

Influence of Gender and Age on Organisational Commitment Among Civil Servants in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper examines the influence of demographic variables of gender and age on the commitment of employees in the Nigerian civil service. Data for the study were obtained through 567 valid questionnaire containing information on gender and age, and work related issues from civil servants purposively selected from six states in the South-West, Nigeria. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for the data. Findings indicate that the age groups of the civil servants are critical to their commitment in the organisation. The findings indicated that commitments in the civil service organisation are higher for the younger and older civil servants than those within the middle age groups. The government is provided with information on what can be done to enhance employees' commitment to the Nigerian civil service through adequate remuneration and motivation for the different age groups. The paper concludes that civil servants should be motivated according to the needs of the age groups in order to enhance their commitment levels.

Key words: Demographic variables; Organisational commitment; Civil service; Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Every organization strives at all times to enhance employees' commitment in order to increase their

productivities. To achieve this laudable goal, an organization must ensure that it provides an enabling work environment and develop a framework that will support and enhance employee's commitment to the organisation (Adeyinka, Ayeni, & Popoola, 2007). Employee's commitment is an important factor in human resource discipline, and plays a role in achieving the organisation's goals (Mohamad, Cha, Ramlan, & Azmi, 2014). The commitment of an employee to the organisation shows the relative strength of the employee's involvement to the organisation. As Jaja and Okpu (2013) observed, employee commitment is one major challenge facing organisations. However, the basic questions in the mind of the researcher include: Are male civil servants more committed than female civil servants in a civil service organization? Is organisation commitment affected by age groups of the civil servants? Thus, the main objective of the study is to examine the influence of demographic factors of gender and age on organisational commitment among civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the paper are to:

- i. Determine if gender impacts on organisational commitment among the civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria,
- ii. Examine the effect of the difference in age groups on organisational commitment among the civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria.

Based on the objectives of the study, the hypotheses for the study are formulated as follows:

- i. Gender has no significant influence on the organisational commitment among the civil servants,
- ii. Organisation commitment does not depend on the age groups of the civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria.

While extensive studies have been done in the private sector, very few studies have examined commitment in

the civil service with regard to the demographic factors in Nigeria. The current study will identify the relationship between the organisational commitment of the civil servants and demographic variables of gender and age in the South-West, Nigeria. Thus, the paper is motivated by the need to enhance the commitment and productivity of the civil servants that constitute the major work force in the country, in line with the change agenda of the present administration in Nigeria. More so, the current economic recession demands that the road to economic recovery lies in total commitment of every civil servant in the country.

The paper is structured as follows. Immediately after the introduction, the paper presents the literature review, followed by the method and results of the study respectively. Finally, the paper ends with conclusion.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Conceptual Definitions

Organisational commitment has been variously defined by many authors, depending on their orientations. According to Cook and Wall (1980), organisational commitment is concerned with feelings of attachment to the goals and values of the organisation, one's role in relation to this, and attachment to the organisation for its own sake rather than for its strictly instrumental value. Commitment is categorised into three multi-dimensional factors namely: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Meyer and Allen (1984) described affective commitment as an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation, while continuance commitment refers to the perceived cost of leaving the job or organisation. Normative commitment refers to the perceived obligation of the employees to remain in the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

However, Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) pointed out the two perspectives of employee commitment that have dominated the literature: (a) behavioural perspective and (b) attitudinal perspective. The behavioural approach to commitment deals with individuals developing a sense of attachment, not to an organization, but their own actions. On the other hand, attitudinal commitment, views commitment as an attitude reflecting the nature and quality of relationship that exists between an employee and the organization. According to Akinyemi (2014), employee commitment has generated a lot of interest because of work-related behaviours such as absenteeism, actual turnover, job satisfaction, extra-role behaviour, job involvement and leader-subordinate relations. However, Jena (2015) argued that the type of commitments of an employee depends on the nature of the relationship between the

employee and the organization or the relationship to a variety of entities in the organization.

