

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS DETERMINANTS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG NIGERIA NATIONAL PARKS' EMPLOYEES

Adekunle Anthony Ogunjinmi, PhD

Department of Ecotourism and Wildlife Management,
Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria

Samuel Akinyele Onadeko, PhD

Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management,
Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Olugbenga Jelili Ladebo, PhD

Kehinde Oluwaseye Ogunjinmi, M. Agric.

Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development,
Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Abstract

This study aimed at exploring linkages between employees' personal characteristics, training opportunities and organisational commitment. The study population was the employees of seven national parks in Nigeria. Collection of data was through the use of questionnaire. Also, 231 employees were randomly selected from all the parks, representing 11.6% of the total population of the employees. Data obtained were subjected to descriptive and inferential analyses such as Pearson's Correlation and multiple linear regression. Majority of the respondents were male (88.7%) with the median age of 35 years. The employees had high training opportunities. They however had generally low level of organisational commitment. Significant difference exists in the employees' organisational commitment based on gender, age, and work experience. There was significant but weak correlations between organisational commitment and training opportunities while gender, age and education were the determinants of organisational commitment. The study confirmed the significance of personal factors as determinants of organisational commitment. Gender, age and education were confirmed as the determinants of organisational commitment. For a more comprehensive understanding of other possible determinants and antecedents of organisational commitment of nature

conservation organisations' employees, further studies should include more factors in analytical model.

Keywords: Characteristics, training, determinants, commitment, employees

Introduction

The management of people in the occupation is an essential element of the management process. To realize the critical importance of people in the organization is to recognize that human element and the organization are synonymous (Yaser, 2012). Every individual within an organisation according to Ogunjinmi et al (2013) is important to the fulfillment of organisational goals and objectives. Consequently, employees constitute an important segment of organisation's stakeholders; their commitment plays significant role in the effectiveness and stability of organisations. Carriere and Bourque (2009) opined that organisational commitment is a psychological stabilising or helpful force that binds individuals to course of action relevant to the organisation. No organization in today's competitive world can perform at peak levels unless each employee is committed to the organisation's objectives and works as an effective team member (Coetzee, 2005).

Rainey (2003) refers to organisational commitment as various loyalties and attachments different individuals hold toward their organisations. The higher the organisational commitment is, the more responsible an individual is to the organization (Chen, 2013). Individuals who have higher levels of organisational commitment are believed to have a sense of belonging and identification within the organization thereby increases their desire to pursue the organisation's goals and activities, and their willingness to remain as part of the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Employees' emotional bond to their organization (i.e., their affective commitment has been considered as an important determinant of dedication and loyalty (Rhoades et al., 2001). Porter et al (1974) characterised organisational commitment into three factors: 1) acceptance of the organisation's goals and values, 2) willingness to work on behalf of the organization, 3) strong motivation to remain in the organization. Also, Buchanan (1974) opined that commitment consists of three components: a) identification – adoption as one's own the goals and values of the organisation, b) involvement – psychological immersion or absorption in the activities of one's work role, and c) loyalty – a feeling of attention for and attachment to the organisation.

According to Chen (2013), organisational commitment is expected to be influenced by a series of elements. Some of these elements or factors include demographic, training opportunities and perceptions of

organisation's management. Various studies have indicated links between demographic factors and organisational commitment. Gender, age, education, salary and experience have been shown to influence commitment (Mowday et al., 1982, Loscocco, 1990, Mathieu and Zajac, 1990, Marsden et al., 1992, Larkey and Morrill, 1995, Meyer and Allen, 1997, Keramati et al., 2013, Mohammed and Eleswed, 2013).

