AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION ON ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Abstract- To date, factors that influence organizational commitment in public organizations in West Africa have not been systematically investigated. Thus, this study aimed to add to the much-needed knowledge and information about this field in The Gambia As public organizations are an integral parts of every countries development whose purpose is to provide services to people. In this research, the aim is to examine whether positively organizational climate lead to higher organizational commitment. The main paradigm of data inquiry for this study was quantitative research method. Besides, self-reported surveys were used to administer the questionnaire. The data gathered from public organizations employees was analyzed with the use of SPSS. It was found that satisfaction with positive organizational climate have positive relationship with organizational commitment among public sector employees. There are some variations among the organizational climate variables correlations to the dimensions of organizational commitment which were further discussed

Indexterms- Organizational Commitment, Organizational Climate, The Gambia, Public Organization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment plays a critical role in today's organizational environment, where potential growth of the public sector often hinges on committed employees as well as quality services to the public. The public sector management nurturing and providing that climate to employees, such that commitment can be attained, has thus become an indispensable managerial practice both in the field of Human Resource Development (HRD and Human Resource Management (HRM) (22). However, with organizational commitment a starting point for successful public organization, no commitment can be actualized in the absence of the right organizational climate offer to the employees. Therefore, it is of pivotal importance to fully understand the factors that influence organizational commitment in public sector, which is the primary motivation of the study. However, as organizations witnessing remarkable changes over time, many public enterprises in developing countries have come under pressure to become more proactive in maintaining employee commitment so as to provide high quality service to the public, increase employees' commitment to contribute immensely to national development. Hence, many raise questions concerning how the public sector employees can survive such changes, with these questions taken into consideration, this study intends to find out feasible solutions with regards to factors influencing organizational commitment in the Gambia.

Problem Statement

Given the growing significant of public enterprises in facilitating economic advancement, there is a need to extend our understanding of the factors that enhance commitment in West African public organizations. In addition, the evolving challenges in the public organization environment in west Africa evident from the increasing number of employees, has called for good organizational climate that would allow these organization to retain their best hands and increase commitment among employees (1), Thus, there had been constant mobility of highly skilled persons from some public institution to private organization or abroad in search of greener pastures, in some part due to the organizational climate. However, the critical issues established is the fact that some of these employees hardly stay for long. This lack of commitment has been tag as labour migration, lack of political will and uncertain organizational environment (1).,(2), Therefore, one of the reasons that informed this study has to do with the unique importance of organizational climate in relation to the organizational commitment among public servant in west Africa which affect the realization of these public institutions' vision.

Purpose of the Study

Based on the research background and motivation, this study aims to investigate the relationships between organizational climate dimensions and organizational commitment in the Gambia and to derive related managerial implications. Furthermore, organizational commitment has been discussed by many academics and practitioners, there is relatively little information on organizational commitment as found in West African countries even less in public sector (1), (3). This paper addresses this gap by providing a discussion on the relationship between the variables that influence commitment. The purpose of this study therefore, stems from the important of commitment in organization.

Taking into account the purpose of this paper, the following research questions needed to be answered.

1. Whether there are any significant relationship between organizational climate and organizational commitment among public organization employees in The Gambia?
2. What dimensions of organizational climate that include Reward, Warmth, Support, Structure, Risk/Conflict, and Organizational Standards would enhance organizational commitment in The Gambia?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Public organization have played an important role in creating employment opportunities in many countries, like wise creating important avenues for citizens to benefits from. In order to achieve this, public sector has enacted public sector reforms in the early 1990s (4). Thus, ''these reforms are aimed at adapting the public sector to the changing economic environment-which involved a shift from a planned economy to a market based economy in West Africa'' (p.2). However, such reforms focus on modus operandi without necessarily addressing some of the structural problems arising from the highly centralized structure of the public administration. In terms of the quality and professionalism of the public administration in sub- Saharan Africa (SSA), the Gambia scores lower than the SSA score of 57% for most countries. Thus, according to Ayee (3) ADB report, for building a better public sector, success will depend on commitment from Government, policy makers, politicians and citizens.

