Volume 13 Issue 42
Originally issued as A12



Global Journal of Management and Business Research
Administration and Management
Volume 13 Issue 12 Version 1.0 Year 2013
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-4588 & Print ISSN: 0975-5853

Attitude to Work by Nigerian Workers: A Theoretical Perspective

By Dr. Orok B. Arrey
Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

Abstract- The attitude to work of the Nigerian worker has been a subject of criticism among scholars and other interested parties for sometime now. The non-challant attitude to work of the Nigerian worker is independent of geopolitical divisions, rural urban residence, religious affiliation, sex and age. Nigerians generally have a poor attitude to work. Like most other general statements, the one about attitude to work in this country may be true without necessarily being an accurate assessment of the situations. Attitudes are characterized by a predisposition or state of readiness to act or react in a particular way to certain stimuli; based on the understanding that they are relatively stable attitude of workers thus become very important to management in the discharge of their responsibilities and formulation of policies. Accountability, which has often been stressed should be given its due attention. This paper is focused on the attitude to work by Nigerians Workers.

GJMBR-A Classification : FOR Code:150304 JEL Code: M16



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2013. Dr. Orok B. Arrey. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Attitude to Work by Nigerian Workers: A Theoretical Perspective

Dr. Orok B. Arrey

Abstract- The attitude to work of the Nigerian worker has been a subject of criticism among scholars and other interested parties for sometime now. The non-challant attitude to work of the Nigerian worker is independent of geopolitical divisions, rural urban residence, religious affiliation, sex and age. Nigerians generally have a poor attitude to work. Like most other general statements, the one about attitude to work in this country may be true without necessarily being an accurate assessment of the situations. Attitudes are characterized by a predisposition or state of readiness to act or react in a particular way to certain stimuli; based on the understanding that they are relatively stable attitude of workers thus become very important to management in the discharge of their responsibilities and formulation of policies. Accountability, which has often been stressed should be given its due attention. This paper is focused on the attitude to work by Nigerians Workers.

I. Introduction

The attitude to work of the Nigerian worker has been a subject of criticism among scholars and other interested parties for quite a long time now.

In a speech at the University of Nigeria convocation of 7th March, 1982, former president Shehu Shagari described Nigerian workers as having one of the worst attitudes to work in the world. He is obviously not the only Nigerian who has talked about the attitude to work of the Nigerian worker. Many prominent Nigerians have talked on that.

II. What is Attitude?

The concept 'attitude' represents one of those social science concepts which lack a common definition. According to G. W. Allport (1985). It has come to signify many things to many writers with the inevitable result that, its meaning is somewhat indefinite and its scientific status called into question. He however defines it as a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized, through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations with which he is related.

This definition denotes that attitudes are characterized by a predisposition or state of readiness to act or react in a particular way to certain stimuli.

The "effective" component of an individual's attitude is the feeling of this individual towards an object. This is seen on the basis of the kinds of behaviour which indicate an individual's feelings, since feeling as a concept is vague. Thus two behavioural manifestations of feelings are usually mentioned. The first is emotion e.g. rises in blood pressure and the second elates to verbal expressions e.g. saying that one takes or dislikes an object. We could therefore state that the effective component of attitude of an individual relates to the emotional reactions and verbal expressions of the individual to a given object.

The "cognitive", which is the second component refers to the individual's knowledge or beliefs about a particular object. Thus this describes the object in some way. For example, an individual might say that an object (a person in this case is wicked). He has made a statement relating to the bad aspects of quality of the object. The statement of belief may also be directed to the future. A worker could for instance say that he beliefs that the new factory manager will make things better for them the third and final component of attitude which is the "behavioural" consists of the individual's "overt" non verbal actions toward an object. Thus it is said that attitudes consist of the individuals "action tendencies" toward an object. Action tendency should be seen as the deposition to take action of some kind. It is simply a readiness to display particular behaviour towards specific object.

III. Background Literature

a) Relationship Between Attitudes and Behaviour

According to Chismall (1986), there is almost universal agreement that attitudes tends to have only a comparatively low relationship to actual behaviour towards the object of the attitude.

Attitudes and behaviour are complex. One holds a particular attitude does not really mean that certain types of behaviour will occur. Attitudes are useful as guides to what a worker, for instance, is likely to do in certain circumstances.

In the words of Schuman, Steeh and Bobo (1986), if attitudes and behavior existed in entirely separate spheres, learning about attitudes would be of little practical values, whatever their interest from the stand point of total intellectual understanding.

