

JOB PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES AT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE, EASTERN PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT: In the rapidly changing and competitive environment to fulfill the expectations of the customers, organizations are always depending on the employee performance basically. Employees are the important asset to an organization and it is crucial that managers are able to motivate and mentor staff effectively in order to both maximize staff output and maintain staff satisfaction. The objective of the research is to identify the job performance factors of the employees of Social Service Department, to measure the level of job performance of employees in Social Service Department and to suggest the ways that helps to improve the perception and performance of the Officers for the departmental goal achievement. The conceptual variables are nature of work, motivation, job knowledge and commitment. The research data were collected from 106 staff in Eastern Province of all Social service officers, Development officer and Management assistant worked in the Department of Social Services. Data are analyzed by univariate and bivariate technique, use the SPSS package for the purpose of analysis. The results shows that all the variables are moderately support to the system. There is a positive relationship with job performance. Major findings are some field officers are reluctant to attend the field work because of there is no facility for transport, accommodation and wild animals problems. Work load, time to time change the data collection format and poor facility of working station. Suggestions are enhance the working facilities of the Social Service officers by providing sufficient office space, furniture, computer accessories and good working environment. Take disciplinary action against the officers who fail to attend their duties on time. Provide the non-cash benefit packages to officers for the improvement of the job performance positively. Eg: Provide quarter's facilities, vehicle arrangements for field visit.

Keywords: Commitment, Job Performance, Involvement

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource is paramount importance for the success of any organization. This is wealth of an organization which can help it in achieving its goals. In the present complex environment no business or organization can exit and grow without appropriate human resources. Human resources become the focus of every progressive organization.

A successful and highly productive business can be achieved by engaging them in improving their performance. All employees are not equal in their working and they have different modes of working like some have highest capability regardless of the incentive but other may have occasional jump-start. If they are handled effectively, the result can be greater productivity and increased employee morale.

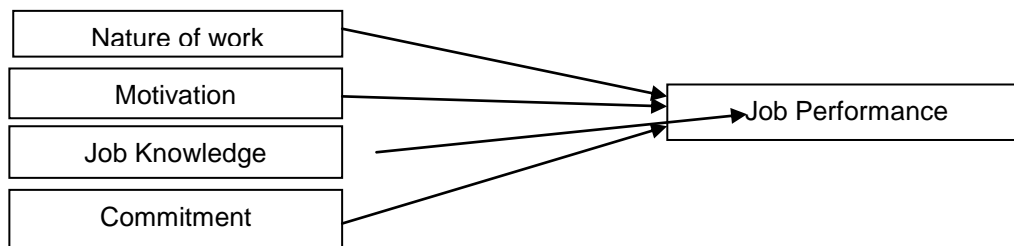
A good employee performance is necessary for the organization, since an organization's success is dependent upon the employee's creativity, innovation and commitment (Ramlall, 2008). Good job performances and productivity growth are also important in stabilizing our economy; by means of improved living standards, higher wages, an increase in goods available for consumption, etc. (Griffin et al., 1981). Griffin et al. also argue that therefore research of individual employee performance is important to society in general.

Department of social services is the one of the service providing Government organization in the Eastern Province. In the organization Social Service officers'

(SSO) contribution toward performance of the department have to be very high. But following causes exhibit that the performance level of the officers are not high as expected by the department. Last 04 years (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) Auditor General's Department has been received fifteen numbers of complaints from general public that, Social Service officers' (SSO) are not always available at the service station and also not engage in the field visits related villages. Even though increasing trend in the need for the casual relief and livelihood assistance in the Eastern Province, past four years (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) Social Service Department has not received adequate number of applications from Social Service officers' (SSO) for the casual relief and self-employment assistance.

2. METHODOLOGY

Based on the problem statement the following conceptual framework has been formulated.



Source-Develop for research purpose
Figure-1 Conceptual Framework

Nature of work:

The nature of work is best defined as the type of work that an employee does. This can refer to the basic daily tasks that he / she carries out as part of his / her job, and it can refer to other non-routine tasks that may be required by the job also. Added together, the characteristics of these tasks comprise the nature of an employee's work.

Motivation:

Motivation is an important factor which encourages persons to give their best performance and help in reaching organizational goals. Employees who are adequately motivated to perform will be more productive, more engaged and feel more invested in their work. When employees feel these things, it helps them, and thereby their managers, be more successful.

Job Knowledge:

Job knowledge is the understanding of a set of responsibilities specific to a job, as well as the ongoing capacity to stay abreast of changes in job functions. The collective job knowledge of the staff of an organization or company is a human resource asset of immense value in the marketplace.

Commitment:

Commitment is a willingness to give your time and energy to something that you believe in, or a firm decision or promise to do something.

