

Employee Commitment to Work as an Ingredient for Service Delivery of Selected Firms in Bayelsa State

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Abstract

Any organization that wants to strive to perform at peak level in today's competitive world must have a mechanism to motivate its employee to be committed to the organizational objectives and work as effective team members. It is no longer good enough to have employees who come to work faithfully every day and do their task independently. Employees now have to think like entrepreneurs while working in teams, and have to prove their work committed to the organization so as to achieve its overall-goals and objectives. The primary aim of this study is to examine the concept of employee commitment to work as an ingredient for service delivery. Ten research questions were posed based essentially in testing employee commitment to work and the experiences they gain as team players. The random sampling method was adopted to ensure adequate representation of the entire element under studied. Questionnaires were designed, distributed, collected and analysed. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between employee commitment to work and increase in productivity in the firms. It was recommended amongst others that to increase productivity and harmony in the working place, management should crave the enabling environment to motivate employment to be committed to work and put in their best so as to increase productivity.

Keyword: *employee commitment, service delivery, organisational commitment, job performance, productivity*

Introduction

No organization in today's competitive world can perform at peak levels unless each employee is committed to the organization objectives and work as an effective team member. It is no longer good enough to have employees who come to work faithfully every day and do their jobs independently. Employees now have to think like entrepreneurs while working in teams, and have to prove their work. However, they also want to be part of a successful organization which provides a good income and the opportunity for development and secure employment. High levels of employee commitment of an individual project or to the business as a whole are considered to be indicators of an organization success. Commitment however,

cannot be assumed. Rather, it requires continuing, credible and confident actions that gain employee trust and support.

The human resource is the engine room of an organization and must be treated with dignity and fairness to avoid voluntary turnover that might result to low production as well as total closure of the enterprises. Moreso, the commitment of workers is dependent on how well they are being treated in the work place. An employee who is not comfortable with the motivational packages present and felt non-compliance with organizational procedure, and policies, and promotion will be uncommitted compared to his colleagues who receive manager blessings.

In the past, organizations seek the loyalty of their personnel by providing job security. However, many organizations have responded to competition pressure by downsizing, restructuring and transformation and thus created a less secure organizational climate. Most employees/workers felt they are victim of fake, empty and broken promises. A major challenge facing contemporary organization involves maintaining employee commitment in the current business environment. Organizations accomplish this by developing a new work contract. In today's workplace, employees face more ambiguity in their daily activities and decreased job security (Bergman, Lester, De Meuse and Grahn, 2000). With no assurance of continued employment, workers have now raised their expectations in order areas. For example, workers expect employers to demonstrate their commitment in terms of pleasant working conditions, access to training and development, provision of a safe working environment and a balance between work and employee's commitments outside the work place.

As result of the ever increasing competition faced by modern organization which makes it to equip itself to face the new challenges, one of the key components of survival is maintaining and upgrading the organization's ability to use human resources effectively and efficiently. Katz (1964) posits that "employee behaviour, essential for effectiveness includes" (a) entering and remaining with the organization (b) carrying out specific role requirement. (c) Engaging in innovative and spontaneous activity that goes beyond role prescriptions. The appointment of good workers is thus critical but of even greater significance is the organization's ability to create a committed workforce hence; the need for managers to understand the concept of commitment. What it is, how it operates and most importantly which behaviours are displayed by employees committed to the organization.

The significance of employee commitment can be seen in prior research by Bateman and Organ (1983) which stress the relationship between commitment and job satisfaction, Moorman, Niehoff and Organ (1992) work justice, Deluga (1994) trust in and loyalty to the leader and perceptions of supervisor fairness (Niehoff and Morgan, 1993). Stephen (2016) opines that people do not follow uncommitted leaders. Commitment can be displayed in a full range of matters to include the work hours you choose to maintain, how you work to improve your abilities or what you do for your fellow workers at personal sacrifice.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to determine if employee commitment in an organization leads to high job performance and productivity. Specifically, the study will identify and discuss the following.

