

## Is Occupational Self-Efficacy A Determinant of Organisational Commitment? A Case Study of Ajaokuta Steel Company Workers

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### Article History

Received: 02.11.2018

Accepted: 11.11.2018

Published: 30.11.2018

### DOI:

10.21276/sjahss.2018.6.11.8



**Abstract:** This study examined occupational self-efficacy as antecedents of organizational commitment among Ajaokuta Steel Company workers in Ajaokuta, Kogi State were investigated in this study. One hundred and eighty-nine (189) participants were used in the study. The instruments used to collect data for the study were Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES) (Pethe, Chaudhari & Dhar, 1999) and Occupational Commitment Scale (OCS) (Meyer and Allen, 1990). A cross sectional design was adopted for the study. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data and statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was employed in the data analysis. The finding indicated that occupational self-efficacy was a significant determinant of organisational commitment. This implies that an employee who has high self-efficacy is likely to have a high level of commitment towards his/her organization. It is recommended that organizations should give attention to workers occupational self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** Occupational Self-Efficacy, Organizational Commitment, Ajaokuta Steel Company Workers.

### INTRODUCTION

In response to increasing global competition, companies are continuously under pressure to undergo dramatic changes. Organizations have flattened their structures to replace their traditional hierarchical management structures with empowered work teams.

In order to achieve this, the management is challenged to create working conditions in which individuals in these teams voluntarily choose to commit, collaborate and act towards accomplishment of organizational goals [1].

Organizational commitment (OC) has become popular among researchers of organizational and industrial psychology because it influences organizational and employees performance [2]. Organizational commitment is an extremely important topic for organizations to understand because an employee's belief and behavior towards an organization has an impact on the success of the organization. It is said that an employee becomes committed when he/she is sincere in duties, assigned tasks and creative towards work. Riketta [3] asserts that the major portion of an individual's life revolves around organizations and investigations of commitment in the workplace are vital for understanding the psychology of human behavior.

Cohen [2] posits that commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets. This general description of commitment relates to the definition of

organizational commitment by Arnold [4] as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization. Miller [5] also states that organizational commitment is a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. Organizational commitment is therefore, the degree to which an employee is willing to maintain membership due to interest and association with the organization's goals and values.

As regards organizational commitment of Nigerian workers, there is divergence of opinion among researchers [6]. They believe that organizational commitment reflects one side of the reciprocal relationship, between the employer and the employee and as such, each party has to play its role as organizations need committed workers in order to face the worldwide economic competition. This is due to the fact that employees who are committed to their organizational would have a strong desire to remain a member of the organization. The employees also would be willing to put in a substantial effort in their job on behalf of the organization [7]. Indeed some researchers found that organizational commitment is a function of

several variables such as job satisfaction, motivation, participative decision making, financial inducement, career opportunities, organizational support, financial reward, communication, promotion prospects, leadership styles and occupational self-efficacy [6, 8-12].

Occupational self-efficacy has been identified as one of the primary constructs of organizational commitment [10]. It can be defined as the perceptions of an individual about his/her abilities to effectively perform his/her tasks in the workplace [13]. According to Bandura [14] self-efficacy implies people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute course of action required to attain a designated type of performance. Bandura [15] defined self-efficacy as belief in one's ability to perform a task or more specifically to execute a specified behavior successfully. According to him, the concern of self-efficacy is with the judgments of what an individual can do in some situations or domains with the skills that he/she possesses. Occupational self-efficacy builds on this definition but is narrower in focus. In contrast to task-specific self-efficacy, however, it is broader in scope, so that a wider range of people working in different professions can be compared [16]. Thus, occupational self-efficacy can be used to assess self-efficacy over different jobs, organizations, levels etc. [16]. Findings have demonstrated the essence of self-efficacy on the job and career [7, 17] and have been used as a general label encompassing judgment of personal efficacy in relation to the wide range of behavior involved in career choice and adjustment. The construct of occupational self-efficacy has many implications for organizations. Empirical research reveals that occupational self-efficacy is positively related with many organizationally relevant variables, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and preparedness for organizational change [18, 16]. Furthermore, self-efficacy as a domain specific construct has been understood as the belief of an individual about his/her competence in a particular domain or context. Based on this viewpoint, occupational self-efficacy as a belief in ability enforces competence to perform in an occupation [19]. Thus, Schyns and Collani [16] established that occupational self-efficacy is positively and significantly related with organizational commitment.

