



**STAFF MULTI-PURPOSE COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES' INSURANCE AND
MEMBERS' WELFARE IN PUBLIC TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, AKWA IBOM
STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the difference in the mean score between staff multi-purpose cooperative societies' insurance and population score. One research question was raised and one hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Akwa Ibom State. Population of the study was 5,137 cooperative society members drawn from four Staff Multi-purpose Cooperative Societies in four Public Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State. The sample size for the study was 357 using purposive sampling technique. A researchers-developed instrument entitled "Staff Multi-purpose Cooperative Societies' Insurance and Members' Welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions (STAFFMPCSIMWPTI)" Questionnaire was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was face-validated by three research experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool and it yielded coefficient index of 0.85. The statistical tool used in answering the research question was Mean and Standard Deviation while one sample t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 alpha with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The study revealed that, there is difference between the mean score of variable of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies' insurance and the population mean score. The study concluded that staff multi-purpose cooperative societies' insurance have a profoundly positive impact on the welfare of members in public tertiary institutions. It was therefore recommended among others that the management of public tertiary institutions should prioritize the establishment and support of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies as a strategic initiative for promoting staff welfare and well-being. The government and relevant regulatory agencies should provide policy support and incentives to encourage the growth of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies in public tertiary institutions.

Introduction

Public tertiary institutions are generally regarded as institutions of higher education that are supported and funded mainly by public funds. These institutions offer post-secondary education and training, including Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics and Colleges of Education. While they are non-compulsory, they provide specialized education at a third stage of development, beyond secondary school level. This is so because they offer specialized education beyond secondary school, marking the third stage of educational development. The production of higher man-power by these tertiary institutions requires and is usually through the services of both professional teachers (lecturers) and administrative officers. Unfortunately, recent observations show that the quality of education provided by these institutions (not limited to Akwa Ibom State), have been hampered for several reasons which presumably include welfare of lecturers and non-teaching staff as evidenced by many



of them being unable to meet some of their basic needs like shelter and procurement of automobiles. This probably informs the need for these staff to come together to form cooperative societies.

It is an established fact that cooperative societies play a vital role in the lives of its members as they are primarily concerned with the welfare of its members through provision of a conducive and affordable avenue for its members to acquire the necessary needs. In addition to bringing together individuals to form a group for a common goal, cooperative societies also assume the responsibility of protecting its members by offering assistance to its members in order that they can achieve mutual needs of the members in an easy and more effective way that provides an economic boost to its members (Akerele & Adekunmbi, 2018).

The well-being of individuals centres more on material consumption and luxury goods. The term “well-being” is used to express a condition in which a person or a nation lives, and in which they also help to create values for the promotion of the living standard of its members. This could be the reason some outcome of many researches show that cooperative societies have assumed the crucial role of enhancing the welfare of staff members by providing access to financial resources for capital accumulation, investment and consumption purposes (Birčiaková *et al.*, 2015). These cooperative societies are designed to meet the needs of their members, promoting economic activities beyond close social networks and fostering social responsibility and university-community care. Also, operating as democratically controlled businesses, cooperative societies create employment opportunities, build capital in communities and empower less powerful members of society to participate in market forces and community development (Usip & Ukoima, 2023).

However, the researcher is worried that these lofty objectives of the Nigerian tertiary institutions’ cooperative societies may not be achieved because many members of the society still could not meet their basic needs such as accessing good health care among others. Thus, the need to examine if the cooperative societies’ packages could help to address the needs of staff in Nigeria public tertiary institutions, with Akwa Ibom State as the case study. The package particularly considered in this study is insurance which could help cooperative societies address the needs of its members.

Cooperative Insurance is a mutual aid system where the members share their premium to establish mutual assets, and funds are paid at times out of unexpected contingencies to compensate for the financial deficit as well as stabilize the lives of the members and family in preparation for various risks that jeopardize the daily life such as death, hospitalization, house damage or traffic accident (Japan Cooperative Insurance Association Incorporated, 2020).

