

MEANINGFULL WORK AND EMPLOYEE JOB INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH-SOUTH UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA

Dr. Sam Damiebi Achebelema
Faculty of Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Email:achebelemaresources@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between meaningful work and employee job involvement among the teaching staff of the universities in South-South, Nigeria. The study conclude that meaningful work has a very low correlation with employee job involvement in the universities in south-south, Nigeria. Finally, the study recommends that top-management must clearly communicate the organization's philosophy that workplace spirituality represents truth and is the right thing to do and must be embraced at all organizational levels and that top-management must put in place work environment that will make the staff of the university derive meaning in their work. This can be done by providing all the necessary tools required by the staff to meaningfully do their work. These would include adequate security, provision of accommodate within the campus, good offices for the staff, well-furnished canteen, very good recreation area and prompt payment of their salary

Keywords: Meaningful Work, Employee Job Involvement, Work Attitude

INTRODUCTION

One of the most visible behaviors in every workplace is the attitude of the workers toward any given scenario or performance. Many writers have defined attitudes based on the way individuals act or respond to situations. To put it another way, an attitude is a "psychological propensity that expresses itself via the evaluation of a certain thing with some degree of favor or dislike." An attitude is a mental disposition that may be either positive or negative, according to the writers. Workers with a positive psychological orientation will have a positive approach that is regarded favorably and assist the organization accomplish its objectives, whereas employees with a negative psychological orientation would have a negative approach.

Workers that have a positive attitude and are valued by their coworkers react in a different manner and exhibit more positive behavior in the workplace. In order to boost output, companies must develop strategies to regulate their workers' attitudes in a manner that encourages good behavior. For the pioneering American social psychologist Gordon Allport (1995), "the idea of attitude is undoubtedly the most unique and fundamental term in modern American social psychology." In light of this, it should come as no surprise that everyone's attitude is unique.

Having a good or negative attitude, according to Fishbein and Ajzen (1994), is a learnt and structured mental state that influences a person's reaction to people, things, and events. When an employee encounters a certain environment, the way he or she reacts to people and items that impact their behavior might be considered an expression of an Attitude. Positive sentiments may show a willingness to work energetically, and it can also be acquired via first-hand experience.

management have undertaken several initiatives in an attempt to enhance organizational settings in order to create an even better work environment. Workplace spirituality is a term used to describe a number of these policies and practices (WS). In addition to religious theology, workplace spirituality may be relevant to the well-being of employees, companies, and society as a whole. When employees have a personal connection to their work, they are more committed to the company and more satisfied in their jobs (Leigh, 1997; Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003), which helps the organization stand solid and improves performance (Jurkiewicz&Giacalone,2004).

It has been argued that additional empirical study is needed to determine the link between workplace spirituality and outcomes such as creative work behavior, employee negativity, and job happiness in the last years by several experts (Rego & Cunha, 2008; Sheep, 2006).

Work results may be affected by a different perspective of gender's concept of spirituality at work, which in turn has an impact on the interactions between members of an organization. However, just a few academics have examined the differences in attitudes about workplace spirituality between men and women.

Meaningful Work.

According to Ashmos and Duchon (2000), "a feeling of what is significant, invigorating, and enjoyable about work" is reflected in the concept of meaning in the workplace.

Based on the idea that work should be a source of pleasure and energizing people's lives, this approach assumes that individuals are intrinsically motivated and desirous of making a positive contribution to the world via their job. Job embeddedness has been shown to be strongly linked to meaningful work because of the close relationship between the two (Rajappan, Nair, Priyadarshini M., & Sivakumar, 2017).

A person's job is meaningful when he or she is able to connect with his or her work in a way that is unique to him or her; he or she is motivated, aware of the facts of life, and aspires to be involved in activities that will offer meaning to his or her life and the lives of others (Overell, 2008). Satisfaction with one's job improves when one's employment is fulfilling. The degree to which an employee enjoys the duties that are allocated to him or her or that he or she is forced to do on a regular basis at work is known as "meaning at work" (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Job Involvement

To have an attitude is to have an opinion about something and convey that opinion by showing favoritism or disfavor for that thing (Eagly & Chaiken 1998). An employee's attitude is a reflection of their internal state. To put it another way, they are a person's thoughts and emotions about their work environment. Every employee has opinions on the setting in which they work.

Employees who are satisfied with their jobs and who believe that their efforts are appreciated are more likely to work efficiently and to the best of their abilities. Negative attitudes like tardiness, absenteeism and theft may negatively impact an employee's productivity when they are not pleased, devoted and interested in their job. As a result, an employee's bad attitude might be reflected in other acts, such as poor performance, absences from work, pilfering and tardiness. If you and your coworkers respect your employees, they'll show appropriate behavior in the office. The opposite is true for individuals who don't feel appreciated. It is essential that companies discover strategies to regulate their workers' attitudes so that they display good attitudes in order to raise productivity.

