Person-Organization Fit and Organizational Engagement in The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency, Port Harcourt

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) which is saddled with the core mandate as the nation's air navigation service provider is the bed rock of Nigeria Aviation Industry and this puts a great demand on the employees who are supposed to developed uniform and consistent Nigerian airspace to meet with international standards and practices. In recent times, employees of the agency have come under verbal attacks by passengers and the general public on accusation of insensitivity in their duties and lack of professionalism. Perhaps, major fallout of this development has been the poor person-organization fit in the sector which resulted into employees' attitudes and behaviours inimical to organizational engagement, prompt and efficient service delivery. This study therefore examined the effect of person-organization fit on organizational engagement in the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency, Port Harcourt using survey research method. Accidental sampling technique was used to elicit information via questionnaire from 178 respondents. Data collected were analyzed using correlation and linear regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The results of the study showed that there is significant relationship between person-organization fit and organizational engagement. As predicted, the study also revealed that person-organization exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational engagement in the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency. Thus, the study recommends among others that management should give due attention to person-organization fit which positively contributes to a large number of organizational attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, display of organizational citizenship behaviour, job performance, organizational commitment and engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Person-Organization (P-O) fit is "the compatibility between individuals and organizations that occurs when: (i) at least one entity provides what the other needs, (ii) they share similar fundamental characteristics and (iii) both meet each other's needs" (Memon, Salleh & Baharom, 2015:315). P-O fit is widely conceptualized as the congruence between the individual and the organization. Lewin (1951) affirmed that the attitude and behaviour of individuals depends on their work environment. Particularly, individuals with a positive perception about their work environment (organization) are more likely to display positive attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, employees' perceived fit with their organization stimulates them to perform not only their job role effectively but also to go beyond expectations, which may be interpreted as a high level of engagement for their job and the employer for whom they work (Richman, 2006; Jin, 2015). However, individuals who experience a mis-fit between their own abilities and complexities of their jobs will engage in attitudes and behaviours inimical to organizational engagement (Hassan, Akram & Naz, 2012). Increased productivity, job satisfaction, reduced turnover intention, organizational commitment and engagement becomes apparent as the congruence between an individual and the organization increases (Iplik, Kilic & Valcin, 2011).

The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) which is saddled with core mandate as the nation's air navigation service provider is the bed rock of Nigeria Aviation Industry and this puts a great demand on the employees who are supposed to develop uniform and consistent Nigerian airspace to meet with international standards and practices. In recent times, employees of the agency have come under verbal attacks by passengers and the general public on accusation of insensitivity in their duties and lack of professionalism. Many passengers are scared of Nigeria airspace and flight operations because of incessant flight cancellations, delays and occasional air crashes. Relations of passengers take turn to hang around the airports since they do not trust their loved ones will get adequate care, particularly when flight operations are cancelled or delayed (Adetula, 2016). Perhaps, major fallout of this development has been the poor person-organization fit in the sector which resulted into employees' attitude and behaviours inimical to organizational engagement and prompt ant efficient service delivery. It is against this backdrop that this study explored the effect of person-organization fit on organizational engagement in NAMA using survey research method. Besides, few studies have been conducted in this area but none have been done in Nigeria to the best of our knowledge. To augment the contemporary knowledge base of human resource management (HRM) practices of developing countries, this study has been undertaken.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Organizational Engagement

According to Wellins and Concelman (2005), Organizational Engagement (OE) is an amalgamation of commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership that fosters an employee in order to reach high performance. Saks (2006) sees organizational engagement as a sense of personal attachment to the company itself, independent of the individual's professional role within the organization. Also, Kahn (1990:694) defined organizational engagement as "harnessing of organization member's selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances". As it can be understood by these definitions, organizational engagement concept is similar to organizational commitment. However, according to the definitions of organizational engagement, the distinguishing features are a genuine willingness to contribute to organizational success, combined with feelings of energy, inspiration, strength and joy (Albrecht, 2010), alignment with organizational goals and a willingness to exert discretionary effort (Unal & Turgut, 2015). In this process, an organization is seen by employees as an inspiring workplace (Albrecht, 2010) where employees are attentive, connected, integrated and focused on situations of the workplace (Kahn, 1992). They show an effort to solve problems in the organization and feel excited about issues concerning their organization (Macey, Schneider, Barbera & Young , 2009).

