

Estimating Job Satisfaction and Commitment Correlate of Senior Staff Members of the University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana

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Abstract

Purpose: Employees' Job Satisfaction (JS) is becoming an important asset to an organisation, especially in the recent past. All other things being equal, satisfied employees are likely to be more productive as a result of citizenship and/or loyalty, decreased-absenteeism, high-commitment and so on. With the knowledge that a positive relationship may exist between employees JS and their commitment, it becomes imperative that management of universities institute measures to regularly collect data on employees' JS. Thus, this study examined Senior Staff (SS) JS and their commitment relationship in the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale.

Methodology: A structured questionnaire was administered to 231 Senior Staff (SS) members of the University. Of this number, which was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination, valid data retrieved and analysed represented a response rate of 92 per cent (212). Whilst the study employs One-Way ANOVA to compare the JS and the commitment level among the SS employee group to the University, Correlation and Regression Analyses were performed to establish associations and to determine the cause-effect relationship between the two variables.

Findings: The results of the study indicated that 74 per cent of SS commitment is influenced by their satisfaction level. Thus, the study concluded that the management of the University should priorities staff JS in almost all its corporate decisions, as this will engender their commitment to the University.

Unique Contribution to Practice and Policy: Organisational Commitment (OC) with all its dimensions (affective, continuance and normative) were confirmed to have a positive relationship with the JS of SS of a multi-campus public university; suggesting that OC does not only predicts JS in terms of teaching staff, as indicated by previous studies, but it also does so even with SS (who are in the non-teaching category). It was, therefore, recommend, based on the findings of this study, that the management of the UDS should priorities staff JS in almost all its corporate decisions, as this will engender their commitment to the University.

Keywords: *Organisational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Senior Staff, Public Universities.*

Introduction

Job Satisfaction (JS), as a construct in the human resource parlance, has long and widely been studied, and yet remains elusive among scholars in social and organisational management sciences. In view of this, literature on personnel management is flooded with myriad definitions of the construct. Job Satisfaction of employees is becoming an important asset to an organisation, especially in the recent past. All other things being equal, satisfied employees are likely to be more productive as a result of citizenship and/or loyalty, decreased absenteeism, high commitment and so on. With the knowledge that a positive relationship may exist between employees JS and their commitment, it becomes imperative that management of universities institute measures to regularly collect data on employees' JS.

In a typical public university in Ghana, employees are grouped into Junior Staff, Senior Staff and Senior Members. Senior Members can also be categorized into Teaching Staff (TS) and Non-Teaching Staff Whilst the NTS carry out the day-to-day administrative related functions of the University, the TS perform teaching and other academic-related activities. The SS, on the other hand, are the auxiliary support staff to both the TS and the NTS in providing basic administrative and other clerical services (Abukar, Francis, & Alhassan, 2019). The focus of the study was on the SS group.

The Senior Staff members of the University for Development Studies (UDS), are the first line of contact with students, parents, visitors and other stakeholders. All enquiries for admission and enrollment take place at the central administration of the University where the SS members are found mostly at the front desk. Students' data or records are processed, stored and produced by this group of employees. They also process, keep and produce records on the recruitment and appointment and promotions of staff. Furthermore, SS administer staff salaries and manage all kinds of staff leave. Almost all the offices in the University are flooded with this category of staff providing various kinds of administrative services. Of course, they **perform** these activities under the supervision of their superiors.

Therefore, SS of the University are required to put up their optimum best towards academic excellence, but they are unable to sometimes discharge their duties willingly and professionally. It is worth noting that some sections (Article 10, Sections 10.02 and 10.04) of the Unified Condition of Service Policy of Public Universities in Ghana, make it categorical that all staff (this includes SS) are entitled to rewards that result from overtime work and additional duties and responsibilities. In view of this, some of the SS members feel dissatisfied when they are denied access to these benefits, especially when they **have** carried out additional responsibilities. This leads to emotional displeasure among many of them to the extent that their institutional citizenship wanes, and this invariably affects their level of commitment to their job. Thus, most SS members sometimes display a cynical attitude towards their job. This is largely noticed in the manner in which they (SS members) handle and process official documents. This phenomenon is louder in public universities than in private universities.

