

Study on the Work Effectiveness of Graduates in the Public Sector Organizations

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the work effectiveness of graduates in the Public Sector Organization. It plays an important role in accelerating organizational development. According to the pilot study regarding their work effectiveness to compare the secondary level employees, development officers are moderately satisfied with their job activities. The objectives of the study are to identify the factors influencing the graduate work effectiveness, to identify which factor highly influences the graduate effectiveness, to measure the effectiveness level of graduates in the public sector organization and to provide the suggestions to enhance the effectiveness in the public sector organization. Hundred samples were selected through systematic random sampling method. Conceptual variables are job design, attitude of employees and career development of job. Descriptive and bivariate analyses were done, using the SPSS for this purpose. Finding of the study shows that all conceptual variables are moderately supported to effectiveness. Employees are facing the problem in the career development and job description of the organizations. Suggestions are job design has to be changed based on the respective department and service minute incorporate the promotion pattern of employees.

Keywords: career development, attitudes, work effectiveness

Background of the Study

Introduction of the organization

At the inception of the North East Provincial Council in 1989, Ministry of Interior was established. The subjects of Provincial Public Administration, Local Government, and Rural Development, were under the purview of this Ministry. In 1991 the Ministry of Interior was abolished and the Departments of Provincial Public Administration, Local Government and Rural Development were brought under the Chief Secretary. Subsequently the Post of Deputy Chief Secretary was created and the subject of Provincial Public Administration came under Chief Secretary's Cluster. Due to the bifurcation of North East Provincial Council into two separate Provincial Councils, Ministry of Provincial Public Administration, North East Provincial Council was de-merged as two separate Ministries namely Provincial Public Administration, Northern Province and Provincial Public Administration, Eastern Province.

According to the Hon. Governor's Memorandum, No: G/EPC/A/MEMO dated 12/02/2009 the authority was delegated to the Deputy Chief Secretary-Administration with regard to the Provincial Combined Services staff.

Literature Review

Graduate Attributes

Bowden et al.'s (2000) commonly cited definition states that graduate attributes are, 'the qualities, skills and understandings a university community agrees its students would desirably develop during their time at the institution and, consequently, shape the contribution they are able to make to their profession and as a citizen'. Each Australian university has constructed its own unique list of desirable graduate attributes. The Australian Government and employers' organizations contributed lists of their own (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2002). Very few attempts have been made to identify commonalities between various lists, provide a research-based synthesis of attributes (cf. Barrie, 2004; Nunan, 1999) or identify deficiencies in lists, in part because of disparate understandings of what is meant by the various categories of attribute included. It seems clear, however, that Bowden et al.'s (2000) definition encompasses two main types of attributes: (1) those which pertain to an individual's capacity for citizenship (including involvement in democratic processes, social cohesion, equity and human rights and ecological sustainability) and thus ability to contribute towards a well-functioning society (Rychen & Salganik, 2005); and (2) those which pertain to an individual's capacity to obtain and maintain work (Harvey, 2001; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005) and thus contribute to economic productivity. This second 'employability' agenda, the main impetus for the recent interest in graduate attributes, is part of the move towards developing 'human capital' to meet the needs of the 'new knowledge economy' (Curtis & McKenzie, 2001, p. vii).

In the context of a rapidly changing information- and knowledge-intensive economy, workers must be both immediately and sustainable employable. In order to do so, they must not only maintain and develop knowledge and skills that are specific to their own discipline or occupation, but must also possess 'generic' skills, dispositions and attributes that are transferable to many occupational situations and areas. These generic skills are defined as 'those transferable skills which are essential for employability at some level for most' (Kearns, 2001, p. 2). Generic skills have also been variously known as 'core skills', 'key competencies', 'transferable skills' or 'underpinning skills' (Mayer, 1992).

