

Full Length Research Paper

An assessment of the organisation commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority workers

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This study examined the organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority Workers using organisation commitment scale with ($r = 0.71$) as a measuring instrument. Five hundred workers were randomly selected from the various departments of the Nigerian Port Authority Lagos. They comprised male and female workers with their age ranges between 25 to 50 with a mean age of 32.5 years. Three hypotheses were developed and tested using T-test and Analysis of variance statistical tools. The results indicate that: no significant difference was observed in the organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority Workers based on gender, educational qualifications and marital status. It was recommended that management of all organisations should always try to meet at least 75% of the demand of their workers. As this will motivate them to give their best and be more committed to the organisation.

Key words: Organisational commitment, workers, educational qualification, gender, marital status.

INTRODUCTION

Organisational Commitment has received increasing interest by organisation researchers in recent years, due to their importance in understanding and predicting outcome like turnover and absenteeism (Boal, 1989). However, there is relatively limited research available on the ability of organisational commitment to predict job performance (Meyer, Paunonen, Genlatly, Goffin and Jaction cited in Tella 2004). Attempt to predict the behaviour of individual workers in organisation has focus on organisational commitment as a crucial psychological factor. From the review of literature on organisational commitment, Mathieu and Zajack (1990) have concluded that effective involvement is not relevant as a behaviour predictor.

Reicher (1989) pointed out that the concept of commitment refers to acceptance of the goals and values of an organisation. Therefore, is important to bear in mind that organisations usually encompass many different constituencies that may have conflicting goals to the extent that

the degree of commitment is defined as a willingness to dedicate oneself to particular values and goals. It seems essential therefore to specify the nature of these values and goals in order to predict people behaviour at work. However, recent researchers have underlined the usefulness of investigation the effects of specific rather than broad commitment measures in line with Reicher's view. Such research efforts as Becker (1992), Becker and Billings (1993) and Hunt and Morgan (1994) have mainly tried to assess the extent to which people feel committed to different organisational constituencies.

The Nigerian Port Authority was established with one of its sole aims as the provision and operation of Port facilities in Nigeria its dominant business, and to optimise the contribution of the core port business. In modern management, it is advocated that this objective and others are made available in written forms and given to the workers in the organisation. This is to ensure that every worker is aware of the common goal he or she is contributing to

achieve. The contributions of the individuals in the system are very important, as this is the basis for achieving organisational objectives. In other words, it should be noted that many things contribute to employees' commitment to their organisation. Mention could be made of the conditions of work, the climate in the place of work, the remuneration, workers welfare, and leadership styles and so on. Not all these are being put in place by many. It is this that bothers the minds of the researchers. Hence, the present study examined the assessment of organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority Workers in Lagos.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority Workers in Lagos. Based on this, these objectives are to be met by the study:

- I. To determine whether Gender differences exist in the organisational commitment of (NPA) workers.
- II. To ascertain the extent to which educational qualifications of the NPA workers determine their level of commitment to the organisation.
- III. To examine the differential effect of marital status on organisational commitment of NPA workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A wide variety of definition and measures of organisational commitment exists (Becker and Randall, 1995). As an attitude, organisational commitment is most often defined as:

- I. A strong desire to remain a member of a particular organisation;
- II. A willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation;
- III. A defined belief in, and acceptance of the values and goals of the organisation (Mowday et al., 1982).

According to Northcraft and Neale (1996) organisational commitment is an attitude reflecting employee's loyalty to their organisation and is an ongoing process through which organisational participants express the concern for the organisation and its continued success and well being. To Salancik (1977 cited in Tella, 2003) commitment is a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions to beliefs that sustain his own involvement. However, three features of behaviour are important in binding individuals to acts: the visibility of the acts, the extent to which the outcomes are irrevocable, and the degree to which the person undertakes the action voluntarily. To this author, commitment can be increased

and harnessed to obtain support for organisational ends and interest through such plays as participation in decisions about actions. Because of the multidimensional nature of organisational commitment, there is growing support for a three-component model proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991), all of which have implications for the continuing participation of the individual in the organisation. The three dimensions are as follows:

- affect commitment which refers to a psychological attachment to the organisation (that is individuals stay with the organisation because they want to).
- Continuance commitment refers to costs associated with leaving the organisation (because they need to); and
- Normative commitment refers to a perceived obligation to remain with the organisation (that is individuals stay with the organisation because they feel they should (Irving et al., 1997).

