EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND CARREER COMMITMENT OF AUDITING FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract: **This study examines the relationship between employee development and career commitment in Audit firms in Port Harcourt. The sample for this study is all the sample unit that is, twenty (20) audit firms in Port Harcourt and a total number of 358 staff.. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to test the postulated hypothesis at 0.05 level of confidence. The study reveals all the dimension of the criterion variable and the measures of the predictor variable are related therefore the null hypotheses were rejected.**

Keywords: Employee Development, Auditing Firms.

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Organizations can survive successfully when management knows the psychology of the employees and skills of human resource management in organization. They observe attitude and behavior of the employees at work place. They want to facilitate the employees and provide them required resources for improving their performance. Organizations make commitment with their employees for achieving organizational goals.

Commitment is recognition of individual to do something, following the principles, standards towards attaining the goals or advance to the destination. Commitment shows the purposes of an organization and employees. Organization and employees can get their target goals and benefits when they make commitment. There is no option of pretext when commitment is made.

Commitment refers to identification with, and involvement in one's occupation (Gupta, 2010). On the other hand, Aryee, Chay and Chew, (1994) viewed career commitment as individual attitudes toward their career, and has been recognized as a form of work commitment that individuals have on a career facet. Much literature refers to similar or related concepts: occupational commitment, professional commitment, career salience, the cosmopolitan/local distinction and professionalism. Common to all these is the critical notion of being committed to one's career, or occupation, rather than to the organization which employs one. Andrea and Tsai (2004) contend that career commitment is the strength of one's motivation to work in a chosen career role. This definition focuses on motivation and goal's achievement within a specific career field. The definition is based on Colarelli (1990) and Hall (1971). Despite increased attention to employee development recently, career commitment has been comparatively neglected (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990). Although career commitment is known to lag developmentally, it has become increasingly important, since a career provides significant occupational meaning and continuity when organizations are unable to provide employment security (Aryee et al, 1994)."

Employee development simply refers to a concerted effort directed towards assessing an employee's potentials likely career parts for that employee, by organizing training and other experiences in order to prepare that employee for future advance jobs .Agba et al"

"Career commitment is relevant to the practical concerns of individuals and organizations, and thus is critical to the ability development since career commitment helps an individual to persist in a given type of work for long enough to develop specialized skills (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990) .Career commitment also provides individuals with the staying power to cultivate business and professional relationships. Such relationships are useful for trading favors and services (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990), as sources of information, and for increasing individual exposure to organizational decision makers (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990). Individuals enter an organization with their own career plans and are attracted to an organization if its practices are consistent with their career needs." On the other hand, "organizations need to realize that positive employee development for their workforce is a way of helping to attract and retain the best people: by recognizing and responding to the needs of individual employees they will get the best out of them. More effective guidance will assist the development of a knowledge economy and benefit individuals, employers and society at large (Cedefop, 2008). It will however require a cultural shift in management behavior in organizations towards self-management (Hackman, 1986). Individuals perceive an organization as more attractive as their own career motivation increases. This phenomenon implies that individual career attitudes may influence individual views of their organizations. Career commitment is characterized by the development of personal career goals, as well as by attachment to, identification with, and involvement in those goals (Chieh-Peng and Mei-Fang, 2004). Individuals with strong career commitment may display higher levels of requirements and expectations from the organizations with which they establish relationships. This phenomenon also implies that individuals with high career commitment may be more motivated when their expectations are satisfied by the organization than are less committed individuals. Career commitment has been widely investigated because it influences individual workplace attitudes and behaviors.

However, this study tends to provide a correlation between generalized motivational domains of identity, insight, and resilience with career counseling, career advancement and career opportunity. "Based on the notion that an individual's behavior is determined primarily by past experiences and extending the analogy of individual development to that of organizational development, this study discusses a series of developmental stages through which employees tend to pass in becoming career committed. The objective of employee development is to match an employee's career aspirations with opportunities and challenges available within the organization (Aplin and Gerster, 1978). The interest of employee development also entails a successful placement of employees in positions that meet their needs as well as the organization's needs (Agba, Ogaboh; Festus and Ushie, (2010). This implies that employee development must be of concern to organizations and managers in order that human resources may be developed to meet constantly changing environmental condition (Aplin & Gerster, 1978; Flippo, 1980). More effective employee development at work will assist the development of a knowledge economy and benefit individuals, employers and society at large. This is an argument for costs to be shared between individuals, employers and governments.