Employability Skills

Employability means the suitability of graduates' knowledge together with their personal abilities and skills to the changing needs of the marketplace. Hence, employability is a changing concept. It varies over time and across economic sectors and across countries. In other words, employability requirement for the service sector is different that employability in the manufacturing sector. Weligamage (2009) further found that employer expectation and requirement differ according to different countries. He suggested that the needs of the employers and skills of learners should be taken into account in formulating future skills assessments. He recommended that universities should identify skill sets that will best serve the future labor market and align programs to meet those needs.

Yorke (2004) viewed employability as a set of achievements, skills and personal attributes that help graduates to obtain employment and retain their jobs. In this respect, Lowden, Hall, Bilot and Lewin (2011) believe that employers expect graduates to possess personal attributes and skills such as team-work, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and managerial abilities. McCabe (2010) contends that jobs are not guaranteed to graduate unless they successfully use their personal attributes and skills in their job. It is important to mention that hard skills including knowledge and personal attributes are necessary to obtain a job but not necessarily sufficient to retain it. Soft skills would help graduates in progressing and retaining their jobs. Hence, universities usually work side by side with the educational authorities to develop and adopt strategies that equip graduates with the necessary knowledge and skills that satisfy the job market demand.

Employers often say that young people lack employability skills. 'Employability skills' play a major role in labor market outcomes. National education systems should always endeavor to equip their students with employability skills. Employers' organizations can relay to the government, and young people themselves, what employers seek from new recruits in terms of employability skills. The term 'employability skills' is hard to define. Generally, employability skills refer to a set of 'generic' or 'soft' skills, such as self-management, team working and communication. This expression also often refers to more than just skills. Personal traits and characteristics also play an important role in employability as these determine the way in which someone uses his/her employability skills. The most important personal attribute is a positive attitude, including a willingness to take part and openness to new activities and ideas.

Knowledge is an equally vital component of what makes a young person employable. From an employer's perspective, this is not just knowledge in the sense of specific information, but knowledge in a more practical sense. For instance, how to apply mathematical concepts to practical situations, how to read input-output graphs and the ability to write a letter with correct use of basic grammar, spelling and format. Knowledge also includes more tacit awareness of matters such as the importance of customer care. In conclusion, there is much debate as to how 'employability skills' are to be defined, and they may vary according to context, but there is consensus that they make an important difference at work, and therefore effect on school-to-work transitions. Employers' organizations wishing to explore this area may: Consult their members to determine what employability skills are essential to business investigating how the national curriculum can (better) provide these skills and lobby government accordingly Encourage their members to become directly involved in improving young people's employability skills, for example, by providing work experience.

Commitment

Organizational commitment has been found to be immensely to such withdrawal behaviors as tardiness, absenteeism and turnover (Yousef, 2000). Moreover, it has been also linked to increased productivity and organizational effectiveness (Buitendach & De Witte, 2005). This is furthermore postulated to have an influence on whether employees will have a propensity to remain with the organization and to perform at higher levels.

Also, organizational commitment is widely described in the management and behavioral sciences literature as a key factor in the relationship between individuals and organizations. Raju and Srivastava, (1994) described organizational commitment as a factor that promotes the attached of the individual to the organization. Employees are regarded as committed to the organization if they willingly continue their association with the organization and devoted their considerable effort to achieving organizational goals (Raju & Srivastava, 1994).

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a broad concept and is difficult to measure in organization (Daft, 2003). It takes into consideration a range of variables at both the organizational and department levels. It evaluates the extent to which the multiple goals of the organization are attained. Moreover, Organizational effectiveness is the notion of how effective an organization is in accomplishing the results the organization aims to generate (Connolly, Conlon & Dutsch, 1998). It plays an important role in accelerating organizational development (Bulent et al, 2001). It is also the net satisfaction of all constituents in the process of gathering and transforming inputs into outputs in an efficient manner (Matthew et al, 2005). Gibson Ivancevich and Donnelly (1991) identified the main measures of effectiveness as profitability, productivity, employee satisfaction.

Problem Statement

In the government organizations most of the graduate employees are working in the position of development officer. According to the pilot survey (thirty questionnaire was issued in May/2014) regarding their work effectiveness to compare the other secondary level employees, development officers are moderately satisfied. Based on that this study goes to analyze the graduates' effectiveness or not.

