

The Mediator Role of Job Satisfaction between Social Support and Employees 'Performance at Saudi Ports Authority

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Abstract--- *Human resource department is a core department in any organization. It puts into consideration the key factors of employee relationship and social support. Social support depends heavily on employee relationship. Employee performance and job satisfaction are key determinants of organizational output.*

Keywords--- *Job Satisfaction, Employee Relationship, Employee Performance, Motivation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Human resource department is a core department in any organization. It puts into consideration the key factors of employee relationship and social support. Social support depends heavily on employee relationship. Employee performance and job satisfaction are key determinants of organizational output. This also applies to Saudi's Sea Port which is one of the largest ports globally, and the biggest port in the Middle East. Maslow's theory postulated the need for employee motivation. Adams equity theory as well suggested the need for motivation for the improvement of employee performance. Recent studies have shown a very strong correlation between employee performance and social support.

Maslow (1954) suggested that some needs are more prioritized than others. In his view, individuals are given morale in order to attain such needs. This occurs in five stages. The first stage is the stage of psychological needs, whereby individuals are able to attain needs such as food, air, clothing and shelter. Psychological safety ensures that employees are psychologically satisfied which improves their ability to deliver at work as well as improving their job satisfaction. The second stage is the safety stage, whereby, individuals are not exposed to adverse insecurity problems such as lack of law and order, and political instability. Access to safety by employees in the Saudi Port has been remarkably noted as one of the key factors for increasing the employee performance. The third stage was termed as the stage of love and belongingness, where individuals are able to experience affection and friendship. When individuals are able to attain affection, they find people to confide in leading to attainment of general happiness. This is transformed in the work premises, where individuals are able to deliver more, and even are more satisfied in their current jobs. This has been identified among the workers in Saudi Port. The fourth stage is the stage of self-esteem. This is whereby employees have dignity and self-discipline. Ethics and moral values have been

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summarized to occur as a result of self-esteem and dignity. Job satisfaction also results from the same. Maslow (1948) therefore suggested the need to motivate workers in the sense of heightening their self-esteem and dignity, in order to improve their performance at work and job satisfaction. The last stage is the stage of self-actualization. This is whereby, individuals have attained psychological needs, safety, love and affection and self-esteem. Their main goal is the attainment of peak objectives. In this stage, individuals desire to achieve the highest set goals that an individual is able to attain. Motivation to achieve these increases work performance. The Maslow theory was however evolved to include 7 stages. The additional stages are the cognitive stage, whereby, need to explore, new experiences and curiosity are a major characteristic. This is essential in the sense that when workers are curious and they desire to attain new knowledge, they are motivated to do more work at their current jobs, hence, they are able to deliver more, increasing employee performance. The other stage is the transcendence stage whereby, individuals are driven by natural forces rather than personal needs. This includes religious needs, and offering service to other people. When people are motivated to serve others in a better way, their job satisfaction is evident and their performance at work as well. The Maslow stages very crucial among the workers of the Saudi's Sea Port. As suggested, the human resource department should look forward towards giving motivation to their workers, as a means of improving their social values as well as work performance. Maslow therefore advocated that social support should be given to workers in order to increase their performance at work.

According to Adam's equity theory, employees' skills, and labor should equate their salaries and returns from labor. This theory suggested that employees' motivation relies heavily on the job as well as the employer. If their contribution at work outweighs the returns from the same, some employees are likely to be demotivated, while others will put more effort to establish a balance between their contribution at work and the returns they achieve from working Beckman (2009). Saudi's Sea Port human resource department should refer to the Adams equity theory in the journey towards achieving satisfaction at work as well as the extent to which employees are able to deliver. Adams classified hard work, techniques, faithfulness, ethics and morals, commitment and tenacity as employees' contribution to work, while factors such as promotions, praise and salary increments were classified as returns from work. Establishing a balance between these two factors is a vital motivational step that the Saudi's Sea Port human resource department should ensure in creating job satisfaction and improving performance of employees. This also leads to the improvement of employees' social values. The Adam's equity theory therefore advocated that human resource department should ensure improved employee relationship as a means of increasing social support, which will yield increased job performance and higher output in the long run.

