Psychosocial Predictors of Job Involvement amongst Civil Servants in Nigeria

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Abstract
This study investigated self-efficacy, meaning in life, education and age as predictors of job involvement among civil servants in Nigeria. It adopted survey research design, purposive and convenience sampling techniques respectively. 214 male and female civil servants participated in the study. A structured questionnaire form containing three validated scales of measurement was used as instrument. Hypothesis one stated that self-efficacy and meaning in life will jointly and independently predict job involvement while hypothesis two stated that educational qualification and age will jointly and independently predict job involvement. Results revealed that self-efficacy and meaning in life jointly predicted job involvement F $(2,211) = 33.512$; $R^2 = 0.234$; $p < .05$. It further showed that meaning in life ($\beta = 0.155$; $t = 2.512$; $p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.432$; $t = 7.009$; $p < .05$) independently predicted job involvement. Similarly, educational qualification and age jointly predicted job involvement F $(2,211) = 2.730$; $R^2 = 0.039$; $p < .05$). Age independently predicted job involvement ($\beta = -0.217$; $t = -2.275$; $p < .05$) but educational qualification did not ($\beta = 0.006$; $t = 0.062$; $p > .05$). Based on the above findings, this study concluded and recommended that self-efficacy, meaning in life and age are significant predictors of job involvement. Hence, directors and managers were advised to design effective manpower training programmes for the employees, to enhance their levels of efficacy, perception of life and job involvement.
Keywords: Age, Civil servant, Education, Job involvement, Meaning in life, Self-efficacy

1. Introduction

Job involvement describes the process of internalizing the importance of a work, based on an individual employee. It explains the processes involved with which an employee can be more orientated about an organization. Also, it is an attitude formed about one's career and it depicts a function of the level of satisfaction, which an individual can derive on it by helping to meet certain desires. Highly job involved individuals make the job a central part of their personal character. Besides, people with high job involvement focus most of their attention on their job (Hackett, Lapierre, & Hausdorf 2001).

Moreover, job involvement is a consequence of work situations and individual differences. Hence, socio-demographic and psychological variables can affect job involvement. Therefore, in this study, the Positive impact of meaning in life, self-efficacy, age, and education were examined on the phenomenon of job involvement. In other words, this study investigated meaning in life, self-efficacy, age and education as predictors of job involvement.

Juárez & Contreras (2008) defined self-efficacy as one's determination to face various challenges, difficulties and conditions in life. On the other side, Gist & Mitcell (1992) viewed it as one's belief to get the things right regarding a particular job. That is, the confidence of an individual to overcome certain challenges or obstacles related to the job.

On the other hand, Reker & Wong (1988) defined meaning in life as the "cognizance of order, coherence and purpose in one's existence, the pursuit and attainment of worthwhile goals, and an accompanying sense of fulfillment" while Wong (1998) defined it as an individually constructed cognitive system, which endows life with personal significance. This meaning system, according to Wong's (1998) implicit theories research, consists of five components: affective, motivational, cognitive, relational, and personal (such as personal characteristics and status in life).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Some researchers in the past have attempted to explore the predictions of job involvement by demographic and environmental variables (Anantharaman, 1980; Sharma and Sharma, 1978) different occupational groups (Anantharaman and Deviasenapathy, 1980; Anatharaman and Begum, 1982; and Singh, 1988) role conflict and role ambiguity (Madhu and Harigopal, 1980; Singh, 1981; Srivastava and Sinha, 1983; Singh and Mishra, 1983), perceived importance of satisfaction of employee needs (Kanungo, Mishra and Dayal, 1975; Gupta, 1993), union involvement (Singh and Srivastava, 1984). However, none of these studies has considered the collective impact of self-efficacy, meaning in life, age and education on the phenomenon of job involvement. Meanwhile, job involvement is recognised as a key factor affecting critical individual and organisational outcomes (Chughtai, 2008). Hence, this study was conducted to further explore factors impacting job involvement most especially

among civil servants. It investigated the collective prediction of job involvement of Nigerian Civil Servants by self-efficacy, meaning in life, age, education. In view of the above, the following research questions were answered in this study:

1. Would self-efficacy and meaning in life jointly and independently predict job involvement among Nigerian Civil Servants?
2. Would education and age jointly and independently predict job involvement among Nigerian Civil Servants?

