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EDITORIAL

This volume 12 Number 2, 2004 has sixteen brilliant varied articles on behaviour and experiences from China, Ghana, Mauritius and from Nigeria. We thank you for your constant support of our effort here.

Sincerely yours,

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INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEES' SEX, NUMBER OF DEPENDANTS AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY ON JOB INVOLVEMENT

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Abstract

Having a paid job constitute an important component of human needs. When on the job however, the level of job involvement differ among employees. Some salient personal characteristics of employees are seldom considered in discussing job involvement in Nigeria. This necessitated this study, which investigated the influence of sex, number of dependants, and family responsibility on job involvement.

A total of 200 participants drawn from two multinational corporations in Ibadan, Nigeria took part in the study that adopted the exposit factor design. Questionnaires were used for data collection.

Females were found to be more involved in their job than the male workers that participated in the study. Number of dependants was found to have high positive relationship with job involvement. It was concluded that there is no justification for the gender stereotype that encourage the deliberate exclusion of females from certain jobs in organisations. Having high number of dependants does not hinder job involvement. The need for gender sensitive policies was recommended for Management of organisations.

Keywords: employees, responsibility, job involvement

Introduction

Work is central to the survival of every individual as an adult. Having a paid job constitute an important component of human needs (Ekore, 2001). Apart from having the desire to meet personal needs through working, it also enable individuals as workers to satisfy the security need and enhance the psychological wellbeing of their families. The desire to meet such needs has been a major factor that motivates every individual to seek employment. When on the job however, the level of involvement differs among employees.

Employees that are highly involved in their jobs would gladly spend extra time to ensure task accomplishment and take uncompleted work/assignment home so as to complete them before the next working day. They actively participate in the Job and would apply extra rule in order to realize the organisational goal irrespective of extrinsic rewards. These work behaviours ultimately lead to higher productivity and consequently bring about higher profit for the organization. On the other hand, employees who are uninvolved in their jobs demonstrate lack of interest in their jobs and do not see their jobs as a central life interest. Such employees readily demonstrate a lack of commitment to the organisation's activities, and may not be so punctual to work. This tends to have very negative implications for the organisation's profit and productivity.

As it were, employees as organisational members are also family members. The level of responsibility to the family by an employee separates one from the other. In Nigeria, as it is with most parts of the world, fathers and mothers (male and females) as workers also have the responsibility to bring up children with utmost care, attention, and concern and to give adequate attention to their parents and other relatives that may be depending on them. Even workers who are single do have dependants like parents, siblings and other relatives as well. Such a worker could show either high or low level of responsibility to the dependants. Family responsibility as a factor along with some social characteristics becomes an important issue to be considered in the investigation of job involvement among employees.

Fathers as the head of the family are expected to contribute extensively to the healthy development of their children by being present in their lives everyday. This involvement is shown in ways ranging from showing affection to the kids, treating their wives with respect, talking and listening to their children, and encouraging them to express themselves. Other ways are reading to them and taking interest in their schoolwork.

The responsibilities of mothers are numerous and indispensable in families just as it is with her male counterpart. The female employee as a mother also assists the husband to balance both family and job demands. This goes to show that if an employee feels his job allows or does not allow him to be responsible to his family, there is the likelihood that such an individual might show high or low involvement on the job as the case may be. Therefore, meeting both social and organisational roles could be a major source of conflict for

the worker. Yet, as organisations in Nigeria seek new ways of improving employees' work attitudes in the 21st century, little or no research attention has been given to the influence of family responsibility and number of dependants on job involvement. This seemingly neglect has underplayed the importance of cultural expectations in Nigeria that have been known to play significant roles in workers productivity in organisations. This necessitated this study that focuses on job involvement using family responsibility and demographic characteristics as possible factors of influence.

Literature Review

According to Appley (1991), the incentive theory explains that individuals in organisations are pulled toward certain actions by some social forces. Family responsibility falls within social stimuli that could pull workers to exhibit behaviours and attitude that reflect job involvement. Holding similar view, Frone, Russel and Cooper (1992) also underpinned job involvement to family responsibility. They reported that individuals seek to construct desired images of themselves and anything that block the construction of these desired images represents a threat to their identification. The identity of any individual is founded in their family and when the job constitutes a threat to their family identity they might become less involved on the job and focus more on meeting family responsibilities. In a similar vein, Cox, Owen, Henderson, and Margand (1992) argued that help with childcare (which is a concern for employees' family responsibility) can among other things, increase productivity and employee morale as well as reduce accident rates, absenteeism and turnover that are known to stem from involvement problems.

It can therefore be inferred that employees who are more responsible to their families would likely be more involved in their jobs as well. The extent of responsibility by an individual towards his family might contribute extensively to the understanding of his or her involvement in the job.