Welfare as averred by Holo *et al.* (2021) is “well-being”, or “what is good” for the people. The authors described it as the provision of social services, health care, housing, social security, education and social work which are believed to be government responsibility to provide for its citizens. Welfare is the availability of resources and presence of conditions required for reasonably comfortable, healthy and secure living.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria today, the entire labour forces are encompassed by a common feature of dissatisfaction as a result of enormous factors limiting the smooth delivery of the social contract to both the employers and the employees. The Nigeria tertiary institutions are not excluded from the wide-ranging and dwindling welfare of the staff in discontent and aggravation. Recently, there has been series of industrial conflicts in the Nigeria public tertiary institutions ranging from working condition of the staff, irregular payment of salaries, high cost of living, death of members as a result of illnesses as well as non-review of working



condition and salaries. Though, the mode of operation in these cooperative societies differs in one way or the other, it is perceived that they are all aimed at catering for the welfare of their members for sustainable standard of living.

Despite the progressively high cost of living, staff multi-purpose cooperative societies are seen as the rescuers of the staff of public tertiary institutions through the various packages offered by the staff multi-purpose cooperative societies. These packages ranges from insurance to others. Practically, staff of public tertiary institutions, especially in Akwa Ibom State, suffered several setbacks that have influenced their well-being negatively. However, more worries are on the trending menace faced by members of these staff multi-purpose cooperative societies ranging from multiple loan facilities to being indebted to other organizations, the ugly demise of some of the members during the Covid19 pandemic, as well as the year 2022 unions strike that led to the “No Work No Pay” fracas that ensued between the Federal Government of Nigeria and staff of public tertiary institutions. But, the question is “could it be that the staff multi-purpose cooperative societies no longer have the required and necessary facilities to accommodate their members? Or the present standards of living of the members have shifted positively in favour of the members compared to when they were not members of these staff multi-purpose cooperative societies? Or do the staff multi-purpose cooperative societies assist the communities where these tertiary institutions are situated?”. All these have directly created a point of concern to the researchers which led to the study titled “Staff Multi-purpose Cooperative Societies’ Insurance and Members’ Welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria”.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the difference between the Mean score and population score of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies’ (SMPCS) insurance and members’ welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the difference between the mean score of SMPCS insurance on members’ welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State and population Mean score

Research Question

The study sought to provide answer to the following question.

1. What is the difference between the Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members’ welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State and the population Mean score?

Research Hypothesis

One research hypothesis was formulated to guide the study at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: The Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members’ welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State is not significantly different from the population Mean score.

Theoretical Framework

Public Relation Theory by Edward Bernays (1923)

The public relation theory was developed by Edward Bernays in the year 1923. The theory is of the opinion that workers’ welfare is provided by employers to create a good image or impression in the minds of the workers and the public. The employer advertises their welfare package to create goodwill and attract qualified personnel into the organization. This theory provides the basis for an atmosphere of goodwill between the labour and management, and also between management and the public. Employees’ welfare under this



theory work as a sort of an advertisement and help an organization to project its good image, build up and promote good and healthy public relations. The labour welfare movement or an exhibition of a labour welfare programme may help the management projects a good image of the organization.

The theory is related to this study due to the fact that it focused on building membership support, exposes one to understanding the needs, desires and motivations required by members of the cooperative societies, work toward enhancing reputation and credibility as well as create effective communication that can help in the operation of the cooperative societies.

Literature Review

Cooperative society as a member-owned and controlled organization, is an entity that operates for the benefits of its members who work collectively to improve their standards of living. Cooperative Society consist of a group of people who have voluntarily come together for the interest of all and to address the needs that require significant capital. The principles associated with cooperative society include voluntary and open membership, democratic membership control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, cooperation among the cooperatives as well as concern for community (Oyalowo, 2018).