In addition, Pitt-Catsouphes and Matz-Costa, 2008 cited in Unal and Turgut (2015) affirmed that the basic factor that distinguishes organizational engagement from organizational commitment is 'energy'. An individual

who is engaged in his organization will be likely to reach self- actualization through channeling all of his energy to contribute to organizational success. Engaged employees perform beyond their capacity by energy, passion, aliveness and willingness. Thus, organizational engagement refers to employees' passion, enthusiasm and high level of concentration and sense of energy towards their organization. Saks (2006) concluded that organizational engagement predicts organizational commitment. That is, employees make efforts to engage in issues of the organization and enjoy being members of it. They feel energetic and use their knowledge and skills to make contributions to organizational goals. Thus, they experience 'organizational engagement'. As a result of this, employees commit to their organizations by speaking proudly of it to others, perceiving problems of the organizations as their own problems and feeling happy at the prospect of working at their organization for the rest of their career life (Unal & Turgut, 2015). Accordingly, when individuals receive economic and socio-economic resources from their leaders, they feel obliged to respond and repay the organization. Individuals repay their organization through their level of engagement. That is, employees will choose to bring cognitive, emotional and physical resources to their organization in response to the resources they receive from their organizations. These resources are predictors of organizational engagement (Saks, 2006). Moreover, perceived organizational support, supportive management, confidential interpersonal relationships and perceived organizational justice has been identified as antecedents of organizational engagement.

In the views of Ahmadian and Etebarian (2015:232), organizational engagement is defines as "individuals' link and dependency to organization including work involvement, loyalty and believing in organizational values". There are three steps in organizational engagement such as acceptance, replication and internalization. Initially, an organization element reaches satisfactory relationship through accepting penetration of others. In this way, the person feels proud of himself as a result of organization engagement. Secondly, with respect to replication, members realizes that organization values makes them delighted and satisfied internally and naturally and that they are similar and compatible to their values. Lastly, with respect to internalization, organizational members do not hesitate to protect the organization. Therefore, organizational culture needs to be designed and planned in way that it increases staff work engagement towards the organization, this is because strong organizational culture leads to improvement of staff spirit, motivation and sense of responsibility, influencing organizational performance and efficacy (Tinline & Crowe, 2010). Thus, employee's engagement to organization is characterized by three factors such as:

i.   Strong belief in organization's values and goals,
ii.   Tendency to exert more effort and
iii.   Strong tendency to stay with the organization for a long period of time.

Therefore, engaged employees are highly energetic, enthusiastic, motivated, involved and concentrated when conducting their job (Karatepe, 2013).

Person-Organization Fit

According to Chatman (1989), person-organization (P-O) fit refers to the congruence between the norms and values of organization and the values of employees. P-O fit is the compatibility of characteristics of the individual and that of the organization (Chan, 1996). Silverthorne (2004) defines P-O fit as the matching between distinctive characteristics of the employee and the organization in which the employee is working. Employee characteristics include individual's ideals, principles, interests and dispositional characteristics. While organization characteristics are made of organizational doctrine, norms, traditions and the overall organizational climate (Hassan *et al.*, 2012). In the view of Chuang, Hsu, Wang and Judge (2015), P-O fit is the match between the characteristics of individual personality and organizational climate which is sometimes refers to as organizational personality or psychological climate. The term psychological climate is often used to suggest the perceptions about job circumstances in organizational psychology in which attitudes, personality, behaviour, motivations and mindset and core values of the employees influence the organizational performance. Psychological climate can be seen as how the employees interpret and perceive their organizational environment. It can be associated with individual's emotional states, personality traits and cognitive perceptions. These perceptions are relatively consistent, homogenous and stable over time (Moran &

Volkwein, 1992; Memon, *et al.*, 2015). The construct of psychological climate is divided into six sub-dimensions which are supportive management, employees' contribution to overall goals, role clarity, contribution and efforts recognition, employees' self-expression and challenging task that requires use of various creative skills (Brown & Leigh, 1996).

