



Job Performance: Relationship between Competency and Attitude towards Achieving Tnb's Vision

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to investigate the relationship between competency and attitude towards achieving TNB's vision. Competency is assumed to be as individual's ability to do job which involve knowledge and skills while attitude is an affective and internal motivation of employee to perform their job best full hearted. It is always a debate either competency or attitude give greater impact towards job performance of an employee. This research was carried out with the purpose that outcomes of this finding may help Human Resource (HR) department to optimized staff development investment either on staff competency skills or staff attitudes. It is mainly related to what is required to prepare employee to work at their best for their organization excellent. The study was conducted on the private sector which is Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), the largest electricity utility in Malaysia. A survey instrument of questionnaire will be used to collect data. For this study, the survey questionnaire administer through hardcopy survey form targeted TNB's staffs attending training in TNB Training Institute - ILSAS as it is convenient to the researcher to approach the target participants. Expected result from the analysis should support the claim that competency and attitude have a balancing effect on job performance towards achieving company vision.

Keywords: Job Performance, Competence, Attitude and Vision

1. Introduction

Every organization has their own vision and mission. According to BusinessDicrectory.Com, company vision is an aspiration description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It really important as a vision is a picture of the organization's desired future and what we ultimately hope to accomplish as a result of our efforts.

In achieving the desire vision of a company, one of the critical factors is rely on employees of the company. Employees are the most valuable intangible asset of every

organization as quoted from research study of Employee – The important Asset of Organisation (Raka, 2010). According to Assaraf (2011), the spiritual entrepreneur, employee could be considered as the brain and heart of the company. Growth and success of every organization is from the contribution of its employee individually as well as collectively.

The world of work is changing rapidly on a daily basis as are the companies and people who work for them. Increasing technological change, competition, globalisations, the expansion of the service sector and delivery speed, go hand in hand with increasing performance demands. To deliver outstanding performance employees today are required to be much more involved in their work, not only physically, but also emotionally and mentally (Turner, Barling and Zacharatos, 2002).

Competence (or Competency) as stated in Wikipedia is the ability of an individual to do a job properly. In this study, we consider competency is the ability of individual to do job which involve knowledge and skills to carry out the job and tasks. Whereas, an **attitude** is an expression of favour or disfavour toward a person, place, thing, or event. Prominent psychologist Gordon Allport once described attitudes “the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology”.

According to Secord and Backman (1969), attitudes are certain regularities of an individual’s feelings, thoughts and predispositions to act to some aspects of her/his environment. An attitude has got three components, namely an affective, a cognitive and a behavioural one. Attitudes are evaluative, i.e. they reflect the person’s tendency to respond positively or negatively to the object of the attitude. Some of the employees attitudes to work and organization are important part of her/his work motivation contents, namely her/his job involvement, organizational commitment, responsibility etc.

In other word, with good knowledge and skills but without right attitude, a job or task could not neither be completed nor done unsatisfactory state as required to accomplish a vision.

1.1 Background

TNB is the largest electricity utility in Malaysia with almost RM73 billion in assets. The Company is listed on the main board of Bursa Malaysia and employs more than 31,000 people Group-wide to serve an estimated 8.08 million customers in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Labuan.

TNB’s core businesses are in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. In Peninsular Malaysia, the Company is a major contributor to the total industry capacity through six thermal stations and three major hydroelectric schemes. It also manages and operates the National Grid which links TNB power stations and IPPs to the distribution network in the peninsula. The grid is connected to Thailand’s transmission system in the north and Singapore’s transmission system in the south. In East Malaysia, TNB, through 80%-owned subsidiary Sabah Electricity Sdn. Bhd. (SESB), manages the Sabah Grid and aims to provide electricity to 95% of the state’s population by year 2013. Set up as the Central Electricity Board of the Federation of Malaya in 1949, TNB has powered national development efforts for more than 60 years by providing reliable and efficient electricity services.

TNB'S Vision is to be among the leading corporations in energy and related business globally.

In 2005, the Company embarked on a 20-Year Strategic Plan which entails greater focus on green initiatives such as the development of renewable sources of fuel, and more effective demand side management via energy efficiency. TNB believes in providing service excellence and aims to attain global leadership. Towards this end, the Company invests significantly in the continuous professional development of its employees through structured programmes. As TNB moves into the next phase of its 20-Year Strategic Plan, Gemilang 2015 human capital development is critical to achieving the main objective of geographical expansion.

1.2 Problem Statement

Developing human capital or employees require a big investment to an organization. To optimized the investment value, it is important to an organization to prioritize or know what to focus in preparing employees to perform their job best, either on competency skills or attitude of how employee behave.

1.3 Research Objectives

RO1. To find out the relationship between competency and attitude of employees in performing their job and tasks towards achieving TNB's vision.

