Job Attitude and Employees Performance of Public Sector Organizations in Jaffna District, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Job attitudes such as satisfaction and involvement are criterion for establishing the health of an organization; rendering effective services largely depends on the human resource. Job satisfaction experienced by employees will induce the people to give their best to the organization. Both the attitudes required to enhance the performance of employees. Thus this paper investigates the relationships between satisfaction, involvement and employee performance. The sample consists of 220 employees from fourteen public sector organizations in Jaffna District, Sri Lanka. The results indicate that job satisfaction and involvement are correlated with performance. As compared to satisfaction job involvement has a greater impact on employee performance.

Key words: Attitudes, involvement, performance, satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Attitudes are the feelings and beliefs that largely determine how employees will perceive their environment, commit themselves to intended actions, and ultimately behave. Attitudes form a mental set that affects how we view something else. It has an impact on how we view and judge our surroundings at work. Managers of organizational behaviour are vitally interested in the nature of the attitudes of their employees toward their Jobs, toward their careers, and toward the organization itself. Job attitudes of the employees are most important to achieve the individual and organizational objectives through their performance. Hence the present study is intended on job attitudes such as job involvement and satisfaction, and employee performance.
Employee involvement refers to the process of engaging employees in their work and increasing their participation in decision-making. In particular, employee involvement ensures that employees who are closest to the work have the power to control work methods, and are able to use their knowledge and skills to improve work process (Lowler, 1992). This approach also attempts to move information and power downward in the organization, so that employees can work autonomously and regulate their own behaviors (Cummings and Worley, 1993). As a consequence, organizations that use this approach typically experience a flattening of the organizational hierarchy. Although there is no one theoretical basis for employee involvement, it is derived from a number of key human relations assumptions (Argyris, 1957). Specifically it is assumed that when employees are given challenging work and allowed to participate in decision-making, they will (a) become more motivated and willing to control their own behavior (b) become more involved in their work, (c) increase their commitment to organizational goals, and (d) use their skills and abilities to make valuable contributions to organizational goals.

Job satisfaction is a set of favorable or unfavorable feelings and emotions with which employees view their work. It is an affective attitude - a feeling of relative like or dislike toward some thing (Newstrom, and Davis, 2001). Job satisfaction studies focus on the various parts that are believed to be important, since these job-related attitudes predispose an employee to behave in certain way (Hoppock, 1935, Hertzberg, 1957, Hulin and Smith, 1964).

Attitudes such as involvement and satisfaction contribute to increase the performance of the employees which is proved by various existing studies (Vroom, 1964, Lawler and Porter, 1967, Velnampy, 2006). Although various research have studied the issue of performance and satisfaction, and explored many facts there is no sufficient studies as a multiple focusing on the public sector organization in the district of Jaffna. In order to fill this gap this study tries to identify the relationship between attitudes and performance.
2. Review of Literature

Various studies (Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey, 1962, Brown, Galanter, Hess and Mandler 1962, Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1957, Festinger, 1957, Abelson and Rosenberg, 1958, Kelman and Eagly, 1965, Pushupa Singh, 1981, and Verma 1985) have been done on attitudes. They emphasize the changes in degree of existing attitudes as congruent and changes from positive to negative as incongruent. Attitude change is the consequence of disequilibrium when positive and negative bonds are associated. This disequilibrium initiates change, and change operates in the direction of equilibrium restoration.

A full satisfaction of the employees will make them to give their best to the organization and then improves their performance. Brayfield and Crockett (1955) concluded that there was virtually no evidence of any relationship between satisfaction and performance. Vroom (1964) up-to-date the study of Brayfield and Crockett and found a median correlation between the two. The high job satisfaction leads to high performance, or that high performers are satisfied with their jobs (Euske et al., 1980). A number of studies indicate a week link (Petty et al., 1984, Laffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985). While others (Caldwell and O’ Reilly, 1990, Sector, 1997) suggest a potential relationship between satisfaction and performance. Even though job satisfaction leads to performance, it is not independent in all job facets and that satisfaction with one facet might lead to satisfaction with another (Alf Crossman, and Bassem Abou-Zaki, 2003). Several studies have been done on this area, but a detailed study, in Jaffna district, has not yet been conducted. Therefore the present study is made on “Attitudes and Employees’ Performance of Public sector organizations’ to fill the gap.