Job performance:

Job performance has been defined as work performance in terms of quality and quantity expected from every employee in a particular job.

Operationalization

Operationalization is the process of taking conceptual definition and making it more precise by linking it to one or more specific indicators or operational definitions.

Table-1 Operationalization

Dimensions	Indicators	Measurement
Nature of work	Task Duties & responsibilities Rewards	Questionnaire
Motivation	Intensity Direction Persistence	Questionnaire
Job knowledge	Skills Qualifications Experience	Questionnaire
Commitment	Affective commitment Continuance commitment Normative commitment	Questionnaire
Performance	Trait Behavior Result	Questionnaire

Source: Developed for research purpose

Definition of indicators

Dimensions under “Nature of work”

Task:

Task is a smallest identifiable and essential piece of a job that serves as a unit of work, and as a means of differentiating between the various components of a work. Tasks completion generally requires the coordination of others. Coordinated human interaction takes on the role of combining the integration of time, energy, effort, ability, and resources of multiple individuals to meet a common goal.

Duties and Responsibilities:

In order to effectively manage employees, it is important to provide them with a clear definition and understanding of their role, function, and responsibilities in the workplace. This will provide them with a good understanding of the job and tasks they are to perform as an individual and within any teams they are a part of. It also provides information on where they fit within the organisation and who they report to, helping to avoid disputes and misunderstandings over authority.

Rewards:

Reward systems refer to programs set up by a company to reward performance and motivate employees on individual and/or group levels. They are normally considered separate from salary, but may be monetary in nature or otherwise have a cost to the company. Nowadays, most of the companies begun implementing them as a tool to attract top employees in a competitive job market as well as to increase employee performance.

Dimensions under “Motivation”

Intensity:

Intensity is the strength of the response in the chosen direction. Typically, there's a close relationship between intensity and the expectation of a desired outcome. Intensity, or motivational force, depends on the individual's perception of the likelihood that effort will yield a certain result. This is true whether or not perception is realistic. For instance, if an individual believes a raise is imminent, it

can be a motivator to pursue the goal with vigor, perhaps by staying late at work and increasing output.

Direction:

Direction is simply the goal that spurs the individual to action. A goal is actively chosen among a set of alternatives, whether the individual realizes it or not. The goal is determined by different influences, including extrinsic and intrinsic factors, which may contradict each other. For instance, an individual may have a natural inclination for introspection, but be motivated towards a highly social lifestyle for career advancement or social status.

Persistence:

Persistence is the duration with which a person expends energy and effort towards the direction or goal. The sustenance of behavior is influenced by extrinsic and intrinsic factors. The factors that initially energized or initiated behavior may not necessarily be the same factors that sustain behavior and provide for persistence. For example, a student may be initially motivated to earn good grades in school to receive an allowance at home. Over time, extrinsic motivation may be supplemented or replaced by intrinsic motivation if the student discovers that learning is fun and personally satisfying.

Dimensions under “Job knowledge”

Skills:

Job skills are personal abilities and talents that help employees carry out work-related tasks. Every employer is looking for a specific set of skills from job seekers that match the skills necessary to perform a particular job. But beyond these job specific technical skills, certain skills are nearly universally sought by employers.

Qualification:

Qualification denotes fitness for purpose through fulfillment of necessary conditions such as attainment of a certain age, taking of an oath, completion of required schooling or training or acquisition of a degree or diploma. Qualified does not necessarily imply competence.

Experience:

Work experience is an asset to every organization. Officers are worked over 5 years. They have lot of experience and knowledge regarding the social service works and this cause them to perform well in the department. Although measures of job experience are frequently-used screening devices in the selection of employees, personnel psychologists have devoted little attention to their usefulness.

Dimensions under “Commitment”

Affective Commitment:

Affective Commitment is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization. An employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and desires to remain a part of the organization. This employee commits to the organization because he/she "wants to". This commitment can be influenced by many different demographic characteristics: age, tenure, sex, and education but these influences are neither strong nor consistent. The problem with these characteristics is that while they can be seen, they cannot be clearly defined.

Continuance Commitment:

Continuance Commitment is the “need” component or the gains verses losses of working in an organization. Side bets or investments, are the gains and losses that may occur should an individual stay or leave an organization. An individual may commit to the organization because he/she perceives a high cost of losing organizational membership and social costs (friendship ties with co-workers) would be costs of losing organizational membership. But an individual does not

see the positive costs as enough to stay with an organization they must also take into account the availability of alternatives (such as another organization), disrupt personal relationships, and other “side bets” that would be incurred from leaving their organization.