Evaluative remarks about items, people, or events that are either favorable or unfavorable are called attitudes. This is how one feels about a certain subject (Robbins, 2003). People, causes, and events may all have attitudes, which is an inclination to make certain judgements about them based on their context. People's attitudes are a reflection of their overall values. With the formation of personal beliefs and biases, as well as the positive contribution to judgment that attitude makes, it's no wonder that attitudes matter. Changing someone's mind about something isn't going to be easy no matter how long they live. When the person sees fit, he or she may alter some of these more loosely held beliefs if it serves their purposes better (Cole, 1996). When it comes to a person's reactions to other people, things, and circumstances, an individual's attitude may have a significant impact on how they deal with each of these (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1994).

Behaviors may be predicted pretty well by attitudes, according to Newstorm and Davis (1993). Employees' tendencies to behave in a given manner may be deduced from these cues. Predictors of positive and negative job attitudes may be found by looking at a person's conduct in the

workplace. Employees that are unsatisfied with their work, lack job participation, and have a low level of commitment to the business face a broad range of disadvantages. Strong and persistent sentiments increase the likelihood of this outcome.

Organizational Culture as a Moderating Variable

Employees who are determined to be enthusiastic and engaged in their work may be deemed to be committed to their employer, and this is the most essential factor in determining their level of commitment. It has been hypothesized by a number of researchers based on studies into employee perceptions of job satisfaction. "Any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental conditions that lead a person truly to state, 'I am content with my employment,'" says Hoppock (1995). Rather of focusing on just one aspect of psychology, the author emphasized that it is a mix of psychological, physiological, and environmental factors that lead a person to express satisfaction with the work they are doing. An employee's function in the workplace is a key factor in job satisfaction, according to Vroom (1994). Individuals' emotional orientations toward the work positions they are now performing are a key component of their level of job satisfaction. People might declare they are content with their jobs when their feelings are taken into consideration. The part that one plays at work gives them a sense of belonging and makes them believe that they are doing honor to the responsibilities bestowed upon them. Workplace contentment has been defined by McNamara (1999) as a mood or mental state that a person experiences as a result of the work they do. A number of variables may have an effect on this, including the quality of one's connection with one's supervisor, the atmosphere in which one works, the degree to which one's job is fulfilled, and so on. The connection between workers and their supervisors has been shown to be the most important element in determining job happiness. An employee feels satisfied in their work when they can see how their efforts are making a difference to the organization's mission. People are happier in their work when they know that they are directly accountable for helping the company accomplish its goals and objectives. Employment satisfaction, according to Schwepker (2001), is a pleasant emotional state that results from the evaluation of one's job as accomplishing or supporting one's ideals. To put it another way, it relates to the sentiments that individuals have about their work. Appreciation of one's efforts or the achievement of a significant milestone might bring to a sense of fulfillment in a person. It was shown that among the 10,052 members of the Brazilian Military Police Organization (Leite, Rodrigues, & Albuquerque, 2014) that work satisfaction had a direct or mediating influence in predicting loyalty. Relationship satisfaction is an antecedent of commitment, which mediates its relationships with other variables, such as work and personal characteristics; however, it played a small role in mediation of the individual variable investigated, which had a direct impact on the organizational commitment. Respect for coworkers at all levels was cited by 67% of respondents as being very essential, making it the leading factor to overall job satisfaction. It was observed that 77 percent of employees were satisfied with their connection with their coworkers, which was one of the most important requirements for employee engagement. They concluded that the working environment is an essential factor in determining job satisfaction in their research on job satisfaction among 210 workers in the banking and telecom industry of Quetta in Pakistan (Raziq & Maulabaksh 2015).

a. The Theory of Planned Behavior

According to Ajzen's notion of deliberate conduct (1991). When a person has an attitude (spirituality) that allows them to go above and beyond what is required by the regulations and perceives a duty to the organization, this method recognizes that this is the linkage. To forecast an individual's intention to participate in an action at a certain time and place, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was developed in 1980 as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The hypothesis was designed to explain all behaviors that can be controlled by the individual. To put it another way, the theory of planned behavior examines the interrelationships between self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes, intentions, and conduct in general. It is possible that the support of family, friends and

peers will impact a person's attitude toward a given conduct, reinforcing his goal of seeing the specific action through to completion.

Extending the notion of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), the theory of planned behavior was essential since the previous model couldn't handle activities over which individuals had limited control. As in the original theory of rational action, the individual's desire to carry out a certain action is important to the notion of planned conduct. Motivational elements influencing action are considered to be captured by intentions, which indicate how hard individuals are willing to work and how much effort they intend to put in, in order to carry out the activity. If you have a strong desire to do something, it is more probable that you will really do it. However, it should be apparent that only conduct that is under volitional control, i.e., may be decided to do or not be performed, can communicate a behavioral purpose. Non-motivational elements, such as the availability of needed opportunities and resources, play an important role in the execution of most actions, even if they fulfill this condition. These elements describe the extent to which individuals may influence their own actions. As long as the individual has the means and the opportunity to carry out the conduct, they should be able to.