Furthermore, person-organization fit is divided into two main types. First, the supplementary fit, which occurs when the individual possesses attributes that are similar to those of members in the organization. Second, the complementary fit, which occurs when an individual's characteristics add something new to fill the gap that is so far missing in the organization or vice versa, with the intention to complement each other (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). Cable and Edwards (2008) argued that supplementary and complementary fit are interrelated and that these two types of fit independently contribute to individual and organizational outcomes. Needs and supplies fit occur when organizations satisfy the needs of their employees. In this context, employees whose needs are met experience a higher rate of job satisfaction and seem more productive (Unal & Turgut, 2015). In addition, demands-abilities fit occur when there is similarity between the requirements of a job and the abilities of an individual to perform the job.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the field theory by Lewin (1952). The field theory emphasizes an individual's needs, personality and motivating forces. It argues that employee behaviour depends upon the state of the person and his environment. The concrete behaviour is a result of the way he sees the environment. When the person perceives the environment positively he tends to behave positively (Lewin, 1952). The central idea of field theory is that employees' behaviour to work is driven by certain needs and working condition which in turn affects their performance. Person-organization fit has positive relationship with job satisfaction and negative relationship with turnover intention (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Bright, 2007; Hassan et al, 2015). Consequently, job satisfaction could be a major determinant of employees' behaviour in their organization whether they exhibit favourable acts of or express deviant workplace behaviour. Wilk and Sackett (1996) affirmed that employee who experience mis-fit between his own abilities abd complexities of the job will have an intention to leave the job for another one in which he perceive better fit. However, if the employee, for one reason or the other, cannot quit or withdraw physically from the job, the employee may be inclined to engage in acts of negativity or counterproductive behaviour as a way of expressing frustration (Porter, Bigley & Steers, 2003). Hence, employees who experience positive fit between their values and that of organizational values; will be expect to behave in an engage way towards both their work and organization. Besides, values and value systems play central roles in motivation (Rokeach 1973). Furthermore, engagement itself is a motivational construct (Unal & Turget, 2015). With this in mind, employees who perceive value congruence with their organizations will have an opportunity to act in accordance with their internalized values. In order words, their environments shape their ground of motivation and their abilities to carry out work activities in an engaged way. Thus, employees with high organizational engagement will find their work interesting, meaningful and energizing, and will experience positive affects including happiness, joy and enthusiasm.

Empirical Review

Studies on person-organization fit (Blau, 1964; Schneider, 2001; Sekiguchi, 2004; Hassan *et al.*, 2012; Unal & Turgut, 2015) show that employees have a tendency to work in organizations that they have parallel values with. This interaction influences their attitudes and behaviours towards their organizations. Previous studies (e.g. O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Posner, 1992; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Elfenbein & O' Reilly, 2007; Hassan *et al.*, 2012; Memon *et al.*, 2015) found that person-organization fit have a positive relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employees' retention, organizational citizenship behaviour, employee engagement and negative relationship with turnover intention. Besides, there are some findings and ideas that shed light on the relationship between person-organization (P-O) fit and organization engagement (OE). For example, the studies conducted by Kim, Aryee, Loi and Kim (2013); Ahmadian and

Etebarian (2015) and Unal and Turgut (2015) revealed a significant and positive correlation between person-organization fit and organizational engagement. Also, Unal and Turget (2015) in their study found that person-organization fit contributed positively to organizational engagement. On the other hand, one interesting finding of their study was that person-organization fit had a more explanatory power on organizational engagement (B=0.459; p<0.001) than on work engagement (B=0.459; p<0.001). In addition, Ahmadian and Etebarian (2015) found that person-organization fit exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on organization engagement.

According to Albrecht (2010), the congruence between the demands of employees and the organizations' offered contribute to engagement level in a positive way. In a similar vein, internalization of organizational values and goals are argued to contribute to employee engagement towards their organizations (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Unal & Turgut, 2015). Bono and Judge (2003) affirmed that employees who perceive their work as consistent with their personal values will be more engaged. This contributes to the occurrence of a positive psychological state within the organization. Consequently, a high level of organizational engagement will in fact nurture favourable attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour, low turnover intention, job performance and organizational engagement. From the foregoing, we can conclude that person-organization fit can be characterized as an organizational resource which has more explanatory power on organizational engagement. In line with the literature review, the following objectives and null hypotheses were formulated for the study.

Objective of The Study

i. To examine the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational engagement in NAMA.

ii. To assess the effect of person-organization fit on organizational engagement in NAMA

Hypotheses of The Study

H_i: There is no significant relationship between person-organization fit and organizational engagement in NAMA

H_2: Person-organization fit does not have a significant effect on organizational engagement in NAMA

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a survey research designs to determine the effect of person-organization fit on organization engagement. The population of the study comprised of the employees in Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) who is three thousand and twenty seven (3,027) in number (NAMA, 2015). However, for the purpose of maintaining a manageable size, NAMA South-South Zone Office, Port Harcourt staff was used as sample. The NAMA South-South zone has an estimated staff strength of three hundred employees – full time employees ranging from grade levels four to fifteen (Junior and Senior Staff levels) were covered. The study using accidental sampling, selected one hundred and seventy eight (178) respondents. The research instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire. This was a modified form of the questionnaire used by cable and Judge (1997); Cable and Parsons (2001) to measure the congruence between employee values and organizational values, and Saks (2006) and Esen's (2011) organizational engagement scale were used to measure organizational engagement. This was necessary to better address the new respondents in a different environment. Out of the 178 copies questionnaire administered, 143 were retrieved and analyzed, giving us a response rate of 79.8%. Out of the 143 respondents, 91 were male and 52 were female employees of the agency.