The SS members also get frustrated sometimes because of delays in promotions to the senior member category resulting from the non-existence of vacancies. It is important to note that in most public universities in Ghana, the promotions of staff in the SS category to the senior member group is now tied to the availability of vacancies. This development has a significant effect on staff attitudes, behaviours, passion and commitment to the work they do. Despite this observation, not many studies have focused on exploring SS JS and their commitment relationship in public universities, especially in the Ghanaian higher education landscape. Therefore, at the very least, an analysis of the relationship between JS and Job Commitment (JC) of the SS members will serve as feedback to employers and policymakers alike on

employees' attitudinal evaluations of their job and job situations, particularly within the Ghanaian higher education context. This may be useful for planning and human resource development purposes, effective administration as well as teaching and learning. This study was, therefore, intended to explore the JS and commitment relationship among the SS of the UDS.

Literature Review

The Concept of Job Satisfaction

Although JS has been studied for a long time and wide, the views of scholars remain divergent on what really constitutes the construct (Abukar, Francis, & Alhassan, 2019). For example, Abukar et al., (2019) define JS to mean the extent to which an employee is happy with his or her work, which is generally expressed in terms of fulfilment of professional objectives as well as physical and psychological needs. It usually found expression in the degree to which an individual feel positive or negative about his or her job. Job satisfaction is the extent of passion a worker attaches and feels about his or her work at the workplace. Fogarty (1994) rather defined job satisfaction to be the extent to which workers gain enjoyment from their efforts at the workplace. This suggests that satisfaction with job performance is quite elastic and can decline over a period. It may also be seen as an attitude or emotional response to one's tasks as well as to the physical and social conditions of the workplace.

Several factors influence the level of an employee's satisfaction. They include satisfaction with supervision at work, the work itself, pay and conditions, appraisal, promotion practices and co-workers (Schermerhorn et.al, 2005). Therefore, the ability of an organisation to sustain such a degree of satisfaction of workers or workers themselves working harder to enjoy what they earn is such an interesting phenomenon to be studied. Obviously, it is not easy for individual workers or the organisation as a whole to sustain the level of satisfaction workers enjoy at the workplace. In fact, a worker's feelings, attitude or passion at the workplace can be attributable to either internal or external factors. For example, an external factor such as favourable working conditions greatly influences the worker's attitude to work. It is for this reason that Shadid et.al (1996) emphasized feelings of self-actualization and accomplishment on job performance as elements of intrinsic satisfaction. For example, a sales manager who achieves an unprecedented target set by a company gets the feeling of accomplishment and begins to work harder with all enthusiasm. Though this may not be true in all such cases since labour efforts to higher productivity depends on a larger extent the rewards and motivation given at any given in time.

Organizational Commitment

Employee commitment is the will and desire that an employee passionately demonstrates towards a job with loyalty and optimal effort. Commitment is underpinned by a growth-oriented mindset and relates to an individual sense of perceiving what can be done to deliver work of a more satisfying level. This is most obvious in a worker's sense of responsibility to achieve work goals. Job commitment exposes the strengths and weaknesses of workers as they challenge themselves with the job they do. Improving upon the strengths, and working on the weaknesses of workers enhances work performance and life satisfaction (Rashid & Rashid, 2011). For example, a weakness such as poor human relations of a public relations officer who is responsible for various correspondences is likely to negatively affect the organisation in both domestic and international dialogues.