Normative Commitment:

The individual commits to and remains with an organization because of feelings of obligation, the last component of organizational commitment. These feelings may derive from a strain on an individual before and after joining an organization. For example, the organization may have invested resources in training an employee who then feels a 'moral' obligation to put forth effort on the job and stay with the organization to 'repay the debt.'

It may also reflect an internalized norm, developed before the person joins the organization through family or other socialization processes, that one should be loyal to one's organization. The employee stays with the organization because he/she "ought to". But generally if an individual invest a great deal they will receive advanced rewards. Normative commitment is higher in organizations that value loyalty and systematically communicate the fact to employees with rewards, incentives and other strategies.

Dimensions under “Job performance”

Trait:

Trait based performance appraisals include the employees characteristics, what an employee is, such as dependability, creativity, leadership, and initiative. Trait focused performance appraisals include graphic rating scale or forced choice method. While these methods are fairly inexpensive to implement they are prone to rater errors such as halo error, leniency error, or central tendency.

Behavior:

Behavior based performance appraisals include what the employee does and should do different; in other words, specific actions exhibited by the employee on the job. Behavior methods include, critical incident and behaviorally anchored rating scale.

Result:

Results based performance appraisals focus on the employees accomplishments. Quantitative data such as: sales, production numbers, and errors, can be used. Common methods for performing results based appraisals include, productivity measures and management by objectives (MBO)

Sampling Procedure

In the department of social service whole employees are selected as sample. Such as SSO (Social service officer), DO (Development Officer), MA (Management Assistant)

Table-2 Sampling Procedure

Districts	Trincomalee	Batticaloa	Ampara	Total
SSO	13	18	26	57
DO	09	14	18	41
MA	04	02	02	08
Total				106

Sources Administration Report – Year 2014

Method of Data Evaluation

Data's are analyzed by univariate and bivariate analysis.

Thus the decision rule can be formulated as follows;

Range	Decision Attributes
If $1.0 \leq X_i \leq 2.5$	Variable denote the low level of job performance
If $2.5 \leq X_i \leq 3.5$	Variable denote the moderate level of job performance
If $3.5 \leq X_i \leq 5.0$	Variable denote the higher level of job performance

3. RESULTUS AND DISCUSSION

Table-3 Descriptive Analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation
Nature of work	2.60	1.255
Motivation	3.43	1.254
Job knowledge	2.79	1.044
Commitment	2.99	1.188
Job performance	2.86	0.972

Source-Survey data

According to the nature of work some rural areas are in very far from their accommodation. Example in Trincomalee district: Verugal, Thampalagamam, Seruvila, Pathavisripura, Gomarankadawela, Morawewa are more than 15km. In Batticaloa district: Porativupattu, Vellavelly, Arayampathy, Manmunaipattu, Kaluwanchikudi areas are more than 20km. In Ampara district: Padiyathalawa, Damana, Uhana, Lahugala, Mahaoya areas are more than 15km. When they are travelling to their duty station the roads are damaged by the flood and poor maintenance of road works. Some field visit areas have wild animals like Elephant, Buffalo so the officers not have guarantee for their life. (Verugal, Kanthale, Vavunathevu, Vellavelly, Padiyathalawa). The SSO and DO failed to collect the application from beneficiaries in rural areas, SSO's are not always available at the service station and also not engage in the field visits, failed to provide the training to disable people to involve in the self-employment. Eg: Kokadichchola. In batticaloa district have lot of disabilities child. But SSO and DO not involve them in to self -employment. One of the main objective of the department is to assist persons with disabilities by the new way of rehabilitating them by providing suitable vocational training to enable them to create their own livelihoods at the place where more convenient to them. The department has constructed a Vocational Training Centre at Uppuveli, Trincomalee and now it is in operation. In yearend (November, December) they have work load that time also they share the works. In year ends they have to close the accounts. Mostly in November, December rainy season in Eastern province that time flood happened in trincomalee, batticaloa, ampara district. In this situation social service officers received lot of casual relief applications from beneficiaries, so SSO, DO, MA complete the works in short period that time officers share their work with co-workers for collect the data of beneficiaries, select the beneficiaries, update the beneficiaries details, preparing vouchers, check the vouchers, make the arrangements for payments.

