact of downsizing have focused more on those that have been laid-off than survivors (Samuel et al, 2009; Omoruyi et al, 2011).. Furthermore, despite the importance of psychological wellbeing of survivors to the attainment of the envisaged goal of the downsizing practice, research on this group of workers (survivors-those employees who were fortunate to be retained after downsizing exercise was carried out) are still limited particularly in Nigeria (Omoruyi et al, 2011; Ayinde, 2011). Therefore, this paper aims to examine the psychological impact of downsizing on survivor-managers because according to Cameron (1994), downsizing is the "most prevalent and yet understudied area in business. Therefore, the study will bridge the gap between downsizing practice and its psychological and emotional impact on survivors in Nigeria. Giving that the failure rates of downsizing/breaches in organisations is estimated at about 70 per cent (Washington, & Hacker, 2005; Burnes, 2000), the outcome of this study will provide implications for practice for human resources managers who are involved in employees downsizing that lead to psychological contract breach.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Downsizing as a Change management approach
Change is an inevitable constant phenomenon inherent in the business world, and a very vital concept that enable organizational managers to adapt to environmental forces. According to Cullinane & Dundon (2006), organisational change is a cautious attempt by an organisation to introduce a unique way of thinking that would help accomplish certain goals and objectives of the organisation. This is fast becoming a norm and a survival strategy for many organisations. The agreement by management to adopt a new way of thinking and accomplishing tasks or goals are based on constant pressure on competition and cheaper costs. (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006). This has led to both assurances to job security and the satisfaction that individuals derive from career choices less sustainable. On the other hand, other studies (Guest & Conway, 2002b; Godard, 2004; Data et al, 2010) have attributed such change to market pressures, new approach to governance, systematic rationalisation, economic model, liberal market, downsizing and deregulation. These findings are in line with Zhao et al., (2007)'s study which argues that major

changes take place in the organisation's arrangement which have affected the sensitivities and relationships with the employees. However, the way organisations adopt or carry out change may result to breach of psychological contract as perceived by the employees (Knights & Kennedy, 2005). Such breach is often referred to as management parlance in downsizing; or right-sizing, de-layering and restructuring. These activities carried out by organisations often lead to a change in organisational efficiency and employment relationships (Sparrow & Cooper, 1998).

This research centres on organisational "downsizing" and it is the deliberate reduction in the number of employees in a bid to cut costs. Different theories have emerged on the strategic concepts of downsizing. Drawing from Sparrow & Cooper (1998), the adoption of downsizing by managers in any organisation depends on three fundamental assumptions: socio-cognitive, institutional and economic perspectives. The economic perspective considered downsizing as a response to decline in productivity and profitability in an organization (Sparrow & Cooper, 1998) while the institutional theorists stressed that downsizing is embarked in organisations because of good management and social resolution (Yu & Park, 2006). The socio-cognitive perspective implied that downsizing is inevitable in any organization as it is an effective strategy that any responsible and competent manager can adopt during any economic challenging times, or even performance of employees does not conform to organizational targets (McKinley, Zhao & Rust, 2000). However, the benefits of this change strategy have been debated considering the degree at which downsizing impacts on job losses, mass layoffs, unemployment and breach as a result of the implementation (Datta et al., 2010). This often reduced loyalty, mistrust; increase in the level of turnover intentions; decline in organisational commitment as well as separation anxiety, decline in innovation and job involvement, loss of skills and knowledge (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008; Zhao et al., 2007; Suazo, 2009).These negative consequences are often linked to breach of psychological contracts.