Without a doubt, higher educational institutions are labour intensive, as reiterated earlier; and strong organizational performance and success require strong employees' commitment and support (Wilkins, Butt, & Annabi, 2017). Employees' commitment is, therefore, an important

determinant of the success or failure of organizations. Indeed, organizations need a more involved and committed workforce to succeed in this competitive global economy (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989). Research in employee commitment has received increased interest and attention in the social sciences and in industrial psychology in recent years. Such heightened interest has resulted in the explication of the construct, both empirically and conceptually (Mowday, T, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Conceptually, many definitions and approaches to OC have been suggested in the literature. For example, Meyer & Allen, (1991) developed a three-component model of OC, which has gained considerable popularity in employee commitment research over the years. These components, according to the study are; affective, continuance and normative commitments. Characteristically, these components support the view that commitment is psychological in nature that embodies an employee's relationship with his or her organisation, and which further dictates his or her decision as to whether to continue or discontinue membership with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment, according to Meyer and Allen (1991), refers "to employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation." Accordingly, employees with strong affective commitment are more likely to continue employment with their organizations willingly and voluntarily. Continuance commitment refers to involuntary loyalty due to an awareness of the cost involved in leaving an organization, and lastly, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment.

Becker (1960) "side-bet theory" of commitment also provides a useful contribution in literature to the conceptual explanation of employee commitment, with the inclusion of the influence of both the internal and external factors of an organization. Jamal and Muhammad (1979), citing the work of Becker (1960), maintained that, the more an employee invests his or her time, energy, skill and other personal assets in the course of his or her engagement with an organization, the more it increases the employee's cost of leaving, and hence it is rationally sensible to expect greater commitment on the part of the employee to the organization; in the course of time. Becker (1960), proffered that "commitment comes into being when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interest with a consistent line of activity." This implies that employees become voluntarily committed to their organizations when they reckoned that the cost of leaving is expensive by virtue of social, economic and other factors incurred as a result of their involvement with their organisations.

This thinking is consistent with Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) conceptualization of OC. Their definition of OC provided 'actionable' orientation to the commitment concept, which they later developed into a 15-item instrument to measure employees' commitment. They defined the concept as "the relative strength of individual identification with, and involvement in a particular organization. This, according to these researchers, is characterized by three related factors: first, a strong conviction to accept the goals and values of their organizations, second, a willingness to sacrifice and put up much effort for and on behalf of the organization, and third, a clear passion to maintain alliance and membership with their organizations. Accordingly, the boundaries of commitment in the light of the above, transcends mere beliefs and opinions, to include an active relationship with the organization, as well as the tendency of individuals to make an honest sacrificial contribution in order to enhance the image and wellbeing of their organizations (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Job satisfaction is associated with job commitment, and organisational commitment is linked to employee commitment. In many studies (Markovits, Davis, Fay, & Dick, 2010; Srivastava 2013; Suri & Petchsawang, 2018; Abukar, Francis, & Alhassan, 2019) of organisational commitment leading to job satisfaction or life satisfaction, more emphasis is placed on employee commitment to helping organisations achieve their goals and objectives. However, Schoemmel and Jonsson (2014) argued that affective commitment impacts job performance rather than the department or the organisation an employee works.

Arguably, JS and OC are two important work attitudes among many that are widely studied (Robbins & Judge, 2016). The two constructs have enjoyed considerable discourse among academicians and practitioners alike, more especially, following the findings of the Hawthorne Studies (Gangai & Agrawal, 2015). Practically, the two concepts are 'bed-fellows with causal and reciprocal interactive relationship, especially in a contemporary work setting where norms of exchange reciprocity govern the psychological contract process between employers and their employees (Morrison & Robison, 1997).