Therefor increasing importance of organizational commitment in public organizations has increased the need to identify factors that increase commitment and reduce turnover intention.

Organizational Commitment

Commitment phenomena have been widely investigated because it affects individual attitudes and behaviour towards the workplace (5). Many definitions of organization commitment exist due to the fact that many researchers define it their own way to suit investigation purposes. Kanter (7) viewed commitment as the willingness of social actor to give energy and loyalty to the organization and it as being positive evaluation of organization and the organizations goals. Through the years, Buchanan (6), define organizational commitment as being a bond between an employee and an employer. Mowday, Boulian, Porter, and Steers (8) discussed three major components of commitment as being a strong belief in and acceptance of organization's goals, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. In addition, (15) stated that organizational commitment had been operationally defined as multidimensional in nature, involving and employee's loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, degree of goals and value congruency with the organization, and desire to maintain membership.

This study looks at the organizational commitment from the perspective of Meyer and Allen's (10) three component model namely, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. This model is widely adopted in most organizational commitment studies and their measurement scale widely used. The three component models are further explained in table 1

Table 1.Organizational Commitment Model

Model	Description
Meyer and Allen's (19) three component mode	**Affective commitment** the emotional bond, identification, and involvement that employees have with an organization (10). , **Continuance commitment**, willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that an employee have with '' nontransferable'' investments. **Normative commitment.** feeling of obligation to stay

Organizational Climate

The research in organizational climate has received considerable attention over the past decades. A growing number of theoretical and empirical studies shed light on the subject. A review of literature indicated that the construct of organizational climate has suffered from conflicting definitions and inconsistencies in operationalization (12). In addition methodological issues regarding how to measure organizational climate have been widely discussed, such as the representativeness of sample and the unit of analysis (15). The theoretical rationale of organizational climate was considered being derived from (13) thoughts of the relationship between individuals and their social environment that individuals' behavior is the function of the people and their psychological environment, implying that the social environment may impact on individual behavior. Many researcher defined organizational climate and the major was by Patterson et al. (14), defined organizational climate as ''shared perceptions of organizational events, practices, and procedures and the kinds of behavior that are rewarded, supported, and expected in a settings'' (17, p.384). Such perceptions are primarily descriptive rather than affective or evaluative. Hence, climate reflecting the aspect of social environment in organizations, can be represented as a number of perceptual variables describing the interactions between employees and their organizational environment (18)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given the importance of public organization contribution to economic development of countries, an empirical study was designed to test perceptions of public organizations employees in their organization. These perceptions might provide benefits for the public organization policy makers and the public service/ employees themselves.

Therefore, this study utilizes a quantitative research paradigm that followed a self-reported survey methodology for data collection, to understand more about organizational commitment in The Gambia. The researcher approached expert in HR in continuous discussion for the sake of verifying validity of instrument and fulfilling the research purpose. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and linear regressions analysis are the statistical methods and techniques use to performed the data analyses.

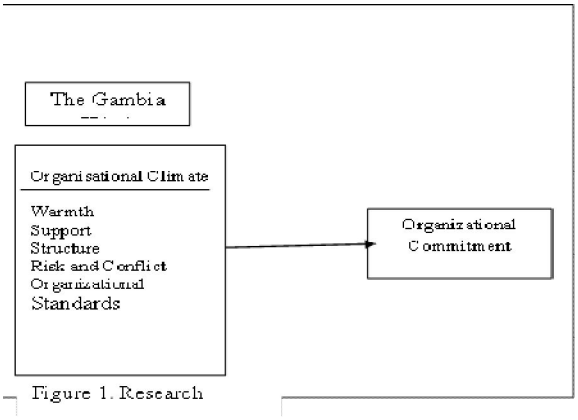


Figure 1. Research

Based on the framework above and to answer the research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1 Organizational Climate is positively related to Organizational Commitment.

H2-1 Organizational Climate dimensions positively related to Organizational Commitment of the Gambia public organizations employees

Instruments and Measurement

The corresponding sources below presented the information for the research measurement decription:

Demographics-Participants were asked to provide their age, gender, years of experience at the public organization to better understand the respondent's background.