Cedefop (2008) argued that; "many employers pay for employee development support. First, they frequently pay for coaching, assessment and development support for individuals from key talent groups (e.g. senior managers, etc.). Second, they also regularly pay for advice and support on learning and development activities. Third, they usually fund outplacement activity.

Furthermore, trend of studies on career commitment have been done over the years by several scholars. London's (1983) examined the effects of individual, situational and extra-work variables on career commitment such as individual variables (needs); situational variables (i.e staffing policies and procedures, leadership style, job design, group cohesiveness, employee development programs, and the compensation system); extra work variables (demands of work and family).Goulet and Singh (2002) in their work used job involvement; organizational commitment; and job satisfaction. They concluded that the need for an achievement variable, which is defined as the personal striving of individuals to attain goals within their social environment, will influence career commitment because while the individual is more focused on need and goal achievement, he will have a long-term work orientation and plan and be committed to his or her career.

Carson and Bedeian (1994) revised London's dimensions definitions and adapted them to the concern of career commitment." They modified London's dimensions and came up with career identity, career planning and career resilience as the new dimensions of career commitment.

ISSN 2394-7322

International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics
Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (165-176), Month: May - August 2016, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

However, none of these studies has examined the relationship between employee development and career commitment using resilience and identity as measures of career commitment as well as counseling and monitoring as the dimensions of employee development. This has created a literature gap which this study tends to fill.

II.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Organizations are challenged with tasks of recruiting, selection, placement and retaining of their employees at the same time; the employers need to make sure employees have loyal and commitment organization (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003). Without effective career commitment, organizations will lose their critical employees and result in the employee turnover. In the modern business environment, effective employees are the main weapon for organizations to win the competition, this is more common in the industries requiring for knowledge workers (Pyron, 2008; Crager, 2006).

Cost is one of the manifestations of the problem. Replacing workers can be expensive. While the cost varies, some studies have shown the cost to replace and hire new staff as high as 60 percent of the old employee's salary (Chieh-Peng and Mei-Fang, 2004). In addition, total costs of replacement, including training and lost production, can range from 90 percent to 200 percent of an employee's annual salary.

Another manifestation of the problem is in the "overall business performance. Oftentimes, the employees who remain with a company are less productive and less efficient than they would have been in a situation whereby they are resilient, emotionally attached to their jobs (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990). This is because they must absorb the responsibilities of the vacant positions, train new employees upon their arrival, and deal with a depressed work culture and environment. As a result, companies with lower career committed employees are often less competitive and produce less than companies with a stable workforce.

Finally, Aryee et al, (1994) have shown "that employees quit jobs more often because of workplace culture or inter-employee relations than because of the difficulty of the work. A culture of high career commitment feeds off of itself, leading to lower and lower retention rates.

Research Hypotheses

Ho$_1$: there is no significance relationship between counseling and identity.

Ho$_2$: there is no significance relationship between counseling and resilience

Ho$_3$: there is no significance relationship between monitoring and identity

Ho$_4$: there is no significant relationship between monitoring and resilience

III.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Workers in contemporary society are expressing a strong desire to pursue more than just a job. They are looking for employment opportunities that promise an extension of their interests, personality and abilities. Then want a variety of things from their jobs besides a pay cheque and a few fringe benefits, and their loyalty to the organization depends upon the degree to which their employer satisfies these wants (Kent & Otte, 1982, Agba, 2004). "With improved living standards, workers are no longer satisfied to have just a job and the usual fringe benefits. They want a career that expresses their interests, personality, abilities and that harmonizes with their total life situation. Unfortunately, most employers have failed to recognize this need and the tools and experiences they provide do not enable workers to develop in their career. High salaries, good working conditions, health and dental insurance, retirement plans, stock purchase programs, reduced work hours, technological advancement, educational reimbursement programs among others might seem to be the necessary ingredients for individual happiness and fulfillment in the world of work. Despite these benefits, there are many employees at all levels that appear to be dissatisfied and delusion with themselves, their work and their future. Most workers realize that in any organizational setting, they must have opportunities for continuing growth and advancement if they are to be satisfied. Where the employer can provide the worker with these opportunities, a proper attitude of loyalty and satisfaction can be developed and performance enhanced.