1.1.1 Purpose of Study

The general purpose of this study was to determine and document findings on the level of civil servants' job involvement in Nigeria particularly, the impact of self-efficacy and meaning in life, age and education on the concept of job involvement. One the other hand, the study specifically examines:

1) self-efficacy and meaning in life as joint and independent predictors of job involvement among the civil servants.

2) education and age as joint and independent predictors of job involvement among the civil servants.

1.1.2 Relevance of Study

Job involvement is recognized as a key factor affecting critical individual and organizational outcomes (Chughtai, 2008). Hence, without a doubt the importance of job involvement cannot be overemphasized. In order to help the public sector of Nigerian economy to solve the problem of job involvement among the employees, which then lead to low output and production rates among other negative work outcomes (Dimitriades, 2007), this study was conducted to discover the important related factors influencing job involvement. From its findings, directors in the ministries would be able to enhance their knowledge of the processes pertaining to employee job involvement, either by manipulating or controlling the major determinants of job involvement. Thus, makes it imperative for research to focus on the impact of self-efficacy, meaning in life, age, and education and in job involvement.

Outcomes of this study would also contribute to the literature regarding employee job involvement. Moreover, the study would recommend training and educative programmes for the managements and operators on how to enhance employee self-efficacy and meaning in life. Results of this study would also be of great importance to the policy makers by guiding them towards making right decisions in respect of human resource management. Findings of this research would go a long way in helping administrators in mapping out, formulating and executing administrative plans that would enhance employee job involvement.

Similarly, the report of this study would help government in understanding the importance of the concept of meaning in life and self-efficacy as it affects employee job involvement. Moreover, findings of this study would also sensitize the entire society to acknowledge some of the salient personality and demographic factors that contribute to positive growth of the economy and society at large. Lastly, it would add to the body of knowledge of job involvement.

2. Review of Literature

According to Orpen (1982), there is a significant correlation between job involvement and self-concept amongst policemen and amongst black clerks. Furthermore, related research has indicated that a variety of organizational and job-related factors can influence government employees' motivation and involvement in their work (Pandey, Moynihan, and Wright 2008; Wright 2004, 2007).

According to Liao and Lee (2009), job involved individuals tend to attribute positive work outcomes to internal and personally controllable factors. The similar finding was proposed by Shih, Hsieh & Lin (2009), who indicate that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and job involvement of internal auditors. There was a positive linkage between self-efficacy and job involvement.

Knoop (1986) suggested that job characteristics, in comparison to individual differences, are a much better indicator of job involvement. In a study by Steel & Rentsch (1997) it was illustrated that both, personality factors and situational factors play an effective role in job attitudes. Several empirical studies found strong links between personal meaning and job involvement (Zika & Chamberlain, 1987; Ryff & Singer, 1989; Steger & Frazier, 2005). For instance, Zika & Chamberlain (1987) reported that personal meaning was the most consistent predicator they found of job involved among some employees in the USA. Shek (1992) found that personal meaning is positively linked with job involvement; Debats, Drost, and Prarthol (1995) reported a positive link with happiness, while Bonebright, Clay and Ankenmann (2000) established a positive connection with work enjoyment. However, Lee, Cohen, Edgar, Laiznen and Gagnon (2006) found meaning in life as positively associated with indices of psychological wellbeing like self-efficacy, problem-oriented coping and social support. Fife (2005) report patients with limited life expectancy, who are able to find a meaning in life, are still able to consider their life as worth living. Instead the lack of meaning brings in the wish to hasten death or a request for euthanasia. Similarly, Jim and Andersen (2007) conducted a study in which they investigated the mediating effect of meaning in life in the relationship between social and physical functioning and distress in breast cancer

survivors. In the cross-sectional study, meaning in life was partly responsible for the effects of functioning impairments on heightened distress. The authors concluded that "the negative social and physical sequelae of cancer are associated with heightened distress, and this association appears to be accounted for, in part, by patients' loss of meaning in their lives". Mascaro and Rosen (2006) examined the moderating effects of self-transcendence meaning in the relationship of college stress and well-being in case of college students.

Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) in their review of literature on job involvement found that individual characteristics such as age, education, sex, tenure, need strength, level of control and values were linked to job involvement. According to Steers (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995), job involvement might be derived from personal factors such as age and years of service; it might also be due to organizational elements, such as participation in decision making process and job security.

Mroczek and Spiro (2005) in their studies, directly or indirectly stated that individuals who are married would be more likely to be involved with their job than those who are not married. They therefore, found and reported that married men have higher job involvement than the never married ones. Since job involvement is often positively attached to career satisfaction, thus it seemed fit to state that married men have higher job involvement than non-married ones.

Tang (2007) report that male and married people had higher income, which has been associated with job involvement. He further reported that married people also have higher quality of life, which is often related to job involvement. Thus, it can be concluded that married men are more involved with their job because they have higher income and better quality of life than females or non-married individuals. Therefore, from the above support, it seems that married individuals will be more likely to be involved with their job, because they have higher income and better quality of life.

Clark and Oswald (1996) in their study analyzed the importance of individual and workplace conditions in explaining reported job involvement in UK. They find that being female, younger than thirty, non-university educated; working fewer hours and being employed in small-medium firms increase self-reported job involvement. Similarly, Mirhashemi (2008) found male employees in his statistical population in Iran having a higher level of job involvement than female employees.

2.1. Statement of Hypotheses
1. Self-efficacy and meaning in life will jointly and independently predict job involvement.
2. Education and age will jointly and independently predict job involvement.

2.2. Operational Definition of Terms
Meaning in Life: Meaning in life is defined in this study as a cognitive system individually constructed by the civil servants, which endows their lives with life significance. It was measured with a 10-item scale of meaning in life developed by Steger, Frazier, Oishi and Kaler (2006). The scale was designed with a 5-point likert response format. High score on the scale implies a strong level of meaning in life while a low score implies a weak level of meaning in life.

Self-Efficacy: Self-efficacy is defined in this study as the civil servants expression of personal conviction that he or she can diligently undertake responsibilities assigned. It was measured with a 9-item scale of self-efficacy developed by Bandura (1983). The scale was designed with a 5-point likert response format. High score on the scale implies a strong level of self-efficacy while a low score implies a weak level of self-efficacy.

Job Involvement: Job involvement is defined in this study as the extent to which a civil servant is physically and cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with his or her present job. It is measured with 7-item scale of job involvement developed by Yenhui (2009). The scale was designed with a 5-point response format. High score on the scale implies a strong level of job involvement while a low score implies a weak level of job involvement.

Age: This simply refers to an employee's chronological age counting from the day of birth to the present year. It was measured as a demographic variable.

Education: This simply refers to an employee's highest level of academic achievement. It was measured in this study as a demographic variable.

3. Methodology
3.1. Research Design
Survey research design was adopted in this study. It was considered appropriate because researchers only elicited information from participants by sampling their opinions through the use of a structured questionnaire form. Hence, there was no active manipulation of any variable in the study. The independent variables considered are meaning in life, self-efficacy, age, and education while the dependent variable is job involvement.