As opposed to the notion of rational action, the theory of planned conduct has a component of self-determination. It's helpful to look at how perceived behavioral control stacks up against other types of control before diving into that topic. There are important differences between behavioral control and the idea of a person's actual location of control. With a focus on elements directly connected to a specific conduct, perceived behavioral control refers to people's assessment of how easy or difficult it would be to accomplish the behavior of interest. However, the belief in one's own ability to exert control over one's own behaviors may and often does differ from one scenario to another. As a result, a person may feel that her actions affect her outcomes in general (internal locus of control), yet she may also believe that her prospects of becoming a commercial airline pilot are limited (low perceived behavioral control).

Empirical Review

Piryaei & Zare (2013) study the association between workplace spirituality characteristics and two positive work attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational commitment) while taking into account the moderating impact of individual spirituality in this relationship. Three hundred full-time employees working in an Iranian industrial company were surveyed using the Workplace Spirituality Scale, the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, the Job in General Scale, and the Affective Commitment Scale (Meyer and Allen, 1990), which were administered using a stratified random sampling method. Men made up 81.81 percent of the sample, and they were on average 41 years old. An approach known as hierarchical regression analysis was used to deconstruct the datasets. Workplace spirituality (defined as a sense of belonging, sense of purpose, and a sense of community) was shown to be positively associated with job happiness and organizational dedication, and the level of personal spirituality of employees may help to regulate this association's strength.

Hassan, Nadeem, & Akhter (2016) Using trust as a mediator, investigate the link between workplace spirituality aspects and job happiness. Teachers in the education sector are asked to fill out a five-point Likert scale questionnaire as a convenience sample. A total of 174 replies were received from 200 questionnaires that were sent to institutions. Barron and Kenny's multiple regression approach is utilized to assess the study's hypotheses. Workplace spirituality has a large positive association with trust, and trust considerably mediates the influence of workplace spirituality on job happiness. Workplace spirituality should expand in the future. Along with the mediator, new moderators should be vetted. As a result of the development of workplace spirituality, increased communication among instructors may be developed. There is a positive correlation between WPS and work happiness since the p-values are less than 0.05, and trust amongst employees would mediate this interaction. Walt, & Klerk (2014) Workplace spirituality and a favorable attitude about work, or job happiness, might be linked. With a sample of 600 white-collar employees from two South African companies, a

cross-sectional research was undertaken. Workplace spirituality and job happiness are shown to be closely linked, according to the findings of this study. To better understand personal spirituality, corporate spirituality, and work fulfillment, these studies provide light on these topics. For the first time, they shed light on the importance of spirituality in the workplace. Organization is essential for survival in the 21st century.

According to Amen & Raziq (2019), workplace spirituality has a moderating influence on organizational commitment among university professors. The 1,655 faculty members working in Karachi's universities were surveyed using the chosen questionnaire, and a sample size of 600 was found to be statistically significant. Finally, the whole model was evaluated using PLS SEM after assessing normality, validity, and reliability (partial least square structural equation modeling). According to statistical evidence, workplace spirituality has a favorable effect on the level of organizational dedication. The biggest predictor of workplace spirituality was found to be job happiness ($t = 8.166$, $p .05$). To make matters worse, the researchers discovered that work satisfaction had a negligible effect on organizational commitment ($t = 0.738$; $p > .05$.) The role of job happiness as a mediator between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment was shown to be ineffective. Finally, this research adds to the growing body of evidence about the relationship between university faculty job satisfaction and organizational commitment when it comes to workplace spirituality. Academics and human resource managers who are looking for strategies to increase work satisfaction and organizational commitment will also find valuable advice in this book.

CONCLUSION

Meaningful work has a very poor link with employee job involvement in the universities in the south-south, Nigeria. There is a strong correlation between meaningful work and job happiness, according to the findings of this research. Employees who work for companies that promote spirituality report higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Deriving from the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following;

1. An atmosphere where employees and members of the host community may mingle and exchange pleasantries should be fostered by senior leadership. Personnel members, students, and other university non-teaching staff need an atmosphere that fosters mutual respect and relationships, in order to foster the institution's spirit and foster a spiritual workplace.
2. It is imperative that the university's administration take a proactive stance against employee negativity such as absenteeism, workers thinking about quitting the job because they are dissatisfied, and personnel speaking badly of the institution whenever possible. All of this may be accomplished by giving the workers with all of the necessities they need to grow their spirituality.
3. When workers develop spirituality in their job, they will be able to put up good work attitudes such as inventive thinking and the capacity to represent the institution appropriately and favorably when the need arises.
4. As a university, the university should have a good purpose in regard to its workers and society, and it should seek to improve both those people's lives as well as the society as a whole. The staff's inner self will be well-nourished as a result of this.

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