IV.   EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Employee development involves concerted efforts directed towards assessing a workers' potentials identifying likely career paths for that employee and designing and implementing various forms of training and experience to prepare that person for more advanced job (Agba, et al, 2010)." According to Agba, et al, (2010), when a firm takes on employee development as a human resource function, such activity is called career guidance, which is composed of three sub-processes or steps: forecasting, planning and counseling. They argued that the first step is to identify the usual path of promotion (career ladder) within the organization. The second step is to estimate when and where job opening will occur and to identify liking candidates for these openings. Forecasting is an integral part of manpower planning. The likely candidates are assessed to determine their existing skills and these skills are compared with those required for the job. Training may then be planned to correct any skill deficiencies that are identified through this comparison (Peterson & Tracey, 1979). Employee development has both personal and organizational dimensions. In organizational level, it is a planned program designed to match individual and organizational needs. Examples of such program include   recruitment policy that encourages a full exchange of information between the applicant and the company prior to hiring; a promotion policy that considers the needs and objective of both the organization and the employee (Tiedeman & O'hara, 1963). A personal level employee development allows for the changes in individuals as their work roles overlap with their social and family development. At this level, the employee and his family and their needs must be reckoned with by employers if they are to be successful in developing and hanging onto good employees. Workers want management to show interest in their development, which would lead to increased productivity and greater commitment to organizational goals (Rabinowitz, 1980).

Changes in the way work is structured and organized, together with the growth of the knowledge-based economy, will require a reconceptualisation of what an employment means to people (Arnold and Jackson, 1997). Over the years, the term 'employment' was used primarily to describe the process of a person being engaged in an occupation or work that is often linked to ideas of progressing up an organizational hierarchy. While many people continue to pursue this kind of employment, many others will be leading very different working lives.

"Baer, Flexer, Luft and Simmons (2008) contend that; an individual's employee development is a lifetime process that encompasses the growth and change process of childhood, the formal career education at school, and the maturational processes that continue throughout a person's working adulthood and into retirement. Schreuder and Coetzee (2006) explain that a employment consists of different stages and the individual is confronted with different issues during each of these stages. Employee development involves concerted efforts directed towards assessing a workers' potentials identifying likely career paths for that employee and designing and implementing various forms of training and experience to prepare that person for more advanced job(Schreuder and Coetzee, 2006). When a firm takes on employee development as a human resource function, such activity is called career guidance, which is composed of three sub-processes or steps: forecasting, planning and counseling. The first step is to identify the usual path of promotion (career ladder) within the organization. The second step is to estimate when and where job opening will occur and to identify liking candidates for these openings. Forecasting is an integral part of manpower planning. The likely candidates are assessed to determine their existing skills and these skills are compared with those required for the job. Training may then be according to Stevens (1990), the common pattern of multiple careers during individuals' adult years requires that they evaluate, make personal decisions and implement career transition actions at several points during their lifetime.

Super (1957) identified five stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline that were thought to capture individuals' work related experiences from the years of childhood to retirement. Miller and Form (1951) and Hall and Nougaim (1968) also identified five career stages, and Schein (1978) proposed a sequence of nine stages of employee development.

McKay, (2013) also contended "that; employee development, a major aspect of human development, is the process through which an individual's work identity is formed. It spans one's entire lifetime. Employee development begins with a person's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living, continues as he or she explores occupations and ultimately decides what sort of employment or career to pursue, prepares for it, applies for and gets a job and advances in it (McKay, 2013). This implies that, it may and probably will include, changing employment and jobs. It is important to note that employee development will occur naturally, as one matures, but with intervention, one can forge a happier and

more successful path. Employee guidance and education, or other means of managing an employee as he develops has proved to be very helpful.