Downsizings have led to significant disorder in organisations: it demoralizes employees and disrupts the learning and skills capacity of the organization (Wilkinson, 2005). It is worthy to note that downsizing has done more harm than good to any organization that adopted such strategy as it has impacted both workforce and the organisation negatively (Amiot et al., 2006; Cartwright, 2008). Although the concept was first adopted by the US firm because of the competition from Japan (Budros, 1999), and it has been globally acknowledged and accepted as a change process in western world (Vicente-Lorente & Suarez- Gonzalez, 2007), developing and emerging economies. However, Lindorff et al., (2011)'s study revealed that such changes are without its consequences for both the employees and organisation with a failure rate of about 70 per cent (Washington & Hacker, 2005; Burnes, 2000). Downsizing reduces the performance level of individuals which leads to a decline in the organisational performance (Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood and Bolino, 2002), poor employment association and a breach to psychological contract. Munoz-Bullon, & Sanchez-Bueno (2011) have investigated on change process such as downsizing, of which their findings implies that organisations should endeavour to manage downsizing effectively to avoid the negative effects on employees (Hitt et al., 1994). Raja et al., (2004) and Zhao et al., (2007) note that oftentimes, one major mistake made regularly is overlooking such negative effects on employees including those that are retained after downsizing. Literature revealed that organisational downsizing may have negative impact on survivor employees including the survivor managers, and it is imperative

to understand the psychological and emotional impact on survivor wellbeing. Hence, this necessitated the study especially in developing country such as Nigeria.

Theoretical explication of psychological contract

This study is underpinned on the framework of the psychological contract theory. The psychological contract theory is defined as "an individual belief, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organizations" (Rousseau, 1989). This theory gained its significance through its function of defining employer-employee relationships in the workplace. The worth of this employer-employee relationship is determined through a social exchange agreement which is the cost-benefit analysis of their social relationship. The effectiveness of the psychological contract lies on the consent of the employer and the employee on voluntary basis (Gautier, 2015). Psychological contract is formed when an employer and a prospective employee agree to exchange their social and moral values with each other. According to Rousseau (1989), the phases of psychological contract formation outlined that the contracting process start before the employment, and develops throughout the course of employment; as the employment relationship grows, the psychological contract also grows and is reinforced overtime. These phases of psychological contract formation start from pre-employment to recruitment to early socialization to later experiences, then to evaluation phase. The existing psychological contract is revised if both parties found the contract worthy. However, the content of psychological contract varies widely depending on several factors including management styles, type of profession, career stage (George, 2010), type of organization, and even job analysis.

In employment relations, Rousseau (1989) conceptualized psychological contract into two dimensions: They are transactional psychological contract and relational psychological contract. Transactional psychological contract focuses solely on employment agreement. It does not exceed financial gain and fulfilment of specified contractual and job requirements. It focuses more on the explicit elements of the contracts without extending to the intrinsic qualities of the employee. These explicit elements include specific economic conditions such as wage rate, limited personal affair in the job, short-time monetizable exchanges or materialistic emphasis on the employee reciprocal exchange agreement with their employers (Rousseau, 1990). Variably, relational psychological contract include the implicit elements of the employee. These implicit elements include socio-emotional involvement as well as economic exchange, mutual trust, loyalty, career development and advancement, and long-term job security. Ideally, Lu et al., (2016) distinguished these two types of psychological contract on the account of duration, degree of specificity, exchange of resources, and reciprocal contingencies. While employees with strong transactional psychological contract see their organization as a source of income (Milward & Hopkins, 1998); employees on the relational psychological contract are seen as "organizational good citizens". Psychological contract related studies focuses on three aspects, which are; obligations, fulfilment, and breaches (Wenlong et al., 2020). Obligation aspect refers to employees' perception of their employers specific promises; Fulfilment aspect is the extent of employers' fulfilment of their obligations based on the employees' perception (Robinson, 1996). Fortunately, when there is positive social exchange of obligation and fulfilment between employers and their employees as agreed, there is job satisfaction, organizational commitment, high morale of employee, and low intension to quit. In contrast, when employees perceive that their employers have failed to fulfil their obligations in the psychological contract, it is understood as psychological contract breach (Morrison, 1997; Van Hootegem and De Witte, 2019). Psychological contract breach

can result to downsizing or rightsizing -which is a deliberate restructuring exercise conducted by organizations in order to reduce number of workforce and cost to balance. It is worthy to note that employees' expectation from their employers is that they will fulfil their obligations.

