

The Impact of Employees' Attitudes on Job Satisfaction and Organisational Effectiveness

Abanka Joseph Musa

Crown University Int'l, Santa Cruz, Argentina.

Corresponding author: renitongo@gmail.com

Abstract

This research paper looks at the possibilities that effective definition and nurturing of the right work attitude can bring about increase job performances, team work, sense of belonging, and foster unity amongst the workers and the management. Attitude is defined as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. However, in spite of the many studies carried out globally by scholars and practitioners on attitudes, much still need to be done about attitudes in workplaces and the factors affecting it. This paper is builds on previous theoretical and empirical studies to determine the extent to which contextual factors and attitudes impacts on job performances, human resources behaviour, organisational effectiveness, job satisfaction and performance standard. The author concludes that sound attitudinal practices aid and, or enhance human resources' job performance, job satisfaction, and competitive edge on the overall business performance.

Keywords: Attitude, Employee's Behaviour, Job Satisfaction, Organisational Effectiveness, Performance Standard.

Introduction

Have you taken time to ask or meditate on why human beings behave the way they behave, even in workplaces? Why humans do exhibits different attitudinal behaviour in different environment-workplaces, religious places, hospitals, interview ground, schools, etc. However, attitude succinctly is the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology. It can be formed from a person's past and present. Attitude is also measurable and changeable as well as influencing the person's emotion and behaviours.

The word attitude, which comes from the Latin word "Optus" meaning suitability or adaptation, means behaviour, state, and line of conduct. Kartubi mentioned that there exist different definitions of the term "Attitude", which is characterised as learned tendencies that prompt an individual to exhibit certain behaviours in front of certain people, times and situations.

Attitudes are evaluation of one of psychological and fundamental concepts because they help to explain people's decisions and actions. It is a global and relatively enduring evaluation of whether we think the target is generally good or both desirable or undesirable. In addition to the forgoing, therefore, Unal & Işeri (2012) defined attitude as the state of emotional and mental preparation, which is formed through experiences that has a

directive or dynamic influential power on an individual's behaviours towards all things and situations. Attitude is "a word used as a general tendency of an individual tendency to act in a certain condition". The use of word "attitude" is based on what someone says, or someone does and is based on visible behaviour. It denotes that someone's attitude toward something can be seen from the way they say and activities related to the attitude object. Attitudes are what the people think or feel about something. Some scholars note that attitude is determined by the individual's beliefs about outcomes or attributes of performing the behaviour (behaviour beliefs), weighted by evaluations of those outcomes or attributes. In the same vein, attitudes have affective, cognitive and behavioural components. The affective component refers to feelings or emotions associated with an attitude object. The cognitive component refers to beliefs, thoughts and attributes associated with an attitude object. The behavioural component refers to past behaviours with respect to an attitude object.

Attitude Defined

The concept of attitude arises from an attempt to account for observed regularities in the behaviour of individual persons. The quality of one's attitude, therefore, is judged from the observable and evaluative responses that are made while one might consult one's inner experiences as evidence of one's own attitudes.

Collectively, attitudes are evaluation of one of the psychological and fundamental concepts because they help to explain people's decisions and actions. It is a global and relatively enduring evaluation of whether we think the target is generally good or both desirable or undesirable. Psychologically, attitude is an expression of favour or disfavour towards a person, place, thing, or events. It can be based on affective, cognitive, or behavioural information and can vary in their strength, e.g, how enduring; how resistant to change and how predictive of behaviour they are. In the same vein, however, attitude can be as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, events, activities, ideas, or just about anything in your environment, but there is debate about precise definitions.

Eagly & Chaiken defined attitudes as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. Inherent in this definition is the idea that reporting an attitude involves the expression of an evaluative judgement about a stimulus object. In other words, reporting an attitude involves making a decision concerning liking vs. disliking, approving vs. disapproving or favouring vs. disfavouring a particular issue, object or person. An attitude, when conceptualised as an evaluative judgement, can vary in two unique ways. First, attitudes can differ in valence, or direction. Some attitudes that a person possesses are positive (like our attitudes towards the Welsh rugby team), while others are negative (like our attitudes towards liver), and yet others are neutral (like our attitudes towards eating fried rice with chicken and salad). Second, attitudes can differ in strength. For example, while one person might feel very

strongly about the religion, a second person might feel much less strongly about the same topic.