3.2. Study Setting
The study was conducted at the various ministries in the Federal and State Secretariats, in Nigeria.

3.3. Participants of the Study

Purposive and Convenience Sampling Techniques were used respectively in sampling 214 male=95 (44.4%) and female=119(55.6%) civil servants who participated in the study. Statistics revealed that marital status of the participants varied accordingly as forty-four (44) (20.6%) were single while the remaining one hundred and seventy (170) (79.4%) were married. It further showed that ninety-eight (98) (45.8%) were junior officers while the remaining one hundred and sixteen (116) (54.2%) were senior officers. Accordingly, levels of educational qualification of participants ranged from SSCE to Ph.D; Thirty-eight (38) (17.8%) had SSCE, three (3) (1.4%) had NCE, nine (9) (4.2%) had OND, three (3) (1.4%) had HND, eighty-two (82) (38.3%) had B.Sc, sixty-five (65) (30.4%) had Master, while the remaining fourteen (14) (6.5%) had PhD. Statistics also showed that eighty-five (85) (39.7%) were Yoruba, one-hundred and two (102) (47.7%) Igbo, twenty-one (21) (9.8%) Hausa while the remaining six (6) (2.8%) came from other minor ethnic groups in Nigeria.

3.4. Instrumentation

A carefully designed questionnaire that is made up of four validated scales of measurement was used in this study as an instrument for collection of data. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: Section A, B, C, and D.

Section A. This section taps relevant demographic information of the participants such as age, gender, marital status, job position and educational qualifications.

Section B. This section comprises of a 10-item scale of meaning in life developed Steger, Frazier, Oishi and Kaler (2006). The response format of the scale consists of a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree). Participants who indicated strongly agreed to a positive statement scored 5 while those who indicated strongly agreed to negative statements scored 1. Hence, a high total score represents a high level of meaning in life while a low total score represents a low level of meaning in life. Authors of the scale reported alpha-coefficient of 0.81 and the present study reports alpha-coefficient of 0.73.

Section C. This section comprises of a 9-item scale of self-efficacy developed by Bandura (1983). The response format of the scale consists of a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree). Participants who indicated strongly agreed to a positive statement scored 5 while those who indicated strongly agreed to negative statements scored 1. Hence, a high total score represents a high level of self-efficacy while a low total score represents a low level of self-efficacy. The author reported alpha-coefficient of 0.80 and the present study reports alpha-coefficient of 0.73.

Section D. This section comprises of a 5-item scale of job involvement developed by Yenhui (2009). The response format of the scale consists of a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 7(strongly agree). Participants who indicated strongly agreed to a positive statement scored 7 while those who indicated strongly agreed to negative statements scored 1. Hence, a high total score represents a high level of job involvement while a low total score represents a low level of job involvement. The author reported alpha-coefficient of 0.79 for the scale and the present study reports alpha-coefficient of 0.78.

3.5. Procedure for Data Collection

Collection of data for this study started with an official process of seeking the consent and approval of the appropriate authorities of the study settings. Researchers officially sought the permission of the commissioners and directors at the ministries through their secretaries while approvals were respectively issued to conduct the study. Having printed two hundred and sixty (240) questionnaire forms, participants were approached individually in their various offices, their consents were also sought in voluntary participation, by ways of telling them the importance of the study and seeking their willingness to participate. They were likewise informed about the benefits accrued to individuals in terms of knowledge and management orientations.

Moreover, assurance was given to the participants in respect of confidentiality of all information supplied as the importance of truth and sincere response was emphasized. Hence, purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used respectively, to sample the two hundred and fourteen civil servants, serving at the various positions in the ministries. A questionnaire form was given to them each to fill. Before, a participant started to fill the questionnaire; effort was exerted by researchers to ensure that participants read the instruction on the questionnaire form and understood what he or she was expected to do. Hence, they were told not to write any identity information on the questionnaire. However, emphasis was made on diligence in filling the form such that respondents were reminded to attempt questions not only on the first but also the second page respectively. Therefore, the whole processes of administration and retrieval of questionnaire lasted for four days.

Eventually, two hundred and twenty-three (223) questionnaire forms were retrieved, among which fourteen (9) were discarded on the account of missing data or information and the remaining six (6) from a total of two hundred and twenty-nine (229) questionnaire forms that were initially distributed were not returned, as they were being reported loss. Hence, a total of two hundred and fourteen (214) completely filled questionnaire forms were gathered and subjected to data analysis.

3.6. Statistical Analysis

Data collected for the study was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software

version 17.0. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the two stated hypotheses because of each test for joint and independent predictions of the dependent variable by the independent variables.

