Emotional Intelligence and the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment of Employee in Public Parastatals in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This research examines the mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Two hundred and forty employees randomly drawn from five public parastatals in Oyo State constituted the study's sample. Variables in the study were assessed using four validated instruments. Descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and hierarchical regression analysis were employed to analyze the data. The significant findings of the study reveal that there was significant impact of job satisfaction on organizational commitment and that emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Based on the findings, it is suggested that emotional intelligence could be used as an intervention to enhance organizational commitment.

Key words: Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, organization commitment, public parastatals

INTRODUCTION

In the recent times, there have been overwhelming complaints about the quality of service being provided by government parastatals and boards in Nigeria. The complaints generally centred on lack of commitment on the part of the employees. To improve the quality of their services therefore would require having a committed workforce.

Following the groundbreaking theory proposed by Porter and Smith (1970), emphasis has been shifted from the relationship between an individual's attitude to and enjoyment of work and its effect on the activities of the organization to employee attitude toward the organization. What gives impetus to this change of emphasis was the postulation by Porter and Smith (1970) that the psychological attachment of an employee to the organization (organizational commitment) is capable of predicting certain employee behaviours. As a rider to this, it was postulated further that the stability of organizational commitment was found it a better predictor of employees behaviour than job satisfaction which is more likely to be affected by various transitory events such as changes in pay or supervision strategies (Mowday et al., 1982).

The conceptualization of organizational commitment has proliferated over the years. These conceptualizations, Meyer and Allen's model has stood the test of time. Having summarized the existing literature (Meyer and Allen, 1991) came up with a triadic interpretation of organizational commitment. The first of the three is affective commitment which is defined as an employee emotional attachment to the organization. Consequent upon this, he identifies himself with the goal of the organization and expresses his or her readiness to remain a part of the organization. His identification with the organization in this wise is due to the fact that he 'wants to'. The second aspect is continuance commitment. Employee commitment here is dictated by the estimation of the high cost of loosing the organizational membership. Continuance commitment emphasize the perceived investment versus cost. The cost of leaving both economically and socially engender this kind of commitment. The third dimension is normative commitment which is concerned with obligation-based consideration (Allen and Meyer, 1996).

The reason why organizational commitment has been of interest to worker in the field is because of its empirical linkage with certain work-related behaviours such as turn-over, absenteeism and job performance (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

Job satisfaction has been described as an extremely complex construct so much that no single model can adequately unfathomed its meaning (Hagerdron, 2000). Be this as it may, scholars in the filed have proposed a number of definitions. For instance, Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Grandley conceptualized job satisfaction as a proxy for an employee's well-being at work. Job satisfaction is affected by factors such as promotional opportunities, pay satisfaction, considerate and participative supervision, opportunities to interact with peers, a variety of duties and a high degree of control

over work methods and space (Villard, 2004). Explaining why interest in job satisfaction by scholars has not waned, Wilson and Rosenfield (1990) pointed out that positive and negative attitude towards work may exert powerful effects on many form of organizational behaviour. Studies by Baron (1986) and Maghradi (1999) have shown the importance of job satisfaction to an organisation in terms of its efficiency, productivity, employee relations, absenteeism and turn over.

Job satisfaction refers to the evaluation of the job in all its ramification and also has as its antecedents, factors such as financial rewards, resources to get the job completed, interest, challenge, use of valued skills, variety, occupational prestige, autonomy relation to co-workers and supervisors, involvement in decision-making and comfort factors such as hours, physical environment and travel time.

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment: The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has been extensively investigated by scholars in the field. Ajayi (1981) found that there was significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment of university teachers. Miller (1997) using job satisfaction as the independent variable found a close significant association between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Okpara (1996) found that job satisfaction variables which include opportunity for promotion, satisfaction with co-worker, satisfaction with supervision, pay satisfaction, satisfaction with work itself and overall job satisfaction correlated positively and significantly with organizational commitment. However, it should not be construed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the same. Organizational commitment focuses on attachment to the emploting organization, while job satisfaction emphasize the specific task environment where an employee performs his or her duties. Again, organizational commitment appears to develop slowly but consistently over time as employee think about their relationship with the organization. This type of relationship as Mowday and Mcdale (1979) expressed is less affected by day-to-day events in the work place.

