

## **Influencing Employees Job Attitude In Nigeria: A Critical Review**

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**Abstract:** *It is explicitly obvious that employees are the backbone of any organization. Employees are the pillars on which numerous organizations stand. They are generally described as the greatest assets existing in our myriads of firms. This research hinges on factors influencing employees' job attitude in Nigeria. The study adopted conceptual approach with a view of x-raying the core factors that are militating against effective commitment of employees in an organization, Materials for the study were generated via internet, textbooks, and documented sources available in our library. The study revealed that organizations achieve higher performance by positively influencing employees' attitudes to their jobs through the provision of adequate incentives. The study, therefore, recommended that employees should be valued as they serve as pillars of any successful organization. The policy implication is that it will enable them to be positively disposed towards duties in their diverse domains of endeavours..*

**Keywords:** *Employee attitude, job satisfaction, quality of work environment and competence.*

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### **I. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

It is glaringly clear that most employees exhibit negative or positive attitudes as a result of numerous factors accruing from their workplaces. Although, Organizations achieve higher performance by positively influencing employees' attitudes to their jobs through configurations of various practices that are supportive of intrinsic motivation. It is also obvious that intrinsic forces that affect organizational activities are employee attitude. Employee attitude determines to a large extent, their productivity, commitment and job satisfaction level. Intrinsic work motivation is conceptualized as subjective rewards emanating from positive execution of task, which hinges particularly on feelings of accomplishment, growth, development, self-esteem, and personal satisfaction, Lawler and Hall (1970). Employees who have positive attitude towards their organization become not only valuable employees but also great assets to the organization. Attitude is very essential and even more credible than facts and figures. Attitude can make or mar an organization if not properly monitored and handled (Anchor, 2009; Keller, 2012; Swindoll, 2012). That is why Organizations experience increased productivity and huge success whenever management actively works to improve culture by improving attitudes, quality of work life, and job satisfaction of employees (Anchor, 2009; Keller, 2012). The most focal employee attitude is job satisfaction. That is why most successful organizations consider job satisfaction to be vital for work performance. This is because they believe that employees who demonstrate increasing levels of ability are influenced by commensurate increase in job satisfaction. These employees are passionate about their work and are always ready to make sacrifices at all times. Sequel to this development, Meyer (2002) opines that employees who are highly satisfied with the organization hardly portray any form of negative attitude. This depicts that negative employee attitude stems from dissatisfaction and other concomitant variables. Job satisfaction is highly important because it is significant to the physical and mental well-being of employees as well as the organization. It is also the employee attitude that is most often related to organizational outcomes. It is highly unfortunate that Nigerians, both young and old have a poor attitude to work. Surprisingly, the rate at which employees exhibit lackadaisical attitudes in our various public and private establishments is heart-rending and disheartening. This has made this a subject matter of intense interest by professional scholars and researchers from different walks of life. This is proven by employees' non-challant attitudes towards their jobs. These non-challant attitudes to work of our employees are independent of geopolitical zones, religion, race, colour, educational qualification, sex and age. Workers at all levels especially in public establishments lack values, sense of accountability and commitment which are the basis on which effective attitudes is anchored. In the light of this study, myriads of factors have been considered to affect employees' job attitude. These factors include quality of work life, job perception, ability, effort, competence, motivation, and employee attitude and job satisfaction. This study aims to critically review how some of these variables influence employee job attitude.

## **II. Objective Of The Study**

The main objective of this study is to highlight the factors that influence employee job attitude. Specifically, the study highlights:

1. The selected factors that affect employee's job attitude in Nigeria.

## **III. Review of Related Literature**

### **3.1 Conceptual Review**

A worker's attitude towards his job can be positive or negative. Attitudes have been defined in diverse ways thereby depicting peoples various perceptions of the concept. The term "attitude" is widely used by the public to denote a psychological state that predisposes a person to act favorably or unfavorably to an event or situation According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993, 1998) define an attitude as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. This synchronizes with the definition propounded by Katz (1960) who proposed that an attitude is the predisposition of the individual to assess a particular object in a favorable or unfavorable manner. This definition implies that an attitude is a general disposition of workers which may be positive or negative towards the achievement of vision and mission of their organization. Attitude is one's behaviour or disposition towards a person or an issue. Crano and Prislin (2006) in their contributions, state that attitudes are the evaluative judgments that integrate and synchronize cognitive/affective reactions. Allport (1935) opines that an attitude is "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through adequate experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which they are interlinked. Myer (2002) defines attitude as "a favourable or unfavourable evaluative reaction towards something or someone often rooted in one's beliefs, and exhibited in one's feelings and intended behaviours. This implies that attitude could either be negative or positive. Sometimes, one could also exhibit ambivalent or lackadaisical attitudes towards an issue or phenomenon. Employees Job Attitude are the feelings we have concerning our diverse components of the work environment (Carpeter, Talya, and Erdogan 2009). According to him, numerous factors which influence the attitude towards work, include personality, environment, job features, psychological contract, organizational justice, work relationship, and stress.

## **IV. Theoretical Framework**

This study depends on the expectancy theories of Vroom, Porter, and Lawler, (1964). The theory points out that employee performance hinges not only on the amount of effort exerted, but also on the intervening influences of several factors such as person's abilities and traits, quality of work environment, job satisfaction, attitude as well as their role perceptions. This theory is in consonance with some of the factors that influence employee job attitude such as ability and effort. Expectancy on the other hand, is the perceived chance of something occurring because of a behavior. Expectancy is expressed in terms of probability. An expectancy of zero depicts that efforts has no anticipated influence on performance. The theory also stipulates that expectancy, valence, and instrumentality join together to determine effort and job performance. Expectancy indicates the presence of intrinsic or extrinsic rewards, and the value of those rewards determines the amount of effort. Quality of work environment comprises, good working conditions, adequate and fair compensation, opportunity for development and growth, job security, social integration, work life balance, involvement, recognition, and workload (Florence and Peter, 2015). According to this theory, individual behavior is influenced by how one perceives and reacts to the environment provided by the organization (Kohler & Mathieu, 1993).

## **V. Empirical Review**

Akankshi Singh Dr. R.P. Gupta (2016) studied Employees Attitude towards organizational Change This study focuses on employee workplace and demographic predictors to know the employee attitudes and behaviours regarding organisational change. The findings indicate significant relationships between readiness for change and workplace and demographic factors. The economic and social environment is so dynamic that without adopting to such change even the most successful organization cannot survive in the changed environment. Any business in today's fast-moving environment that is looking for the pace of change to slow is likely to be sorely disappointed. In fact, businesses should embrace change. Change is important for any organization because, without change, businesses would likely lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the needs of what most hope to be a growing base of loyal customers. It is difficult for organizations to avoid change, as new ideas promote growth for them and their members. Change occurs for many reasons such as new staff roles; increases or decreases in funding; acquisition of new technology; new missions, vision or goals; and to reach new members or clients. Changes can create new opportunities, but are often met with criticism from resistant individuals within the group. Jin (2007) in a study of the factors influencing employee service performance from a multi-dimension perspective in Chinese service organizations, found that appropriate personality traits (agreeableness and conscientiousness) and good employee job satisfaction are related