4. Results

Hypothesis one, which stated that self-efficacy and meaning in life would jointly and independently predict job involvement was analyzed using multiple regression statistics.

Table 1: A Summary Table of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Joint and Independent Prediction of Job involvement by Self-Efficacy and Meaning in Life.

Independent Variables	R	R^2	B	t	F	Sig.
Meaning in Life			0.155	2.512		0.013
	0.491	0.234			33.512	
Self-Efficacy			0.432	7.009		0.000

Results in the table 1 above show that self-efficacy and meaning in life jointly predicted job involvement F (2,211) = 33.512; R^2= 0.234; p <.05. The results further show that both meaning in life (β=0.155; t=2.512; p <.05) and self-efficacy (β=0.432; t=7.009; p <.05) independently predicted job involvement. Hence hypothesis one which stated that self-efficacy and meaning in life would jointly and independently predict job involvement was confirmed.

Hypothesis two which states that, educational qualification and age would jointly and independently predict job involvement was analyzed using multiple regression statistics.

Table 2: A Summary Table of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Joint and Independent Prediction of Job Involvement by Education Qualification and Age.

Independent Variables	R	R^2	B	t	F	Sig.
Educational			0.006	0.062		.950
Age	0.248	0.039	-0.217	-2.275	2.730	.024

Results in the table 2 above show that educational qualification and age jointly predicted job involvement F (2,211) = 2.730; R^2= 0.039; p <.05). The results further show that age independently predicted job involvement (β=-0.217; t=-2.275; p <.05). However, results revealed that educational qualification did not independently predict job involvement (β=0.006; t=0.062; p >.05). Therefore hypothesis two, which stated that educational qualification and age would jointly and independently predict job involvement, was partially confirmed.

5. Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine self-efficacy and meaning in life as predictors of job involvement. Two hypotheses were tested. The first was confirmed and the second was partially confirmed. The first hypothesis stated that, self-efficacy and meaning in life would jointly and independently predict job involvement among civil servants. Results show that, self-efficacy and meaning in life jointly predicted job involvement among civil servants. This implies that, job involvement among civil servants was jointly accounted for by self-efficacy and meaning in life. The results further imply that, there is a significant link among meaning in life, job involvement, and self-efficacy. Hence, job involvement is a positive outcome of an employee's confidence, as regards work performance combined with his knowledge and understanding about situations in life. Furthermore, results revealed that meaning in life and self-efficacy independently predicted job involvement. It explains that an employee who has a positive view of life combined with a high level of sense of confidence in himself will be whole involved in performing an official task being assigned to him or her, or to a work team, where he or she is a member.

The above results are supported by the findings of Orpen (1982), there is a significant correlation between job involvement and self-concept amongst policemen and amongst black clerks. Furthermore, related research has indicated that a variety of organizational and job-related factors can influence government employees' motivation and involvement in their work (Pandey, Moynihan, and Wright 2008, 2007, 2004).

According to Liao and Lee (2009), job involved individuals tend to attribute positive work outcomes to internal and personally controllable factors. The similar finding was proposed by Shih, Hsieh & Lin (2009), who indicate that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and job involvement of internal auditors. There was a positive linkage between self-efficacy and job involvement. In a study by Steel & Rentsch (1997) it was illustrated that both, personality factors and situational factors play an effective role in job attitudes. Several innovative studies have shown the influence of a person's disposition on job attitude. Similarly, Shek (1992)

found that personal meaning is positively linked with job involvement; Debats, Drost, and Prarthol (1995) reported a positive link with happiness, while Bonebright, Clay and Ankenmann (2000) established a positive connection with work enjoyment.