Meyer and Allen (1991) asserts that commitment can come in different forms, as well as having different foci. According to Becker (1992) the individual can feel committed to the organisation, top management, supervisors, or the work group. Besides these foci, he explained that research has examined workers commitment to career (e.g. Blau, 1985) unions (e.g. Morrow and Wirth, 1989). Hackett et al. (1994) had earlier asserts that organisational commitment is of interest to both behavioural scientists and practising managers while Mowday et al. (1982) explained that, most participants are inclined to associate high commitment with increased productivity and lower turn over.

Studies on the outcomes of different forms of commitment have provided strong indication that affective and normative commitment are positively related and continuance commitment is negatively connected with organisational outcomes such as performance and citizenship behaviours (Hackett et al., 1994; Shore and Wayne, 1993). Based on these findings, it is important for employers of labour, to identify workers commitment pattern and map out strategies for enhancing those ones relevant to the organisational goals.

There has been profusion of research works on the correlates of commitment. Meyer et al. (1993), for example, found that age was positively correlated with affective and normative commitment. It was however discovered by the researchers that age was unrelated to continuance commitment. Adeyemo (1997) reported that female teachers expressed better job commitment than their male counterparts did. Tang and Kim (1999) in an exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses reported that combinations of factors significantly predict job commitment. Also Yung et al. (1999) in an examination of the factors associated with organisational commitment among blue collar workers reported that the following were positively and significantly related to communication, leadership, job satisfaction, extrinsic and intrinsic

exchange as well as extrinsic and intrinsic rewards.

Dornstein and Matalon (1989) gave the report of their own study by stated that eight variables were relevant to organisational commitment. These include interesting work, co-workers attitudes towards the organisation, organisational dependency, age, education, employment alternative, attitude of family and friends, and importance to organisation. The variables according to them explained 65% of the variance in organisational commitment. Glisson and Durick (1988) in their own study of 319 human service organisation workers used to analyse the effects of multiple predictors (job, organisation and workers characteristics) on the job satisfaction and commitment showed that skill variety and role ambiguity are the best predictors of satisfaction while leadership and other organisation's variable as age are the best predictor of commitment.

Ellemer et al. (1989), pointed out that background variables such as gender, level of education, or team size were found out to be clearly related to the three forms of commitment. It was further established in the study that participants showed stronger commitment the younger they were and less experience they had in their present jobs. Further evidence gather from literature revealed that age and marital status has been associated with commitment (Adeyemo, 2001). Meyer and Allen (1984) also confirmed that age might be correlated with commitment because it serves as proxy seniority that is associated with opportunity to better one's position in the work. Meyer et al. (1993) found as well that age was related to commitment among nurses while Colarelli and Bishop (1990) reported a positive correlation between education and organisation commitment. On the contrary, Irving et al., (1997) found that age not related to organisational commitment of workers. Although, gender has also been found not to be related to organisational commitment by Mathieu and Zajac (1990). While Irving et al. (1997) reported that men in their sample experience higher level of commitment.

Tella (2004) studied the work motivation in relation to organisational commitment and job satisfaction of library personnel in academic and Research libraries in Oyo State Nigeria. He reported that significant difference exists in the organisational commitment of the library personnel based on their educational qualification. Other reports of his study include: significance difference exists in the organisational commitment of married and single workers; no difference was observed in the organisation commitment of the personnel irrespective of their gender. Ajayi (1981) reported that University teachers are neither significantly satisfied nor significantly committed. His finding also showed that the least satisfied group among the subjects were the associate professors; and the least committed group are the female lecturer. He concluded that job satisfaction and commitment tend to increase with status.

Riechl and Sipple in Luthans (1980) found that workers

commitment and organisational commitment are unrelated with commitment associated with work environment. While Tang and Kim (1999) reported that, the linear combination of the factors budget, Evil and success was a significant predictor of the linear combination of organisational commitment.

Statement of the hypotheses

In this study three hypotheses were tested for significance at 0.05 margin of error. They include:

1. There will be no significant difference in the organisational commitment of male and female NPA workers.
2. There will be no significance difference in the organisational commitment of NPA workers based on their education qualifications.
3. There will be no significant difference in the organisational commitment of married and single NPA workers.

METHOD

Population and sample

The population of this study comprised the entire work force of the Nigeria Port Authority, Lagos, Nigeria; regardless of their positions, sex, experience, levels, status and department. This is because it was not possible to make use of the totality of the population of this study (that is the entire workforce of the Nigeria Port Authority). They comprised male and female with their age ranged between 25 to 50 years with a mean age of 32.5 and a standard deviation of 12.5 years. Table 1 contains the details of sample selection.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for the collection of data on this study was 'organisational commitment scale' with items adapted from Mowday et al. (1979)'s Organisational Commitment Questionnaire. It was a Likert type scale with response ranges from Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was re-established when it was administered on 50 sample; with the result yielded $r=0.71$ via test-retest reliability method of 2 weeks interval. This figure is in agreement with the declaration by Kentz (1977) that a high reliability value of 0.70 and above shows that a test is reliable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented in Tables 2 to 4. Table 2 presents the results of the analysis conducted on the organisational commitment of Nigerian Port Authority workers base on gender. It clearly reveals that no significant differences exist in the organisational commitment of the male and female Nigerian Port Authority Workers.