Training is recognized as part of capacity building and personnel development in organisations. It has also been identified as contributing greatly to organisational competitiveness (Schuler and MacMillan, 1984). Studies have begun to examine the relationship between training and commitment (Owens, 2006, Al-Emadi and Marquardt, 2007). From management's view point, training can be regarded as a means of engaging the commitment of employees to organisation (Heyes and Stuart, 1996 cited in Soltani and Liao, 2010, Bartlett, 2001). In the Harvard map of HRM, Beer et al (1984 cited in Soltani and Liao, 2010) stated that "training is one of the several human resource flows which altogether lead to achieving the 'four Cs' of HR outcomes: commitment, congruence, competence and cost effectiveness". Links between provisions of training and improvements in organisational commitment have been established. Positive relationship between training perceptions and affective organisational commitment has also been found (Bartlett, 2001, Ahmad and Abubakar, 2003, Al-Emadi and Marquardt, 2007). As part of their unwritten psychological contract with the organization, employees expect to be provided with training and development opportunities in exchange for displayed organisational commitment (Bartlett, 2001). In order to judge better the effectiveness of training, it has been suggested that its relationship to organisational commitment be examined (Bartlett, 2001).

Since organisational commitment occupies an important position that cannot be neglected, it becomes necessary to explore determinants of organisational commitment (Chen, 2013). This study aimed at determining the influence of gender, age, education, salary, work experience and training on organisational commitment of Nigeria National Parks employees. It was hypothesized that personal characteristics of respondents and training opportunities would be the determinants of organisational commitment of the employees.

Materials and Methods

The study area

The study was conducted in the seven National Parks in Nigeria. The parks were Chad Basin National Park (CBNP), Cross River National Park (CRNP), Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP), Kainji Lake National Park (KLNP), Kamuku National Park (KNP), Okomu National Park (OKNP), and

Old Oyo National Park (OONP). These parks are located in the various ecological zones of the country (Ogunjinmi, 2009). Hunting and other human activities that affect biodiversity are forbidden in the parks. The national parks cover about 22,592km² (i.e. about 2.5%) of the country. National Parks are assets of the Federal Government and the agency responsible for their management is the National Parks Service, an agency of the Federal Ministry of Environment (Marguba, 2002).

Sample, Survey Procedure, Measurement and Analyses

The target population for this study was the employees of Nigeria National Parks. List of employees was obtained from each of the parks, at the time of this study, the total number of employees combined from all the parks was estimated to be 2000 individuals from which 231 (representing 11.6%) of the population) were randomly selected for the study. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. About 300 questionnaires were distributed from where 231 were returned, amounting to 77% response rate. The questionnaire consisted of personal characteristics of the employees such as gender, age, education, salary, work experience, training opportunities and organisational communication items. Gender was measured as male=1, female=0, age was measured in years, education was measured as secondary =1, tertiary= 0, salary was measured as the actual monthly income or pay, work experience was measured as actual years spent on the job while training opportunities was measured as the number of times an employee was given opportunity to attend training since joining the organisation. Organisational commitment was measured using Meyer et al (1993) affective organisational commitment scale. The internal consistency reliability of organisational commitment was ascertained using the Cronbach-Alpha procedure and reliability co-efficient was 0.77. Data obtained were presented and analysed using descriptive and inferential analytical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, median and standard deviations, were used to order and describe data. The inferential statistical tools employed were Pearson's Correlations and multiple-linear regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

In Table 1, personal characteristics of the employees are presented. There were more male (88.7%) than female respondents (11.3%). This probably might be due to the paramilitary nature of national parks with employment bias towards male, particularly for park protection activities. The age range of majority of the respondents (45%) was 31-40 years, an indication that they were in their active age. Majority (54.5%) possessed secondary education. This was inconsistent with observations of White

(2008) that reported that 50% of Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District employees had Bachelor degree. With regards to employees' salary, 64.1% received ₦5000- ₦25000 (US\$ 28.9 and US\$ 144.5) on monthly basis, this translated to US\$ 0.96-US\$ 4.82 per day. The median income for the employees was ₦17900 (US\$ 103.47), which is lower than the country minimum wage of ₦18000 (US\$ 104.05). In terms of work experience, 70.6% had 0-10 years of experience. This was in agreement with the findings of Ogunjinmi et al (2008) in Yankari Game Reserve.