3. Research problems

The following research questions are formed based on the literature previously discussed, and research gap.

1) Is there a positive relationship between attitudes and performance?
2) Is there a positive relationship between satisfaction and Job involvement?
3) Do the attitudes such as a satisfaction and Job involvement influence on the employees’ performance?
4. Hypothesis

The following hypotheses are formulated in the study

1) There is a significant relationship between attitudes and employees’ performance.
2) Job satisfaction has a greater impact on performance rather than job involvement.

5. Objectives of the study

The main object of the study is to examine the relationship between attitudes and performance and the specific objectives are;

1) To find out the impact of attitudes on employees’ performance
2) To suggest the organization to increase the performance of employees.

6. Data collection and sampling design

Primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data have collected through the questionnaire developed by the researcher after the review of literature and secondary data were collected from the books journals etc.

The samples for the study were the public sector organizations in Jaffna district, Sri Lanka. Thus the following organizations have selected for the purpose of the study.

Table 1: Sample selected for the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>No of organisations</th>
<th>No of respondents selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divisional secretariats</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predeshiya Saba</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal council</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Secretariat</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; survey data.

An attempt, in first, was made to identify the public sector organizations located in Jaffna district and then the above organizations were identified and selected for the
study. Although 13 divisional secretariats are in Jaffna only four in Kopay, Point-Pedro, Valikamam and Chavakachcheri have selected, Neervely, Nallur and Valikamam Predeshiya sabas and two private banks (Hatton national bank and Commercial bank) and three state banks such as National saving bank, Peoples bank and Bank of Ceylon are focused for the study. Among the 14 organizations in the five categories 220 respondents covering all type of employees were considered for the survey as an ultimate sample.

7. Research methods and conceptualization
An instrument was developed by the researcher to measure the perceived level of satisfaction, involvement, and performance and then distributed among the respondents with the five-point Likert scale ranging from always to never. Each fifteen statements are given to measure the satisfaction and involvement and ten statements for performance. Major Satisfactional factors as pay, fringe benefits, and psychological issues, are included in the instrument. Participation in decision – making, challenging work, more motivation. Willing to control their own behavior, giving their best to the organization, commitment, valuable contribution to the organization and staying more time in the work are considered to measure the involvement. Likewise the following variables are taken for measuring performance (1) completion of work with in the time. (2) Independent work (3) creativity, (4) innovation. (5) Initiative skill. (6) Discipline. (7) Turnover. (8) Absenteeism. (9) Competition, and (10) training.

Based on the above variables attitudes and performance were measured and quantified with the five (5) point scale.
From the above variables, a conceptual model was formulated to reveal the relationship between the variables and hypotheses testing.

Figure 1: Conceptual model
Above model shows the relationship between the attitudes, such as satisfaction and involvement and performance. Satisfaction and involvement are independent variables whereas performance is the dependent variable. To find out this relationship, multiple correlation analysis was carried out. Further multiple regression, t-test were also used to test the hypothesis and significance using SPSS.

8. Limitation of the study

1) The study is confined only to the selected public sector organizations in Jaffna district.

2) Regarding attitudes satisfaction and involvement are only considered in the study.

9. Results and Discussion

First of all a covariance method with correlation matrix was used to check the reliability of the data. Cronbach’s alpha value was calculated for variables; attitudes and performance. Thus the reliability measure was 0.823, 0.854, and 0.912 for satisfaction, involvement and performance respectively. These measures confirmed that the data were highly reliable to use and then continued the analysis.