Attitude and behaviour are obviously not entirely on spheres after careful reviews of a wide range of past studies. The discrepancy between attitudes and behavior have been explained in the context of three arguments. The first is that the operational measure of

Author: Department of Business Aministration Federal University Wukari Taraba State Nigeria. e-mail: orokbonifacearrey@yahoo.com

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

attitude are inadequate since they do not take into consideration a multi-component conceptualization of attitudes. Secondly, variables other than attitudes may influence a person's behaviour, thereby making the attitude contract irrelevant to behavioural prediction. In the final argument, it is stated that the discrepancy is a consequence of the act of measuring attitudes towards performing the behaviour in question.

IV. Presentation

a) Understanding Behaviour

Understanding behaviour in work settings has been an area of interest and research among social scientists. Tim, Davis and Fred Luthans (1989), identified three major approaches in these attempts.

1. Beheviour is a function of the persons B = F (P). In this theoretical position, explanations are given as to why people behave the way they do by the use of internal psychological constructs such as motivation, perception, attitudes, expectancies and personality characteristics.
2. Behaviour is a function of the environment B = F (E). This theoretical perspective is particularly concerned with the role that reinforcing contingencies play in maintaining and changing beheviour. It is argued that behaviour is externally oriented and this is most closely associated with Skinner's operant conditioning. The work of Luthans and Kreitner and Miller are associated with this approach.
3. Beaviour is a function of a person and the environment B = F (PE). This framework recognizes both internal cognitive variables and external environmental variables and is the approach that is most widely stressed today by scholars of organizational behaviour. Porter and Lawler's Model is a good example of this approach.

Davis and Luthans have however seen these major approaches as inadequate in explaining human behaviour in organizations. The approach stresses the interactive nature of all the variables of organization behaviour. That is called social learning theory.

(a) The organization participant which includes internal cognition. It is thus suggested that organizational behaviour can be best understood in terms of interacting reciprocal determinism between the three variables.

Basically, the theory posits that learning does not only take place as a result of directly experienced response consequences, but also through observing the effects on the social environment of other people's behaviour.

The behaviour of the Nigerian worker can be obviously understood from this perspective. Two issues are central here these are:-

(a) Directly experienced response consequences, and observing the effects on the social environment of other people's behaviour. Our workers are active social participants and they are part of the wider social system. In their places of work, they would put up a behaviour, say discussing with co-workers when there is work to do, or leaving their seats for "essential" personal services like going to the bank. When their superior comes in and finds them discussing or 'not on seat' and does not act to correct the irresponsible behaviour, the net effect of this experience on the part of the workers is a continuation of these patterns of activity. When other workers realize the effect of their co-workers behaviour, they would equally indulge in such behaviour and become a cycle in which new entrants are socialized. This becomes worse where the worker superiors are seen to be involved in such practices.

Another aspect of this is that workers are much more likely to behave properly when their superior show not just good example; but expertise in their responsibilities. The (managers) will not only obtain obedience from their subordinates, but respect. Our researches in some industrial organizations have shown this to be case.

V. Recommendation

Accountability which has often been stressed should be given its due attention. The government has the power to question the sources of an individual's wealth and this should and ought to be done where an individual is seen to be living above his legitimate income. Managers or superior officers should punish erring workings and reward the hardworking ones, and this should be seen to be so by all sundry.

Also superior officers should show good example by doing their work diligently.

We really do not have to teach workers what to do and what not to do. Let them see us do what we preach.

VI. Conclusion

It is true that Nigerian workers has over the years been subjected to criticisms about his attitude to work and behaviour in the work situation. Care must be taken when labels are given, especially where properly designed empirical researches are need to give credence to labels.

Labels must be properly given not just to make comprehension possible but, more importantly, to create proper condition for worth-while explanation. The behaviour of a Nigeria worker is not his attitude. If his behaviour is really poor, that should be our central concern. We have to look not just within his work situation in understanding him; but also in the wider society. He can only behave properly if certain recommendations are put in to practice.

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

References Références Referencias

1. Chrismari F. P. (1986) Attitudes Psychology and the _Study of Public Opinion. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.
2. Ejiofor P. N. O. (1984). "Employee Welfare Under Unfavourable Economic condition". Vol II No. 1 January — June page 11
3. Kiuranov C. (1985). "Attitudes of Youth of Work. The Bulgarian Case". International Social Science Journal Vol. XXXVIL No. 4.
4. Kolade C. (1985). Productivity Vs. Retrenchment: The Dilemma of Personnel Management. "Perman, Vol. 12, No. 2 July — Dec. 1985 pp 33-34.
5. Oyaide W. J. (1985). "Management in an Austere Economy" management in Nigeria. Vol. 21, No 4, April, 1985, p. 39.

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

This page is intentionally left blank

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)