Objectives

The following objectives have been set to study the work effectiveness of graduates in the Public Sector Organization:

- To identify the factors influencing to the graduate effectiveness in the public sector organization.
- To identify which factor is highly influenced to the graduate effectiveness.
- To measure the effectiveness level of graduates in the public sector organization.
- To provide the suggestions to enhance the effectiveness level in the public sector organization.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions have been outlined:

- What are the factors influencing to the graduate effectiveness?
- Which factor is highly influenced to the graduate effectiveness?
- How to measure the effectiveness level?
- What are the suggestions provided to enhance the effectiveness level in the graduate?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework depicted in the figure 1 illustrates the relationship between independent variables (Job Design, Attitude of Employees and Career Development) and the dependent variable (Work Effectiveness).

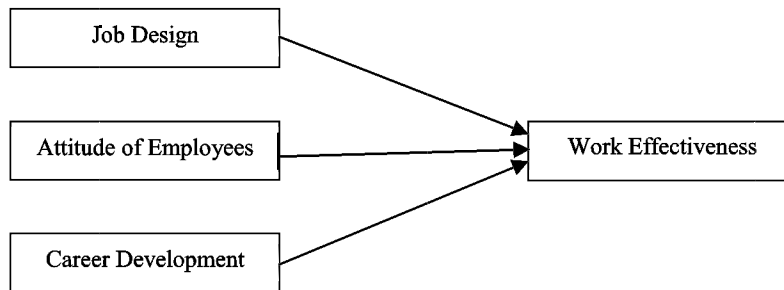


Figure 1: Conceptual framework
Source- Develop for research purpose

Operationalization

Based on the conceptual framework, operationalization has been formulated for the research purpose.

Table-1 Operationalization

Variable	Indicator	Measurement
Job design	Task identity Skill variety Task significance	Questionnaire
Attitudes of Employees	Commitment Involvement Work relationship	Questionnaire
Career development	Promotion Motivation Available opportunities	Questionnaire
Work effectiveness	Satisfaction	Questionnaire

Source: Literature review done for this research purpose

Operational Definition

Job Design

Work arrangement (or rearrangement) aimed at reducing or overcoming job dissatisfaction and employee alienation arising from repetitive and mechanistic tasks. Through job design, organizations try to raise productivity levels by offering non-monetary rewards such as greater satisfaction from a sense of personal achievement in meeting the increased challenge and responsibility of one's work. Job enlargement, job enrichment, job rotation, and job simplification are the various techniques used in a job design exercise.

Task Identity refers to the ability to see a job completed from the beginning to the end.

Skill Variety refers the degree to which a number of different skills must be used.

Task significance refers the degree to which the job has an impact on the lives of others.

Attitudes

An attitude is generally defined as a way a person responds to his or her environment, either positively or negatively.

Commitment

Commitment is a psychological state that binds an individual to the organization. It refers to the likelihood that an individual will stick to the organization, feel psychologically attached to it, whether the job is satisfying or not.

Involvement

Regular participation of employees in (1) deciding how their work is done, (2) making suggestions for improvement, (3) goal setting, (4) planning, and (5) monitoring of their performance. Encouragement to employee involvement is based on the thinking that people involved in a process know it best, and on the observation that involved employees are more motivated to improve their performance.

Work relationship

Workplace relationships are unique interpersonal relationships with important implications for the individuals in those relationships, and the organizations in which the relationships exist and develop.

Career Development

Career development, a major aspect of human development, is the process through which an individual's work identity is formed. It spans one's entire lifetime. Career development begins with a person's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living, continues as he or she explores occupations and ultimately decides what career to pursue, prepares for it, applies for and gets a job and advances in it. It may, and probably will include, changing careers and jobs.

Promotion

It is the advancement of an employee’s position or job within a company position or job. A job promotion may be the result of an employee's proactive pursuit of a higher ranking or as a reward by employers for good performance.

Motivation

Internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal.