Table 1: Personal characteristics of the employees (N= 231)

Socio-economic factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	205	88.7
Female	26	11.3
Age (years)		
20-30	74	32.0
31-40	104	45.0
41-50	47	20.4
Greater than 50	6	2.6
Median	35	
Education		
Secondary	126	54.5
Tertiary	105	45.5
Salary (Naira)		
5000-25000	148	64.1
26000-46000	70	30.3
47000-67000	8	3.5
Greater than 67000	5	2.1
Median	17900	
Experience (years)		
0-10	163	70.6
11-20	54	23.4
Greater than 20	14	6.0
Median	8	

From Table 2, 45.5% of the employees had attended training for more than 10 times since they were employed. Most of these trainings were undertaken to acquire further educational qualifications, and were aimed at improving their competency in conservation and park management. This shows that Nigeria National Park Service take employees' training as important and priority for the organisation.

Table 2: Frequency of training opportunities for employees of Nigeria National Parks (N=231)

Number of times employees attended training	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5	55	23.8
6-10	71	30.7
Greater than 10	105	45.5

The means and standard deviations of employees' response to items on organisational commitment scale are in Table 3. The means range from

2.08 to 3.24. The employees were generally positive towards two items of organisational commitment scale. They were positive towards the statements *this park has a great deal of personal meaning for me* ($\bar{x} = 3.12$, $SD = 0.77$) and *I really feel as if Park problems are my own* ($\bar{x} = 3.24$, $SD = 0.86$). It could be deduced from these that their commitment to the organization was low. However, there was significant difference in the respondents commitment based on gender ($F = 2.55$, $p < 0.01$), age ($F = 2.75$, $p < 0.01$) and work experience ($F = 2.63$, $p < 0.01$) (Table 4). With regards to gender, since most of the respondents were male, it could be inferred that male were less committed than female. Marsden et al (1992) however demonstrated that overall, men tend to have slightly higher levels of organisational commitment than women do; this was attributable to the different kinds of jobs that men and women hold. The result on age and work experience could imply that younger and less experienced employees would have low level of organisational commitment considering that majority of the respondents median age was 35 years and median work experience was 8 years. This means that they have relatively young age and work experience which is a pointer to their tendency to exhibit lower level of organisational commitment.

Table 3: Means (\bar{x}) and Standard Deviations (SD) of employees' response to items on organisational commitment scale

Organisational commitment item	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (SD)
This <i>Park</i> has a great deal of personal meaning for me	3.12	0.77
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this <i>Park</i>	2.09	1.14
I do not feel like part of the family at my <i>Park</i>	2.29	0.78
I really feel as if <i>Park</i> problems are my own	3.24	0.86
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my <i>Park</i>	2.08	0.67
I do not feel emotionally attached to this <i>Park</i>	2.40	1.22

Table 4: Differences in employees' organisational commitment based on selected personal characteristics and training opportunities

Personal characteristics	F	Sig.
Gender	2.55**	0.01
Age	2.75**	0.01
Education	1.76	0.10
Salary	1.40	0.16
Experience	2.63**	0.01
Training opportunities	1.51	0.12

**Significant at 0.01 probability level

The study further showed that there were no significant correlations between organisational commitment and gender ($r = -0.06$, $p > 0.05$), age ($r = 0.02$, $p > 0.05$), education ($r = -0.05$, $p > 0.05$) and work experience ($r = -0.06$,

$p > 0.05$). However, only training opportunities ($r = 0.13$, $p < 0.05$) had significant but weak relationship with organisational commitment (Table 5). Consistent with this study, Ahmad and Abubakar (2003) observed no significant correlation between gender and organisational commitment. Angle and Perry (1981) and Opayemi (2004) however indicated significant relationship between gender and organisational commitment. The results on age, education and experience were inconsistent with the findings of Keramati et al (2013) which showed significant relationship between age and organisational commitment. Salami (2008) also observed that age and education showed significant correlations with organisational commitment.