Over the years, the relationship between JS and OC have been examined by myriad scholarship, albeit mixed and varied findings characterizing the causal, reciprocal and linear relationships between the two variables. For instance, in their structural model examining the causal and reciprocal relationships between JS and OC, Vandenberg & Lance (1992) findings revealed that OC is a causally antecedent of JS of employees in organizations, thus OC is postulated to cause JS. Their findings are consistent with that of Bateman & Strasser, (1984), wherein the results of their longitudinal survey found OC as a predictor variable, rather than an outcome. This finding contradicts other studies (Eleswed & Fatema Mohammed, 2014; Sikorska-Simmons, 2005) that suggest that JS predicts OC. This also differs from the findings of Saridakis, Yanqing Lai, and Gourlay (2018) that support the reciprocal relationship between the two variables. More so, in a study to investigate the association between JS and OC of teaching staff, Donald, Lucia, and Victor, (2016) also found a significant positive relationship between employees' JS and their affective and continuance commitment in some selected South African HEIs. However, the researchers acknowledged the uncertainty in generalizing their findings to other employee groups in South African HEIs. The findings of Donald, Lucia, and Victor, (2016) found favour in many other studies (e.g., Markovits, Davis, Fay, & Dick, 2010; Srivastava 2013; Vujicic et al., 2015; Suri & Petchsawang, 2018) wherein significant relationships were established between JS and OC.

Materials and Method

Population and Setting

The study was conducted in University for Development Studies. The University is Ghana's first public multi-campus university located in the Northern part of the country. It was established in May 1992 by the Government of Ghana to blend the academic world with that of the community in order to provide constructive interaction between the two for the total development of Northern Ghana, in particular, and the country as a whole. With eight (8) Schools, six (6) Faculties, three (3) Institutes, five (5) Centres and eleven Directorates, the University has three (3) main campuses located at Dungen, Nyankpala and Choggu all in the Northern Region of Ghana. Currently, the University runs both graduate and undergraduate programmes; and as of the end of the 2020/2021 academic year, it had a student and staff populations of 22,093 and 1,734 respectively (University for Development Studies, 2021).

Target Population

The target population of a study is defined as a total set of observations from which a sample is drawn. It is the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects or events that have common observable characteristics in which the researcher is interested in studying (Alhassan, 2020). The target population was made up of about 600 SS members of the University. This number was reduced to about 491 after the authors conducted a technique known as population refinement. Population refinement is the process of specifying a General population (GP), as defined above, to reach the required sample called Accessible Population (AP) that has the relevant information and is available and willing to respond to your instrument (Asiamah, et al., 2017). It is on the AP that a sample determination formula is usually apply to obtain the study sample.

Sampling and Data Collection

The senior staff members were divided into three distinct homogenous strata (independent sample groups) on the basis of the three campuses of the University. The quota sampling technique was then used to conveniently select subjects of, at least, a year of working experience from each campus. This technique was necessary for ensuring the spread of the data, and to avoid skewness towards a particular demographic variable, e.g. gender, age, and so on.

The Yamane's formula $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$, with "N" being the population, and "e", the margin of error (0.05), was used to determine a sample size of 231 for the study, which was proportionately distributed and among the three campuses. Of the 231 questionnaires administered, a usable 212 questionnaires were retrieved – representing 92% response rate– for analysis; using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 for windows. Data were collected in September 2021 during the first trimester of the 2021/22 academic year.

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was adapted from the literature and was refined to fit into the study context. The adopted instrument was pre-tested to a sample of 7% of the study sample (231). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a sample size from 1% to 10% is considered acceptable for pre-testing an instrument. The instrument was then modified to incorporate the feedback from the pre-test and was eventually administered to the target respondents through personal contacts by the researchers for almost a month.

Job Satisfaction was measured using a 10-item Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (GJSS) developed by Macdonald and MacIntyre, (1997). The scale was considered appropriate for this study, as it shares features of both the facet and general measurement approaches. It has a sufficient number of items for reliability purposes, and a sizable number of items convenient for the organizational environment. The GJSS is also suitable for measuring the JS of employees across diverse occupations, and across diverse cultural settings. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability for the scale is 0.77.

OC was measured using Mowday, Steers, and Porter, (1979) OC scale. Despite its existence for a long time, the scale is still relevant and was adopted by studies such as Srivastava, (2013); Vandenberg & Lance, (1992); Mohamed Aly, Ghanem, & El-Shanawany, (2016). Also, the scale has been validated and tested across different cultures and environments globally. It contains 15 items and is measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated for the purpose of assessing its consistency. Alpha Correlation Coefficient (ACC) was thus, used to measure the internal

consistency of the items. An ACC of 0.911 was obtained; which is evidence of the high degree of reliability. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999) and Fraenkel & Wallen (2006), an ACC of 0.70 and above of a given scale is considered reliable and acceptable, especially in social science research. On the JS scale, the test results produced an ACC of 0.843, which is also considered acceptable.

