





ORGANIZATIONAL MEMORY AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN FEDERAL PARASTATALS IN ENUGU STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

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Currently, the rate at which information is flowing from employer to employee makes it almost difficult for employees to ensure that all records have been read before attempting to destroy them. This study therefore examines organizational memory and employee performance in federal parastatals in Enugu state of Nigeria. The specific objective is to determine the extent of relationship that exists between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state of Nigeria. The study was guided by one research question and descriptive survey design was used. The study was anchored on Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1976). The population of the study is 120 staff and 92 were sampled. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, 23). The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment. The study recommends among others that parastatals should ensure that their employees are competent so as to measure to the innovative changes in the organization.

Contribution/Originality: This study is one of the very few studies which have investigated the level of relationship that exists between organisational memory and employee performance with specific focus on shared knowledge and employee commitment of federal parastatals in Nigerian environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century business world seems to have moved on from being dependent on physical assets as a major competitive advantage component and performance determinant, to a world where invisible or intangible assets are key performance influencers. That is, a world where intangible resources rule. Such intangible resources include skill, competencies, abilities and knowledge. Ekwe (2013) buttresses this point by stating that the world economy has decades witnessed slow transition for the past few raging from industry based environment which has a focus on physical assets such as factories, plants, machines and equipment; to a high technology, information, knowledge and innovation based environment, which point on the expertise, talents, creativity, skill, dedication and experience of people in the organization.

Central to the whole mix of intangible resources that have been observed by scholars and researchers to be pertinent to the performance of both the public and private sector organizations is knowledge. Companies that have this resource (knowledge) tend to outperform companies that do not, and so, focus seem to have shifted to the

acquisition and conservation of these resources by many organizations. This has even led to some people calling the economy of today a knowledge-based economy as captured by Zhang *et al.* (2004) who explicate that in today's knowledge-based economy, knowledge has become a very significant asset in many organizations' asset mix. Having recognized that knowledge is very pertinent to the very survival of organizations; experts, scholars and management consultants have gone ahead to look for strategies to store and retrieve it when needed. It therefore, brings to limelight the concept of organizational memory.

Organizational memory is the outcome of an organization's learning system; this is a place where information is saved/stored until it is retrieved and processed as new knowledge. Thus, an organizational memory system is a set of knowledge retention devices, such as people and documents, which collect, save and provide access to the organization's experience. These systems can be used to gather solutions to problems, increase records of exchanges between the organization and its clients, and provide ways/links between people who need and have experiential knowledge. Ugwu (2014) opine that organizational memory is the processes that enable knowledge sharing, how information is stored in organization, and how it is accessed. This consists of the accumulated information regarding formal decisions, and this information is not generally saved, but rather it is separated across different retention facilities (Williams, 2014).

Organizations such as Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) and the Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET) achieve their knowledge either from external or internal sources. However, it is not just enough to acquire knowledge, it is also important to store, process and retrieve this knowledge for usage in the organizations. Thus, organizational memory is often viewed as a system of knowledge repositories. The organizations not only store the knowledge but also has to spread same within and outside the organization for it to be effective (Bencsik *et al.*, 2009). Organizational memory is said to be one of the essential factors of organizational learning, particularly if it is concerned with knowledge flowing from an organization to its employees. Knowledge is no doubt an important component in the business dynamics of today and this is powered by information.

Nigerian Civil Service is an umbrella body where the studied federal parastatals are under. The parastatals operate under the guidelines of civil service rules and regulations except for FIRS which is semi-autonomous but still operate within the civil service rules. The civil service and by extension these studied federal parastatals appear fraught with problems such as lack of measurable objectives, inadequate evaluations, mismanagement of time, inadequate facilities, disorganization, personnel mismanagement and over centralization which could be attributed to poor organizational memory. Federal Inland Revenue (FIRS), Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) and Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET) have been facing serious challenges of poor employees' competence which arises as a result of lack of innovative retention, poor employee commitment as a result of lack of shared knowledge and poor employee retention which occur as a result of poor skill acquisition and retention. All these seem to be as a result of poor organizational memory practices or management in the studied parastatals. Thus, these internal weaknesses appear to make them to define their performance or output in monetary terms (money disbursed or made for the Federal Government) rather than service delivered. This study was therefore necessitated as a result of these aforementioned organizational memory management issues in these agencies. It is against this backdrop that the researcher seeks to examine the relationship that exists between organizational memory and employee performance of selected federal parastatals in Enugu state.