The interest in job satisfaction and commitment cannot be unconnected with behaviour consequences that are traceable to job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment. Among such outcomes believed to be products of job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment are: productivity, attendance at work, turnover, retirement, participation, labour militancy, sympathy for unions and psychological withdrawal from

work and organizational effectiveness (Leung, 1997; Randall, 1990; Tett and Meyer, 1993; Cheng, 1990; Naumann, 1993; Ismail, 1990; Balfour and Weschler, 1996; Salovey and Mayer, 1989; Moynihan *et al.*, 2000).

The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has been well researched (Tett and Meyer, 1993; Petrides and Furnham, 2006). In most of these studies job satisfaction and organizational commitment are either treated as dependent or independent variable. In some cases commitment preceded satisfaction and in others commitment and satisfaction were reciprocally linked (Petrides and Furnham, 2006).

However, the same story cannot be told when it comes to emotional intelligence and work attitudes. The research in this area is still expanding. Emotional intelligence has its root in the Thorndike's construct of social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920). Further development on this came in 1983 when Gardner (Gardner, 1983) established the idea of interpersonal intelligence as an aspect of multiple intelligence. It was, however, Payne (1985) who in his doctoral work coined the term emotional intelligence. The construct of emotional intelligence found its way into academic literature through the scholarly effort of Salovey and Mayer (Salovey and Mayer, 1989). Goleman (1995) through his seminal publication titled "Emotional Intelligence" brought the construct into limelight. He claimed that emotional intelligence is equal to, if not more valuable than, IQ as an important indicator of one's professional and life success. Emotional intelligence as conceived by Salovey and Mayer (1997) composed of four dimensions, namely:

- Perception and appraisal of emotion
- Facilitation of thought using emotion
- Understanding emotional knowledge
- Regulating emotional thought and display toward goals.

Goleman (1997) conceptualized emotional intelligence in terms of a five-step process. The first step is self-awareness which has to do with the individual's ability to recognize a feeling as they occur in real-life situations. This awareness enables a person to have a better understanding of his or her own feelings and thought that empowers a person to make well informed choices not only for themselves but also staff and their employing organization. This attributes help individual to make effective decisions.

The second aspect of emotional intelligence identified in Goleman's postulation is the management and self-regulation of emotion. Once individuals are aware

of their emotion, they would have the capacity to put such emotion under proper control so that they are not unnecessarily handicap by it. The next aspect is self-motivation and performance. It is characterized by goal orientedness and channelization of emotion toward desired outcomes. The fourth dimension is empathy and perspective taking. It involves capacity to recognize emotion in others as well as understanding other's point of view. The criticality of this aspect in work setting could be understood from the perspective that in work situations, teamness is required to get work executed and except there is better understanding of each other's feeling, performance will be impaired. The fifth and the final aspect of Goleman's model is social skills. With these social competences, it is easier for people to handle interpersonal relationship effectively.

Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction are related on a number of fronts. Based on the research of Locke (1969) job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are complex emotional reaction to the job. Again, Smith definition of job satisfaction as feeling or affective response to work situation is a subtle hint of the association between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Apart from these theoretical conjectures, empirical evidences demonstrating positive and significant association between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction abound (e.g., Adeyemo and Ogunyemi, 2005; Carmelli, 2003; Villard, 2004).

Emotional intelligence and organizational commitment also share common identity. Organizational commitment has been interpreted in three ways thus: affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. Affective commitment has to do with the emotional attachment to the organization; continuance commitment emphasizes the perceived investment versus cost while normative commitment is concerned with obligation based consideration (Allen and Meyer, 1996). Emotionally intelligent individuals are 'optimistic' a quality that enables them to focus on the resolution rather the reasoning. The work in any organization imposes difficulties that may result in feelings of frustration. An emotional intelligent worker or individual would know, as Abraham (1999) opined, not hold the organization responsible for his/her feeling of frustration as he is capable of placing himself in positive affective state and able to experience negative affective states that have insignificant destructive consequences (Salovey and Meyer, 1989). The relevance of emotional intelligence in this wise particularly to public employees who are saddle with the responsibility of rendering services without adequate facilities and other frustrating encounters cannot be underestimated. Thus possession of emotional intelligence skills can help to mitigate frustrating experience at work and help to enhance affective commitment to the organization and further diminish the level of continuance commitment. Emotional intelligence and organizational commitment have been studied. Carmelli (2006) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and work attitudes and found that relationship exist between the independent variable and work attitudes of which organizational commitment happen to be one of them. Furthermore, Prati (2004) provides evidence that emotional intelligence contributes significant explanation over and above the effect of surface and non-acting on organizational commitment.