V. CAREER COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment is the extent to which a worker recognizes with the organization and desires to carry on. It is a degree of the worker's willingness to continue with the organization in the future. It reflects the employee's belief in the mission and targets of employer establishment and his/her willingness to expend attempt in their achievement with intent to carry on working there (Singh & Pandey, 2004). A large variety of explanation and measures of organizational commitment exist; a strong wants to remain the part of a specific organization; a willingness to exert high levels of efforts on behalf of the organization; and belief in and acceptability of the values and goals of the organization (Tella et al., 2007). It is the psychological state that binds the individual to the organization. Antecedents of organizational commitment are quite diverse in nature and origin (Bashir & Ramay, 2008).

The organizational commitment is determined by a number of individual and organizational variables including age, tenure in the organization and character such as positive and negative, affectivity or internal and external control ascription, job design, values and the leadership style of one's supervisor (Singh & Pandey, 2004). Effects of organizational commitment on outcome vary across vocation stages. This is particularly true for the association between organizational commitment and turnover. Procedural fairness, information sharing, and work life policy practice must be considered as balancing means to attain lower turnover rates. Professional remain in organizations where work is exciting and demanding, possibility for progress are high and if they feel logically well paid then there is require to shift from control oriented to commitment oriented job practices and to line up policies to these high allegiance work practices (Malik et. al., 2010).

Thus, organizational commitment is a situation in which a worker recognizes with a specific organization and its goals, and desires to continue attachment in the organization (Al-Aameri, 2000)." "Worker's commitment is the psychological possession one has for his/her job in the work environment. These concepts often interrelate with each other where worker motivation influences job satisfaction or employee's commitment while job satisfaction may persuade motivation or employee's commitment (Gliem & Gliem, 2001). It is the level to which a worker recognizes with a specific organization and its targets and desires to retain relationship in the institution. Research recommends that organizational commitment also leads to lower degrees of both absence and turnover and actually, it is a good sign of turnover then job satisfaction (Robbins & Coulter, 2005). The organizational commitment is partially the effect of intrinsic personal characteristics and partially the consequence of how peoples understand the institution and their instant job function (Daneshfard & Ekvaniyan, 2012).

VI. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling involves the taking of a reasonable portion of a population as a representative of a population about which generalization could be made on the basis of the findings derived from the sample. According to Baridam (2001), after the target population for the study has been defined the study subjects can be selected. If the target population is small, that is, it consists of a limited number of sampling units; all the sample units may be taken into the research of the study subjects. For the purpose of this study, all the sampling units will be considered, that is, twenty (20) audit firms in Port Harcourt. A total number of 358 staff will be considered for sample. To determine the sample size we use Taro Yamane formular as thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N\ (e^2)}$$

Where;

n = Sample size
N = Population
e^2 = level of significance (0.05)

ISSN 2394-7322

International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics
Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (165-176), Month: May - August 2016, Available at: **www.noveltyjournals.com**

$$= \frac{358}{1 + 358(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{358}{1 + 0.895}$$

$$= \frac{358}{1.895}$$

n = 189

VII. QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

S/n	Audit Firms	Staff Strength	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned
1	Shola Olorumisola & Co	19	10	6
2	S.O. Agelgbe & Co	16	8	5
3	Mbadunuju & Co	18	10	8
4	Ugboaja Martins & Co	21	11	6
5	Madu & Madu & Co	17	9	5
6	Sunny Gogo & Co	16	8	6
7	James Onuocha & Co	17	9	7
8	Akintola Williams & Co	28	15	10
9	Prince and Prince & Co	17	9	5
10	Allwell Brown & Co	18	10	6
11	Oforegbu & Co	15	8	3
12	Tamunoebi & Co	14	7	5
13	Edo Ekere & Co	16	8	5
14	Hugh Halliday & Co	23	12	8
15	Femi Ojukwutu & Co	18	10	7
16	UMC Professional Services	16	8	4
17	VC Enyidede & Co	15	8	6
18	Unogwu & Unogwu & Co	16	8	3
19	Davidson & Co	18	10	7
20	Leedum Bor & Co	20	11	8
	TOTAL	**358**	**189**	**120**