Table 5: Correlation between personal characteristics, training opportunities and organisational commitment of respondents

Variables	Correlation value (r)
Gender	-0.06
Age	0.02
Education	-0.05
Work experience	-0.06
Training	0.13*

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

This study observed that gender ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$), age ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < 0.05$) and education ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$) were the determinants of employees' organisational commitment. The value of adjusted R square (0.15) implies that this model explained 15% of the total variance in organisational commitment. These findings on age and education are consistent with observations of Salami (2008) that age and education made significant contributions to the prediction of organisational commitment. Adenuga et al (2013) also indicated that gender significantly predicted employees' organisational commitment. Surprisingly, despite the established correlation between organisational commitment and training in this study, it was not a part of predictive factors of organisational commitment. This result is consistent with Ghina (2012) that observed that training and development did not predict organisational commitment.

Table 6: Results of regression analyses between personal characteristics, training opportunities and organisational commitment

Independent variables	β	t values
Gender	-0.20	-2.99**
Age	-0.21	-2.12*
Education	-0.31	-3.80**
Salary	-0.12	-1.21
Work experience	0.22	1.96
Training	0.06	0.86
R	0.39	
R ²	0.15	
R ² (adj)	0.12	
ΔR^2	0.15	

Standard error	2.67
df	230
*p<0.05, **p<0.01	

Conclusion:

The findings from this study contribute to the existing organisational commitment literature by determining how employees' personal characteristics and training opportunities relate to their levels of organisational commitment. Although the employees had greater opportunities for training, their organisational commitment level was low while differences in their organisational commitment exist based on gender, age and work experience. There was significant but weak correlations between organisational commitment and training opportunities. The study confirmed the significance of employees' personal factors as determinants of organisational commitment. Gender, age and education were confirmed as the determinants of organisational commitment. For a more comprehensive understanding of other possible determinants and antecedents of organisational commitment of nature conservation organisations' employees, further studies should include more factors in analytical model.

References:

- Adenuga, R. A., Adenuga, F. T. & Ayodele, K. O. Organisational commitment and turnover intention among private universities' employees in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Open Journal of Education* 2013, 1, (2), 31-36
- Ahmad K. Z. & Abubakar, R. The association between training and organizational commitment among white workers in Malaysia. *International Journal of Training and Development* 2003, 7, (3), 166-85.
- Al-Emadi, M. A. & Marquardt, M. J. Relationship between employees' beliefs regarding training benefits and organizational commitment in a Petroleum Company the State of Qatar", *International Journal of Training and Development* 2007, 11, (1), 49-70.
- Angle, H. L. & Perry, J. An empirical assessment of organizational commitment and organizational effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 1981, 26, 1-13.
- Bartlett, K.R. "The Relationship between Training and Organizational Commitment: A Study in the Health Care Field", *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 2001, 12, (4), 335-352
- Buchanan, B. II. "Building organizational commitment: The socialization of managers in work organizations", *Administrative Science Quarterly* 1974, 19, 4, 533-546.
- Carriere, J., & Bourque, C. The effects of organizational communication on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a land ambulance service

and the mediating role of communication satisfaction. *Career Development International* 2009, 14, (1), 29-49.

Chen, B. An exploration of determinants of organisational commitment: Emphasis on the relationship between organisational democracy and commitment. Capstone Project, 2013. www.martin.uky.edu/centers_research/Capstones_2013/Chen.pdf

Coetzee, M. The fairness of affirmative action: An organisational justice perspective. PhD Thesis, University of Pretoria. upetd.up.ac.za/thesis/available/etd-04132005-130646/.../00front.pdf

Ghina, A. The influence of corporate culture on organisational commitment: Case study of civil government organisations in India. *International Journal of Basic and Applied Science* 2012, 1, (2), 156-170

Keramati, M. A., Horri, M. S. & Afzalipoor, S. H. R. A study on effects of personal characteristics on organisational commitment. *Management Science Letters* 2013, 3, 345-350

Larkey, L. & Morrill, C. Organisational commitment as a symbolic process. *Western Journal of Communication* 1995, 59, (3), 193-214.