Purpose of study: Much as the literature on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment are bounteous, there is still dearth of evidence on the moderating influence of other factors. By investigating the moderating influence of emotional intelligence on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the present study offers a new direction on the role played by emotional intelligence in work attitude outcome.

Research questions: Based on the articulated objectives of the study, the following research questions were addressed in the study.

- Would there be a significant and positive impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment?
- Would emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design: The study employed descriptive survey research design using the ex-post facto type. In this kind of study, no manipulation is involved. It is an after fact study.

Participants: The sample of the study were 240 participants randomly drawn from five parastatals in Oyo State, Nigeria. One hundred and forty of the participants are males and ninety are females. Their age ranged between 22 and 58 years with mean age of 35.6 years and standard deviation of 5.4 years. One hundred and seventy of them are married and the rest single. The working experience of the participants ranged between three and thirty years. Forty five percent of the participants have attained managerial and supervisory status. The highest paid participants received one hundred and fifty thousand naira per month while the least paid got ten thousand naira per month. In terms of educational qualification, the least was General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O/L) and highest was master degree.

Instrumentation: Three instruments were used in the study to assess job satisfaction, organizational commitment and emotional intelligence. Respondents were also requested to supply information about their marital status, qualifications, gender, working experience, age and occupational status. A brief description of each of the scale is given below.

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction was assessed by using the job satisfaction scale developed by Brayfield and Roeth (1951). The instrument has a total of five items with a response format anchor on a five point scale of strongly agree (5) and strongly disagree (1). An example of the scale item is: "I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job'. Coefficient Alpha value ranges between .88 to .91.

Organizational commitment: This was measured with organizational commitment scale developed by Ellemer *et al.* (1998). The scale has five items with response format ranging from Not much (1) to very much (7). To suit the purpose of the present study, the response format was reformatted. Consequent upon this, the instrument was revalidated using the split-half method. The reliability was found to be 0.71.

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence was assessed by using emotional intelligence questionnaire developed by Schuttle *et al.* (1997). The instrument has a total of 33 items with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). An example of the scale item is: I have control over my emotion. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.87 was found for the internal consistency of the scale. It also has a test-retest reliability of 0.78. The scale also shows evidence of validity as scores on the scale were shown to be related to eight of the nine measures predicted to be related to emotional intelligence. As indicated by Lazzari, the scale has a Cronbach Alpha of 0.81

Procedure: The research instruments were administered on 250 employees using the drop-off and pick-up method whereby the respondents were given a week to respond to the questionnaires. The researcher was assisted in the administration of the instruments by managers in the selected organizations. Out of 250 distributed, 240 were returned and considered useful for the study. This number represents a response rate of 96.0%.

Method of data analysis: The influence of demographic factors on organizational commitment is well documented in literature (Mowday *et al.*, 1982). To really ascertain the moderating influence of emotional intelligence on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, it was considered proper that demographic factors such as age, sex, marital status, qualification, working experience and organizational tenure, are controlled in the statistical analysis to reduce the possibility of spurious relationship based on unmeasured variables. Since the aforementioned variables are categorical in nature, they were coded as dummy variable.

Hierarchical regression analysis (Cohen and Cohen, 1975) was employed as tools of analysis. A three-step procedure was used. Personal factors (i.e., control variables) were entered first, followed by the main effects of job satisfaction and emotional intelligence in the second step. In the third stage, the interaction term (job satisfaction x emotional intelligence) was entered into the regression equation. The F-change was assessed and the significance and contribution of each of the variables were determined using the standardized beta and t-ratio were interpreted. The moderating influence of emotional intelligence was tested through the examination of the interaction term. Assuming that the interaction term was significant, emotional intelligence would then deemed to moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviations and intercorrelations among the study variables. In summary, the mean age and mean length of service for the participants were 35.6 years and 16.3 years respectively. The mean score for emotional intelligence was found to be 122.42 with a standard deviation of 19.53. Job satisfaction also had a mean value of 16.39 and standard deviation of 3.11 while organizational commitment recorded a mean score of 16.94 and standard deviation of 3.36. There were also significant correlations between organizational commitment and job satisfaction on one hand ($r = .244$, $p<0.01$) and emotional intelligence on the other ($r = .317$, $p<0.01$). Significant relationship was also found between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence ($r = .235$, $p<0.01$).