Attitude is defined as individuals' feelings like likes and dislikes, pros and cons, favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative towards various other people, objects, events or activities. These are the evaluative statements – either favourable or unfavourable towards object or people. I like coke. I do not like rock music. These are expressions of attitude towards products. In organisations, attitudes are important because they affect job behaviours. If employees believe that supervisors, auditors, bosses, engineers are all in a conspiracy to make the employee work harder for the same or less money, then it makes sense to try understand how attitudes were formed, their relationship to actual job behaviour and how they can be made more favourable.

Attitude can also be defined as an individual's feelings about or inclinations towards other persons, objects, events, or activities. It therefore, means that a leader must as a matter of clarity understand the variables and attributes of attitudes while trying to get the right kind of people to fix a job. He should also understand the relevance of attitudes enshrined in the mind of the people to get them or influence their actions in organisation, and its job performance.

Attitudes encompass such affective feelings as likes and dislikes, and satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Our needs, past experiences, self-concept, and personality shape the beliefs, feelings, and opinion we hold towards the perceived world. Once we have formed our likes and dislikes, we generally cling on to them and find it difficult to change our attitudes, unless we make a conscious and determined effort to do so. An interesting phenomenon is that our values shape our attitudes. Traditionally, behavioural scientists have divided attitudes into two major groups:

- i. those that are cognitive (for example, beliefs or expectations about cause-effect relationships between events), and;
- ii. those that are evaluative (for example, liking or disliking for event). An example of a cognitive attitude would be an employee's belief that superior job performance would be rewarded by praise from a superior. An example of an evaluative attitude would be the degree to which he or she would like or value such praise.

In this paradigm, therefore, it is sometimes common to define an attitude towards an object, affect (that is, discrete emotions or overall arousal) is generally understood to be distinct from attitude as a measure of favourability. This definition allows for one's evaluation of an attitude object to vary from extremely negative to extremely positive, but also admits that people can be conflicted or ambivalent towards an object; meaning that they might at different times express both positive and negative attitudes toward the same object, hence, whether the attitudes are explicit (that is, deliberately formed) or implicit (that is, subconscious) has been a topic of considerable research. Researches on implicit attitudes are generally unacknowledged or outside of awareness use sophisticated

methods involving the explicit attitudes of the same object. Implicit and explicit attitudes seem to affect people's behaviour, and thought in different ways.

Moreover, attitude to work vary considerably across different cultures. A dehumanizing perception of work by some employees reflects in their non-challant attitude to it. Concisely, the differences in employee's perception and organisational realities often lead to the general ineptitude, laziness, lack of commitment and 'I don't care attitude or inclination' in the attitude of employees towards their work. Within the context of culture, however, orientation of workers in terms of their high expectations of work and the work place, flamboyant gratification of need, etc. usually accentuate the problems of Nigeria workers particularly when their expectations, needs, aspirations are not met.

In a more succinct form, attitudes are perception that involve emotional feelings or biases and which predispose one to act in a certain way.

Types of Attitudes

Allport (1935) defines attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situation with which it is related (as cited in Baker, 1992, p. 11). In this context, therefore, Jung stated that there are several types of attitudes which could be discussed below;

- * Implicit and explicit attitudes: These have to do with how internal drive and external stimuli affect human actions and attitudinal changes.

- * Consciousness and the unconscious attitude: The presence of two attitudes is extremely frequent, one conscious and the other unconscious. This means that consciousness has a constellation of contents different from that of the unconscious; a duality particularly evident is neurosis.

- * Extraversion and introversion attitudes: This pair is so elementary to Jung's theory of type of attitudes that he labeled them the 'attitude-types'. Some individuals are the outgoing type while some are the quiet type. These traits of individual differences affect individual attitudes toward an object, events or a given situation or phenomena.