RO2. To help HR department to set priority either on staff competency or staff attitudes in staff development to achieve organization goals and vision.

1.4 Research Questions

RQ1. Is there a significant relationship between competency and attitude in performing their job and task towards achieving TNB's vision?

RQ2. Between competency and attitude of employees, which one gives greater impact to an organization in achieving organization goals and vision?

1.5 The Gap of the Study

There are many studies and research paper on job satisfaction, job attitude and job performance been conducted. However, there are no concrete study been done for TNB organization specifically to look at relationship between competency and attitude among TNB's employees on their job performance in achieving organization's vision.

2. Literature Review

Iqbal, Latif and Nasser (2012), reveals the relationship between person job fit, job satisfaction and job performance in their research paper, The Impact of Person Job Fit on Job Satisfaction and its Subsequent Impact on Employees Performance. Their paper studied and analyzed the responses of 251 respondents from various universities in twin cities i.e. Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Results indicated that there exists relationship between person job

fit and job satisfaction and job performance and the result is positive. While the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance is also positive.

Ruitenbergh and Beer (2012), in their research study the impact of attitudes and work preferences on Dutch mothers' employment, argued that relatively variable work preferences act as a mediating factor between more stable gender and work attitudes and actual labour market behaviour. With a path analysis of a representative survey among 940 Dutch mothers, the study demonstrates that the effect of gender and work attitudes on mothers' labour market behaviour is largely mediated by the variable work preference, which influence on actual labour participation appears much larger than the influence of objective background characteristics. The analysis supports the claim that more or less stable gender and work attitudes have a balancing effect on otherwise more flexible work preferences.

Khan et al., (2012) conduct an empirical study of autonomous Medical Institutions of Pakistan to find out factors that influence level of job satisfaction among the workforce of autonomous medical institutions of Pakistan and its effects on performance. The sample of the study is comprised of 200 doctors, nurses, administrative and accounts staff working in autonomous medical institutions in Punjab. 250 Questionnaires were distributed out of which 200 were received back and used for analysis. SPSS is used for data analysis statistically. It is concluded from study that facets such as: pay, promotion, job safety and security, working conditions, job autonomy, relationship with co-workers, and relationship with supervisor and nature of work; affect the job satisfaction and performance.

Bello (2012), examine the concept of ethical leadership, the characteristics of an ethical leader, ethical leadership and its impact on employee job performance and how organisations can develop leaders that are not only sound in character but sound in action. He discussed on two important variables which are trust and commitment for better understanding of ethical leadership and employee job performance.

Yancey (2012), mentioned that prior research has uncovered inter correlations between many work attitudes and work behaviours. His study is an effort to uncover the underlying structure between these variables, 156 graduate students at a Midwestern state university were administered a 70-item survey that tapped into 11 different work attitudes and work behaviors. An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed to explore the underlying factor structure of the 70 items. One conclusion from the study was that burnout did not strongly correlate with the other variables. It appeared to be a separate factor. The remaining variables were strongly related, consistent with previous research.

Dizgah, Chegini and Bisokhan (2012), conducted a study on job satisfaction and job performance in Guilan public sector using correlative method and data were collected by questionnaire and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. Results show that there is a meaningful relationship between job satisfaction In-role performance and innovative job performance and findings are in accordance with previous researches.

Hussin (2011), determine the level of job satisfaction & job performance and to identify the relationship between job satisfaction components (which are pay, promotion, the work itself, supervision, & co-workers) and job performance among employees of Tradewinds Group of Companies. The study was conducted among 115 respondents in Tradewinds Group of Companies in Klang Valley. In this study, the whole population method was used. The study revealed that there was a positive relationship between job satisfaction components

which were promotion, work itself, supervision and co-workers except for pay towards employee job performance.

Other important finding is that affective commitment had positive relationship towards employee's attitude stated in research paper Employee Attitudes Vs Employee Affective Commitment (Ismail, Awis and Amin, 2011). The study describes the attitude, believe and value among staff in UiTM Kedah succeed in translating the vision and mission towards achieving UiTM goals. The support and commitment from all levels of position and across departments are prominently and inspiring all community of UiTM especial UiTM Kedah.

Habib, Ahmad and Shah (2010), conducted a study from 310 employees of 15 advertising agencies of Islamabad (Pakistan) to test interdependency of job satisfaction and job performance. The study also explains that employees having greater organizational commitment perform well and employees having good attitude towards work are highly satisfied as compared to employees who are less inclined towards their work.

Shah and Irani (2010) examined Employee Attitudes and Behaviours towards Organisational Change Using Supervisor and Peer Relations. They confirmed that employee could develop their attitudes and behaviors on the basis of supervisor and peer relations. However, from demographic characteristics interesting results were found such that relationship between employees number of dependents and readiness for organizational change. Their study also found that employee who had more dependents felt more open and ready for organizational change. Other correlations including present employment status and readiness for change and marital status and supervisor and peer relations was confirmed in this study. These relations highlight the need to consider these factors within policy and strategy to promote employee openness and readiness for organizational change.