Psychological Impact of Downsizing on Survivor employees in Nigeria
In Nigeria recently, it has become a common practice of many organizations to downsize their workforces. Most banks, manufacturing firms and tertiary institutions have adopted this strategy in order to remain competitive due to recession and political instability bedevilling the economy. However, Cutting costs, mass layoff of idle human resources, near-crash perceptions due to financial crisis in the economy, and improvement of organizational effectiveness and ability has been the indicators for adopting and implementing the downsizing practice (Anekwe, Mukhtarruddin & Prihanto, 2019).

Previous research studies (e.g Bordia et al., 2008; Datta et al., 2010) have established a link between downsizing and psychological and emotional impact on survivor employees as a breach of psychological obligations which are usually implied during downsizing exercise. According to McCann et al., (2008), survivor employees are said to experience diverse psychological and emotional effects during downsizings such as threats of redundancy, increased responsibility, anxiety and work pressures. Downsizing impact on survivors is described as being more negative than positive (Grunberg et al., 2001). These impacts on survivor employees are popularly referred to as "survivor syndrome" depicting the attitudinal, psychological and emotional characteristics of employees who survived a downsizing exercise. Such psychological and emotional effects include anger, grief, resentment, depression and even fear (Bashford, 2004; Noer, 1993; Fong & Kleiner, 2004; Atwood et al., 1995; Rousseau, 1995; Buono, 2003). However, research evidence of downsizing practice abounds in Nigeria with its attendant emotional, financial and social impact on victims of the exercise (*see* Adegoroye, 2006; Oluba, 2008). For example, organisational downsizing had been widely undertaken in both private and public sector institutions in Nigeria dating back to 1975 (*see* Adegoroye, 2006; Ayinde, 2011). The financial service sector are said to be most affected in recent times because of the banking sector reforms and the global financial crises. The outcomes of such downsizing exercise had been mass retrenchment, redundancies and its associated emotional and psychological impact on survivor employees. The review of the literature published between 2000 and 2008 showed that downsizing has a negative emotional and psychological impact on survivor employees (Bujang and Sani, 2010). These impacts are quite similar to those suffered by the victims of leavers during downsizing. However, evidence revealed that most of these studies (*see* Sears et al., 2008; Erickson and Roof, 2007; Holmes, 2007; Sahibzada, 2006; Rone, 2005; Pipelow,2000) were carried out mostly in western context and do not involve managerial employees in developing countries like Nigeria. This informed the focus of this research in non-western context and the use of the managerial-reference group.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research method was adopted for this study. The flexible and inductive nature of qualitative approach offers the best platform to delve into the individual internal psychological process such as the feeling of psychological breach and emotion (Guest et al., 2013). In the same vein, Coyne (2008) argued that understanding complex human emotional and psychological issues could best be undertaken through a qualitative approach.

Purposive sampling technique was adopted in this study which is depended on the purpose of the research (Schwandt, 1997), and identify the primary contributors with real-life experiences (Woodgate, 2006). This technique was used because of the subjective nature of qualitative study and does not call for statistical generalisation (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). It also helped in making a realistic comparison of participants (Mason, 1996). The unit of analysis was individual (survivor-managers). This assisted the researchers to achieve the objectives of the study because of the close interaction with the participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Creswell 2003), which increased the richness of the data.

The research was carried out in Lagos because it is a multi-cultural city in Nigeria with a population of about 20 million people. Out of the 175 companies that are linked to the capital market sector, 80 per cent of them are in Lagos (www.nairaland.com), and easy access to interview participants. The participants were drawn from the Nigerian online business forum and the website of the capital market regulation commission. These helped us to categorise operators within the sector which has carried out a downsizing program within the last three years. Majority of the stock broking firms where participants are selected have staff strength of between 25 and 150 employees and classified as SMEs. The researchers randomly selected 60 participants purposefully from the 25 stock broking firms of which 20 survivor-managers were interviewed. Data was collected using semi-structured interview approach from 20 survivor-managers**.** Before the interview, a formal letter was sent to the participants containing the aim, objectives of the research, rights, responsibilities and obligations of the researcher before the interview especially on confidential matters.