- * Rational and irrational attitudes: 'I conceive reason as an attitude'. This shows that attitudes in form of actions can be justified and at times, they may be no reason accrued to that actions or attitude. The rational subdivides into the thinking and feeling of psychological functions, each with its attitude. There is thus a typical thinking, feeling, sensation and intuitive attitude which have to do with a particular event or situation.

- * Individual and social attitudes: This has to do with acceptable behavioural norms within a given society. An acceptable in one society may not be acceptable in another society.

Attitude Functions

One of the classic views of attitudes is that attitudes serve particular functions for individuals. That is, researchers have tried to understand why individuals hold particular

attitudes or why they hold attitudes in general by considering how attitudes affect the individuals who hold them. The functional utility of attitudes was pointed out by Allport (1935) in his classic discussion of attitudes. According to him, attitude was social psychology's most indispensable concept. He stated, "Without guiding attitudes the individual is confused and baffled...Attitudes determine for each individual what he will see and hear, what he will think and what he will do...they "engender me upon the world"; they draw lines about and segregate an otherwise chaotic environment; they are our methods for finding our way about in an ambiguous universe".

According to Fazio (2000), the mere possession of any attitude is useful to the individual in terms of orienting him to the attitudinal object. This object appraisal function can be regarded as the primary value of having an attitude. Fazio goes on to state, "Every attitude, regardless of any other functional benefits that it may also provide, serves this object appraisal function". In the same token, however, both Katz (1960) et al commented on this object; appraisal functions in their functional theory of attitudes. One of the fundamental assumptions of functional theory is that we often hold or express our attitudes and preferences in order to communicate something about ourselves to other people. This implies that attitudes towards specific issues, products, or ideas serve to convey broader information about us to those who are interested. For e.g. Smith et al. said, "Attitudes aid us in classifying for action the objects of the environment, and they make appropriate response tendencies available for coping with these objects" (p. 41). Katz (1960) takes the view that attitudes are determined by the functions they serve for us. People hold given attitudes because these attitudes help them achieve their basic goals.

However, Daniel Katz writes that attitudes can serve 'instrumental, adjustive or utilitarian, ego-defensive, value-expressive, and or knowledge functions.

The functional view of attitudes, according to experts suggests that in order for attitudes to change (e.g., via persuasion), appeals must be made to the functions that a particular attitude serves for the individual. As an example, the 'ego-defensive' function might be used to influence the racially prejudicial attitudes of an individual who sees themselves as open-minded and tolerant and by appealing to that individual that individual's image of them as tolerant and open-minded, however, may be possible to change their prejudicial attitudes to be more consistent with their self-concept. Similarly, a persuasive message that threatens self-image is much more likely to be rejected.

Daniel Katz classified attitudes into four major groups, thus;

Utilitarian: People adopt attitudes that are rewarding and that help them avoid punishment. In other words, any attitude that is adopted in a person's own self-interest is considered to serve a utilitarian function. Consider you have a condo, people with condos pay property taxes, and as a result you don't want to pay more taxes. If those factors lead to your attitude that 'increases in property taxes are bad' your attitude is serving a utilitarian function.

Knowledge: People need to maintain an organised, meaningful, and stable view of the world that being said as important values and general principles can provide a framework for our knowledge. Attitudes achieve this goal by making things fit together and make sense. Example:

- i. I believe that I am a good person.
- ii. I believe that good things happen to good people.
- iii. Something bad happens to John.
- iv. So, I believe John must not be a good person.

Ego-defensive: This function involves psychoanalytic principles where people use defense mechanisms to protect themselves from psychological harm. Mechanisms, therefore, include: i. Denial, ii. Repression, iii. Projection, and iv. Rationalisation.

The ego-defensive notion, therefore, correlates nicely with downward comparison theory, which holds the view that derogating a less fortunate other increases our own subjective well-being. We are more likely to use the ego-defensive function when we suffer a frustration or misfortune.