Wanyama and Mutsotso (2010) concluded that, capacity building and employee productivity is positively correlated to organizational performance. Therefore they recommended, the firms through the Human Resource Departments should plan and execute training programmes that are in line with objectives of the firm and those that match employees' abilities and skills to enhance effective organizational performance. Human Resource Development practitioners should consider desired work-related attitudes such as organizational motivation, employee turnover, employee productivity, punctuality, organizational performance, job satisfaction and motivation to be an additional outcome of employee productivity and capacity building.

Since employee productivity depends on the amount of time an individual is physically present at a job and also the degree to which he or she is "mentally present" or efficiently functioning while present at a job. Companies must address employees' satisfaction, health, and morale in order to maintain high worker productivity (Wanyama and Mutsotso, 2010). Human Resource Department professionals should create conducive working environment for its employees and highly held in high esteem since they are the driving force of the company.

Zingheim and Schuster (2009) mentioned that organizations had a common concept for competencies but different specific definitions. A compilation of their competency definitions includes "individual knowledge, skill, capabilities, behaviors, abilities, aptitudes and judgment applied to perform required or essential work to meet the organization's performance goals, to address business challenges, to accomplish the organization's mission

and to make the organization more successful and help people be successful at the same time.”

Ricketta (2008), in his study, permit the extent to which job attitudes predict performance to be disentangled from the extent to which performance predicts job attitudes. The study is based on meta-analysis and this meta-analysis provides some support for effects of job attitudes on performance and little support for the reverse effects. Meta-analytic regression analysis is applied to the aggregated correlations to estimate the unique effect of job attitudes on performance (with baseline performance controlled) and the unique effect of performance on job attitudes (with baseline job attitudes controlled). Differences between forms of job attitudes (organizational commitment and job satisfaction) and performance (in-role and extra-role), as well as the moderating.

Human assets are one of the most important resources available to any organization and employee competence and commitment largely determine the objectives that an organization can set for itself and to its success in achieving them. Therefore, the demand for effective employees continuously increases in both public and private organizations (Vathanophas and Thai-Ngam, 2007).

HayGroup (2004) point out that an organization’s best source of competitive advantage lies with its employees. Strategies, business models, products and services can all be copied by competitors, but talented and competent employees represent a sustainable source of differentiation. Boyatzis (1982) defined that competency encompassing the knowledge, skills, abilities, traits and behaviors that allow an individual to perform a task within a specific function or job.

Bartel et al., (2004), it was examine whether a workplace can induce good or bad attitudes among its employees and whether any such “workplace attitudes” affect economic outcomes. The results document the existence and persistence of a genuine workplace effect in how workers view their jobs and organizations. The study’s results show that there are happy and unhappy workplaces, as well as happy and unhappy workers, with very different patterns of turnover and productivity in these workplaces. This study analyses responses of thousands of employees working in nearly two hundred branches to the employee opinion survey of a major US bank in 1994 and 1996. The results of this study support a conclusion that employee attitudes are strongly correlated with economic outcomes of work organizations, consistent with the findings of a 25 small but growing body of other studies that focus on organization- level outcome.

According Sonnentag and Frese (2001), organizations need highly performing individuals in order to meet organization goals, to deliver the products and services they specialized in and finally to achieve competitive advantage. Performance is also important for the individual as accomplishing tasks and performing at a high level can be a source of satisfaction, with feelings of mastery and pride (VanScotter, Motowidlo and Cross, 2000).

The growing globalisation of business and increasing competition and technological advancement has led to an increasing need to change organisational policies and strategies (Hampel and Martinsons, 2009). The pace of challenges is increasing and thus organizational change is considered unavoidable (Drucker, 1999).

According to Kolman (1997), Work Attitude Questionnaire (WAQ) could make a reliable method to measure work attitudes and some other motivational characteristics, as well. The paper deals with results of two surveys. The first survey aimed at identifying the general patterns of work attitudes in the Czech work-force. The second survey compared work and organizational attitudes of four groups of subjects. Based on this finding it seems reasonable to assert, the research instrument, referred here as the WAQ, shown stability of results over time, age and gender differences.

Job performance consists of the observable behaviors that people do in their jobs that are relevant to the goals of the organization (Campbell, McHenry and Wise, 1990). Job performance is of interest to organizations because of the importance of high productivity in the workplace (Hunter and Hunter, 1984). Performance definitions should focus on behaviors rather than outcomes because a focus on outcomes could lead employees to find the easiest way to achieve the desired results, which is likely to be detrimental to the organization because other important behaviors will not be performed (Murphy, 1989).