positively to the employee service performance. Additionally, team work cohesiveness was positively linked to the employee performance. Thus, a positive relationship has been found between training and the employee performance. Isaac Oluwafemi Dipeolu and Fredrick O. Oshiname (2012) investigated Attitudinal Disposition and Behavioural Intentions of Employers of Labour in Ibadan North Local Government Area towards Staff and Applicants Living with HIV and AIDS. The study adopted cross-sectional design. A multistage sampling technique was utilised to select 400 participants in the public (38) and private (362) sectors for interview. The instrument for data collection was a pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire. T-test/ Analysis of variance was used for the quantitative data and for the categorical variables, cross tabulation with Chi Square test was used. Slightly less than half (48.0%) would keep their staff's HIV status secret while more than half, (57.0%), would not recruit a PLWHA. More than half of the participants, (56.5%), expressed a positive attitude to staff who is a PLWHA. More respondents in the private sector, (47.8%), claimed to have ever organized HIV and AIDS-related educational programmes for their staff than those in the public sector (42.1%). Almost equal number of participants in the public (36.8%) and private (36.2%) sectors would require mandatory test for HIV before employment. Only 1.8% of participants in the Public Sector (PuS) and 6% in the Private Sector (PrS) reported that their organisations had a workplace HIV and AIDS policy. Although the participants would tolerate staff with HIV and AIDS, their intentions show limited knowledge about the mode of transmission and prevention of HIV. Health education strategies such as training and workplace HIV and AIDS education are needed to address these shortcomings. Akintunde, Samuel Oyebanji (2013) embarked on a study entitled assessment of attitudinal disposition of lecturers to nudity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This study examines the attitudinal disposition of lecturers to scanty, tight fitting and exotic dress pattern of lady students, otherwise called nudity in tertiary institutions. It also examines the differences in the attitudes of lecturers, which are associated with their sex, possession of educational qualification, age and experience as well as acceptance of responsibility for the moral character of their students. With the aid of a questionnaire, the author collected and analyzed data relevant to this study from a sample size of 67 lecturers of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, which was used as a case study. This study reveals that, contrary to suggestions from common discussion and some newspapers articles, lecturers have negative attitudinal disposition to the tight, scanty and exotic dressing pattern of lady students in tertiary institutions. However, they also believe that action to enforce better dress pattern should not be such that would make students feel being embarrassed. There is significant difference in the attitudinal disposition of old experienced lecturers and the young inexperienced lecturers (who are less tolerant of the scanty, tight fitting and exotic dress pattern of the lady students). There are no significant differences in the attitudes of male and female lecturers and lecturers who have teaching qualification and those who do not as well as lecturers who accept responsibility for the character of their students and those who do not. It was therefore suggested that there should be periodic general orientation of staff and students to the ideals of tertiary institutions and the need for good moral conduct as well as, or along with good academics. The authorities of the tertiary institutions should engage in deliberate promotion of decent and elegant dressing among students and involve all stakeholders such as the lecturers, students' leaders, parents and their security personnel on campus in the promotion of decent and elegant dress pattern by students. In addition, there is an urgent need for the direction of research efforts and funding to the character development and measurement issues in education.

Charles Arinze Obiora (2012) embarked on wages administration and Civil Service Productivity in Anambra State. The study adopts the survey research method to collect data which were analyzed based on simple percentage and chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ). The assertion of the paper is that while the wages and salaries of civil servants are their rights and entitlements, the manner by which they are determined and paid in the state civil service leaves much to be desired as it has enormous influence on staff morale and productivity. The paper recommends that at intervals, the state government should review the wages and salaries of civil servants so as to ensure that it reflects the economic realities of the period it is being paid.

Helen K. Arkorful, Frederick Doe and Collins B. Agyemang (2014) studied attitude of private and public sector employees towards female managers in Ghana. The study purposively selected 120 respondents from two private and public sector organizations with parity. Independent t-test was employed in analysing the four hypotheses. Employees from public organizations showed more favourable attitude towards female managers than employees from the private sector. Employees who had had satisfying previous interactions with female managers were likely to express positive attitude toward them than those who had had regrettable experiences. Female employees and younger employees demonstrated more favourable attitudes toward female managers than male and older employees. The present findings lend support to the social identity theory that women would be more receptive than male to the appropriateness of having women serve in managerial roles but contradict the position of the role incongruity theory that women performing agentic roles characteristic of men will be resisted because they are performing roles uncharacteristic of their gender. Implication for employers, administrators and policy makers are discussed.

## **VI. Factors That Affect Employee Job Attitude In Nigeria.**

Vast factors have been identified to influence employee job performance in our various organizations in Nigeria. These factors include family background, culture, and quality of work environment, job perception, ability, effort, competence, motivation, and employee attitude and job satisfaction. Quality of work environment is essential for organizations to continually attract and retain valuable employees. Lau (2000) perceives quality of work environment as the favorable conditions and surroundings of a workplace that provide support and promote employees' job satisfaction by providing them with job security and reward. QWL encompasses various aspects such as working conditions, working time, mode of wages payment, health hazards, and management behavior during the process of responding to the needs of the employees.