Table 2 shows the results obtained from the hierarchical regression analysis carried out on organizational commitment data. The results demonstrated that demographic variables (gender, experience, occupational status, marital status, qualifications, age and length of service) could not predict organizational commitment. It was however established from the results that job satisfaction impact significantly and positively on organizational commitment ($\beta = .256$, $p<0.05$). The result thus confirmed that there is significant

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables

	N	X	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Organizational commitment	240	16.94	3.36	1.000	.244**	.317**	.048	.033	.022	.048	.106	.046	.068
Job satisfaction	240	16.39	3.11	.244**	1.000	.235**	.136*	-.124	.130*	-.012	.073	.084	.016
Emotional intelligence	240	122.42	19.53	.317**	.235**	1.000	.102	-.097	-.057	.040	.132*	-.003	.130*
Age	240	25.6	5.4	.048	.136*	.102	1.000	.012	.643**	.575**	.466**	.575**	.305**
Gender	240	1.69	.46	.033	-.124	-.097	.012	1.000	.135*	.059	.074	.044	.089
Working experience	240	16.3	3.0	.022	.130*	-.057	.643**	.135*	1.000	.669**	.512**	.535**	.291
Occupation status	240	1.64	.48	.048	-.012	.040	.575**	.059	.669**	1.000	.821**	.374	.339**
Salary g.l.	240	1.59	.49	.106	0.73	.132*	.466**	.074	.512**	.821**	1.000	.349**	.377**
Marital status	240	1.88	.33	.046	0.84	-.003	.575**	.044	.535**	.374**	.349**	1.000	.168**
Educational qualification	240	2.68	.70	.068	.016	.130*	.305**	.089	.291**	.339*	.377**	.168**	1.000

1 = Organizational commitment, 2 = Job satisfaction, 3 = Emotional intelligence, 4 = Age, 5 = Gender, 6 = Working experience, 7 = Occupation status, 8 = Salary G.L., 9 = Marital status, 10 = Educational qualification, ** $p<0.01$, * $p<0.05$

Table 2: Hierarchical regression analysis on organizational commitment data

Variables	Organizational commitment				
	Beta	R^2 Total	Change in R^2	F-change	Sig. F- change
Step 1					
Control variables		.019	.019	.631	.730
Gender	.027				
Experience	.041				
Occupational status	.144				
Marital status	.021				
Qualifications	.033				
Age	.033				
Length of service	.184				
Main variable		.143	.124	.16.66	.000
Emotional intelligence	.316*				
Job satisfaction	.256*				
Interaction		.148	.148	13.637	.000
Emotional intelligence×job satisfaction	.341*				

relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Similarly, it was found that emotional intelligence had significant influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = .136$, $p<0.01$). When the interaction terms were added to the regression equation, there was significant increase in the variance of organizational commitment. This provides evidence for the moderating roles of emotional intelligence in the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that job satisfaction is a potent predictor of organizational commitment. This result concurred with those of the previous researchers (Rose, 1991; Petrides and Furham, 2006). A logical explanation of this result could be that organizational commitment is a function of job satisfaction. The various dimensions of job satisfaction such as satisfaction with pay, co-worker, supervision, work itself are needed by the workers to meet their basic needs. When employees needs are met, there is the likelihood that the level of organizational commitment manifested by the workers would be high. This explanation probably holds for participants in this study. Again employees who have higher job satisfaction are likely to be motivated and committed to their organization.

The findings further demonstrated the moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This finding falls in line with those obtained by the previous researchers (Tans, 2003; Wong and Law, 2002; Petrides and Furham, 2006; Thushel, 2005; Carmelli, 2003). What the result suggests is that the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment is not necessarily direct but moderated by emotional intelligence. The probable explanation for this result is that emotionally intelligent employees could handle work challenges better using core skills of emotional intelligence such as interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, adaptability, stress management and general mood.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From research evidence so far reported, the impact of emotional intelligence on real life is now beyond conjecture. Emotional intelligence skills and competences are usable and valuable tools in understanding, supporting, maintaining and enhancing high level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The development of committed employee has several advantages to it. Realization of organizational goals depends to some extent on having a committed workforce. This is not a function of rational exchange alone, but also

to some degree, the extent to which employees are connected emotionally to their organization and the extent to which it gives them joy, excitement, surprise and satisfaction. Thus by equipping employees with emotional intelligence skills and competencies, organization stands a good chance of engendering commitment in their employee and reaping benefits accruable from it.

In conclusion, it is important to note that without a good understanding of the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and the moderating influence of emotional intelligence in the relationship, whatever intervention is done to enhance organizational commitment may not achieve the expected result.

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