- (a) Determine how employees view fairness in an organization as influencing their commitment

- (b) Determine if organizational loyalty is healthy.
- (c) Define the concept of commitment
- (d) The importance of employee commitment
- (e) The factors affecting commitment in organizations
- (f) How organization builds employee commitment.

Research Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship of employee commitment to work and increase in productivity

Ho: There is no significant relationship between employee commitment and job performance

Ho: There is no significant relationship between employee commitment and reduction in absenteeism lateness to work and job turnover.

Review of Literature

Theoretical framework of the study

The theoretical framework of the study will be based on the social exchange theory which is grounded in an economic model of human behaviour where by interactional processes between individual are motivated by a desire to maximize rewards and minimize losses. In view of this, Blau (1964) suggest that “this social transaction incorporates both material benefits and psychological reward including status, loyalty and approval”. For instance, in the work place, the supervisor provides subordinate with support and monetary rewards while in exchange the subordinate contributes personnel devotions and expertise to the achievement of organization goals. Furthermore, interaction process between in individual is motivated desire to maximize reward and minimize losses. It is well known economic principle that relationship providing more reward than cost will yield unending mutual trust and attraction.

The concept of commitment

Before discussing its implication for employees, it is important to clarify what we mean by commitment and to identify its different forms and forci. Over the years commitment has been conceptualized in various ways (for reviews, Seekien, Molloy and Cooper, 2009, Meyer & Allen, 1997). For present purpose, we adopt the approach taken in a – well – established three component model (TCIN: Merye and Allen, 1991, 1997; Merye and Herscovitch, 2001) and view commitment as a force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and to a course of action of relevance to that target” (Merye, Becker and Van Dick 2006). This binding force can be experienced in different ways (i.e. can be accompanied by different mindsets). Including; an affective attachment and involvement with the target, a felt obligation to the target and an awareness of cost associated with discontinuing involvement with the target. In their pure forums, these mindsets are referred to as affective (AC), normative (NC) and continuance commitment (CC) respectively. Another important development in commitment research has been the increase in attention to other work place commitments (Becker, 1992; Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). Links commitments to other organization (eg professions and Unions; see Vandenberghe, 2009), people (e.g supervisor and teams; see Becker, 2009) and actions (e.g goals and programs see Neubert and Wu 2009). These commitments have all been found to have outcomes of relevance to the target and in many cases, to the organization as a whole.

Defining Commitment

Over the years, commitment has been defined and measured in many ways. Indeed, this lack of consensus in the definition of the term has contributed greatly to its treatment as a multidimensional construct (Meyer and Allen 1991). Even if multiple dimensions or forms of

commitment exist, there has to be a core essence that characterizes it. To establish what that core constitutes, one has to look for commonality among the existing conceptualizations. Table 1, provides a set of definition taken from the literature. As indicated by Meryer and Herscovitch (2001) all these definition refer to a force that directs a person's behaviour. There appears to be a consensus that the force is experienced as a mind-set (i.e a frame of mind or psychological state).

Table 1.1 Definitions of Commitment

- ❖ A stabilizing force that acts to maintain behavioural direction when expectancy/equity conditions are not and do not function (Scholl, 1981).
- ❖ A force that stabilizes individual behaviour under circumstances where the individual would otherwise be tempted to change that behavior (Brickman, 1987).
- ❖ An obliging force which requires that the person honour the commitment, even in the face of fluctuating attitudes and whims (Brown, 1996).
- ❖ The relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday et al. 1979).
- ❖ The psychological attachment felt by the person for the organization: It will reflect the degree to which the individual internalizes or adopts characteristic, or perspectives of the organization" (O'Reilly and Chatman 1986).
- ❖ A psychological state binds the individual to the organization. (Allen & Meyer 1990)

Source: Adapted from Meyer and Herscovitch (2001).

Thus, a committed employee is an individual

Who supports the organization through good and bad time.

- ❖ Attend work on a regular basis
- ❖ Defends the organization
- ❖ Contributes a full day's effort and more
- ❖ Is supportive of the Organization's goals and objectives.

The various definitions of commitment share a common proposition, in that commitment is considered to be a bond or linking of the individual to the organization. The definition differs in terms of how this bond is considered to have developed.