International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) as reported in Campbell *et al.* (2017), described the cooperative society as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. According to the author, cooperative societies are formed based on the powerful idea that together, a group of people can achieve goals that cannot be achieved singly. Cooperative societies help members to address economic problems, and their ultimate goal is to encourage thrift among members and meet credit needs of those who might otherwise fall prey to loan sharks and other predatory lenders. Furthermore, the author postulated that cooperative societies can be set up in poor communities where access to means of secure savings and credit at non-exploitative terms is of great importance. It can exist among traders, farmers, craftsmen, artisan, professional and so on, who pool their resources together to meet their common needs by means of regular savings.

The essence of being a member of a cooperative society is always centred on the need to augment one's income, meet financial obligations in order to live a reasonable comfortable life by meeting their welfare needs such as food needs, housing needs, mobility needs, medical needs, educational needs and other family needs (Holo, *et al.*, 2021).

Insurance

Malambo (2023) opined insurance to be one of the contributing areas that promote the national economies of many countries in areas such as employment creation, tax payment, investment, savings and risk stabilization amongst others. The author explained that insurance alleviate government efforts in the provision of some amenities such as pension, improving lives of people, economic diversification, mitigating against risks and attracting direct foreign investment through risk stabilization.

According to IISA (2022), there are two main types of insurance; long-term insurance or life insurance which is concerned with insurance of a person. It is long-term in nature such that it covers schemes such as life insurance, term insurance, pension and etc. While the second type of insurance is short-term insurance which is concerned with insurance of



properties such as vehicles, buildings and related liability insurance (this is short term in nature and usually arranged on an annual basis and renewed for a further period of twelve months thereafter). IISA explained some of the schemes under long-term insurance to be whole life, term insurance, life and pension, annuities, funeral covers, mortgage protection, critical illness cover, health insurance and disability covers. While schemes under short-term insurance are categorized under motor, fire, combined insurance cover, fidelity guarantee, liability cover, workmen compensation, machinery breakdown.

Welfare is seen as a state of well-being and quality of life of individuals, groups or communities. This can be observed economically, socially, psychological and physically. Stratton in Poi (2020) defined employee welfare programmes as the good fortune, health, happiness and prosperity of a person, group or organization (well-being). Stratton furthered that welfare is an act that involves financial or other assistance to an individual or family from an organization, city state or national government. The welfare need not be monetary alone, but also in kind or other forms, capable of being monetized. These include items such as allowances, housing, medical insurance, food and transportation.

Nadeau and Nadeau (2016) averred that welfare has a direct link to general well-being and quality of life and decent standard of living of individual(s). The authors further explained that welfare means “well-being” or what is “good” for people. It is taken to mean precision of social services such as health care, housing, social security, education and social work which are believed to be government responsibility to provide for its citizen. Spicker in Holo *et al.* (2021) maintained that welfare of cooperative members can be measured by the ability to foot their medical services bills as a result of being a member of cooperative society, meeting of their accommodation (housing) needs, ability to pay for their children/wards education as well as feeding expenses and being able to acquire basic personal and household items needed for reasonable comfortable live.

Research Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Osuala in Abiodun (2023) explained descriptive design as a type of research design that involves the use of various analytical techniques employed in the description or explanation of a phenomenon. Using this design enabled the researcher to collect, organize, analyse and describe data as they exist without any interference, hence, it was the choice of the researcher to adopt the design. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State.

The population of this study comprised 5,137 cooperative members. (This is made up of 3,850 members from Uniuyo Staff-Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society Ltd, 613 members from Akwa Ibom State University Staff-Multi-purpose Cooperatives Society, 619 members from Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic Staff-Multi-purpose Cooperative Society, and Akwa Ibom State College of Education Staff-Multi-purpose Cooperative Society – 55 members).

The sample size for the study was 357, determined using Krejcie and Morgan’s formula (1970). Purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of the cooperative societies that were used for the study.