Model Specification

The model has the following mathematical functions:

OE = f (P-O fit)

Econometrically, the model was specified as:

$OE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ P-O fit} + \Sigma t$

Where:

OE = Organizational engagement

P-O fit = Person-organization fit

β_0 = Intercept

$\beta_1 < 0$ = coefficient and appriori sign of the independent variable

Σt = Error term

From the above, the appriori expectation of the model will be:

Model: $\beta_1 < 0$

Methods of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using correlation and linear regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. A pilot study to determine the level of reliability was carried out on 50 staff that was part of the study within a time interval of two weeks. Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish the internal consistency of the instruments as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics of Variables

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Person-organization (P-O) fit	28	0.825
Organization engagement	15	0.879

The results yield a coefficient of 0.825 and 0.879, which satisfied the general recommended level of 0.70 for the research indicators (Cornbach, 1951). Also, the questionnaire was validated by experts in management and social sciences. Hence, researchers' satisfied reliability and validity of the instrument.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 2. Correlation Matrix

Variables		Person-Organization (P-O) fit	Organizational engagement
Person-organization (P-O) fit	Pearson correlation sig. (2 tailed) N	1 143	0.846** 0.000 143
Organizational engagement	Pearson correlation sig. (2 tailed) N	0.846** 0.000 143	1 143

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 – tailed)

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficient between person-organization fit (independent variable) and organizational engagement (dependent variable). There exists a significant positive high correlation between person-organization fit and organizational engagement (r=0.846, n = 143, p<0.01). This implies that person-organization fit has a strong and positive relationship with organizational engagement. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3. Linear Regression Analysis

Model	R	R²	Adj-R²	Std. Error of the estimate
1	0.761	0.665	0.603	0.385

a. Predictors: (constant), person-organization (P-O) fit
b. Dependent variable: Organizational engagement

Table 4. ANOVA[a]

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean	F.	Sig.	Remark
Regression	13.749	2	4.709	26.310	0.0001[b]	Sig.
Residual	8.513	139	0.325			
Total	22.262	141				

a. Dependent variable: Organizational engagement
b. Predictors: (constant), person-organization (P-O) fit

The linear regression shows (R^2) value 0.665 which revealed that P-O fit independently accounted for 66.5% of the variation in organizational engagement in NAMA. The F. statistics of 26.310 revealed that the model is statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results showed that person-organization (P-O) fit have strong and positive relationship with organizational engagement. This finding is in agreement with previous studies (Kim et al, 2013; Ahmadian & Etebarian, 2015; Unal & Turgut, 2015). Also based on the results of linear regression analysis, P-O fit has significantly explained 66.5% of variation in organizational engagement in NAMA. Therefore, the study has shown that P-O fit exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational engagement. This finding concur with the previous studies of Ahmadian and Etebarian (2015); Unal and Turgut (2015) who reported that P-O fit exerts significant effect on organizational engagement. The finding is also in agreement with the views of Bono and Judge's (2003) that employees who perceive their work as consistent with their personal values will be more engaged. Similarly, Saks (2006) affirmed that employees who experience high levels of organizational support are more likely to have greater levels of both work and organizational engagement.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has showed through it perceived findings that P-O fit has a positive effect on organizational engagement. Based on the findings of this study, we concluded that person-organization fit exists when an employee has right skills and abilities to perform his job or the job can fulfill the employee's need. Employees are likely decade from attitudes and behaviours inimical to organizational engagement if they perceive that they are better fitted with their jobs and the organizational, this is because, person-organization fit positively contributes to a large number of organizational attitudes and behaviours as job satisfaction, job performance, organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, work engagement, organizational engagement and negative relationship with turnover intention.

Based on the findings and conclusion reached in this study the following recommendations were made to ensure that the employees of NAMA are well motivated in order to discourage them from engaging in attitudes and behaviours that are inimical to organizational engagement and the good reputation of the agency:
   i.   NAMA top management should give due attention to person-organization fit to avoid employees' negative attitudes and behaviours inimical to organizational engagement, prompt and efficient service delivery.
   ii. Management should provide employees more job autonomy, offering praise for good performance and being supportive and create a more relaxed work environment. This will promotes

psychological safety within the organization and facilitates employees' engagement to their work and organization.

iii. Management should focus on recruiting and selecting employees whose personality and values are in congruence with that of the organization and with their jobs. This will go a long way to improve productivity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment display of organizational citizenship behaviour and organizational engagement.

iv. Management should be supportive, provide opportunities for professional growth, allowed employees try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences and climate of expression should be provided to the employees where their efforts and contributions would be recognized. Thus, putting importance on values such as tolerance, fairness and being people oriented.

v. Further studies are recommended to investigate the role of P-O fit on job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour and turnover intention in Nigerian banking sector.

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