Types of Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1991) developed an integrated approach, utilizing the concepts put forward by various researchers and have defined commitment as consisting of three components.

Affective Commitment: This refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization. Those with strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they genuinely want to do so. They see the organization as part of them.

According to Mowday (1982), the antecedents of affective commitment generally fall into four categories (1) Personal Characteristics (2) Structural Characteristics (Organizational) (3) Job-related characteristics and (4) Work experience.

Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the cost associated with leaving the organization. The potential cost of leaving an organization includes: the threat of wasting the time and effort spent acquiring nontransferable skills, losing attractive benefits. Living seniority-based privileges, or having to uproot family and disrupt personnel relationships. Apart from the cost involved in leaving the organization, continuance commitment will also develop as a function of a lack of alternative employment opportunities. Employees whose

primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so and have no viable alternative.

Normative Commitment

Normative Commitment refers to the employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization. Employees with high level of nomination commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization because they are grateful to it. Wiener (1982) suggest that the feeling of obligation to remain with an organization may result from the internalization of nominative pressures exerted on an individual prior to entry into the organization (family or cultural orientation) or following entry (organizational orientation). However, nominative commitment may also develop when an organization provides the employee with "rewards in advance" (e.g paying college tuition), or incurs significant costs in providing employment (e.g head-hunting fees or cost associated with job training). Recognition of these investments causes employees to feel an obligation to reciprocate by committing themselves to the organization until the debt has been repaid (Scholl 1981).

A second form of commitment is referred to as calculative commitment in literature. Calculative occurs as a result of individual – organizational - transactions and alternatives in side-bets over time. Through calculative commitment, individual become bonded to an organization because they have invested in the organization because they have invested in the organization (for example, a pension plan) and cannot afford to separate themselves from it.

Conceptualization of Commitment: Model Developed By O' Reilly and Chatman

Research findings indicate that employee is very fluid in the early period of employment but quickly begins to stabilize with the passage of time. Moreover, management behaviour can influence an employee commitment type, in terms of whether an employee more affectively committed. Employee work commitment is an important issue for all types of organizational change programmes. O'Relly and Chatman (1986) developed their multidimensional framework on basis of the assumption that commitment represents an attitude towards the organization. According to these authors, commitment takes on three distinct forms, which are compliance, identification and internalization.

Compliance takes place when attitudes and corresponding behaviour are adopted in order to gain specific rewards. Identification takes place when an employee accepts influence to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship. Finally, internationalization occurs when influences is accepted because the attitude and behaviour s one is being encouraged to adopt are congruent with existing values. Employees thus become committed to organizations with which they share values. In the final analysis, employee commitment is viewed as an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. It is characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations goal and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on its behalf and a strong desire to maintain memberships of it.

Employee Commitment and Work Behaviour in Organization

Gaining the commitment of the entire workforce is arguably more significant today than in the past. Organizations seek improved performance and sustained competitive advantage as a response to increased market and other external pressures. Worman (1996) argues that employers will need to gain the willing contribution of a diverse workforce in order to target new market and distinguish their products and services from the competition.

There is now a substantial body of evidence – demonstrating the benefit to organizations of having a strongly committed workforce. Indeed, employees who are committed to an organization are less likely to leave (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990, Yett and Mayer, 1993) and more likely to attend regularly (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolintsky, 2003) perform effectively (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Riketta, 2002); and be good organizational citizen (Meyer et al. 2002; Riketta, 2002). Commitments to other work relevant foci, such as occupations (e.g Meyer, Allen and Smith 1993) supervisors (e.g Stringlhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003) work teams (eg Becker and Kernan, 2003) and customers linked to retention and other indices of effective performance of benefits to employers. Commitments reflecting an affective attachment and involvement with the target have been shown to have greater benefit for that target than those based on concerns over social or economic costs (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005, Meyer et al. 2002).