A researchers-developed instrument entitled “Staff Multi-purpose Cooperative Societies’ Insurance and Members’ Welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions (STAFFMPCSIMWPTI)” Questionnaire was used in collecting data for the study.

The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85. The trial test was carried out on 30 respondents who were not



part of the actual study. The Cronbach Alpha was preferred because it gives a more accurate estimate of instrument reliability (Chikezie and Joseph, 2021).

The distribution of the questionnaire was carried out by the researchers with the help of four research assistants in order to achieve high rate of return and prevent loss of instrument.

The statistical tool used in answering the research question was Mean and Standard Deviation while one sample t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 alpha with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Results

Research Question 1

What is the difference between the Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members' welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State and the population Mean score?

Table 1: Mean Score of SMPCS Insurance on Members' Welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions, Akwa Ibom State

n= 343

Variable	\bar{x}	U	SD	Df	Decision
Insurance	19.25	12.5	.94	342	Diff

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 1 revealed that the 343 members of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies had Mean score of 19.25 with population/criterion Mean of 12.5. This indicates that the observed Mean (19.25) exceeds the criterion Mean (12.5) by 6.76 points, representing a significant deviation of 54 percent above the expected standard. Hence, it suggests that members of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies in public tertiary institutions have high level of welfare packages due to insurance knowledge. This difference could be as a result of influence of independent variable (insurance) on dependent variable (welfare of cooperative societies' members).

Research Hypothesis 1

The Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members' welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom state is not significantly different from the population Mean score.

Table 2: Population t-test of SMPCS Insurance on Members' Welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions, Akwa Ibom State

n=343

Variable	\bar{x}	U	SD	T	Df	Sig
Insurance	19.25	12.5	.94	132.56	342	.000

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 2 showed the t-value $_{(342)} = 132.56$, $p (000)$ less than alpha level (.05), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected. This implies that the Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members' welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State significantly differs from the population Mean score of 12.5.

Discussion of Findings

The result showed a difference between the Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members' welfare in Public Tertiary Institutions, Akwa Ibom State and the population Mean



score and a significantly greater Mean score of SMPCS insurance on members' welfare in public tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State than the population Mean score of 12.5. This significant difference suggests that members of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies in public tertiary institutions have a higher Mean score of insurance compared to the population Mean score. This could be due to the fact that cooperative societies provide insurance services to their members, which may lead to higher insurance uptake and financial security among the members. The implication of this finding is that insurance serves as one of the major tools for harnessing resources towards promoting the welfare of members as it highlights the importance of providing insurance services to members of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies in public tertiary institutions, which can lead to improved financial security and risk management.

Conclusion

The study concluded that staff multi-purpose cooperative societies' insurance have a profoundly positive impact on the welfare of members in public tertiary institutions. This package (insurance) provide financial benefits, leading to improved financial stability and health care security, which in turn enhances job satisfaction and the general well-being. Also, this welfare package offered by the staff multi-purpose cooperative societies enable members to achieve a better balance between work and personal life. The study also concluded that public tertiary institutions that support staff multi-purpose cooperative societies demonstrate a commitment to employees' welfare and well-being, leading to improved productivity and employees' engagement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The management of public tertiary institutions should prioritize the establishment and support of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies as a strategic initiative for promoting staff welfare and well-being.
2. Institutions of tertiary education should provide financial and logistical support to these societies to enable them to provide effective services to their members.
3. The government (both federal and state) and relevant regulatory agencies should provide policy support and incentives to encourage the growth and development of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies in public tertiary institutions.
4. Public tertiary institutions should integrate staff welfare and well-being into their overall strategic plans and goals, recognizing the critical role that staff play in achieving institutional objectives.
5. Further research should be conducted to explore the impact of staff multi-purpose cooperative societies on staff welfare and well-being in other contexts, such as private tertiary institutions and other sectors.

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