Interviews
A pilot interview was first conducted to provide an understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The participants were selected on the bases that they must be first-line managers and had experienced downsizing exercise in their organisations. The guide to the interview was developed to reflect the questions in line with study objectives. The interview questions were equally reviewed by other research professionals to validate the contents before using it to conduct the interviews. Before the interviews, the researchers also sent formal letters to all selected participants, describing the purpose of the research and confidentiality issues. The participants were educated and given consent forms to sign before the interview commenced. The interviews were conducted in two stages:

The first stage of the interview involved drawing of 7 participants from the 4 firms selected out of a total of 20 firms, and unstructured interviews were conducted. All the interview sessions at this stage lasted between 45 minutes to an hour. Prompts were also used to elicit deeper meaning based on the relevant themes that emerged during the interview. Themes that emerged at this point formed the basis for deeper understanding during the second stage of the interview. The second stage involved the designing of semi-structured questionnaire based on the themes that emerged from the first stage of the unstructured interview. Thirteen (13) participants were interviewed at this stage. All the interviews lasted about an hour. Both the pilot interview and semi-structured interviews complimented each other to ensure that the objective of the research was attached. The Table 1 below depicts the number of participants and the names used for coding the data in each organisation. Because of the confidential issues, the names of the organisations are not mentioned in this research.

Table 1: No of participants and names of organisations

No of participants	Participants	Role	Staff strength
3	RA RB RC	stock broking	135
2	RD RE	stock broking	50
1	RF	stock broking	120
1	RG	stock broking	75
2	RH RI	stock broking	80
3	RJ RK RL	stock broking	35
1	RM	stock broking	78
1	RO	stock broking	55
1	RP	stock broking	22
1	RQ	stock broking	109
1	RR	stock broking	135
1	RS	stock broking	140
2	RT RU	stock broking	105
Total=20			

DATA ANALYSIS

Inductive thematic data analysis approach was used in analysing the data since the codes used for the research were data-driven. The code names and definitions were specified which helped to unravel the characteristics of the codes in simpler terms (Miles and Huberman, 1994) as seen in table 2 below. According to Boyatzis, 1998, this process helps to check the credibility and dependability of the data. The data analysis process in Figure 1 below is made up of seven stages.
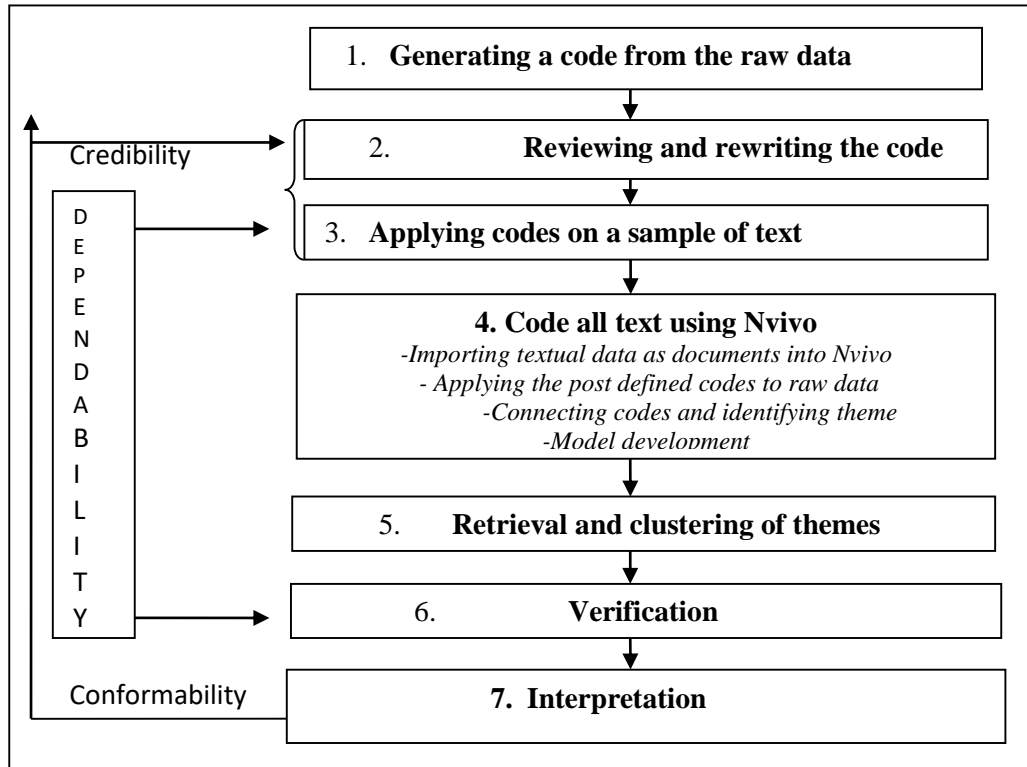
Figure 1: Data analysis process