It is a well-known economic principle that interactional process between individual in the work place are motivated by a desire to maximize rewards and minimize losses, that relationship providing more rewards than costs will yield enduring mutual trust and attraction. Moreso, these social transaction incorporate both material benefits and psychological rewards including status, loyal and approval. For instance in the workplace, the supervisor provides a subordinate with support and monetary rewards while in exchange the subordinate contribute personal devotions and expertise.

The most widely studied behavioural correlate of commitment has been turnover in the organization. However, this focus on turnover may be myopic. Organizational effectiveness depends on more than simply maintaining a stable workforce; employees must perform assigned duties dependably and be willing to engage in a activities that go beyond role requirements (Organ, 1988).It therefore implies that employee willingness to contribute to organizational effectiveness will be influenced by the nature of the commitment they experience. It is imperative that employee who wait to belong to the organization (affective commitment) might be more likely than those who need to belong (continuance commitment) or feel obliged to belong (normative commitment) to make an effort on behalf of the organization.

Organizations need employees who are willing to go beyond the call of duty and engage in extra-role behaviour. For this reason, the research continued is examining the link between the three components of commitment of commitment and a multidimensional measure of work behaviour. Allen and Smith (1987) and Meyer and Allen (1984) found that measures of work behaviour correlated positively with measure of affective and normative commitment but not with continuance commitment. Research by Randall, Fedor and Longenecker (1990) revealed that affective commitment contributed significantly to the prediction of concern for quality sacrifice orientation and willingness to share knowledge. Normative commitment contributed only to the prediction of sacrifice orientation, and continuance commitment did not add significantly to the prediction of any of this behaviour. These findings thus provide support for the proposition that three components of commitment have different implications for work-related behaviour other turnover.

Consequence of Organizational Commitment

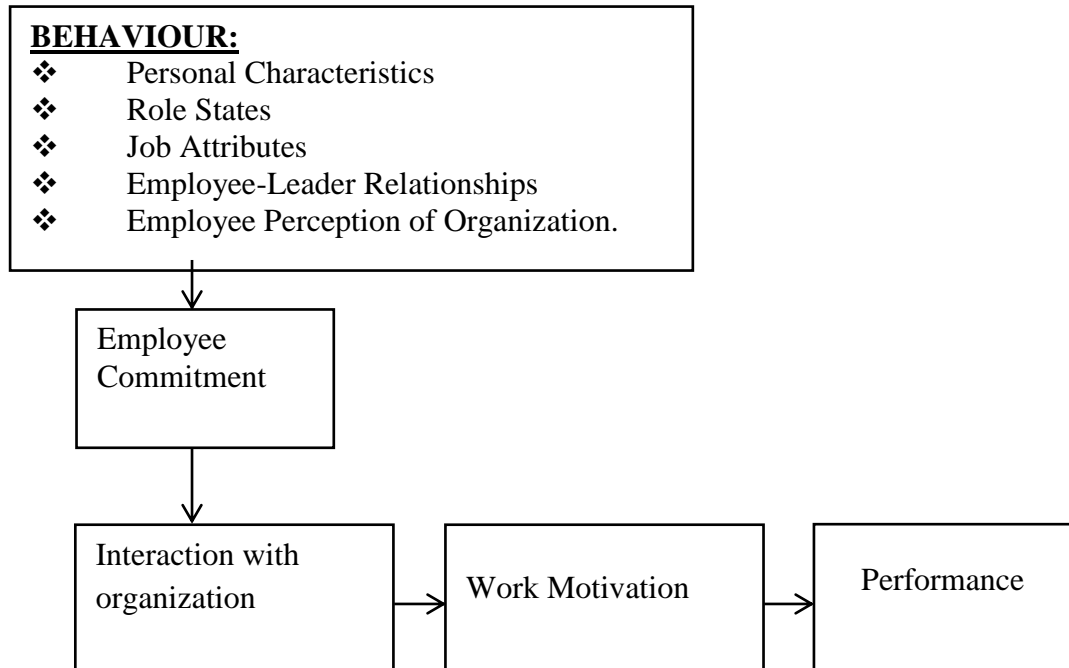
Commitment has Several Components: Compatibility of values, and pride in the organization, loyalty, job satisfaction and feeling fairly rewarded.