1.2 Gender and Employees' Commitment

The literature on the relationship between gender and organizational commitment have not reached consensus on the nature of the relationship that exists between the variables. For instance, Ahmad and Abubakar (2003) found no relationship existing between gender and commitment, while Agyeman and Ponniah (2014) reported a positive, although statistically insignificant, relationship between gender and organisational commitment. In a study by Opayemi (2004), it was found that women were consistently more committed to the organization than men. Also, Khan, Khan, Khan, Nawaz, and Yar (2013) argued that though men are physically strong, they possess a mindset that is sluggish and less-task oriented. However, Kumasey, Delle, and Ofei (2014) observed that men were more committed when compared to women, especially in an organisation with the masculine orientation. In the same vein, Aydin, Sarier and Uysal (2011), and Jena (2015) found that men have stronger organisational commitment than women. As Aydin et al. (2011) observed, being a mother is more important than work for the women, and that they quit an employment or stay away from office more often. Thus, this study contributes to the growing knowledge by establishing the relationship between the gender and organisational commitment in the Nigerian civil service.

1.3 Age and Employees' Commitment

In many organisations, demographic factors are often used as decision variables in recruitment/selection, payment of salaries and compensations, as well as retrenchment and retirement. Demographic factors such as age and work experience are used as conditions for employment, based on the perceived relationship between demographic variables, especially age, and employees' commitment. Findings by Affum-Osei, Acquaaah, and Acheampong (2015) indicated that older employees are more committed to the organisation, because younger ones can leave the organisation anytime as a result of future job opportunities, unlike the older employees who have invested much in the organization and their turnover intention reduces with the years of job tenure. Salami (2008), studied older married employees and younger single employees in private companies, including banks and government parastatals in Nigeria and his result showed a higher commitment for older and married employees. Khan et al. (2013) studied Academicians in Pakistan and found that as an employee grows older, his/her sense of obligations gains maturity, thereby reducing the chances of turnover.

Although, majority of the studies agreed that older employees show more commitment, Meyer and Allen (1984) found that younger employees show more

commitment to working because they are faced with fewer job offers and have less experience. Similarly, Akinyemi (2014) studied banks in Nigeria and concluded that older employees do not show more commitment than younger employees. But in a study by Ogba (2008), it was found that commitments to the organisation are higher for the younger and older employees than employees within the middle age groups. This disparity in research outcome may, however, be due to industry or country specific factors.

2. METHOD

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of demographic factors of gender and age on the commitment of civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria. The population of the study consists of all civil servants in Nigeria. Since the population is large, a survey was carried out among a sample of civil servants in six states (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, & Osun). All respondents were full-time employees in the civil service, who have worked for at least 1 year, and ages ranged from 20 years to 60 years. The items for the questionnaire were generated from the instrument developed by Cook and Wall (1980). The questionnaire includes data on demographic characteristics of gender and age, and work related issues. The questionnaire on the work related issues contained 9-item, using a 7-point Likert rating scale with anchors labelled: 1=No, I strongly disagree, 2= No, I disagree quite a lot, 3= No, I disagree just a little, 4 = I am not sure, 5= Yes, I agree just a little, 6= I agree quite a lot, and 7= I strongly agree. In each state, one hundred questionnaires were purposively distributed in the State Secretariat among the civil servants. In all, 600 questionnaires were administered to the respondents by six trained Research Assistants, out of which 567 valid questionnaire were available for the study, giving a response rate of 94.5% of the total sample. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for the data.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the South-West, Nigeria.

As shown in Table 1, 51.5% of the respondents that participated in the study were male, while 48.5% were female civil servants. The result shows a level of balance in view of the fact that the Nigerian Civil Service is not gender biased. The age profile of the respondents shows that 13.2% were aged 20-25 years, while 20.8% were between ages 26-30 years. Majority of the respondents

(38.4%) are within the age bracket 31-40 years, which are the productive age in the civil service. Finally, 27.5% of the respondents were above 40 years.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents in the South-West, Nigeria

Public servants	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age		
5-20 years	75	13.2
26-30 years	118	20.8
31-40 years	218	38.4
Above 40 years	156	27.5
Gender		
Male	292	51.5
Female	275	48.5
Marital status		
Married	372	65.6
Single	182	32.1
Divorced	13	2.3
Years in service		
Less than 5 years	140	24.7
5-10 years	199	35.1
11-20 years	144	25.4
More than 20 years	84	14.8

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 1 also shows that 65.6% of the respondents are married, 32.1% are single while only 2.3% are divorced. Majority of the respondents (53.6%) have a Bachelors Degree while 25.6% have postgraduate degrees, 12.2% are diploma holders while only 8.6 are high school graduates. The respondents with the highest working experience (35.1%) are civil servants, who have spent between 5-10 years in service, while 25.4% have spent 11-20 years in service, 24.7% have spent less than 5 years and 14.8% have worked for more than 20 years in civil service.