Stage one to three of the data analysis process was adopted during the pilot interview where the initial raw data from the unstructured interview was analysed. At stage three all the interview data both from the pilot interview and the semi-structured interviews were imported into NVIVO. NVivo is a software used in the analyses of qualitative data. The software was adopted because of the huge data involved in the analysis. This helped in coding and management of data easily. It is important to mention themes for this study drawn inductively were applied within and across cases. This assisted in the interpretation of the findings (see Boyatzis, 1998). Guide for coding which aided the coding of the data is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Guide for coding the data

Anxiety	This is defined as fear of survivor employees with respected to downsizing
Feeling of Uncertainty	This is define as doubt, and pressures during the period of downsizing
Insecurity of Job	This is define as worry as a result of high unemployment rate because of human connection playing a vital role in securing a job
Reduction in Individual Motivation	This is define as lack of drive to carry out assigned responsibility because of feeing of job insecurity
Poor Communication	This is define as dissatisfaction of employees leading to poor relations and communication

In a bid to validate the outcome of the research, inter-coder reliability analysis was conducted using both the quotes and codes drawn from the raw data (Bryman, 2008) with two judges. The judges evaluated the quotes extracted and related to the themes that emerged (Macredie and Mijinyawa, 2011). The results of the analysis in Table 3 showed that it surpassed 70% benchmark as suggested by Miles and Huberman, (1994). This was an approach used to unveil ways through which data can be analysed and reported (dependability check) followed by the conformability checks to examine how the data is firmly linked to the interpretation (see Boyatzis, 1998).

Table 3: Reliability analysis

Psychological Impact of Downsizing on Survivors	Number of judges	Reliability	
		First judge	Second judge
	2	0.87(87%)	0.82(82%)

FINDINGS

Tables 4 and 5 below show codes, their supporting cases and supporting evidences. Codes in this study were generated and clustered based on the emerging patterns in the data (Boyatzis 1998). This process unveiled the psychological impact of downsizing on Survivor-managers

. **Table 4: Codes and sample supporting cases**

Codes	Related cases	No of Cases Coded
Anxiety	RD, RE, RF, RG, RH, RI, RJ, RK, RL RM,RU, RQ	12 /20 (60%)
Feeling of Uncertainty	RA, RB, RC, RH, RJ, RM, RO, RP, RQ, RR, RS,RT, RU	13/20 (65%)
Insecurity of Job	RD, RE, RF, RG, RH, RI, RJ, RK, RL, RM, RO,RP,	12/20 (60 %)
Reduction in Individual Motivation	RA, RB, RC, RD, RE, RH, RR, RP, RT, RU	10/20 (50%)
Poor Communication	RG, RH, RI, RJ, RN, RL, RM, RO, RP, RQ, RR, RS, RT, RP	14/20 (70%)

Table 5: Codes and sample supporting evidence

Codes	Supporting Evidences
Anxiety	"*when this downsizing thing started at first, virtually all of us were scared and miserable with anxiety especially if management is having a meeting because singe one of us was sure who will be affected''* (RD) "*For me I start feeling unreasonably anxious because I was not sure if I will be next in line to leave the organisation*" (RH)
Feeling of Uncertainty	"*...To be frank with you there is that feeling of uncertainty because as an employee, nobody knows what will happen in the next minute*"(RJ)