Commitment in workplace depends on a number of factors which includes: Personal characteristics, level of role conflict and ambiguity, job attributes, relationship between

employees and their supervisor, and the employees' perception of how well organization being managed. Moreso, an outcome of commitment is work motivation. It is pertinent to note that the level of work motivation will depend on the degree that individuals integrate with their organization and identity than selves with the organization objectives. Also, the propensity (height) of the employees' integration with the organization and magnitude of the work motivation will determine the level of the achieved performance gain

Figure 2: Shows the Development and Consequence of Employee Commitment within the Organization

Development and Consequences of Employee Commitment



Methodology

The population under study was drawn from employees of 10 indigenous companies that are registered with Bayelsa State Ministry of Commerce and Industry with a joint number of 214 employees from companies' source. A sample size of 140 employees drawn from the above mentioned companies were used as a basic for collecting data on the variable of the study. Sample size is 140 using Taro Yamane's formula.

The sample size satisfied all criteria which sample size depends, such as nature of the study, nature of the population and statistical technique required for the study. Also, the choice of the sample for the study is justified by the fact that information relating to the study can best be obtained from the group of persons directly concerned, who are experiencing the conditions personally and region to the study, these are employees of the ten companies. Cross-sectional design was adopted. Resource for choosing a cross sectional research design is because data is gathered (one shot) and over a continuous period (Ahiazu and Asawo, 2016). A random sampling technique was used for data collection. 140 questionnaires were distributed and 120, were retrieved. Questionnaire administration was the principal instrument for data collection carried out personally by the researcher. The Likert rating scale was used. Thus requires respondents to grade their response to indicate their level of agreement to the statement (Ezejulue and Oguwo, 1990) as shown in table fig. 3 below.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis Testing 1

Ho: There is no significant relationship of employee commitment to work and increase in productivity.

To use this Hypothesis response from Question 1 and 2 were used as basis for analysis.

Question 1: To what extent do employee commitment to work leads to reductions in absenteeism, lateness to work and job turnover.

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Not at all	8	6.7	6.7	6.7
Low extent	5	4.2	4.2	10.8
Moderate	13	10.8	10.5	21.7
Considerable extent	31	27.5	27.5	40.7
Current extent	61	50.8	50.8	
Total	120	100	100	100

Question 2: To what extent do you think employee commitment to work leads to increase in team work in organization?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	6	5.0	5.0	5.0
Low extent	12	10.0	10.0	15.0
Moderate	8	6.7	6.7	21.0
Considerable extent	26	21.7	21.7	43.0
Current extent	68	56.7	56.7	
Total	120	100	100	100

Correlations

			Employee commitment	Productivity
Spearman's	Employee Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.825**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	120	120
	Productivity	Correlation Coefficient	.825	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	120	120

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

From the above SPSS output, Spearman correlation coefficient is high and positive .825**. P – values is less than the level of significance (0.05) which means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate accepted. The study shows that employee commitment to work has a significance relationship with increase in productivity in selected firms of Bayelsa State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between employee commitment to work and job performance.

To test this Hypothesis, response from Question 3 & 4 will be used.

Question 3: To what extent do you think that employee commitment to work lead to increase in productivity?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	4	3.3	3.3	3.3
Low extent	7	5.8	5.8	9.2
Moderate	11	9.2	9.2	18.3
Considerable	31	25.8	25.8	44.2
Great extent	67	55.8	55.8	
Total	120	100.00	100.00	100.00

Question 4: To what extent do you think that employee commitment to work leads to efficient and effective achievement of organizational goals?

Items	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	5	4.2	4.2	4.2
Low extent	11	9.2	9.2	13.3
Moderate	13	10.8	10.8	24.2
Considerable	31	25.8	25.8	50.0
Great extent	60	50.0	50.0	
Total	120	100.00	100.00	100.00

Correlations

	Employee Commitment	Job performance productivity
Spearman's coefficient	1.000	.813**
Rho		.000
(2 tailed)	120	120
N		
Job performance Coefficient	.813**	1.000
Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	
N	120	120

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

From the above SPSS output, Spearman correlation Coefficient is high and positive. .813**. P – Value is less than the level of significance (0.05) which means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Results from the study suggest that employee commitment has a significant relationship with job performance.

