

Performance Indicators and Job Commitment of University Graduates during the National Youth Service Corps Programme in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract - *This study examined the performance indicators and job commitment of university graduates during the one year mandatory National Youth Service (NYSC) programme in Oyo state, Nigeria. The study looked at job satisfaction, employer's motivation influence on job commitment of NYSC members serving in Oyo state. The study adopted the descriptive ex-post facto research design. 330 respondents were randomly selected from five local governments within Ibadan metropolis to represent the sample population for the study. Three types of questionnaires were developed and validated to measure the performance indicators and job commitment of NYSC members. The study shows a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job commitment of NYSC members in Oyo state and it was recommended that employers of NYSC members during the one year mandatory service year need to create an atmosphere of job satisfaction for the NYSC members by providing organisational reward policies.*

Keywords: *Job Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Employers Motivation, National Youth Service Corps and University Graduate.*

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, there has been the need for improvement in the overall performance of workers in the Nigerian labour market. This is necessary if the nation's economy is to grow and catch up with those of developed countries of the world. One of the means of meeting this objective is the introduction of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme in 1973 by decree No 24 of 22nd May, 1973 as amended by Decree 51 of 16th June 1993. One of the purposes of the scheme is to inculcate in Nigerian youth, the spirit of selfless service to the country [1].

Today, the NYSC has become a household name. Every graduating student from any Nigeria university nurses the ambition of being part of the scheme that is, having interest in serving his /her fatherland. In line with its mandate of mobilizing graduate youth for nation building, the NYSC scheme has firmly established itself as a force to be reckoned with for social, cultural and economic integration within the country. To a very large extent, the NYSC has been able to bridge the long age gap between acute shortages of personnel in various parts of the country. It is anticipated that through the scheme, Nigeria's problem of poverty, mass illiteracy, acute shortage of high skilled manpower (coupled with uneven distribution of skilled personnel) would be curtailed. However, one important question to be asked is how committed are the youth corps members to the job assigned them and the organisation they are posted to, this is because commitment often leads to productivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of job commitment refers to as the affective reactions of employees to the characteristics of his employer. It is the concerned feeling of attachment to the goals and values of the organization. One's role in relation to this, is the attachment to the organisation for its own sake rather than for organisational benefit. Job commitment is categorized into affective, continuance and normative commitments [2]. Affective commitment according to Meyer [3] has to do with emotional attachment, identification and involvement of an employee with the organisational goals. However, to Porter [4], affective commitment has to do with employees' belief in and acceptance of the organisational goals and values, willingness to focus efforts on helping the organisation in goal achievement and a desire to

maintain organisational membership. Meyer [2] concluded that retaining membership out of staff personal choice revealed that they are committed to their jobs.

Continuance commitment according to Reichers [5] has to do with employee's "non-transferable" investments (such as retirement benefits, relationships with other employees or things that are special to the organisation) in an organisation which result from their desire through remaining within an enterprise. However, Meyer [2] pointed out that employees who have non-transferable investment within an organisation often do not leave their organisation easily, because they share continuance commitment with their employer.

Normative commitment can be described as a recent development which expresses employees' duties in their organisation [6]. This position was supported by [3] who stressed that the three components of commitment are psychological that characterized employees rapport with the organisation or has influence on employees decision on whether to stay or discontinue with the organisation. They showed that employee with strong affective commitment will desire to stay with the organisation while employee with strong continuance commitment must stay with the organisation and employee with a strong normative commitment will remain because they feel "they have to".

Fields [7] define affective commitment as employee's identity with, involvement in and liking form, He also define normative commitment as elective feeling of commitment to continue employment while he sees continuance commitment as a situation when the employees knows the cost of disengaging from the organisation. In essence, job commitment is associated with many behavioural and organisational outcomes which influence them. For example, Matthieu and Zajec [8] concluded that there is a positive relationship between job commitment and job attendance and negative linear relevance to employee's lateness and turnover.