Organizational Commitment

The study measured organizational commitment propensity with Meyer and Allen's (11) questionnaire. This questionnaire comprises 24 structured questions with 8 items in each dimension. The Authors established the reliability estimates (internal consistencies) for this instrument as follows: .85 for affective, .79 for continuance and .73 for normative, and its validity and reliability is evidenced in international samples (19). Employees were instructed to rate on the basis of their personal observation, the extent of their organisational commitment regarding the described conditions on a 5 point summated Likert–type scale with scale anchors ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Organizational Climate

This study measured organizational climate with 22-item of Litwin and Stringer (13) Organizational Climate Questionnaire (OCQ), cited from Kanten and Ülker (20) study. This measure consists of 6 sub-scales, namely, Reward (4 items), Warmth (4 items), Support (4 items), Structure (3 items), Risk and Conflict (4 items) Organizational Standards (3 items). Respondent were instructed to rate, on average on the basis of their personal experience and observation, the extent to which their public organisations'environment support commitment regarding the described conditions on a point 5 Likert-type scale. The researchers established the reliability estimates (internal consistencies) for this organisation climate is .78.

Data Collection procedures

The data used to conduct the research was collected using online surveys. The researchers' acquaintances as organizational contacts sent the inquiry letters by means of emails to their colleagues for exploring their willingness of participating in this survey. The 150 participants were targeted from the public sectors which are not attained, out of which the return rate was 48%. Besides survey, further literature review helped to increase the validity and overall quality of the empirical materials.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The Relationship between the Variables

The correlation matrix highlights the relationship between the independent variables used in this study and their relationships with the dependent variables. The table 2 below shows organizational climate relationships with the dependent variables. Overall organizational climate have a positive relation with commitment ($p<.01$).

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Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation N=72

Measures	n	M	SD	1
1Organisational Commitment	72	378	.31	
2Organisational Climate	72	3.85	24	.363**

**. Correlation is significant at the ** p< .01

In addition, among the respondents, support and commitment, .62** Warmth .51** Reward .29* risk and conflicts .26* are significantly correlated to organizational commitment. The structure -0.34 and organizational standards -0.25 are negatively correlated with organizational commitment. This finding is consistent with Griffin (22). They found that increasing the employee's level of satisfaction with the support system, reward and warmth at work will go a long way in helping in the organizational commitment of employees. This is further supported by (23) who emphasized that employees who are satisfied with work environment are more likely to remain loyal to the organization.

The Relationship between the Variables

The Pearson product moment correlation analysis supports a significant relationship between the variables under this study, thus since correlation does not simply imply causation and the study are concern with the relationship between the variables. The researchers conduct a linear regression to find the effect the variables have on each other. The researchers examined this hypothesis below;

Table 3.Linear Regression Analysis Summary

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients β	Standard Error	Beta	*t*	Adjusted R^2	F
(constant)	2.04	.542		3.8		
Climate	.47	.14	.363	3.26	.13	10.62

Note: 1. Predictors: (Constant), organizational climate

2.DependentVariable: Organizational Commitment

3. ***p<.001

Based on the results presented, the overall fit of the mode isR^2= 0.13, meaning the organizational climate construct explained approximately 13% of the variation in the organizational commitment variable, providing evidence that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the correlation table shows that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. Moreover, among the respondents, the regressions model with one predictive variable namely, organizational climate was statistically significant. Thus, the results revealed that organizational climate (β=0.47 p<0.01) is a significant predator of organizational commitment. Hence, higher organizational climate could be associated with higher levels of organizational commitment. Thus this further affirms the results produced from the correlational analysis on these two variables and the hypotheses were supported.

Discussion on the Results

The results are supported by empirical evidence from (24) and (18) studies, who found that satisfaction with the dimensions of organizational climate leads to organization commitment. Additionally, considering the relationship between the variables are also supported by the Social Resource Theory (SRT). The theory ague that social capital is the value resources embedded in social network that can be borrowed through direct social ties and be utilized to facilitate ate people's action and or behaviours with the workplace (25). Receiving this social capital leads to greater organizational commitment if the organizational climate is positive and the reverse if the climate is negative.