	", The period of downsizing was a period associated with anxiety and uncertainty"(RO) *"...I was really in a state of confusion on what my fate would be with respect to my job"(RH)*
Insecurity of Job	*"Some many thoughts come to me such as if lose my job how would I foot my bills? Who do I pay for my children school fees? "(RO)* *"....to be frank, I don't want to be where there is no job security "(RL)* *"I was not conformable losing my friends whom I have been working for so long in this organisation(RN)*
Reduction in Individual Motivation	*"It is highly unlikely that I will be motivated if I receive a report to that some people are layoff , the drive will no longer be there" (RH)* *"As soon as I heard that the company will embark on downsizing, I often spent most of my time looking for another job rather than putting more effort on the job"(RR)*
Poor Communication	*"...It was a sad experience because there was no formal meeting with management on downsizing, we were anxiously making calls to HR know what was going on"(RP)* *"...It was an ugly situation none of us know this ahead of time, at least I will feel a bit protected or loved" (RL)*

The framework of the Psychological Impact of Downsizing on Survivor-managers in Nigeria

The psychological contract is a series of mutual and reciprocal obligations which the individuals in employment relationship believe to exist between them and the employing organisation. Any breach or failure by either party in fulfilling its obligation will usually result in psychological and emotional impact such as anxiety, the feeling of uncertainty, and insecurity of job, poor motivation and communication which will impact both parties in their relationship. This is said to be consistent with Downsizing practice which usually involves deliberate alteration of implicit contract or reduction in the workforce as a means of cutting costs. The framework in Figure 2 below shows that psychological and emotional impact of downsizing on survivor-managerial employees in Nigeria may impact them in several ways. The finding depicted in the framework presents an understanding and interpretation of psychological contract breach and its attendant impact on survivor-managers. These findings are discussed below.
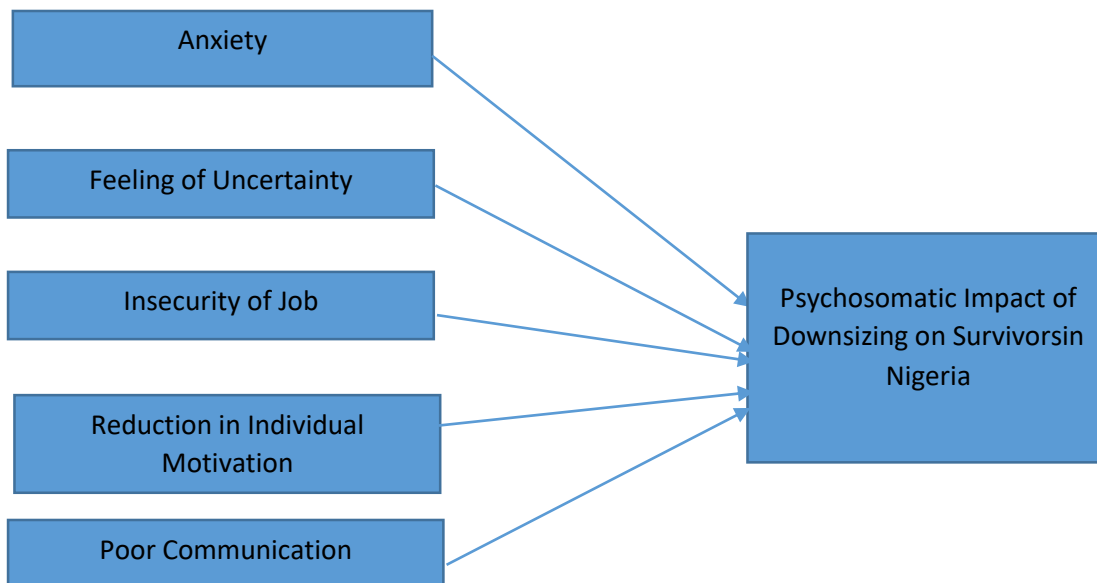
Figure 2: Framework of the Psychological Impact of Downsizing on Survivors in Nigeria