Based on the finding of motivation, 18.9% of the selected officers strongly disagree and 25.5% neutral with the indicator of motivation. Basic needs mean the officer satisfied in the environmental conditions, economic, social and political factors to do their work properly. But they said that, the officer basic need at office is table and chair. Anyhow some rural areas DS divisions have enough furniture's for officers but don't have enough space to put the furniture at divisional secretariat. Eg: Seruvila. Respondents stated that the some officers face accommodation problem because Department don't have quarters facilities. So out district officers stay in the rooms, they spent lot of money for the accommodation. They spent Rs.5,000 to 7,000 only for room rent, some of them spent Rs. 10,000 to 12,000 for room and food. Social service department not provide the vehicle for the field and official works so officers used their own vehicle for the works. Officers get transfer to other organization because some time the officers feel field work/ office work is very difficult because social service department is service providing department. It has work load than other departments, in government rule the officers should work within the department continuously in 05 years. Sometimes officers get fed-up on their service in 02 to

03 years and some field officers (SSO, DO) cover-up two duty station that time they get stress on their work. The field officer (SSO, DO) must go to field visit in 8days per month. They used own vehicles for the field works. Per day they need Rs. 500 for fuel expenses. But the department provides only Rs.2000 per month for fuel allowance. This travelling claim enough for 04 days (500 x 4= 2000). Other days they spent their own money for field visit. So, they face cost of living problem in their real life. The department not considers the geographical area at the time of the travelling claim provide. Eg: Kathankudy is 8km and Pothuvil is 150km from the batticaloa district but the claim are same for the each area field visit. Here no consider killo meters of field visit area.

In order to the job knowledge, some respondents said that, the head of the department always change the beneficiaries data format due to amendment of the Circulars, Other departments also time to time change the format, there is no proper structure for data collection, too much of documentation work.(Manual), mostly SSO depend on GramaNiladari's data, therefore they wait to get accurate data from GS, it cause to delay of SSO's performance. Beneficiaries are don't corporate with the officers in the field visit because, beneficiaries don't have the adequate knowledge, some field area beneficiaries are uneducated and they can't fill the application form themselves. So, they need a help from officers. Officers spent more time with one person to get details, due to this reason officer's complete lack of application per day. Eg: Kinniya, Muthur, Kattankudy, Uhana. When the officers are in field visit that time disable beneficiaries go to hospital for their medical purpose. So officers unable to conduct them. It mostly happened in rural area. Eg: Seruvila, Kattankudy, Lahugala, Mahaoya. In order to the commitment Livelihood performance only success of 30% because the organization provide Rs.30,000 for the livelihood activities per year Eg: business, tailoring, gardening, shop, livestock, others. So the beneficiaries do those livelihood activities only for 03 to 04 months not continue whole year. Some officers passed some examination, that time they drop this job and take another job with another institute. some offices have small kits so they face many problems to go to field. In rural area visit they face transport problem, food, accommodation problem and phone coverage problem. Some cases officers will stay at the field visit area for some purpose like collecting information, training progamme that time they not received healthy food, proper accommodation, difficult to conduct with family members due to coverage problem. Eg: Seruvila. Lahugala.

Correlation Analysis

Table-4 Correlation analysis

Variable	Performance
Nature of work	.330**
Motivation	.355**
Job knowledge	.492**
commitment	.377**
Job performance	1

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

All the variables are positively correlated with job performance.

4. CONCLUSION

All the research variables are moderately support to the system. They facing the problems are some field officers are reluctant to attend the field work due to the problem of transport, accommodation and wild animals. In addition work load, time to time change the data collection format and poor facility of working station. Providing suggestions are enhance the working facilities of the Social Service

officers by providing sufficient office space, furniture, computer accessories and good working environment. Take disciplinary action against the officers who fail to attend their duties in time. Eg: Establishment Code, Chapter 5. Take action to inform government rules and regulation, circulars and other departmental new activities to all officers regularly. Eg: Gazette No.1467/15-2006/Oct/17 (about disable peoples).

Set the suitable and efficient non-cash benefit packages to officers for the improvement of the job performance positively. Eg: provide quarter's facilities, vehicle arrangements for field visit, provide land under housing scheme for officers to build the house. (In Trincomalee Kuchcheveli DS division provide land for their Divisional Secretary office staff and National Housing Development Authority provide loan for officers to build the house).

The department of Social Services has stepped forward to implement certain activities in the near future as the gate keeping mechanism to provide adequate services to the needy vulnerable in the community. As such the following activities are planned to implement in the year 2015.

- Commencement of Safe House in Trincomalee to provide safe residential facilities on a temporary basis for the victims of domestic violence till the case taken up either at the police station or court.
- Conducting programmes with the support of the NGOs in the identified areas to create awareness among the public regarding the illegal mother migrations and its consequences. It would help the public to identify the way for a safe migration for the employment.
- Convert the Sarana Elders Home in Ampara as the State Elders Home.
- Increase the amount of PAMA assistance for the beneficiaries.
- Action has to be taken to obtain the necessary cadre approval to run the safe house and Vocational Training school from the Management Services Department.
- Collaborate with the Line Ministry to obtain additional assistance to cadre the demand of the needy people in the Province.

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