#### **RELATED LITERATURE**

Meyer and Allen [20] developed a commitment model in which the commitment has been broken down into three approaches: affective, continuance and normative commitment. Their research provides preliminary evidence that affective, continuance and normative components of attitudinal commitment are conceptually and empirically separate. Further study by Meyer and Allen [21] broadened the perspective on organizational commitment through the componential model. They suggested that

organizational commitment should be conceptualized as a psychological state that is concerned about how individual feel about their organizational engagement and the desire to continue to remain with the organization.

One of the dimensions of organizational commitment is affective commitment which is an employee's desire to be emotionally attached to the identification and involvement in the organization [22, 20]. According to Noor and Noor [23] employees who have strong affective commitment will more likely remain in the organization because they want to. However, when there is no desire to be emotionally attached and be involved in the pursuit of organization goals, the employees may desire to leave the company.

Another dimension of commitment is continuance commitment and is the employees' awareness or recognition of the benefits of continuing to remain in the organization versus the perceived cost of leaving the organization [22, 21]. According to Chan [24], employees' with high continuance commitment are more likely to remain in the organization.

Finally, the dimension of normative commitment is a consequence of an employee's feeling of obligation to stay in the organization based on one's personal norms and values [22, 21]. Even when the employees face pressure from others to leave the organization, the employee will still feel strongly to continue working for the organization. The decision made by the employee whether to stay or leave the organization is based on their personal belief of the right and moral thing to do. The individual employees with higher normative component of organizational commitment usually will be more likely to remain and be committed to the organization [22].

Bandura's social-cognitive theory [25]. Bandura [25] postulates that these expectations determine whether or not a certain behaviour or performance will be attempted, the amount of effort the individual will contribute to the behaviour, and how long the behaviour will be sustained when obstacles are encountered. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes, namely cognitive, motivational, and affective and selection processes.

Personal well-being and human accomplishment are enhanced by a strong sense of efficacy in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided [25]. It can be regarded as an optimistic and self-confident view of one's capability to deal with certain life

stressors. Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. People, with high self-efficacy set those challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them while they also heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. After failures, they quickly recover their sense of efficacy. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable, therefore approaching threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them.

In contrast, when individuals doubt their capabilities, they shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats and easily fall victim to stress and may develop intentions to quit. Persons with low self-efficacy also tend to have low self-esteem, and they harbor pessimistic thoughts about their accomplishments and personal development according to Schwarzer [26] which may hinder organizational commitment.

So the level of an employee's abilities in an organization be it innate or learned tends to affect his or her level of commitment in the workplace.

#### **Expectancy Value Theory [27]**

Vroom [27] was the first to develop an expectancy theory with direct application to work settings, which was later expanded and refined by Porter and Lawler [28] and others [29]. The expectancy theory has three key elements: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. This theory assumes that the likelihood of attaining a valued outcome leads to specific behavior. If a person believes that he/she is capable of gaining a positive result, it will be more likely that she/he will repeat that behavior. This means in terms of self-efficacy that the kind of reward or benefit an employee perceives in getting at the end of a task determines the employee's perception about his/her worth and ability in completing the task which invariably enhances commitment towards the organization. Empirical study [30] found that there was no significant relationship between organizational commitment and self-efficacy among Nigerian Police personnel. Ayebami and Adeoye [31] explored employees' influence of emotional intelligence and career self-efficacy on organizational commitment. Results indicated that participants possessed moderate levels of emotional intelligence and career self-efficacy with low level of organizational commitment. Based on the findings, it was suggested that managers could sharpen employees' emotional intelligence and career self-efficacy to buffer organizational commitment of employees. Oyewumi, Ibitoye and Sanni [32] examined job satisfaction and self-efficacy as correlates of job commitment of special education teachers in Oyo State. Findings revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and commitment as there was a positive significant relationship between self-efficacy and job satisfaction of special education

teachers. Following these related theoretical and empirical reviews, the researchers hypothesized that occupational self-efficacy will not significantly predict organizational commitment.