DISCUSSION

Anxiety

Evidence from the study shows that the feeling of anxiety and fear for the likelihood of loss of jobs were significantly indicated by most of the survivor managerial employees during downsizing exercise. This is consistent with previous studies that indicate that employees experience psychological and emotional impacts such as anxiety, grief, fear of job loss and anger during organisational downsizing (Noer, 1993; Bashford, 2004; McCann et al., 2008). The opinions of the participants are captured in the expressions below;

"when this downsizing thing started at first, virtually all of us were scared and miserable with anxiety especially if management is having a meeting because since none of us were sure who will be affected'' (RD)
"For me, I started feeling unreasonably anxious because I was not sure if I will be next in line to leave the organisation" (RH)
", I was really afraid, and that made me come on time and do my work so that I will not be sacked" (RN)
"....because if I am sacked, I will not be able to provide for my family. So I was really scared "(RS)

The feeling of Uncertainty in the Workplace

Findings from the study revealed that interviewed study participants indicated the feeling of uncertainty and pressures during the period of downsizing. According to the findings, these feelings based on the ongoing downsizing exercise and nobody knows who may likely be the next victim and what fate holds for them concerning their job. These feelings are amply captured in the participants' statements thus:-

"...To be frank with you there is that feeling of uncertainty because as an employee, nobody knows what will happen in the next minute" (RJ)

", The period of downsizing was a period associated with anxiety and uncertainty" (RO)

"...I was really in a state of confusion on what my fate would be concerning my job" (RH)
''I was really confused, doubts constantly ruled my mind'' (RA)

Insecurity of Job

Finding from research investigation revealed that participants have negative psychological stress and uncertainty on the continuance of their jobs. This feeling of job insecurity may be a result of the Nigerian environment with evidence of a high unemployment rate and where human connection plays a vital role in securing a job. This finding is consistent with the result of other previous studies which indicate that employees revealed the negative emotional impact of job insecurity and associated stressful work conditions (Sels et al., 2004; Suazo, 2009). See the opinion of the participants in the under listed statements.

"We were kind of insured job wise because we did not know what was going on or what the company is trying to do "(RH)
"...there are lots of insecurity in minds of colleagues, everyone"(RP)
"So many thoughts came to me such as; if I lost my job, how will I foot my bills? How do I pay for my children's school fees? " (RO)

"....to be frank, I don't want to be where there is no job security" (RL)

"I was not conformable losing my friends whom I have been working with for so long in this organisation (RN)

Reduction in Individual Motivation

Consistent with other previous studies, participants indicated the feeling of reduced individual motivation and job satisfaction (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Dadi, 2012; Wolfe and Robinson, 1997). They emphasized that their work drive was significantly affected by the associated negative emotional and psychological impact of downsizing practice. For example, some of the interviewed participants stated that they were unhappy with the events in the workplace and reported coming to work late, spending most times on job sites and paying less attention to deadlines. These views are captured in the participants' own words.

"It is highly unlikely that I will be motivated if I receive a report that some colleagues have been laid-off, the drive will no longer be there" (RH)
"...As soon as I heard that the company will embark on downsizing, I often spent most of my time looking for another job rather than putting more effort on the job"(RR)
"...as soon as we heard it my attitude and passion for work changed. You see, I use to come to work at about 7 am every day, but now, I do come by 9 am" (RA)
"I was really unhappy about everything although the company was aware of the dynamics of the economy at that point" (RP)

Poor and Insufficient Communication

Poor and insufficient communication about on-going organisational downsizing was revealed by participants as contributing to the emotional and psychological impact on the remaining employees. Most of the participants expressed lack of information and management inability to brief the employees about the procedures and modalities of the downsizing practice. They argued that formal briefings and counselling about the impending exercise may help to lessen and assuage the feeling and the impact of workplace events. The opinions of the participants were expressed in their own words thus;-