Table 3 presents the results of the analysis conducted on the organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority Workers based on their educational qualifications. The results reveal that no significant difference

Table 1. Sample demographic distribution.

Demographic		Characteristic	Frequency	Total
Department 1		Harbour Department	100	
Department 2		Training Department	100	
Department 3		Engineering Department	100	500
Department 4		Custom Department	100	
Department 5		Marine Department	100	
Sex:	1	Male	350	500
	2	Female	150	
Marital Status	1	Married	235	500
	2	Single	265	
Age	1	25-30 years	30	500
	2	31-35 years	135	
	3	36-40 years	140	
	4	41-45 years	45	
	5	46- 50 years	50	
Religion	1	Christian	300	500
	2	Muslim	200	

Table 2. Difference in the organisational commitment of the male and female Nigeria Port Authority workers.

Variable	Number	X	SD	Df	t. obs	t. crit	P	Remark
Male Workers	350	32.93	5.65	498	1.0	1.96	0.05	N.S.
Female Worker	150	33.49	5.57					

Table 3. Difference in the organisational commitment of NPA workers based on their educational qualifications.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sign. of F	Remark	P
Main effect	102.744	2	51.373	1.638	.196	N.S	0.05
Education	102.747	2	51.373	1.638	.196	N.S	
Explained	102.747	2	51.373	1.638	.196	N.S	
Residual	7745.247	497	31.358				
Total	7848.224	499	31.519				

Table 4. Difference in the organisational commitment of the Nigeria Port Authority workers based on marital status.

Variable	Number	X	SD	Df	t. obs	t. crit	P	Remark
Married workers	235	32.62	5.49	498	1.84	1.96	0.05	N.S.
Single workers	265	33.54	5.69					

was observed in the organisational commitment of the NPA workers irrespective of their educational qualifications.

Table 4 presents the results of the analysis conducted on the organisational commitment of the NPA workers based on their marital status. Table 4 clearly reveals that

no significant difference exists in the organisational commitment of the married and single NPA workers.

The results of the first hypotheses, which compares the organisational commitment of the Nigerian Port Authority workers based on gender was found to be non significant. This implies that male and female NPA workers show the same commitment to the organisation. This finding corroborate with the report by Tella (2003) who observed no difference in the organisational commitment of the library personnel irrespective of their gender. Similarly, Ellemer et al. (1998) report that background variables of which gender is inclusive were found to be clearly related to commitment support the present finding on this study. However, the results of Mathieu and Zaja (1990) and Irving et al. (1997) that men in their sample experience higher level of commitment contradict the present finding of this study. The variation in this result may be because of the fact that African men are hardworking and always ready to give their best provided the organisation is giving them all their entitlement.

The result of the second hypothesis shows that irrespective of the educational qualifications, Nigerian Port Authority Worker shows the same commitment to their organisation. The finding by Dornstein and Matalon (1989) that educational qualifications were among the eight variables relevant to organisational commitment is in agreement with this finding. So also, is the report by Colarelli and Bishop (1990) who as well reported positive correlation between education and commitment lend a good credence to the finding in this study. On the contrary, the result of the study conducted by Tella (2003) that significant difference exists in the organisational commitment of the personnel based on the educational qualification disagree with the present finding. The differences in the two results may however be due to the subject used in the two studies. While Tella make used of the personnel in academic libraries who are academicians, the present study used Port Authority workers who are professionals.

The third hypothesis shows no significant difference in the organisational commitment of NPA workers based on their marital status. This also correspond with Tella (2003) and Adeyemo (2001) both of whom found marital status to be associated with organisational commitment. The situation here may be explained with reference to Young et al. (1998) declaration that promotion satisfaction, job characteristics, communication satisfaction, extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards enjoyed by both married and single NPA workers enhance their commitment.

Based on all the above, we are hereby of the opinion that the management of all organisations should make sure that they are at least meeting 75% of the demands of their workers. They should promote them when they are due for it, they should not deny them of their right and opportunities, anything short of this can degenerate to conflict. Good condition of service should always be provided in all organisations. All these put in place, will to

great extent motivate workers to give their best and contributing their quota to the success of their organisations and in the achievement of the overall objectives.

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