Methods of Data Analysis

SPSS was used for the various statistical analysis, as mentioned earlier. Accordingly, Pearson correlation and Linear Regression analysis were performed to determine the relationship between SS' JS and their commitment to the University. Model diagnostic tests such as normality, linearity and test of independence were performed to attach credibility to the results.

Results

This section discusses SS' JS and their committed relationship. Therefore, the correlation and the regression analyses are run and their results interpreted.

Correlation between Commitment and Satisfaction

On the correlation between Commitment and Satisfaction, a partial correlation was the method used to explore the relationship between the two variables utilised for the study. Careful analysis was done to ensure that none of the correlation assumptions (normality, linearity and homoscedasticity), as reiterated earlier was violated. The results computed explains the correlation among the variables on holding the age, status and rank of respondents as controlled variables. The results are shown in Table 1 below giving details on the Pearson correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Table 1: Commitment and Satisfaction Correlation Matrix

	Age	Status	Rank	Affective	Continuance	Normative	Commitment	Satisfaction
Age	1							
Status	0.043	1						
Rank	0.021	0.023	1					
Affective	-.269**	0.083	0.005	1				
Continuance	-.256**	0.07	0.024	.991**	1			
Normative	-.278**	0.067	0.022	.989**	.979**	1		
Commitment	-.267**	0.076	0.016	.997**	.995**	.993**	1	
Satisfaction	-.285**	-0.111	-0.053	.874**	.865**	.836**	.860**	1

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tail)*

An aggregation of commitment and satisfaction dimensions (affective, continuance, normative and satisfaction) was used for the computation of the correlation. It is important to note that a '0' correlation value depicts that there is no relationship between the variables. However, all loadings have values that are greater than '0' except all loadings under the controlled variable

(age, status and rank). The age and rank of respondents had no relationship with the satisfaction SS of the University (Table 1).

For the commitment of SS, $r = (0.874, 0.865 \text{ and } 0.836)$ for affective, continuance and normative in that order. The ' r ' values underline the impact of the various components on the overall satisfaction of SS. These positive values show a positive relationship between the variables. The coefficient of determination was also calculated to estimate the exact percentage variance the components shared. The results of the computations were $(0.874 \ 0.874) * 100 = 76\%$, $(0.865 * 0.865) * 100 = 75\%$ and $(0.836 * 0.836) * 100 = 70\%$ for affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment respectively. The aggregate commitment also recorded an ' r ' of 0.860 with a coefficient of determination of 74%. From the results, the SS commitment level is over 70%. Also, 74% of the aggregate commitment serves perfectly the average of the affective, continuance and normative commitment. The affective commitment domain increases an individual's satisfaction on a job by 76% whereas the continuance commitment domain exhibition of SS of UDS increases their satisfaction and contentment by 75%.

Regression Analysis on Commitment and Satisfaction

Regression analysis was conducted to ascertain the predictive power of each independent variable. Just like the correlation, regression also estimates the variance between the various variables. Therefore, in this study, the regression analysis was done to estimate the degree of the impact of commitment on the satisfaction levels of the SS of UDS. Table 2 below shows a model summary of the regression analysis.

Table 2: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.900 ^a	0.810	0.807	2.770

Predictors: (Constant), Commitment, Total Normative, Total Affective, Total Continuance

The analysis, shows that the predictive power of the model used for this study is over 80%. Also, the results are marked by a significant measure of 0.000 (Table 3).

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig
1					
Regression	6815.971	4	1703.993	222.101	.000 ^b
Residual	1595.804	208	7.672		
Total	8411.775	211			

a. Dependent Variable: Total Satisfaction.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Commitment, Total Normative, Total Affective, Total Continuance.