The second hypothesis stated that, educational qualification and age would jointly and independently predict job involvement among civil servants. Results revealed that educational qualification and age jointly predicted job involvement among civil servants. These imply that apart from psychological variables, demographic variables also matter when addressing the issue of job involvement. For instance, as employees improve in age, it is also important for them to advance educationally. Thus, not all organizational behaviours could be learnt on the job but also through training and education. Though, above results show that educational qualification of employees did not mainly predict job involvement, this is to an extent. If an employee is well educated, the education will socialize him or her better and enables a good understanding of the fact that he or she is a significant part of the work setting and so if he did not contribute significantly, it would affect him psychologically and otherwise. On the other hand, it was discovered in this study that age of civil servants matters when discussing the issue of job involvement. Age brings about maturity while a matured employee would definitely display the good qualities of maturity in the discharge of his duties and responsibilities.

The outcomes of this study corroborate the findings of Moorhead and Griffin, (1995), who reported that job involvement is a function of personal factors such as age and years of service. Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) in their study found that individual characteristics such as age, education, sex, tenure, need strength, level of control and values were linked to job involvement. Contrary to the above was the result of a study conducted by Clark and Oswald (1996). In their study, they analyzed the importance of individual and workplace conditions in explaining reported job involvement in UK. They find that being younger than thirty, non-university educated; working fewer hours and being employed in small-medium firms increase self-reported job involvement.

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigated self-efficacy and meaning in life as predictors of job involvement among civil servants in Nigeria. In addition, the study examined educational qualification and age as demographic predictors of job involvement. In the light of these, hypotheses were stated and tested respectively based on literature reviewed and data collected. Hence, the following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

1. Self-efficacy and meaning-in-life are significant joint predictors of job involvement of civil servants.
2. Self-efficacy is a significant independent predictor of job involvement of civil servants.
3. Meaning-in-life is a significant independent predictor of job involvement of civil servants.
4. Educational qualification and age are significant joint predictors of job involvement of civil servants.
5. Education alone did not predict job involvement of civil servant.
6. Age is a significant demographic predictor of job involvement of civil servants.

5.2 Implications

The various findings and conclusions made in this study have some practical implications for the employees, employers, government, scholars and the society at large. A conclusion was made that self-efficacy and meaning in life are significant joint predictors of job involvement among civil servants. This finding has an implication for the human resource department of organizations to focus attentions on the area of improving job involvement. This finding has an implication for directors and managers at the work settings, to organize training programmes for employees such that would effectively increase their level of confidence and improve their sense of positivity to events in life as it brings about more involvement in their organizational activities.

Educational qualification was not found determining job involvement. The implication of this finding is that managers should not see only employees of high education more important than the low educationally qualified as every member of organization is a stakeholder. Finally, this study found that age is a significant demographic predictor of job involvement, the implication of this is that employers should take note age of applicants and employees as an important factor worth given a consideration when recruiting and managing staff.

5.3 Recommendation

In view of the joint influence of self-efficacy and meaning in life on job involvement, directors and managers should design effective manpower training programmes, for the employees, to efficiently manage their personality characteristics of self-efficacy and personal meaning. When employees are treated well socially such that there is a provision of cordial and mutual social and work relations among staff, there is bound to be instillation of self-worth and career contentment among staff in relation to social-work group they belong to. This on the other hand, enhances employee commitment to work. Though educational qualification was not found determining job involvement however, it is strongly recommended for directors and managers to also recognize and give supports to staff of low education and as their highly educationally qualified counterparts was supported. When they sensed any bias action from the side of management, this automatically will reduce their inputs to work.

Age is also shown to be a significant predictor of job involvement, directors and managers should give priority to age in the recruitment exercise. Such a factor could have subliminal effect on employees generally with recourse

to a particular age. Both young and old are important because they all have good values to offer the organization.

5.4. Limitation of Study

There are numbers of factors that have limited the generalization of results of this study:

- there was no active control over extraneous variables and this implies that the changes observed on the dependent variables could have been caused by factors not controlled in the study.
- only self-report method was used to collect data and self report is fallible due to the fact that often times respondents may distort information and they were not given adequate time to respond to statements in the questionnaire.
- only meaning in life and self-efficacy were considered in this study as psychological independent variables, some other psychological variables could also explain job involvement.
- the time set for data collection was very short. This makes the sample size limited.
- the study was restricted to public service.

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