3.2 Results of the T-Test of Gender and Employees' Commitment

Table 2 below shows the summary of the relationship between gender and employees' commitment of the civil servants.

Table 2
T-test Summary Showing the Influence of Gender on Employees' Commitment

	Gender	Mean	Std. deviation	t-value	Sig.
Employees' commitment	Male	43.59	7.717	.512	.490
	Female	43.26	7.485		

Note. Researcher's SPSS output, 2016.

The results indicated that gender had no significant influence on employees' commitment [$t(565) = .51, p = .490$]. This showed that there was no statistically significant variation in the commitment of male civil servants ($M = 43.59; SD = 7.72$) compared to their female counterparts ($M = 43.26; SD = 7.49$), although, male civil servants showed a slightly higher mean score. The implication of this is that the gender of an average civil servant in Nigeria does not significantly influence his/her commitment to the job. That is, the level of commitment of employees does not depend on their gender and that both male and female civil servants exhibit similar level of commitment to their jobs. This result corroborated the findings of Dalgic (2014) that gender is not a significant variable in determining employees' level of organisational commitment. However, it contradicted that of Kumasey, Delle and Ofei, (2014), who observed that male employees show more commitment to work than female employees, and Aydin et al. (2014), who claimed that the effects of gender on organisational commitment is in favour of men.

3.3 Results of ANOVA for Age and Employees' Commitment

Table 3 below presents the results of one way ANOVA

Table 4
Scheffe's Post-Hoc Test of Multiple Comparisons

(I) age (in years)	(J) age (in years)	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
20-25 years	26-30 years	2.312	1.112	.230	-.80	5.43
	31-40 years	.239	1.008	.996	-2.59	3.06
	Above 40 years	-1.114	1.058	.775	-4.08	1.85
26-30 years	20-25 years	-2.312	1.112	.230	-5.43	.80
	31-40 years	-2.073	.860	.123	-4.48	.34
	Above 40 years	-3.426*	.918	.003	-6.00	-.85
31-40 years	20-25 years	-.239	1.008	.996	-3.06	2.59
	26-30 years	2.073	.860	.123	-.34	4.48
	Above 40 years	-1.354	.789	.402	-3.57	.86
Above 40 years	20-25 years	1.114	1.058	.775	-1.85	4.08
	26-30 years	3.426*	.918	.003	.85	6.00
	31-40 years	1.354	.789	.402	-.86	3.57

Note. *. The mean difference is significant level at 0.05.

test of age and employees' commitment in a civil service organisation.

Table 3
One Way ANOVA Showing the Influence of Age on Employees' Commitment

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	796.655	3	265.552	4.687	.003
Within groups	31900.058	563	56.661		
Total	32696.713	566			

Note. Researcher's SPSS output, 2016.

As shown in Table 3 above, the results of the ANOVA indicated that there was statistically significant difference among the different age groups [$F(3, 563) = 4.69, p = .03$]. It implied that the age is a critical factor in determining the commitment level of civil servants towards their job. Furthermore, in line with the study by Obamuyi (2013), the paper used omega square (w^2) to measure the strength of association between age groups of civil servants and organisation commitment.

Omega square:

$$\begin{aligned} (\omega^2) &= \text{SSB} - (K-1)\text{MSW} / (\text{SST} + \text{MSW}) \\ &= 796.655 - (4-1)(56.661) / (32,696.713 + 56.661) \\ &= \text{Approximately } 2\% . \end{aligned}$$

The results revealed that approximately 2% of the variation in employees' commitment to the civil service can be attributed to difference in age groups. Furthermore, Scheffe's Post-hoc test of multiple comparisons (Table 4) and homogenous subsets of means (Table 5) were used to determine the means that were different from each other.

Table 5
Scheffe's Post Hoc Test of Homogenous Subsets

Age (in years)	N	Subset for Alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
20-25 years	75	43.69	43.69
26-30 years	118	41.38	
31-40 years	218	43.45	43.45
Above 40 years	156		44.81
Sig.		.126	.579

Note. Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 121.931.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed. Researcher's SPSS output, 2016.