Loscocco, K. A. Reactions to blue-collar work: A comparison of women and men. *Work & Occupations* 1990, 17, (2), 152–177.

Marguba, L.B. National Parks and their benefits to local communities in Nigeria. National Park Service, 2002, 46 Pp.

Marsden, P.V., Kalleberg, A. L. & Cook, C. R. Gender differences in organisational commitment: Influences of work positions and family roles. GSS Topical Report No. 23, 1992

Mathieu, J. E., & Zajac, D. M. A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organisational commitment. *Psychological Bulletin* 1990, 108, (2), 171-194.

Meyer, N. J. & Allen, N. *Commitment in the Workplace*. Thousand Oaks, CA Sage Publications, 1997

Meyer, J.P.; Allen, N.J. and Smith, C.A. Commitment to organisations and occupations: Extension test of three component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1993, 78, 538-551.

Mohammed, F. & Eleswed, M. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment: A correlation study in Bahrain. *Research Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology* 2013, 3, (5), 43-53

Mowday, R. T. Porter, L. W. & Steers, R.M. *Employee-organizational linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism and turnover*. New York: Academic Press, 1982

Ogunjinmi, A. A., Ladebo, O. J., Onadeko, S. A. & Ogunjinmi, O. K. Demographic and professional factors as predictors of communication satisfaction among Nigeria National Parks' employees. *European Scientific Journal* 2013, 9, (32), 325-336

- Ogunjinmi, A. A., Ojo, L. O., Onadeko, S. A. & Oguntoke, O. An appraisal of environmental interpretive policies and strategies of Nigeria National Parks. *Tropical Agricultural Research and Extension* 2009, 12, (1), 7-12
- Ogunjinmi, A.A.; Umunna, M.O. & Ogunjinmi, K.O. Factors affecting job satisfaction of rangers in Yankari Game Reserve, Bauchi, Nigeria. *Journal of Agriculture and Social Research* 2008, 8, (2), 19-26
- Opayemi, A. S. Personal attributes and organizational commitment among Nigeria Police Officers. *African Journal for the Psychological Study of Social Issues* 2004, 7, (2), 251-263.
- Owens, P. L. "One more reason not to cut your training budget: The relationship between training and organizational outcomes", *Public Personnel Management* 2006, 35,(2), 163-172.
- Porter, L. W., Steers, M. R., Mowday, T. R. & Boulian, V. P. "Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians", *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974, 59, 5, 603-609.
- Rainey, H. G. *Understanding and managing public organisations*. Jossey-bass, 2003.
- Rhoades, L., Eisenberger, R., & Armeli, S. Affective commitment to the organization: The contribution of perceived organisational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 2001, 86, (5), 825-836
- Salami, S. O. Demographic and psychological factors predicting organisational commitment among industrial workers. *Anthropologist* 2008, 10, (1), 31-38
- Schuler, R. S. & MacMillan, I. C. "Gaining competitive advantage through human resource management practices", *Human Resource Management* 1984, 23, (3), 241-255.
- Soltani, E. & Liao, Y. Training interventions: Fulfilling managerial ends or proliferating invaluable means for employees? Some evidence from Iran. *European Business Review* 2010, 22, (2), 131.
- White, A.P. An examination of Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Employee job satisfaction. PhD Thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2008, 154 Pp.
- Yaser, M. A. The relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment among managers in telecommunication companies in Jordan. *Ozean Journal of Applied Sciences* 2012, 5, (2), 109-121