The issue of job involvement is very vital to the progress of every organisation. It establishes a relationship between productivity, employees needs, and quality of life. Scholars like Argyris (1957) and McGregor (1960) presented job involvement as a means of aiding productivity by creating work situation in which there would be better integration of individuals and organisational goals. Gurin, Veroff and Feld (1960) also spoke of job involvement as the extent to which individuals seek some expression and actualisation of the self in their work.

Some researches have found that flexible schedules (Shin, Wong, Simko, and Ostiz 1989; Staines and Pleck 1983), parental leave (Shellenbarger 1996) and help with older care (Burden and Geogins 1987) can reduce multiple role strains in families thereby promoting level of responsibilities and increasing job involvement. Researches like Bacharch, Bamberger and Lonley (1991); Frone, Russel and Cooper (1992) have shown that balancing work and family responsibilities have implications for job involvement. This position is aptly buttressed by Kalat(1999), that one of the most powerful influences in the human environment is the family. By implication, the level of family responsibility could be an important factor influencing job involvement. Goff, Mount and Jamison (1990) mentioned absenteeism, which is a counterproductive attitude arising from low level of job involvement.

Brody(1985), and Lantor(1983) found that family responsibilities may cripple a woman's climb on the career ladder, while burden of care can lead to emotional collapse, strained personal relationship and decline in personal health which could affect the employee's level of job involvement.

Reisch (1984); Gilbert, Holahan and Meaning (1981) found that those who are employed outside the home must also deal with the stressors associated with their occupational role often without any reassignment of household responsibilities such as cooking, shopping and ironing. Moen and Dempster- Meclain (1987) asserted that the jobs are greater than either they or their spouses would prefer.

Sekeran (1989); Sekeran and Mowday (1981) posited two approaches to job involvement. The first is personal characteristics that predispose individuals to become more or less involved in their jobs. Secondly, job involvement can also be seen as a response to specific work situation characteristics such as work flexibility. Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) found that individual characteristic like sex of employees is a factor in job involvement. Maccoby and Jacklin(1974) reported that men and women as workers differ in conformity. Women tend to be more flexible while men are more independent. Maccoby (1990) posited that the important differences between males and females emerge more in social settings. The deduction that can be made from this position is that level of job involvement between males and females working in organisation (a social setting) would differ.

A critical review of literature necessitated the following hypotheses to be tested in the study;

- Sekeran, U.(1989) Paths to the job satisfaction of banking employees. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour's* 10, 347-359.
- Shellenbarger, S. (1991) More Job seekers put family needs first. *The wall street Journal* pp 31,136.
- Shin, M. Wong, N.W, Simko, P.A. Ostiz Torres B (1989) Promoting the wellbeing of working parents: coping, social supported and flexible schedules. *The American Journal of community psychology* 17, 31-55
- Staines, G.L. and Pleck, J.H. (1983). The impact of work schedules on the family. Ann Arbor, M.I: Institute for Social Research.

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- (1) Employees with high family responsibilities will report more involvement in their jobs than those with low family responsibilities
- (2) There will be a significant relationship between the number of dependents employees have and their level of job involvement
- (3) Female employees will be more involved in their jobs than their male counterparts.

Method

Design

The survey study adopted an ex-post-facto research design. All the responses were provided by the respondents as the situations applied to them. There was no prior categorisation of respondents into the dimensions of the variables. The independent variables are sex, number of dependants, and family responsibilities while the dependent variable is job involvement.

Participants

Participants in this study were selected from the population of workers of the Nigerian Bottling Company and Nigerian Breweries Plc both located in Ibadan through the accidental sampling technique. They were all fulltime workers in the organisations. The workers operate in the various departments of the two organisations. A total of two hundred (200) participants consisting of one hundred and twenty four (124) males and seventy-six (76) females constituted the sample for the study. Their age range was between 20 to 55 years with a mean age of 32.6 and a standard deviation of 7.52.

Instrument

Questionnaires were used to collect data in the study. The questionnaire consists of three sections. Section A measured the demographic variables of participants such as sex, age, education, number of dependants, and religion. Section B contained the Family Responsibility scale, which was developed by the researchers to measure the respondents' level of family responsibilities. The scale had 8 items with a reliability and validity coefficient values of $r = 0.65$ and 0.61 respectively. It was scored by using the likert format with scores ranging from strongly Agree (5) to strongly Disagree (1). The higher scores indicate higher family responsibilities. Items 5 and 1 were reversed, meaning that higher scores indicate low family responsibilities. Section C contained the Job Involvement scale. It measured the respondents' level of job involvement. The scale has 7

items and was adapted from literature (Landy, 1985) for the study. The likert format was adopted in scoring which ranged from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Higher scores indicate higher level of job involvement. The alpha coefficient value of 0.85 was reported in the present study.

Procedure

A total of 256 questionnaires were initially given out to respondents in the organisations but only 200 were recovered. One hundred and twenty four males and seventy-six female respondents returned theirs. Each of the questionnaires had the instructions clearly written on it. The respondents were informed that the exercise was strictly for research purposes and that individual's responses would be treated confidentially. The responses were then collected, collated and used for the main statistical analysis to test the stated hypotheses.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The Independent t-test statistics was used to test hypotheses one and three, while the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to test hypothesis two.