Value expressive: Value expressive attitudes express concerns about self-image and personal values. Many lines of research support the distinction between instrumental and value-expressive attitudes. First, some attitude objects elicit attitudes that are associated primarily with one or the other of these functions. For example, Shavitt (1990) found that people's thoughts about air conditioners and coffee focus on the utility of the objects, whereas thoughts about greeting cards and national flags tend to focus on the object's capacity to symbolise the self and social values. In the same vein, evidence shows that people are more persuaded by messages containing arguments that match the primary function of their attitudes than by messages containing arguments that do not match the primary function of their attitudes.

Attitude Change

Ruggiero (2008) defines an attitude as a habitual emotional response driven by belief (as cited in Pratono, 2014, p. 48). Belief is ideas we hold to be true. In any case, Schwrz (2007) defines an attitude as a mental predisposition to act that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. However, attitudes can be changed through persuasion and an important domain of research on attitude change focuses on responses to communication. The experimental researches into the factors that can affect the persuasiveness of a message include:

* Target characteristics: These are characteristics that refer to the person who receives and processes a message. One such trait is intelligence-it seems that more intelligent people are less easily persuaded by one-sided messages. Another variable that has been studied in this category over the years is self-esteem. Although, it is sometimes thought that those higher in self-esteem are less easily persuaded, there is some evidence that the relationship between self-esteem and personality is actually curvilinear, with people of moderate self-

esteem being more easily persuaded than both those of high and low self-esteem levels. The mind's frame and mood of the target also plays a role in this process.

* Source characteristics: The major sources of characteristics are expertise, trustworthiness and interpersonal attraction or attractiveness. The credibility of a perceived message has been found to be a key variable here; if one reads a report about health and believes it came from a professional medical journal, one may be more easily persuaded than if one believes it is from a popular newspaper. Some psychologists have debated whether this is a long lasting effect and found the effect of telling people that a message came from a credible source disappeared after several weeks (the so-called "sleeper effect"), whether there is a sleeper effect is controversial. Perceived wisdom is that if people are informed of the source of a message before hearing it, there is less likelihood of a sleeper effect than if they are told a message and then told its source.

* Message characteristics: The nature of the message plays a role in persuasion. Sometimes, presenting both sides of a story is useful to help change attitudes. When people are not motivated to process a message, simply the number of arguments presented in a persuasive message will influence attitude change such that a greater number of arguments will produce greater attitude change.

* Cognitive routes: A message can appeal to an individual's cognitive evaluation to help change an attitude. In the central route to persuade the individual is presented with the data and motivated to evaluate the data and arrive at an attitude changing conclusion. In the peripheral route to attitude change, therefore, the individual is encouraged to not look at the content but at the source. This is commonly seen in modern advertisements that feature celebrities.

Our attitudes are organised and changed as a result of the principle of cognitive consistency. This principle, therefore, suggests that we strive to achieve consistency between our beliefs, values and attitudes; attitudes and behaviours, and different attitudes. In any case, cognitive consistency is such a powerful force in our social lives that it's absence or opposite (inconsistency) is experienced by us as psychologically uncomfortable. We are, however, motivated to reduce and, or avoid cognitive inconsistency, and how we achieve consistency between our thoughts, feelings and behaviours may differ considerably from what we would understand as rational behaviour.

Emotion and Attitudes Change

Emotion is a common component in persuasion, social influence, and attitude change. Much of attitudes research emphasized the importance of affective or emotion components. Emotion works hand-in-hand with the cognitive process, or the way we think about an issue or situation. Emotional appeals are commonly found in advertising, health campaigns and political messages. Recent examples include no-smoking health campaigns and political campaign advertising emphasizing the fear of terrorism. Attitudes and attitude objects are functions of cognitive, affective and conative components. Attitudes are part of

the brain's associative networks, the spider-like structures residing in long-term memory that consist of affective and cognitive nodes.

By activating an affective or emotion node, attitudes change may be possible, though; affective and cognitive components tend to be intertwined. In primarily affective networks, it is more difficult to produce cognitive counter arguments in the resistance to persuasion and attitude change. Affective forecasting, otherwise known as intuition or the prediction of emotion also impacts attitude change. Research suggests that predicting emotions is an important component of decision-making in addition to the cognitive processes.