Co-efficient of correlation was computed to find out the significant relationship between the variables and presented in the Table 2

Table 2:- Correlation matrix of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.790 **</td>
<td>0.713 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>0.790 **</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.748 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>0.713 **</td>
<td>0.748 **</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: survey data
Table 2 indicates that satisfaction, involvement and performance are significantly correlated at 0.01 significance level. The correlation value between satisfaction and performance is 0.713 which is lessor than that in involvement and performance. Whatever we can observe that there is positive relationship between attitudes and performance. Hence hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Regression model was applied to test that how far the attitudes (satisfaction and involvement) impact on performance. Coefficient of determination- $R^2$ is the measure of proportion of the variance of dependent variable about its mean that is explained by the independents or predictor variables (Hair et.al, 1998). Higher value of $R^2$ represents greater explanatory power of the regression equation. In this way, a multiple regression analysis was performed to identify the predictors of satisfaction and Job–involvement as conceptualized in the model. Table 3 provides the summary measures of the model.

Table 3: Predictors of performance –model summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R square</th>
<th>Std.Error of The Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.787 a</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>0.521</td>
<td>2.87375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a predictors; (constant) satisfaction and involvement.

The specification of the two variables ie satisfaction and involvement in the model revealed the ability to predict performance. $R^2$ Value of 0.542 which is in the model denotes that 54.2%, of the observed variability in performance can be explained by the differences in both the independent variables namely satisfaction and involvement. Remaining 45.8% of the variance in performance is related to other variable which is not explained, because they are not depicted in the model. $R^2$ value of 54.2% indicates that there may be number of variables which can have an impact on performance that need to be studied. Hence this area is indicated as a scope for future research.
Table 4; coefficients for predictors of performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>17.684</td>
<td>4.149</td>
<td>4.882</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>2.764</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>3.780</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; survey data

At the above model, t values are significant for both the independent variables (sig.001) and therefore we can reject the null hypothesis that the coefficients for satisfaction and involvement are 0. The signification level explains that we can observe a high degree of certainty (greater than 99.9% in both cases) that the coefficients should be included in the regression equation. Both variables have a positive coefficient, which means that performance increases with increasing level of satisfaction and Job involvement. The study finds that high levels of satisfaction and involvement would be associated with higher level of performance and the study proves that satisfaction and involvement will impact on the level of performance. But involvement has a greater impact on performance than the satisfaction. There fore hypothesis 2 is not accepted.

10. Conclusion

Job satisfaction does impact future performance through the Job involvement, but higher performance also makes people feel more satisfied and committed. It is a cycle of events that is clearly in keeping with the developmental perspective (Alan Randolph et.al, 1998). Attitudes such as satisfaction and involvement are important to the employees to have high levels of performance which was conceptualized and supported by the findings of the present study. The results of the study and from the formulated hypotheses revealed that attitudes namely satisfaction and involvement, and performance are significantly correlated. Correlation between involvement and performance is somewhat higher than the correlation among satisfaction and performance.
Even though attitudes have a greater impact on performance (54.2%). Involvement has a greater impact rather than the impact of satisfaction on the performance and hence hypothesis 2 is rejected.
To conclude satisfaction, performance and involvement are associated and inter-related and together lead to the realization of organizational objectives. Some other factors which influence on the performance should be explored by further study.

11. Suggestions
The following suggestions are recommended to increase the individual performance,

1) Performance standards should be established and communicated to the employees. This will help employees to achieve the standards and perform well.

2) Employees who are reaching standards and or above standard should be appreciated and rewarded.

3) Fair pay, benefits, promotion opportunities and good supervision should be in the organization to satisfy the employees in order to enhance the performance.

4) Good leadership styles as to fit for the organizational conditions may be satisfied the workers.

5) Identifying weaknesses of employees may be the best one to improve the Worker’s performance, because it indicates the area which training should be Provided.

6) Motivating employees to achieve the high level of satisfaction and performance
12. Reference