According to Mohammed (2016), most of the problems experienced by Saudi's Sea Port are majorly in the cargo offloading and loading sector. These problems majorly occur as a result of poor employee relationships resulting to limited social support hence low work performance. These problems are related to the poor delivery of the human resource department in terms of offering proper training workers, motivation in terms of salary increment and promotions and employee relationships. This study suggests the use of Adams equity theory and the Maslow's theory in ensuring job satisfaction as well as proper job performance by Saudi's Sea Port employees.

Mekonnen (2014) suggests that the act of stimulating employees with different characters, commitments and moral values increases the productivity of an organization. He described the performance of employees as a function

of motivation given to them and their ability to deliver in their current jobs. In other words, if the human resource department fails in providing sufficient motivation, and workers do not possess the job satisfaction required, the overall work productivity will be questionable. This is the case among the workers in the Saudi's Sea Port, where the human resource provides insufficient motivation to its workers, this leads to the overall low work performance especially in the cargo department. The need for improvement in the levels of motivation being delivered and heightening the ability of workers which leads to a desirable level of job satisfaction and therefore enhanced job performance is unquestionable. The levels of motivation imparted in the workers depend on the employee relationship. If a good employee relationship is ensured, more social support will be imparted o workers which will develop their job performance and ability to deliver.

According to Stella (2008), the greater the motivation of an employee, the higher their rate of performance at work and hence the greater the organizational output. She advocated for equity among the employees who are at the same level. In other words, employees should receive fair treatment, be it from the top management or from the human resource department. Fair employee treatment increases employee job satisfaction and self- esteem which is in line with the Maslow's theory. Therefore, the Saudi's Sea Port human resource should apply the Maslow's stages of motivation in ensuring they deliver quality motivation and enhance equity among its employers in the journey towards enhancing their job satisfaction as well as increasing the organizational output. Motivation is provided to workers by rewarding their contribution. In other words, establishing equilibrium between the amount of worker contribution and the output they receive from their performance as postulated in the Adams equity theory. She therefore advocated for the use of Adams equity theory in enhancing performance of workers.

Milapo (2001) maintained that motivation is a vital requirement for any organization. This is because even the workers with highest working techniques and ability will fail to deliver properly if they are not motivated. Therefore, he advocated for the provision of incentives to workers as a means of motivating them. He also postulated for equity of employees whereby all employees need to be treated equally. He also put across that motivation improves the social life of employee in terms of giving them morale and self- esteem, providing them with psychological and job satisfaction. When employees achieve all these, they desire to achieve their highest objectives, in other words, they make progress toward self-actualization. In the self- actualization stage, individuals are driven by the desire to explore more, hard work and anxiety. In recommendation, he suggested that the human resource departments of various organizations should provide motivation to its employers to the extent which the employees reach their peak levels and they desire to become self- actualized. This will increase their job satisfaction as well as performance hence achieving higher productivity. The Saudi Sea Port human resource department should therefore ensure higher motivation to its employees especially in the cargo department as a means of increasing employee performance and maintaining employee equity and providing social support.

Mulins (2007) suggested that the level of experience and work techniques that an individual possesses reflects their ability to perform at work. Work intelligence and skills can only be achieved through training which is majorly done by the human resource department of an organization. The level of motivation imparted on a particular worker also relies heavily on their job satisfaction. If employees are highly satisfied, then they are likely to be more motivated than other employees with lower job satisfaction. He suggested the increment of salaries to hardworking

employees, praising them as well as promoting them, as ways of motivating employees. This corresponds to the Adams equity theory. If this is achieved by the Saudi's Sea Port human resource, then higher employee performance is likely to be evident, which will lead to greater productivity.

Beatrice et.al. (2009) asserted that although employee performance also relies heavily on their level of education, when employees qualifications are sufficiently substandard, higher levels of motivation are likely to have fewer impacts on the ability of employees to deliver at work. Similarly, if employees' qualifications and experience is high, motivation is likely to cause a greater impact in the ability of employees to deliver. The Saudi's Sea Port should therefore ensure that qualified employees are recruited and adequate motivation availed to them in order to increase their ability to deliver hence increasing the productivity.