Job commitment is an attitude of the organisation loyalty that is exhibited by Nigerian graduates. Sheldon [9] posited that attitudinal commitment is when the identity of an employee is linked to the organisation. While, Hall et al. [10] concluded that attitudinal commitment is when the goals of the organisation and those of the individuals become related. In doing so, NYSC members with high level of commitment to an organisation are likely to remain at work for longer hours during the service year while

those with lower commitment may be expected to work for fewer hours because of their negative relationship between job commitment and job behaviour. NYSC members as the citizens of Nigeria are required to perform their obligations that can lead them to establish their job commitment within an organisation.

Committed employees are referred to those who are morally bounded and are not likely to terminate their appointment with the organisation prematurely. Pfeffer [11] observed that individuals who are highly motivated to spend their time and energy to follow organisational goals are classified as committed employees and organisation's primary assets. Meyer [2] identified a committed employee as one who stays with an organisation, attends work regularly, put in a full day and more, protects corporate assets and believes in the organisational leadership and goals. O'Reilly and Chatman [12] posited that morally bounded individuals are likely to exhibit acceptable behaviour to the organisation. This behaviour directly or indirectly improves organizational productivity and other employees within the organisation. If NYSC members can work more hours in the organisation where they are deployed, they may contribute more to increase organizational productivity. Those that stayed late at workplace among them can be available to assist the organization and or even their colleagues to solve some technical challenges even when the organisation is not producing at optimal level. This attitude may even motivate other regular staff of the organisation and by so doing, help the entire work family.

Commitment in the workplace is a concept that has attracted a great deal of attention from scholars in many disciplines including industrial psychology, industrial sociology, educational leadership, management, business and public administration. [13] demonstrated how important commitment is to the various sections in an organisation in order to understand employees' attitudes and performance. [14]; [15]; [16] and [13] have found forms of commitment to be important predictors of behaviours such as actual performance, organisational citizenship behavior, turnover and absenteeism. To [13], of all the forms of commitment identified, organisational commitment has received the most important attention. The majority of conceptual frameworks as well as empirical research have focused on this form as the main form of commitment that should be the strongest determinant of outcomes.

One of the variables that have been found to be associated with job commitment is job satisfaction. [17] concluded that an employee's desirability for commitment in an organisation is directly a function of the level of satisfaction derived from the work. [18] and [19] show that dissatisfaction with the organisational reward policies and rates of organisational advancement could result in a weaker commitment on the part of employees. In line with this, NYSC members who are dissatisfied with their rewards are most likely not to be committed to their job and vice versa.

Job satisfaction is so important to the extent that its absence often leads to lethargy and reduced job commitment [20]; [21]. [22] and [23] stressed that lack of job satisfaction is a predictor of quitting a job. There are instances when employees quit the public sector for private sector due to lack of job satisfaction and vice versa. In another dimension, there are occasions when individual choose to change his/her profession to another that is, considered a greener pasture with more job satisfaction. [24] was of the opinion that this latter is more common in countries grappling with dwindling economic resources and poor conditions of service coupled with delay in payment of workers' salaries and emoluments. [25] lend credence to this when he said people in such countries tend to migrate to better and consistently paying jobs within and outside the country in order to meet their societal demands and enjoy job satisfaction.

Motivation is another important factor that needed to be considered when the issue of job commitment is been considered. An organisation depend to a large extent on the level of motivation provided for her workers irrespective of its level of technological advancement. Luthan [26] asserts that motivation should not be seen as the only explanation of behaviour, since it interacts with and acts in conjunction with other mediating process and the environment. Luthan [26] stressed that like other cognitive process, motivation cannot be seen. All that can be seen is behaviour and this should not be equated with causes of behaviour. He further explained that motivation is a process that starts with a physiological deficiency or need that activates behaviour or drive that is aimed at a good incentive. Therefore, the key to understanding the process of motivation lies in the meaning of and relationship among, needs, drives and incentives. In the light of this, if NYSC members are motivated, they tend to put in their best on the job since they know what awaits them at the end of their service year. For instance, if

they are motivated with financial reward or job placement after the service then they may be more committed to the job allocated to them during the service year. [27] define motivation as human and psychological characteristics that contribute to a degree of commitment. It was emphasized that motivation includes factors that cause and sustain human behaviour in a particular committed direction.