Work effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is the notion of how effective an organization is in accomplishing the results the organization aims to generate.

Sample

This research study consider for the 100 samples, particularly examine the Chief Secretary Cluster of Eastern Province. The sample is selected through systematic random sampling method. Self-administrated questionnaire were used for the research purpose. The table 2 details the sample.

Table 2. Sample

Name of the Dept.	No.of Employees	Percentage	Sample
Personnel & Training	12	8.759	09
Provincial Treasury	11	8.029	08
Provincial Public Administration	14	10.218	10
Provincial Planning Secretariat	15	10.948	11
MDTD	12	8.759	09
Dept. of Revenue	04	2.919	03
Dept. of Motor Traffic	51	37.226	37
Engineering Services	02	1.459	01
Dep.t of Audit	16	11.678	12
Total	137	100	100

Source: Cadre information as on 31st December-2013/ Provincial Council (EP)

Data Evaluation Method

Data were evaluated using univariate and bivariate analysis with the help of statistical software, SPSS. Univariate analysis is carried out with the measure of mean and standard deviation. Five point Likert scales accustomed in the questionnaire to get information. The ranges are Strongly agree - 5, Agree-4, Neutral-3, Disagree-2, Strongly Disagree-1.

Hence the decision rule will be,

- 1 ≤ Xi ≤ 2.5 - Factors are poorly influence to the graduate effectiveness
- 2.5 < Xi ≤ 3.5 - Factors are moderately influence to the graduate effectiveness
- 3.5 < Xi ≤ 5 - Factors are highly influence to the graduate effectiveness

And the study has been designed with two limitations a) this study is limited to the Eastern Provincial Cluster and b) sample are collected from the Development officers.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis

The table 3 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the data collected.

Table 3. Summary of descriptive analysis

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Design	2.90	0.216
Attitudes of Employees	2.48	0.969
Career Development	3.02	0.724
Work Effectiveness	3.05	0.326

Source: Survey data

Workers will be more likely to believe that their work is meaningful if the design of the job encompasses (1) skill variety (the degree to which a number of different skills must be used), (2) task identity (the ability to see a job completed from the beginning to the end), and (3) task significance (the degree to which the job has an impact on the lives of others) (Hackman and Oldham, 1976).

According to the job design, development officer having the grades are III, II and I, their tasks are investigated, collection of information and data, analysis and function in relation to the tasks of achieving the expected goals in development proposals, including report compilation and survey and other tasks. Basic qualification of recruitment of grade III is a degree recognized by the UGC. The age limit is between 25-35 years. In the other secondary level employees specially consider to the management assistant people, because those people amount are higher in the organization. Management assistant having the segments are Grade III, II, I and supra grade. Method of recruitment in this position is GCE (O/L) six credit passes and A/L qualification. The age limit is 18-30. Their duties and responsibilities are functions, which are not technical, the task is supportive or facilitating to the task of officers on the executive. Based on this research respondents are told that task is given by the superior and that task shared by the all secondary level employees. There is no any specification for the post and an organization basis task differs from one to another.

Attitudes reflect a person's likes and dislikes towards other persons, objects, events and activities in their environment. It makes sense to study and know about attitudes because strong attitudes will very likely affect a person's behavior; attitudes toward supervision, pay, benefits, promotion or anything that might trigger positive or negative reactions. As a result, employee satisfaction and attitudes represent one of the key areas of measuring organizational effectiveness. Because of the importance of the links of tasks, contextual, and ethical performance with important measures of organizational effectiveness, one of the key goals of managers should be to create linkages between employee performance and their

satisfaction. However, it is not easy to change a person's attitudes about their work. Attitudes and satisfactions at work can and do change, sometimes quickly, as events change, employees who are happy and productive can become dissatisfied and resentful overnight as a consequence of any management actions. Employee attitudes can provide important information about the effectiveness of different management strategies. Job related attitudes play a major role in shaping the work behavior of managers in organizations. Lynn et al., (1990) described the differential relationship that organizational attitudes (organizational commitment and satisfaction) and job attitudes (job involvement and satisfaction) have with several behavior intentions (turnover, absenteeism and performance). Many researchers agree that job attitude has a positive impact on performance (Manikandan, 2002).