Campbell, McCloy and Sager (1993) explain that performance is not the consequence of behaviors, but rather the behaviors themselves. In other words, performance consists of the behaviors that employees actually engage in which can be observed.

According to Murphy (1989), he suggested that the causes of performance are more likely to change over time rather than remain stable. His finding suggests that the ability and characteristics that account for performance on well-learned, well-practiced tasks are different than those that account on performance on similar tasks that are new to the incumbent. There are aspects of jobs themselves that make it unlikely that cause of job performance will remain stable over time.

Secord and Backman (1969) have put forward their definition of attitude almost half a century ago. Even so, it is widely accepted as valid to these days. According to them, attitudes 'are certain regularities of an individual's feelings, thoughts and predispositions to act to some aspects of her/his environment'.

As ensues from the definition quoted, an attitude has got three components, namely an affective, a cognitive and a behavioral. The affective component refers to the feelings of the subject as concerns the object of her/his attitude. The cognitive component, correspondingly, concerns what the person thinks or believes about the object and the behavioral component is about the subject's behavioral responses which the object might elicit (Secord and Backman, 1969).

Attitudes are evaluative, i.e. they reflect the person's tendency to respond positively or negatively to the object of the attitude. An attitude refers to a specific target, be it a person, group of people, social institution, object or concept.

In the early days of attitude research, most investigators accepted as a given that human behavior is guided by social attitudes. In fact, the field of social psychology was originally defined as the scientific study of attitudes (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918; Watson, 1925) because it was assumed that attitude was the key to understanding human behavior.

3. Methodology

Research methodology is the way describes how the data will gather and interpret in order to meet the objective of the study. Generally, data can be obtained from primary or secondary sources.

This research paper is to find out the relationship between competency and attitude of employees in which attempts to examine the relationships of independent and dependent variables by applying self-administered survey questionnaire.

The scope of this study is to examine the relationship between competency skills i.e. technical skill on how to do things and attitude which related to self internal behaviour and motivation of TNB's staffs in performing their tasks to achieve company's vision.

Research methodology is a decision within the body of a research of the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques and fieldwork procedures and data analysis Zikmund (2003).

This study is based on literature review and conceptual framework and developed hypotheses to examine the relations between independent and dependent variables. The procedure adopted for this research follows a quantitative approach for data collection and analysis.

3.1 Hypotheses

The data gathering method in this research is a primary data through self-administered survey questionnaire. There are three hypotheses that have been designed for this study, where (Ho) is a null hypothesis to be tested and (H1) is an alternate hypothesis. The hypothesis for this study is as follow:

Hypothesis 1

Competency is the critical effect towards employee's performance.

Hypothesis 2

Attitude is the critical effect towards employee's performance.

Hypothesis 3

Competency and attitude have effect towards employee's performance.

3.2 Research Design

To test the hypothesis, non-probability sampling technique will be used as the type of investigation is related to establishing relationship between two variables which are relationship between competency and attitude towards achieving TNB's Vision and targeted population is known.

For this non-probability sampling, the technique use will be based on purposive sampling as every element in the population has a known and equal chance of being selected as subject.

3.3 Scope and Sample

Targeted participants for this survey are full time employees from TNB. For this study, the targeted participants are those TNB's staffs attending training at TNB Training Institute (ILSAS) for the month of January 2013.

Based on last year figure from ILSAS Performance Report (FY11/12), there are 756 employees attended training in ILSAS for the month of January 2012. According to Uma Sekaran and Roger Bougie (2009), sample size for 750 is 186 and sample size for 800 is 201. Sampling of 187 employees will be gathered and all responses are anonymous and confidential.

3.4 Procedure

The survey instrument was administered to the participants using manual hardcopy survey form. The hardcopy survey form will be distributed to TNB's staffs attended training in ILSAS.

The forms will be distributed in the class and participants will be asked to complete the survey questionnaire. The forms then will be collected at the end the class of that day. It is convenient to the researcher to approach the target participants as she works in ILSAS as a trainer.

3.5 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into two (2) sections. The first (1) section asked about the demographic information, work category either executive or non executive and service duration, as well as current working division of each sample.

Second (2) sections consist of two (2) parts which are Part 1 – Technical Abilities and Part 2 –Work Attitudes. It cover both variables which are competency skill needed to do the job and employee attitudes towards company achievement. Questionnaire designed with each rating prioritized by 5 point scale (Strongly Disagree - SD, Disagree - D, Undecided - U, Agree - A and Strongly Agree - SA).

4. Data Analysis and Measurement

There are two data analysis applied which are descriptive analysis and correlations analysis to test the significant levels. The Hypothetical-deductive methods are used for answering by using SPSS 18.0 software (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Multiple regression analysis will be carried out for the data analysis which to study one independent variable hypothesized to affect one dependent variable. Regression analysis will give result on competency and attitude as independent variable hypothesized to affect dependent variable job performance.

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