Berman et al., [28] asserted that motivation is one of the most important and essential ingredient for the achievement of employees' and ultimately organisational targets and goals. [29]; [30]; and [31] lend credence to this by asserting that motivation encourages job participation and satisfaction of employees by making the work more meaningful and encouraging as well as keeping the employees more productive and improving their job performance. Lord [32] on his own concluded that productivity is a function of employee motivation. Employees motivating factors such as goal achievement, salaries, job responsibilities and incentives enhance employees' job satisfaction and result to job commitment and improved productivity.

Organisational researchers [18], [14], [15], [16], [23], Meyer [2], Bolon [6] claimed that availability of good customer services are essential for the organisation's survival and this cannot be achieved without well motivated and highly trained personnel as they play indispensable role in enhancing the productivity and performance of the organisation [33]. Employees' motivation is in fact an essential component of business operations. High motivation coincides with job satisfaction, a sense of pride in one's work, a lifelong commitment to one's organisation, and the desire to put the achievement of organisational goals ahead of personal goals, thereby enhancing an organisation's performance and productivity [34], [35]. The lack or low level of commitment noticeable on the part of NYSC member may also be induced by poor motivation. Many of them are not paid by the organisation they work with directly. They only rely on the stipend given them by the federal government. Job satisfaction can be viewed with reference to the needs and values of individuals and the extent to which these needs and values are satisfied in the work place. Such views assume that the needs of the individuals are fairly stable (there is explicit/implicit reliance upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs) and that the characteristics of jobs are also fairly stable.

Employees' motivation can be in two ways. The first is the intrinsic motivation. This is when people

are internally, personally and naturally motivated. This group of people does not need external reward such as pay rise or commendation to do well on the job. They are self motivated because they enjoy performing the assigned task. Secondly, the extrinsic motivation is when people are externally motivated. Those in this group do not enjoy the assigned task but are motivated to do it as a result of the attached reward such as high pay, promotion and commendation. [36], [37] and [31] asserted that intrinsic motivation is likely to have a strong and longer term effect on employees because it is a natural and not imposed.

Akintoye [38] on his own asserted that money remain the most significant motivational strategy which confirms the work of Taylor and his scientific associates as far back as 1911 who described money as the most important factor in motivating individual worker. So also [39] demonstrated the motivational power of money through the process of job choice. He explained that money has the motivational power to attract individual worker towards higher performance.

In the opinion of Banjoko [40] it was concluded that managers used money to reward or punish workers through the process of rewarding employees for higher productivity and by instilling the fear of loss of job due to poor performance. He also added that the desire to be promoted and earn enhanced pay may also motivate employees. Colvin [41] also showed that financial incentive will get people to do more of what they are doing. Akere [42] observed that the factors that constitute employees' job satisfaction are numerous, ranging from dignity or respect accrued to the job, promptness in the payment of salary, job security, advancement and promotion opportunities, hours of service requires, welfare packages to mention but few. A satisfied worker is always motivated intrinsically and extrinsically to give his best to the organisation. Most NYSC members are not satisfied with their primary assignments for so many reasons; they just do it to while away time during the mandatory one year service period and obtain the discharge certificate as this is a prerequisite for securing white collar jobs or admission for higher degrees in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that most NYSC members were not committed to their primary assignment, thus, performing relatively low in their place of primary assignment. This can be traced to low level of job

satisfaction, poor motivation as a result of poor emolument in the work placement.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to pilot this study:

Ho₁: There is no correlation between job satisfaction and job commitment of NYSC members serving in Oyo state.