Results

Hypothesis one which stated that employees with high family responsibilities will be more involved in their jobs than employees with family responsibilities was analysed with the independent t - test and the result presented in the table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary Table of the Independent t-test result showing the influence of Family Responsibility on Job involvement

Fam. Respon.	N	X	SD	Df	T	P
Low	117	59.13	6.96	198	1.51	ns
High	83	60.83	8.78			

The Table above shows that hypothesis 1 was not confirmed $t(198) = 1.51, P > .05$. This means there is no significant difference in the Job involvement of employees with high family responsibility ($x = 60.83, SD = 8.78$) and those with low family responsibility ($x = 59.13, SD = 6.96$).

The second hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant relationship between the number of dependents employees have and their level of job involvement was tested with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The result indicates that hypothesis two was confirmed with $r=0.68$, $P<.05$.

Employee's number of dependents showed positive relationship with their job involvement. That is, the higher the number of dependants the higher the level of employees' job involvement. The third hypothesis which stated that female employees will be more involved in their jobs than their male counterparts was analysed with the independent t- statistical test and the result is shown on Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary Table of the independent t – test result showing the Influence of sex on Job involvement

Sex	N	X	SD	df	t	P
Male	124	58.62	7.74	198	2.87	<.05
Female	76	61.82	7.52			

The above table shows that hypothesis three was confirmed $t(198) = 2.87$, $P<.05$. This mean that female employees ($x= 61.8$, $SD=7.52$) had higher job involvement scores than the male employees ($x= 58.6$, $SD=7.74$).

Discussion

The findings of the study show that employees with high family responsibility were not more more involved in their jobs than employees with low family responsibility. The result finding clearly shows that when employees are saddled with too many responsibilities or too little responsibilities they could still be involved in the job they are engaged in. The mean differences however showed that employees with high family responsibilities showed more involvement on the job. The reason could be that these individuals make some extras from the job and therefore devote more time to overtime allowance, which might solve some family problems. This finding is not supportive of an earlier work of Bacharach, Bamberger and Conely (1991) which

indicated that work and family responsibilities might affect job involvement. Frone (1992) also supports this finding in his reference to self-identity via the family. The outcome of the present study has shown that employees responsibility to their families do not hinder job involvement.

The result of hypothesis two indicated that employees number of dependants showed positive relationship with job involvement and that the higher the number of dependents, the higher the level of job involvement. The reason for this could be that since employees with a higher number of dependants have many people to take care of financially, materially and otherwise, they may have no option than to be more involved on the job. This could be reflected in various ways: being punctual, doing overtime, and rate busting. All these could be aimed at retaining the jobs and also getting extra allowances like overtime pay and after sales bonuses. In this case, having high number of dependants could lead the employee to be more involved in the job because of the belief that the job will enable them provide for their dependants.

The result of hypothesis three showed that female employees were more involved in their jobs than male employees. The reason for this finding could be the fact that females find it easier to be emotionally tied to issues be it their family or their jobs. This finding clearly support the earlier positions of Maccoby and Jacklin(1974); and Maccoby(1990). They extensively reported significant differences between males and females especially in social actions. The work settings that were covered in the present study aptly represent such social activity described by Maccoby. The finding also supports those of Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) that a variable such as sex does influence job involvement. Such demographics characteristic could also reflect in a worker's job attitude. Since females tend to be more involved with their family duties in most cultures, it may then be easier for them to be more involved in their jobs. This finding further lends support to the volume of literature on sex differences in behaviour and attitude.

The findings in this study have serious implications for organisations. It has become pertinent that issues of family responsibility and dependants have implication for job involvement. Therefore, any effort to enhance job involvement in employees must take such personal factors into consideration because it has been found that there is a high positive relationship between the two variables. Rather than hiring employees based on sex, emphasis should

be on other personal qualities. As found in this study, females showed higher level of involvement in their jobs than the males. The factor of family responsibility should be taken into consideration when recruiting new employees as it could help predict possible involvement level of an applicant when hired rather than otherwise. If such personal demographic factors are ignored, they could have negative impact on job involvement and reduce productivity. It should also be noted that females who are seen as weak and lazier showed more involvement in their jobs. This finding calls for more opportunity for females to get into higher positions in corporate organisations to be able to direct work activities whenever possible. Female discrimination in the organization should thus be discouraged.

The outcome of the present study has serious implication for future research. For example, that females were higher than their male counterparts on job involvement calls for more research efforts in the area of gender and job involvement. The seeming exclusion of females from certain jobs in the organisations that the study covered has raise some questions that future researchers need to investigate. It is therefore recommended that management of organisations needs to establish gender sensitive recruitment policies and consider giving attention to workers' values and needs relating to family responsibilities such as dependants' welfare.

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