Taking cognisance of the forgoing analysis, therefore, measuring emotions and its subsequent impacts on attitude has posed a lot of challenges to researchers in recent years but since we cannot see into the brain, various models and measurement tools have been constructed to obtain emotion and attitude information. Measurement, therefore, includes the use of physiological cues like facial expressions, vocal changes, and other body rate measures. For instances, fear is associated with raising eyebrows, increased heart rate and increase body tension.

Causes of Employee's Attitudes

Human resources practitioners are so keen to understanding the importance of human resources and the attendant implications of any negative attitudes in workplaces. There have been series of significant researches to understanding the dispositional and cultural influences on job satisfaction as well, which is not well understood by practitioners, because, in part, the complex nature of human behaviours. In addition, however, one of the most important areas of the work situation to influence job satisfaction—the work itself—is often overlooked by practitioners when addressing job satisfaction.

* **Dispositional influences:** Several innovative studies have shown the influences of a person's disposition on job satisfaction. One of the first studies in this area, according to Staw & Ross (1985) demonstrated that a person's job satisfaction scores have stability over time, even when he/she changes jobs or companies. In a related study also, childhood temperament was found to be statistically related to adult job satisfaction up to forty years later (Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986). Evidence even indicates that the job satisfaction of identical twins reared apart is statistically similar.

* **Cultural influences:** In terms of other influences on employee's attitudes, there is also a small but growing body of research on the influences of culture or country on employee attitudes and job satisfaction. The continued globalisation of organisations, however, possess new challenges for human resource management practitioners, and the available research on cross-cultural organisational and human resources issues can help them better understand and guide practice.

* **Work situation influences:** As discussed earlier, the work situation also matters in terms of job satisfaction and organisation impact. Contrary to some commonly held practitioner's beliefs, the most notable situational influence on job satisfaction is the nature of the work

itself-often called “intrinsic job characteristics”. Research studies across many years, organisations, and types of jobs show that when employees are asked to evaluate different facets of their job such as supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, coworkers, the nature of the work itself generally emerges as the most important job facet (Judge & Church, 2000). This is not to say that well-designed compensation programmes or effective supervision are unimportant, rather, it is that much can be done to influence job satisfaction by ensuring work is as interesting and challenging as possible.

Conclusion

Attitude is an individual's feelings like; likes and dislikes, pros and cons, favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative towards various other people, objects, events or activities. These are the evaluative statements – either favourable or unfavourable towards object or people. I like coke. I do not like rock music. These are expressions of attitude towards products. In organisations, attitudes are important because they affect job behaviours. If employees believe that supervisors, auditors, bosses, engineers are all in a conspiracy to make the employee work harder for the same or less money, then it makes sense to try understand how attitudes were formed, their relationship to actual job behaviour and how they can be made more favourable. It's an individual's feelings about or inclinations towards other persons, objects, events, or activities. It therefore, means that a manager must as a matter of clarity understand the variables and attributes of attitudes while trying to get the right kind of people to fix a job. He should also understand the relevance of attitudes enshrined in the mind of people to get them or influence their actions in organisation, and its job performance.

Attitudes encompass such affective feelings as likes and dislikes, and satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Our needs, past experiences, self-concept, and personality shape the beliefs, feelings, and opinion we hold towards the perceived world. Once we have formed our likes and dislikes, we generally cling on to them and find it difficult to change our attitudes, unless we make a conscious and determined effort to do so, an interesting phenomenon is that our values shape our attitudes.

From the foregoing, attitude is a disposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain thing; idea, object, person, and situation. An attitude concerning a class of object is the meaning that class has for the person, with a stress on how the individual evaluates the class, whether positively or negatively. Some versions of this conception, however, holds that attitudes are encoded verbally in the brain and that when people say how they feel about something they are merely giving voice to words already held within their minds. In any case, attitudes aid us in classifying for action the objects of the environment, and they make appropriate response tendencies available for coping with these objects. It denotes that someone's attitude toward something can be seen from the way they say and activities related to the attitude object. Attitudes are what the people think or feel about something, and regardless of the origin of attitudes, the term attitudes

is reserved for evaluative tendencies, which can both be inferred from and have an influence on beliefs, affect, and overt behaviour.

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