It was evident from the study that affective, continuance and normative commitment, whether individually or aggregated, led to on average 74% satisfaction level of SS. This suggests that the satisfaction level is relatively high by these dimensions. However, poor interpersonal communications continue to affect willingness and cooperativeness on the part of most SS.

Hence, negative attitudes and work behaviours towards work affect job satisfaction levels. This is evidenced by Meyer and Allen's three-dimensional conceptualization of commitment (affective, continuance and normative) which is confirmed to have a positive relationship with JS, even in this study.

Moreover, the commitment levels of SS commensurate over 70% of satisfaction among SS and this is perhaps due to fear of losing their jobs but not necessarily being satisfied with terms and conditions of service as well as other benefits obtainable from the job. It was established by the study however that age and status of SS had no influence on their commitment and satisfaction levels. SS age was also found not to have any significant effect on their commitment levels. This is because age is not a determining factor of neither job satisfaction nor job commitment. If staff is satisfied with a job, it does not matter the age of the person but rather the passion attached to doing that job. Besides, the study revealed that the status of the SS was no influential factor on job commitment and JS.

It was also observed that the rank of SS had a direct and positive bearing on their commitment and satisfaction. This is perhaps due to additional remunerations, benefits or entitlements attached to some designations. Interestingly, some SS did not want to lose such positions so as to be affected by those additional benefits. Institutions of higher learning contribute to the development of a country with which Ghana is no exception. They are seen as the backbone to knowledge transfer and acquisition and contribute massively towards a nation's Gross Domestic Product and the economic stability of nations. Their contribution towards economic performance is recognized and accepted worldwide as significant. Organisational commitment as a whole and the commitment levels of individuals within an organisational context has been a focus of numerous studies over the years. It has become one of the most intensively investigated construct along with JS. For example, in a study to explore the relationship between JS and OC among teaching staff members in some selected Higher Education Institutions, Donald, et al., (2016), found JS to be positively related to all the dimensions (affective, continuance, normative, etc) of OC. Similarly, in their attempt to establish a relationship between JS and OC among hospital employees in Turkey, Metin et al, (2012) also found a positive correlation between JS and OC.

In Ghana, Abukar et al, (2019) conducted a study to determine the relationship between JS and OC among three employee-groups in a multi-campus public university in the northern part of the country. Their study found a significant relationship between JS and OC and that employees' JS predicts their commitment to the University. The researchers further maintained that theoretically, their work will extend the understanding of how JS is a critical determinant of employees' commitment in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) context. In view of this, the used of the two constructs (job satisfaction and commitment) in this study was founded on literature and in practice.

Conclusion and Recommendation

To assess the commitment of employees, the researchers employed Meyer and Allen's three-dimensional conceptualization of organisational commitment. The dimensionality of Meyer et al. (1993) and their relationships with JS was examined, and the individual and interactive effects of job commitments dimensions and job satisfaction were computed and analysed. The study used age, current status and current rank of respondents as controlled variables in estimating the degree of impact on job commitment and job satisfaction and the results proved that age and status of SS had no influence on their commitment and satisfaction, however it was established that the rank of workers had a direct and positive relationship with their level of commitment and satisfaction.

More importantly, the study indicates that OC, with all its dimensions (affective, continuance and normative) were confirmed to have a positive relationship with the JS of SS of a multi-campus public university; suggesting that OC does not only predicts JS in terms of teaching staff, as indicated by previous studies, but it also does so even with SS (who are in the non-teaching category). It was, therefore, recommend, based on the findings of this study, that the management of the UDS should priorities staff JS in almost all its corporate decisions, as this will engender their commitment to the University.

This study has contributed uniquely to knowledge in the employee satisfaction and commitment by exploring the JS and OC relationship of a multi-campus university. Other studies have only worked on non-multi-campus universities. Besides, SS members were used as subjects but not senior members, as usually done by most studies. Lastly, the study also employed practical observations that are products of dissatisfaction resulting from some decision taken by the management of the institution where the study was conducted.

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