Ho₂: There is no correlation between employer's motivation and job commitment of NYSC members serving in Oyo state

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The population for this study comprised 3908 being the entire batch 'A' 2014 youth corps members serving in Oyo state and simple random technique was used to select 330 respondents out of 1649 posted to the five local governments (Ibadan North, Ibadan North East, Egbeda, Oluyole, and Lagelu) in Ibadan Metropolis.

Three research instruments were used to collect data for this study (Job Commitment Scale, Job Satisfaction Scale and Ray Motivation Scale). The Job commitment scale is a scale developed by [43] to measure the level at which employees are committed to their job. While Job satisfaction scale was developed by [44] to measure the level of employees' satisfaction with their jobs. However, Job motivation scale was developed by [45] to measure the level of motivation enjoyed by the workers in their place of work. The instrument was administered on a sample of 50 youth corps members in Osun state for re-validation. The same instruments was re-administered on the same respondents after a period of two weeks. The scores of the respondents on the two administrations were correlated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and obtained reliability coefficients of 0.81 for job commitment scale, 0.74 for job satisfaction scale and 0.69 for job motivation scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Job Commitment among Corps Members (N=330)

Variables	\bar{x}	SD	Df	r_{cal}	P
Job Satisfaction	93.55	6.48			
Job Commitment	49.75	7.16	330	0.714	0.019*

*Significant at 0.05 level.

The result in Table 1 shows that there is a relationship between job satisfaction and job commitment of NYSC members in Oyo state ($r=0.714$, $p < 0.05$). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This is an indication that the more an NYSC member is satisfied with the job, the more committed he will be to the job.

The result corroborates the work of [18] and [19] which shows that dissatisfaction with factors such as organisational reward policies or rates of organisational advancement could result in a weaker commitment to the employing organisation by workers. Also the report of [17] concluded that the desirability of employees' commitment in an organisation is directly related to the level of job satisfaction derived from the organisation. In line with this, [20] and [21] concluded that job satisfaction is so important in that its absence often leads to lethargy and reduced job commitment. Therefore, NYSC members who are dissatisfied with their rewards may not be committed to their job.

Table 2. Relationship between Employees' Motivation and Job Commitment among NYSC Members (N=330)

Variables	\bar{x}	SD	Df	r_{cal}	P
Employees	15.50	5.37			
Motivation			330	0.682	0.024*
Job Commitment	49.75	7.16			

*Significant at 0.05 level.

The result in Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between employees' motivation and job commitment of NYSC members in Oyo state ($r=0.682$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that the higher the employees motivation, the higher the level of job commitment among NYSC members in Oyo state. Based on this result, the hypothesis is rejected.

The result of the finding is in line with the finding of Banjoko [40] who conducted a study on many managers using money as reward or punish workers through the process of rewarding employees for higher productivity by instilling fear of loss of job, premature retirement due to poor performance. Also Colvin [41] shows that financial incentives will get people to do more of what they are doing. Likewise, [38] asserted that money remains the most significant motivational strategy. In addition, [39] demonstrates the motivational power of money through the process of job choice. He explained that money can be used as instrument to attract, retain and motivate employees towards higher performance. [36], [37] and [31] also

agreed that motivation is likely to have a strong and longer term effect on employees.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, employers of NYSC members during the service year should create an atmosphere of job satisfaction for them by providing organisational reward policies or rates of organisational advancement which could result in a better commitment to the organisation employing them as corporers.

Employers of NYSC members should endeavour to put into maximum use those who are posted to them during the one mandatory service year for Nigerian graduates. This can be done by motivating the NYSC members through the provision of accommodation, transportation, incentives and welfare package. The employers should ensure that they pay NYSC members in addition to the federal government allowance. Employers of NYSC members should constantly give reward for good jobs noticeable among the corps while the lazy ones should be encouraged to put in their maximum efforts during the service year.

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