### **6.1 Quality Of Work Environment And Employee Job Attitude**

Quality performance has been hampered as a result of numerous factors, intrinsic and extrinsic to the environment in which we operate. Quality of work environment considers various qualities of work life. Factors that influence performance as propounded by Walton (1975) include adequate and fair compensation; safe and healthy working conditions; immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities; opportunity for continued growth and security; social integration in the work organization; constitutionalism in the work organization; work and total life space; and social relevance of work life. Mishra (1996) model proposes that Quality of Work Environment is also affected by the level of income and educational background of the employees. Higher income and education levels lead to high quality of work environment. Therefore, if the environment is conducive, employees stand the better chance of yielding positive results. These results manifest in the quality of service being rendered by an organization.

### **6.2 Job Satisfaction and Employee Job Attitude**

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state accruing from the evaluation of one's job or job experiences, or the attitudes and perceptions of people about their jobs (Armstrong, 2006). On the other hand, Schneider and Snyder (1975) consider job satisfaction as a personal assessment of the conditions present in the job, or the outcomes that arise as a result of having a job. Furthermore, Spector (1997) asserts that job satisfaction is the extent to which people are satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs. From the above definitions, we can infer that an employee who is highly satisfied with his job is always very productive. The correlation existing between job satisfaction and performance is still very vague. Consequent upon that, we cannot assume that job satisfaction leads to high performance or that high performers are necessarily satisfied with their jobs. But, on the other hand, only satisfied employees can go extra miles to make sacrifices for the betterment of their organization. We witness a lot of lackadaisical attitudes from employees in our various working places. Employees feel cheated and devote little or no time to their jobs. Let us take our public establishments for instance; they are no man's land where all forms of negative characters are being exhibited by workers. I feel there is every need to look into those things that will boost employee's interest towards making concerted efforts in their diverse places of work. Let us quickly x-ray the views of various researchers pertaining to job satisfaction. There are three dimensional approaches in which researchers have perceived job satisfaction. They looked at job satisfaction from the perspective of job characteristics, organizational characteristics and worker characteristics (dispositional approach) (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Jex, 2002). In connection with the job characteristics approach, research has showed that the nature of an individual's job or the characteristics of the organization that the individual works for, predominantly determines job satisfaction (Jex, 2002). This is in sync with the view adopted by Hackman and Oldham (1980) who pointed out that job characteristics is an aspect of a job that generates ideal conditions for high levels of motivation, satisfaction, and Performance. The second approach perceives job satisfaction to be dependent on organizational characteristics (Social Information Processing). According to Jex (2002) states that during social information processing, employees look to coworkers to make sense of and develop attitudes about their work environment. In other words, if employees observe that their coworkers are positive and are satisfied, then they will most likely be satisfied. Generally, research on social information processing theory supports the idea that social environment does have an impact on employees' attitudes, behaviors, and job satisfaction (Aamondt, 2009). The dispositional approach asserts that internal disposition is the basis of explaining job satisfaction. Hence, some people are inclined to be satisfied or dissatisfied with their work no matter the nature of the job or the organizational environment. According to Jex (2002), some people are genetically positive in disposition, whereas others are innately negative in disposition. From different perceptions discussed above, we can quickly infer that job satisfaction influences employee's attitude at work. Furthermore, Bavendam (2000) also highlighted six factors that cause job satisfaction to include: Opportunity for growth, stress, leadership, increase in relative strength, work standards, and fair reward and adequate authority. The level of job satisfaction is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivating Factors such as the quality of supervision, social relationships with the work group, and the degree to which individuals succeed or fail in their work (Armstrong, 2006). Other factors according to Jennings (1998) include salary, benefits, job security, and the ability to retire within the organization.