#### **METHOD**

##### **Participants**

A total of one hundred and eighty-nine (189) industrial workers comprising of one hundred and forty (140) males and forty nine (49) females were drawn from Ajaokuta Steel Company in Ajaokuta, Kogi State. Participants were selected using simple random sampling technique and their mean age was found to be at 41.9.

##### **Instruments**

Two instruments were used to collect data for the study, they include;

- Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES) [19].
- Occupational Commitment Scale (OCS) [22].

##### **Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale [19]**

This scale was developed by Pethe, Chaudhari, and Dhar [19] and it is a 19-item scale comprising of six factors which include- (i) confidence (ii) command (iii) adaptability (iv) personal effectiveness (v) positive attitude and (vi) individuality. The instrument was designed to measure the efficacy beliefs of the participants towards their occupation and is a five point Likert-scale with the response range varying from 5 for 'strongly agree' to 1 for 'strongly disagree'. The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .98. The researcher in a pilot study obtained a reliability coefficient of .92 among Nigerian samples.

##### **Organizational Commitment Scale [19]**

The organizational commitment scale used in this study is a 24-item instrument, designed by Meyer and Allen [22]. Each subscale of the OCS contains eight (8) items. The Affective commitment scale measures an individual's identification/emotional attachment to the organization. The continuance subscale measures the efforts/awareness of the costs of leaving the organization and the normative subscale measures the obligation/loyalty to the organization. Responses to each of the 24 items are rated using a 7-point Likert rating scale. Allen and Meyer [20] reported a high reliability score in almost all the items in the instrument. They reported a reliability coefficient of 0.82 for affective commitment scale; 0.74 for continuance commitment and 0.83 for normative commitment. The reliability alpha obtained with Nigerian samples is 0.79 for affective commitment and 0.81 for continuance commitment [33].

##### **Procedure**

The researchers wrote to the management of Ajaokuta Steel Company seeking permission to carry out this study. In the letter, the researchers explained the need for the study and the benefit therein if allowed to

do so, thus permission was granted within two weeks. Furthermore the two instruments were exposed to pilot using 83 participants drawn from Innoson Industries Enugu. These workers were administered the organizational commitment scale [22] and occupational self-efficacy scale [19], which yielded a Cronbach alpha of 0.79 and 0.82 respectively which was accepted as a good Index since Mitchel & Jolley [34] noted that an index of 0.70 (and preferably 0.80) is needed to say a measure is internally consistent.

**Design/Statistics**

A cross sectional design was adopted for the study. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was employed in the data analysis.

**RESULTS**

Multiple Regressions was conducted in which organisational commitment was the dependent variable.

**Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and correlations for demographic variables, occupational self-efficacy on organisational commitment**

S/N	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M	SD
1	Organizational Commitment	-	.17**	.19**	.00	-.12*	-.11*	.26***	111.32	15.13
2	Gender		-	-.14*	-.01	-.24***	.03	-.03	1.26	.44
3	Age			-	.25***	-.23***	-.05	.07	41.88	10.06
4	Marital Status				-	.04	-.06	.08	1.91	.53
5	Edu Qualification					-	-.02	.14*	4.43	1.19
6	Religion						-	-.13*	1.40	.49
7	Occ. Self-Efficacy							-	79.34	11.63

Note. \* =  $p < .05$  (two-tailed), \*\* =  $p < .01$  (two-tailed), \*\*\* =  $p < .001$  (two-tailed). Gender was coded 1 = male, 2 = female; Age was coded in years, Religion was coded 1 = Christian, 2 = Islam, 3 = ATR; Marital Status was coded 1 = single, 2 = married, 3 = divorced, 4 = widow, 5 = widower; Edu. Qual was coded 1 = FSLC, 2 = WAEC, 3 = NCE/OND, 4 = HND, 5 = B.sc, 6 = PhD, 7 = others.