From Tables 4 and 5, the results of the Scheffe's Post Hoc Test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the commitments of employees within the age group of 26-30 years ($M = 41.38$) and the age group above 40 years ($M = 44.81$), with a mean difference of 3.426 and a p value of .003. The mean difference of employees with the age groups of 20-25, 26-30 and 31-40 years is not significantly different from each other. In a similar vein, the mean difference of employees with the age groups of 20-25, 31-40 and above 40 years are not significantly different from one another. Thus, the findings implied that the observed significant influence of age on employees' commitment was contributed by the variation between employees within 26-30 years and those above 40 years.

The mean rank for the civil servants' commitment on age indicated that civil servants above 40 years and those between the age group of 20-25 years demonstrated higher commitment to their organisation, at (44.81) and (43.69) respectively. However, the mean rank showed lower commitment to the organisation for civil servants within the age groups of 31-40 and 26-30, at (43.45 and 41.38) respectively. The findings implied that the younger and older civil servants demonstrated higher commitment towards the organisation, unlike civil servants within the middle age groups with lower commitment. This indicated that civil servants demonstrate more commitment, few years after joining the civil service (say at age group of 20-25), thereafter, their commitments to the work become weak, until later years in life (say above 40 years). This could be due to societal challenges and high expectations of the civil servants within the middle age groups, which could not be met from the public service, and the need to check for better opportunities in other organisations. Thus, as employees get older in age, say above 40 years, they are more committed to their jobs since opportunities for changing jobs are slim, couple with the fact that the employees are approaching retirement age. This result corroborated the studies by Ogba (2008), Khan et al. (2013), and Affum-Osei, Acquah, and Acheampong

(2015), but contradicted that of Akinyemi (2014), who found that older employees do not show more commitment to their jobs, when compared to younger employees.

3.4 Policies to Enhance Employees' Commitment in the Civil Service

Table 6 presents list of policies, in the opinions of the respondents, which can be embarked upon by the government to encourage employees' commitment to work in the civil service organizations

Table 6
Measures to Enhance the Employees' Commitments in the Civil Service

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Staff care services and modalities including provision of necessary equipment, and office facilities	244	42.9
Prompt salary	192	33.8
Salary Increment	172	30.3
Incentives/ bonuses and access to loan	128	22.5
Adequate and effective pension plan	28	4.9
Keeping good moral and avoiding corrupt practices	24	4.2
Job autonomy, communication and performance appraisal	24	4.2
Job security	9	1.6
Provision of further academic opportunities	3	0.5
On-the-job target requirement	2	0.4

Note. Multiple responses were allowed. Total number of respondents =567. Responses in order of frequency.

Source: Researcher's SPSS Output, 2016.

From Table 6 above, government is advised to put in place some fundamental measures in order to create favourable enabling environment that will encourage civil servants' commitment. The five most preferred measures to enhance commitment, as supported by the civil servants, include: Staff Care Services and provision of necessary facilities (42.9%); Prompt Salary (33.8%); Salary Increment (30.3%); Incentives/Bonuses and Access to loan (22.5%); and Staff Training and Development Programmes (21.3%). The measures suggested by the civil servants are very germane in view of the report of the study by Obamuyi (2011) that civil servants are not motivated by their work, and hence have low commitment, due to: (i) poor conditions of service including poor wages and late payment of salaries, and (ii) the bureaucratic nature of the public service. Thus, managers (government) desiring to foster employees' commitment should consider enacting policies and practices that are likely to be seen

by employees as supportive (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnysky, 2002).

CONCLUSION

The paper examined the influence of demographic factors of gender and age on the commitment of civil servants in the South-West, Nigeria. This study showed that age has a statistically significant effect employees' on commitment to work among civil servants in Nigeria. The findings indicated that commitments to the organisation are higher for the younger and older civil servants than those within the middle age group. However, the demographic characteristic of gender does not significantly influence civil servants' commitment to work in Nigeria. The result of the study is useful in almost every organization to encourage maximum commitment among employees within different age categories, particularly in the civil service. However, it is important that government devote time, effort and resources to encourage employees to have a positive attitude towards work. The results of this study also showed that creating a positive working environment that encourages employees' commitment to their jobs, requires that the management of every organization must review the human resource management practices in the organisation. The results further implied that the government must: (i) formulate policies that target the different age groups of the civil servants in order to motivate them; and (ii) provide an enabling environment that enhances the civil servants' change of mind-sets and productivity, with new commitment, arising from government change agenda on workers' welfare.

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