## **VII. Competence And Employee Job Attitude**

Competence depicts the quality or state of being able or suitable for a particular task. It implies also the state of being competent or proficient in a particular task. Employees' performance on the other hand, is the product of their competence, the support to adequately perform their job, and the motivation to perform their job at high levels. A question thus arises as to whether successful performing employees tend to display similar competencies or their competencies are unique to a specific situation? I can boldly say that employee competence is specific to a given situation. This is in tandem with the contingency theory which advocates situations as affecting everything. Attitude is a physical revelation of one's thoughts and actions. It manifests itself in both negative and positive dimensions. Attitude paves way for behavioral action which ultimately influences productivity. This behavioural action depicts how competent the employees are. Employee magnitude of competence determines his/ her level of disposition towards goal attainment. An incompetent worker has nothing positive to offer to the sustained growth and development of the organization. This is simply because a man cannot give what does not have. He is regarded as a liability rather an asset to the organization. Sometimes, negative attitude being exhibited by workers are as a result of lack of professional skills that enhance quality, productivity and innate desire to work. In view of this, Spencer and Spencer (1993) in their write up on job satisfaction, causes and consequences, maintain that superior performance at work is a result of specific sets of competencies combined in a particular way. These competencies go a long way to unleashing the potentials inherent in an individual that propel him to contribute effectively and efficiently towards the goal of an organization. It is evident today that differences in performance between individuals can be explained by individual differences in abilities, personality, and/or motivation. Jayan (2006) in a study of middle level managers found that Competence, personality, and job attitude are significant predictors of the Manager's performance.

## **VIII. Motivation And Employee Job Attitude**

Motivation is conceived as those factors that impel one to put in his best towards the growth and success of the organization. Incentives workers receive from their boss make most of them more productive and loyal to the organization. Such incentives include pay, commendation, praise, recognition and some other material incentives such as money etc. The extent to which workers are motivated yields positive results to the organization because most of them are propelled into action emanating from the encouragement given to them. Workers no matter the organization or establishment, have their expectation ranging from the issues of getting adequate payment from whatever they are doing, being secured in their place of work, being placed and recognized as significant in the organization, equipped with necessary tools, skill and equipment for the accomplishment of organization's goals. While we see these conditions as vital for every worker, some scholars tend to see them as necessary only for managerial cadre of an organization. If the managers are well equipped with the above factors, they will be able to run their organization successfully. Workers productivity will be affected and as we know productivity is money, in order to avoid this unhealthy situation happen, we should provide a comfortable and appropriate working environment facilities that suits to humans needs ( Asmui, Hussin and Paino(2012).

### **8.1 Gap in Knowledge**

Based on the literature reviewed, none of the studies reviewed x-rayed factors that influence employees' job attitude in Nigeria. This research bridges the lacuna by unveiling factors that could impact employee job performance in Nigeria.

### **8.2 Methodology**

This study adopted qualitative research approach. Data were generated via internet, textbooks, journal articles and numerous publications germane to this study.

## **IX. Conclusion And Recommendations**

Since job satisfaction does not occur in isolation, as it is conceptualized as being dependent on organizational factors such as structure, size, pay, good working conditions, and leadership style, that constitutes the organizational climate. Therefore, organizations are thereby adjured to relate effectively with their employees through the provision of basic facilities that will enhance their performance. Competence unveils one's level of ability. It is only a competent employee that can offer useful service in any organization. To buttress it further, competencies are capacities or dispositions embedded in the individual and are manifested by their actions and inactions. Therefore, jobs should be given to only qualified employees who possess certain innate abilities that can surely contribute towards achieving the set goals of an organization. Motivation propels employees into action. It sometimes fishes out the best in a man. Research has revealed that a motivated

employee is somehow a productivity employee. Certain factors such as incentives, praise, recognition, commendation, and even physical cash induce commensurate efforts geared towards actualizing organizations set targets. Therefore, organizations are adjured to put in her best to ensure that all the necessary incentives are being made available to employees at the right time, right place and at the right occasion. Quality of work environment influences employees and determines their degree of commitment to the organization. A conducive atmosphere makes work easier and relaxes the nerves of the employee. An environment influences a man because man depends on his environment for survival and growth. Man and his environment are interdependent. If the work environment is weak and cannot provide conditions necessary for improved work outfit, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness will be greatly hampered. Therefore, a good working environment is paramount to goal attainment and at the time gives employees no room for exhibiting lackadaisical attitude. Organizations are, therefore, encouraged to provide the basic facilities that will enhance proficiency and make workers more committed towards goal achievement which is the hallmark of every organization.

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