According to McColy and Wise (2002), motivation is very crucial for the achievement of higher organizational performance. Proper training to increase the ability of workers and their overall working skills was also pointed out to be very important tools that the human resource department of Saudi's Sea Port should look forward to offering in order to increase their ability to deliver and improving employee performance. According to him, there exists a correlation between motivation and the level of employee performance. Kothari (2013) understands correlation as indicates a relationship between dependent and independent variables, mentioning how strong or weak the correlation is. McColy and Wise (2002) established a very strong relationship between motivation, which was the independent variable and work performance, the dependent variable. Therefore it was found that work performance relies on motivation with a correlation coefficient of 0.366 at 5% level of significant.

According to Miao (2011), employee performance is also determined by the amount of support offered to them by the organization. This support was established as social support, provision of working and basic employee resources. Also, he acknowledged that providing morale and overall moral support to employees was very important. The roles and responsibilities of each employee should also be clearly outlined as a way of providing proper guidelines to employees. Proper guidelines are helpful to employees in the aspect of providing them with working procedures and enabling them to give feedback. In the Saudi's sea port, where workers are characterized by low performance leading to low overall yields, the human resource department should look forward towards ensuring that social support and guidelines are offered to employees as a means of increasing their effectiveness. Also, establishing a good relationship with employees was pointed out as another requirement of increasing their performance. Establishing a good relationship with employees, providing adequate facilities and social needs and adequate levels of motivation increases the job satisfaction derived from the employees. Hence these factors are undeniably vital in improving the performance of Saudi's Sea Port cargo department.

Terziovski and Samson (2002) asserted that human resource practices majorly provision of adequate training to workers, primarily, will help in the improvement of employee performance. He also established the need for a healthy employee relationship and provision of sufficient social support by the human resource department. This will raise the employee efficiency at work, and hence job satisfaction as a result of favorable working conditions Mekonnen (2014). This can be transformed to the case of Saudi sea port where sufficient training, moral and social support and improved employee relationship are likely to be very vital in the improvement of employee performance

and job satisfaction. The overall result will be higher productivity at work.

Robbins (1996) also suggested that increase employee performance is a derivative of employee motivation and adequate training. Therefore if the human resource department deprives the employees of sufficient training and motivation, the overall outcome will be poor job performance, dissatisfaction at work and low productivity. This is the case in the Saudi's Sea Port where the human resource department has performed in a remarkably poor way in equipping its employees with sufficient working skills especially in the cargo department. In recommendation, Robbins (1996) asserted that human resource department should work in agreement of the Maslow's theory of motivation and hierarchy of needs as well as Adams equity theory.

According to Gebregziabher, (2009), employees' personal qualities can affect their performance at work. Virtues such as dignity, self- esteem, intelligence, ethics and moral values will enhance productivity at work, while vices such as extreme drinking habits, unfaithfulness, lack of commitment and other forms of substance abuse affects their ability to deliver at work negatively. Vices such as drinking habits, unfaithfulness and lack of commitment can result due to dissatisfaction at job and poor employee relationship. Therefore, the human resource department should come up with strategies to ensure that employees have more of the virtues than vices. Also proper training programs should be established Gellert and Schalk (2012). The human resource department should also come up with ways to establish a rapport with the employees. This will enhance employee relationship, social support and job satisfaction, which is then transformed to improved employee performance and high productivity. The application of this argument by the Saudi's Sea Port Authority will lead to improved employee performance and higher productivity.

II. THE CURRENT STUDY

The main aim of this study is to examine the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between social support and employee performance. Previous studies have established a significant relationship between employee relationship and social support. This study seeks to answer the research question that; is there a relationship between employee performance and social support through the following research hypothesis.

H₁: social support have positive significant to employee performance

H₂: social support have positive significant to job satisfaction

H₃: Job satisfaction have positive significant to employee performance

H₄: job satisfaction have positive significant ad a mediator between social support and employees' performance

In conclusion, from previous studies, it is crucial for the human resource department of Saudi's Sea Port Authority to establish ways in which it can offer motivation to employees, establish a good employee relationship which increases employees ability to deliver the expected output as well as give feedback.

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