Result of correlation table show that organisational commitment was significantly related to gender ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ), age ( $r = .19, p < .01$ ), educational qualification ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ), religion ( $r = .11, p < .05$ ), occupational self-efficacy ( $r = .26, p < .001$ ). Thus, the more self-efficacy a worker develops in his/her job the more likely he/she will dispose

organisational commitment. Gender was significantly related to age ( $r = -.14, p < .05$ ), educational qualification ( $r = -.24, p < .001$ ). Age was significantly related to marital status ( $r = .25, p < .001$ ), and educational qualification ( $r = -.23, p < .001$ ). Educational qualification was significantly related to occupational self-efficacy ( $r = .14, p < .05$ ).

**Table-2: Showing the prediction of ‘organisational commitment’ from occupational self-efficacy**

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Δ	B	Beta (β)	T
Model 1	.30**	.09**	.09**			
Gender				6.76	.20	2.65**
Age				.33	.22	2.85**
Marital Status				-1.60	-.06	-.76
Edu. Qualification				-.320	-.03	-.33
Religion				-3.47	-.11	-1.59
Model 2						
Occupational Self-efficacy	.39***	.15***	.05***	.32	.25	3.34***

Note. \*\* =  $p < .01$  (two-tailed), \*\*\* =  $p < .001$  (two-tailed).

Regression result in table 2 above indicated that amongst the control variables only gender ( $\beta = .20, t = 2.65, p < .01$ ) and age ( $\beta = .22, t = 2.85, p < .01$ ) were significant antecedents of organisational commitment among steel workers. The control variables jointly accounted for 9% variance as antecedents of organisational commitment among steel workers of Ajaokuta ( $R^2 = .09, p < .01$ ). Occupational self-efficacy entered in model three of the equation was a significant

antecedent of organisational commitment among steel workers of Ajaokuta ( $\beta = .25, t = 3.34, p < .001$ ). It accounted for 5% variance as an antecedent of job commitment among steel workers ( $R^2\Delta = .05, p < .001$ ). This implies that the more occupational self-efficacy a steel worker builds the more organisational commitment he/she is likely to have.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- In the correlation result organisational commitment was significantly related to control variables (gender, age, educational qualification, religion) and to main variables, occupational self-efficacy.
- Amongst the control variables only gender and age were significant antecedents of organisational commitment.
- Occupational self-efficacy was a significant antecedent of organisational commitment.

## DISCUSSION

In congruence with previous studies [32], the findings of this study indicate that occupational self-efficacy was a significant antecedent of organisational commitment hence disconfirming the hypothesis. According to the findings, organizational commitment increases remarkably due to an individual's belief in his/her ability and competence to perform in an occupation. This belief will go a long way in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of employees as general productivity is heightened.

## Implications of the study

Occupational self-efficacy was a significant antecedent of organisational commitment. The implication of this finding is that an employee who has high self-efficacy is likely to have a high level of commitment towards his/her organization. This finding implies that an employee's perception of his/her worth and competence exhibited in completing a task in turn enforces organizational commitment.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between occupational self-efficacy, and organizational commitment among Ajaokuta Steel Company workers in Ajaokuta, Kogi State. One hundred and eighty-nine (189) workers participated in the study. Previous researches showed that occupational self-efficacy, were significantly related to organizational commitment [30, 32, 10, 33, 18, 35]. In the present study, the findings supported that occupational self-efficacy was a significant determinant of organizational commitment. This study, therefore recommends that organizations should give attention to this personality trait during recruitment and placement. And introduce policies and trainings that can enhance competence/ occupational self-efficacy as it is significant in organizational commitment.

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