"...to be frank with you, this was impromptu, this even made it worse because the company did not communicate us. This sulked all of us."(RN)
"Had it been that the company notified us through any medium for a couple of weeks about the downsizing thing and tell us about the options available we wouldn't have felt this heavily. This is the way developed nations operate and that would have not been felt so much" (RO)
"...It was a sad experience because there was no formal meeting with management on downsizing; we were anxiously making calls to HR department to know what was going on" (RP)
"...It was an ugly situation, none of us knows this ahead of time, at least I would have felt a bit protected or loved" (RL)

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The greatest misunderstanding about the concept of downsizing and its implementation is the naivety of focussing on the key objectives of competitiveness, and cost-cutting without regards to the emotional and psychological wellbeing on workers especially the survivors. This is considering the valuable nature of the human elements in achieving these key organisational objectives. Downsizing practice is said to be consistent with breach of implicit obligations; and individuals at the nexus of workplace event perceive and interpret management action based on individual cultural perception. Evidence from this study showed that survivors indicated several negative emotional and psychological outcomes. These include, reduced individual motivation and dissatisfaction with the job, feeling of uncertainty about their future in the organisation, fear and anxiety on outcome of the ongoing process, insecurity of job and lack of prior knowledge or insufficient information from the management on the ongoing exercise on the expected outcome. These negative psychological and emotional impact exhibited by the survivor employees may be due to factors within the environment such as lack of jobs, high rate of unemployment, lack of social security, cultural obligations and systematic corruption. These findings have some implications:

Theoretical
The framework developed in this study may serve as a frame of references (Agarwal et al., 2011; Macredie and Mijinyawa, 2011) in understanding the emotional and psychological impact of downsizing or breach on workers especially the survivors. The operational definitions of the themes adopted in this study and the impact of downsizing on survivors can be used as analytical tools for researchers to understand and explain the emotional and psychological impact of downsizing exercise in organisations.

Considerable attempt has been made by most researchers in this area to adopt any case study, experimentation or survey method while qualitative methods that specifically implemented the

inductive approach are barely used in this area. Although these approaches are quite commendable, this approach adopted in this study will further help in creating awareness on the need to diversify such research in terms of the methods.

Macredie and Mijinyawa, (2011) have argued that the failure of some research works to define the theoretical concepts had made the exploration and validation of variables difficult in some studies, hence the themes that emerged in this study can be used to develop hypotheses to validate the findings emerged in this study. The researchers argue that comparative studies or cross-sectional survey may be adopted to better validate and understand the impact of downsizing on survivor-managers in Nigeria.

Practical

Managers implementing downsizing process should adopt an open and transparent process and be sensitive to the wellbeing of the victims and survivors alike to curtail the negative emotional and psychological impact on surviving employees and ensure the attainment of the envisaged objectives of downsizing practice. It may also be necessary to adopt an open and planned engagement with the survivor employees (including the survivor-managers) such as offering counselling, re-orientation, and information support for more positive outcomes on surviving employees and organisation.

Dedrick and West, (2003) note that frameworks are useful tools for decision makers wanting to build models. This framework may serve as a frame of reference for organisations that want to have a deeper understanding of downsizing and its impact on survivors. Furthermore, the framework could use to understand why the organisation's productivity is below expectation as well as the justification for the courses of action (Benbasat and Moore, 1992). Organisations may adopt the argument here and the empirical understanding to create awareness of the impending challenges that might be encountered during downsizing.

Limitations and Future Research

First, the researchers adopted a qualitative approach in line with the research design, collection and analysis of the data. According to Macredie and Mijinyawa (2011), the resultant effect may be unanticipated respondents and research bias in the analysis of the data which limits the understanding of the alternative approaches. Therefore, future research should adopt a different approach such as mixed-method to further validate and confirm the findings associated with the framework. Secondly, the issue of theoretical generalization has always been a limitation associated with qualitative studies. Hence, the generalization of the study framework is required to be established across a wider population. Other approaches such as the confirmatory statistical approach should be deployed to test, validity and confirm the framework. This may serve as a benchmark for the on the theoretical constructs or factors impacting on survivors during downsizing in Nigeria.

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