HYPOTHESES TESTING Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient analysis of employee development and career commitment

Correlation

		identity	resilience
Spearman's counselling rho	Correlation	.624**	.713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	120	120
Spearman's monitoring rho	Correlation	.604**	.503**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	120	120

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

ISSN 2394-7322

International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics
Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (165-176), Month: May - August 2016, Available at: **www.noveltyjournals.com**

Table 4.2.3 shows SPSS output of tested hypotheses. The results of the hypotheses show that the correlation between the dimensions and measures are significant at the 0.05 level of significance (2-tailed). Therefore, we reject the null hypotheses and state that there is a significant relationship in both instances on the basis that probability values are less than 0.05. From the results shown in table 4.2.3 we found that "there is a significant relationship between counseling and identity, there is a significant relationship between counseling and resilience, there is a significant relationship between monitoring and identity, and there is a significant relationship between monitoring and resilience."

VIII.   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 4.3.1 shows the test of hypotheses of employee development dimensions and measures of career commitment. The SPSS output revealed that the null hypotheses were rejected since the p-value output were less than the probability values of 0.01 level of significance (p<0.01). The discussions of findings of the results were presented as thus:

Relationship between counseling and identity

The result of the tested hypothesis shows that there is a positive significant relationship between counseling and identity. This implies that employee guidance is very significant. It has been found to improve the well-being of workers (Agba, Ogaboh, Festus, and Ushie, (2010). This finding is in line with the findings of Agba, Ogaboh, Festus, and Ushie, (2010). They concluded that counseling of employees is essential as they are visitors to a strange land called organization.

Relationship between counselling and resilience

From the hypothesis tested, the study found a positive significant relationship between counseling and resilience. This result indicates that counseling helps the employees a lot to be resilient conscious in their respective assignment. This finding corresponds with the findings of Collard, Epperheimer, and Saign, (1996). They concluded that counseling brings the employees closer to the management because of the encouragement being meted to them by the counselor.

Relationship between monitoring and identity

The SPSS output shows a positive significant relationship between monitoring and identity. This implies that employee development improves the identity of employees in the audit firms through the monitoring of employees' work activities. This finding is in conformity with the findings of Ashforth and Mael, (1989). They submitted that career commitment is related to the supervisor's inspirational guidance giving to the employees'.

Relationship between monitoring and resilience

There is a positive significant relationship between monitoring and resilience. This findings indicates that employee development depends solely on employee monitoring as it enhances the resilient capacity of the audit firms. This is in line with the findings of McKay, (2013). He maintained that monitoring gives direction to employees on the best methods and practices that will enhance organisation's work effectiveness.

IX.   CONCLUSION

Based on the summary of findings, we make the following conclusions.

The study concludes that; a positive relationship exists between counseling and identity. This implies that, as counseling increases, identity also increases among employees of audit firms. Monitoring is positively related with resilience. This means that; as monitoring increases, resilience also increases in the audit firms. The study also concludes that there is a positive association between monitoring and identity. This indicates also increases in the audit firms.

Recommendation

Drawing from the conclusion, the following recommendations were made.

1. Audit practitioners should create a platform for counseling their employees; monitor them on their jobs for optimum productivity.

2. Employees that display resilient character should be encouraged by a way of salary increase or for a vacation.

ISSN 2394-7322

International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics
Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (165-176), Month: May - August 2016, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

3. Audit administrators should reward committed employees as this will increase performance in the workplace.

4. Seminars and workshops should be organized to enlighten administrators in the audit firms to acquaint themselves with the various approaches of developing their staffs.

Recommendation For Further Studies

Other researchers should carry out further studies on the following:

1. Employee development and intention to stay of employees in the audit firms

2. Organizational resilience and employee commitment of bank workers

3. Career counseling and Organizational effectiveness

4. Employee monitoring and Organizational productivity

5. Career development and employee retention

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