Furthermore, the perspective of signalling theory (26), illustrated that an organisational climate can be viewed as the signal which conveys organization intention to employees about their job behaviours. Extending this rationale therefore, a supportive organisational climate conveys the behavioural expectation of commitment to the employees. Thus, when employee expectations and values are met, positive emotions toward the organization and feelings of loyalty to the organisational are expected.

Another theory which underlines the conclusions of this relationship is the social exchange theory (SET), social exchange theory (27) posits that every interaction among people can be understood as form of reciprocal exchange of rewards. Although, the theory is based on individual social interaction, recent studies have attempted to conceptualize the relationship between an organization and its employees as a kind of social exchange relationship (22).

Finally, the expectancy theory underlies the conclusion of this relationship (8). This theory ague that employee joined workplace with their own expectation and values about an organisation. Thus when expectation and values are met, employees feelings of loyalty are expected. Therefore, based on results of this study and prior research conducted on some of the variables, many empirical evidence provide support for positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational commitment (8).

CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to bring out to the academic spot light the varied important of the key factors of organizational climate's dimension to the organizational commitment of public organization employees. As Public organization in The Gambia being one of the main employers, need to create a positive organizational climate, in order to saves its best hands that create the key element for achieving its vision in today's dynamic and changing operating conditions. Thus, creating positive organizational climate, which cares about the welfare of public service, is thought to be imperative. Since, it is through that a positive working environment which appreciates employees is expected to positively affect

their commitment levels, so they will undertake additional roles in organizational processes.

In this research, the general conclusion is that overall organizational climate dimension is strongly associated with the propensity of organizational commitment. As mention in the study reward, warmth, organizational support are critical factors enhancing employees' commitment behaviour, which is collaborated in this study as the factors that clear effects on employee willing ness to remain in the organization when they perceive a higher degree of supportive climates in The Gambia

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Studies such as the present research are important because it enables policy makers in public organizations to improve employee's commitment by identifying factors that can improve it. As the results of this study showed that there is a strong relationship between organizational climate and organizational commitment in The Gambia public organizations. Policy makers in those countries should work at improving the work environment aspects such as Warmth, Rewards, and Support, as these variables are the most significant to organizational commitment.

Therefore policy makers should closely monitor rewards, the warmth working environment and supports considering its effect on employees' commitment to the organization. If these conditions are affected negatively, their output will be affected; above all attaining organizational commitment will consequently become a challenge.

Although, not all the variable support organizational commitment such as structure and organizational standards dimensions, these areas should be further reviewed by policy makers to provide a level playing field for all employees, in this case the results are important. Public policy makers can use the conclusions drawn from this study when designing their policies to influence high organizational commitment for public service. However this does not mean that only these variables have a high correlation with organizational commitment as indicated the r2 is only 11% and 13% respectively. A broader set of factors should be taken into considerations as motivation, compensation satisfaction; promotion system and so on will help in organizational commitment behavior

Limitation and Future Research

Although, this study endeavored to perfect the design of the research, it still had the following limitations;First, the study was conducted on few percentages of the public organizations employees.

Therefore whether the findings of this study can be applied to all public organizations in the Gambia remain to be investigated. Thus, this study suggests further studies to address this concern.

The data was collected through online and some due to limited accessibility of internet cannot response to the questionnaire, therefore the research take this study as a preliminary study and should be replicated over time and also includes more industries and more countries. Replication can help validate the results of this research. Also future researcher should consider using a qualitative approach to this study in order to give more insight on commitment issues in West Africa.

Despites these limitations, the results of this research expand current understanding of the factors that have relationship with organizational commitment in the Gambia.

Final Consideration

This research contributes on public organization literature, even more in organizational commitment and organization climate in The Gambia. Further studies are needed to extend the finding of this study by taking into account a broader set of factors (e.g work motivation, safety at work, individual and organizational counterproductive behavior), how these factors affect employee's commitment behavior remains an interesting issue in research. Researchers can investigate and bring these issues in the academic spot light of West Africa.

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