Based on the employees' attitudes also moderate level of work effectiveness. Development officers are mostly committed and involvement of their given work. Most of the employees are they obey the superior order and having the good relationship with them. Employees feel that they are coming from the various fields in the Advanced level. Even though they take into same job and survive in the post.

Effective career development support is important not only for individuals, but also for the Organizations that employ them. For both of them it is part of a strategy of achieving resilience to handle change more effectively. Career development is a major tool for attracting, motivating and retaining good quality employees. The career development process enables one to better recognize and capitalize on internal and external influences that could enhance their overall development.

In accordance with the career development main factors are promoted and available opportunities. Employees are equally motivated within the organization. In the promotion pattern of the development officer, they have to pass the Efficiency Bar (EB) examination. First EB (3 year date of appointment of GIII) Second EB (3 year date of promotion of GII) and Third EB (5 year date of promotion of GI). Exam conducted once a year. Salary point in the grade I amount is Rs. 20,925. In the management assistant promotion patterns are first EB (3 year date of appointment of GIII), second EB (3 year promotion of GII) and third EB (5 year promotion of GI). Salary point of Grade I amount is Rs.17,550. If the management assistant upgrade the supra position, he/she achieve the GI service or GII satisfactory service period not less than 8 years or GII officer obtain a degree from recognized university. Supra grade their salary point is Rs.20,395. This opportunity is only for the management assistant. There are opportunities available for the development officers to sit for the SLAS, SLEAS, SLPS, Accountancy service and etc. They can site for the competitive open exam if they have a degree with relevant age limit and five years of work experience. The management assistant also sits for the above examination with the relevant qualification and work experience.

Data Reliability

Reliability of the variables, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated to evaluate the reliability of the measures. An alpha level of 0.70 or above is generally considered to be

accepted (Cronbach, 1951). All the measures in survey exceed this threshold. Job design (alpha= 0.841), attitudes of employees (alpha=0.754) and career development (alpha = 0.761)

Correlation Analysis

Table 4 exhibits correlation between variables. In the correlation analysis variables are found having the positive relationship with research variables.

Table 4. Correlations

		Job Design	Employee Attitude	Career Development	Work Effectiveness
Job Design	Pearson Correlation	1	.202*	.478**	.615**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.044	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Attitudes of Employees	Pearson Correlation	.202*	1	.484**	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.044		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Career Development	Pearson Correlation	.478**	.484**	1	.473**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Work Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.615**	.360**	.473**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

There are variations in the classification of employability, there is a broad understanding of what qualities, characteristics, skills and knowledge constitute employability in general and for graduates in particular. Employers expect graduates to have the technical and discipline competences from their degrees, but require graduates to demonstrate a range of broader skills and attributes such as team working, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and managerial abilities. Modern economy needs highly trained and skilled human resource, and higher education institutions (HEIs) are required to produce qualified graduates to meet the needs of national development and employers. The industry defines the characteristics and skill requirements of its workforce which may or may not be matched by the graduates being produced by HEIs. In the higher education context, employability has a variety of meanings, from the employment rate of graduates to the characteristics of the graduate (Harvey, 2003). In this research study, work effectiveness was evaluated through the job design, employee attitude and career development. All the variables are moderately supported for the work effectively. Among this variables career development high influences.

Recommendation

Human capital is a key factor in the every organization. This research study considered development officers and other secondary level employees especially concerned with a management assistant working under the 3rd category in the organization. The job design should be identified clearly depends on their organizational needs. The task should be given separately for the development officer and other secondary level employees. Graduate appointment should be given based on their respective field; this will enhance the employees and organizational work effectively. Employees' attitudes are positive. They should work continuously with commitment and involvement. There is a need for rearrangements in the Service Minutes/recruitment scheme and that should be done based on the promotional career development. The priority should be given to the graduate employees than the secondary level employees.

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