Hypothesis Testing 3

Ho: There is no significant relationship between employee commitment and reduction in absenteeism, lateness to work and job turnover.

To test this Hypothesis, we shall use responses from question 5 and 6 for its analysis.

Question 5: To what extent do you think that employee commitment to work leads to enhance performance of the organization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	9	7.5	7.5	7.5
Low extent	10	8.3	8.3	11.7
Moderate	12	5.8	5.8	21.7
Considerable	24	29.2	29.2	41.7
Great extent	70	49.2	49.2	
Total	120	100.00	100.00	100.00

Question 6: To what extent does a committed employee sacrifice his leisure time to work?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	9	7.5	7.5	7.5
Low extent	5	4.2	4.2	11.7
Moderate	12	10.0	10.0	21.7
Considerable	24	20.0	20.0	41.7
Great extent	70	58.3	58.3	100.00
Total	120	100.00	100.00	

Correlation

	Employee Commitment	Absenteeism, Lateness to Work, Job Turnover
Spearman's coefficient	1.000	.701**
Rho	120	.002
	Sig. (2 tailed)	120
	N	
Absenteeism Lateness to work Job Turnover	.701**	1.000
	.002	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	
	N	120

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

From the above SPSS analysis, spearman correlation coefficient is high and positive at .701**. P – Value .002 is to less than the level of significance (0.05) which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate Hypothesis is accepted. The study shows that employee commitment to work has a significant relationship in reduction in absenteeism, lateness to work and job turnover.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one results shows that employee commitment work has a significant relationship with increase in productivity. There is now a substantial body of evidence demonstrating the benefit to organization of having a strongly commitment workforce. Camilleri (2006) argues that employee commitment is viewed and being a key prerequisite for the effective execution of projects, operational processes and the successful implementation of organizational change programmes.

Hypothesis two results show that employee commitment to work has significant relationship with job performance. This is so in the sense that a committed employee is an individual who supports the organization through good at bad time, attends work on a regular basis and contributes a full day's effort and more for task performance. In similar vein (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolmytsty, 2002) argues that a committed employee performs effectively.

Hypothesis three results shows that employee commitment to work has a significant relationship in reduction in absenteeism, lateness to work and job turnover. A committed employee is one that is loyal to the organization, defends it as at when due and sees the success of such any organization as his contribution thus would not want to indulge in detrimental behaviours that might bring down the organization. Therefore he/she would shun negative attitudes like absenteeism, lateness to work or job turnover.

In similar vein, Mathew and Zajac (1990); and Meyer (1998) argue that employee who is committed to an organization are less likely to leave and are more likely to attend regularly.

Conclusion

Commitment has been defined and measured in many different ways as a multidimensional construct. Gaining the commitment of the entire workforce is arguably more significant today than in past. Organizations seek improved performance and sustained competitive advantage as a response to increased markets and other external pressures. Employers will need to gain the willing contribution of a diverse workforce in order to target new markets and distinguish their products and services from competition. There is a large body of research demonstrating the benefits commitment for employers. The results of the research reviewed here subject that commitment can also have benefits for employees, making it a potential win-win situation. According to Bragg (2002), employee commitment is dependent on the drivers, namely: (1) fairness (2) trust (c) concern for employees. If employers wish to build commitment, they should elect an environment of fairness, trust, care and concern by acting consistently in ways that employees perceive as fair, trusting and caring. Based on the discussions of findings, the study concludes that employees commitment to work is key to increase in productivity, performances and also reduces absenteeism, lateness to work and job turnover.

Recommendations

1. It was recommended amongst others that to survive in this dynamic and turbulent Business environment, management should provide the enabling environment to motivate work to put in their best to increase productivity.
2. Employers of labour should crave the commitment of employee to work as a work team to enhance performance.
3. Employers should fair to their employees trustworthy and show concern for their employees so as to build employees commitment to work.

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