The main objective of the study is to determine the extent of relationship that exists between organizational memory and employee performance in Enugu state.

The specific objective of the study is:

1. To determine the extent of relationship that exists between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

1.1. Research Question

1. To what extent does shared knowledge affect employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state?

1.2. Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Conceptual Framework

2.1.1. Organizational Memory

Organization memory (OM) can be define as the means by which knowledge from the past is brought to bear on present activities, thus resulting in higher or lower levels of organizational effectiveness. OM is sometimes called institutional or corporate memory and defined as the accumulated body of data, information, and knowledge created in the course of an individual organization's existence (Jennex, 2012). Organizational memory is the ideal output of the organization's learning process where information is stored until retrieved and processed again. Organizational memory is composed of the structure of its retention facility, the information contained in it, the processes of information acquisition and retrieval, and its consequential effects" (Walsh and Ungson, 2011). The information stored consists of individual memories including experiences, beliefs, routines and tangible arte facts (Moorman and Miner, 2008).

Organizational memory includes files, documents, accounts, standard operating procedures, and rule books. In the social and physical geography of organizational structures and relationships; in standards of good professional practice; in the culture of organizational stories; and in shared perceptions of the way things are done around here (Rowlinson, 2010). Once the information has been stored it is further able to be retrieved from the organizational memory, then interpreted and utilized for specific purposes and converted into meaningful information. To effectively manage an organization's memory, Walsh and Ungson (2011) opined that managers need to reflect upon "who, what, when, where, why and how is information stored?" A well-managed organizational memory contributes to organizational success (Chang and Cho, 2008).

2.1.2. Employee Performance

Employee performance can be defined as a process for establishing a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organization level. It is about aligning the organizational objectives with the employees' agreed measures, skills, competency requirements, development plans and the delivery of results. Many companies normally assess their employee's performance on an annual or quarterly basis in order to ascertain the areas that need improvement, learning and development in order to achieve the overall business strategy and to create a high performance workforce (Garger, 2009).

2.1.3. Shared Knowledge

Shared knowledge is a key dimension of organizational learning and a key mechanism for organizations success. The start of an organization's learning process is triggered by the diffusion of an individual's knowledge. The individual's knowledge is spread and communicated towards groups and teams, and further shared with, and absorbed by, the entire organization. The sharing and transferring of knowledge enables the organization's learning, and this learning can progress competence building processes (Borgatti and Carboni, 2007). This view is theoretically framed by the knowledge-based theory of organizations that suggests that "knowledge is viewed as

residing within the individual, and the primary role of the organization is knowledge application rather than knowledge creation” (Grant, 2006). Shared knowledge is a key element of a firms’ strategic management, as a key success factor it increases both organizational performance and effectiveness (Argote, 2013).

2.1.4. Employee Commitment

Over the years, commitment has been defined and measured in many different ways. Indeed, this lack of consensus in the definition of the term has contributed greatly to its treatment as a multidimensional construct (Meyer and Allen, 2011). Even if multiple dimensions or forms of commitment exist, there has to be a core essence that characterizes it. To establish the core essence is, one has to look for commonality among the existing conceptualizations. As indicated by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) all of these definitions refer to a force that directs a person’s behaviour. There appears to be consensus that the force is experienced as a mind-set (i.e. a frame of mind or psychological state).

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This section revealed the suitable theory in which the study was anchored on. The theory in which the study was anchored on is Social learning theory by Bandura (1976).

This study is anchored on social learning theory which was propounded by Bandura (1976). Social learning theory is a theory that explains skills acquisition and transfer of knowledge in individuals. The theorist focused on the part played by models in transmitting specific behaviour, attitudes and emotional responses in different circumstances, indicating that there is much more to learn through role modeling than classical or operant conditioning. It explains that people learn new behaviour through observational learning, suggesting that if an individual observes pleasant, favourable outcome or consequences in the observed behaviour, they most likely imitate, and adopt the behaviour themselves. Therefore, by watching the behaviour of other people, we are capable of learning many behavioural patterns. Every individual has at one time or the other watched and tried to imitate actions of others in the performance of a task. This is particularly true when such activities involve social interaction and interpersonal communications. Bandura proposed that we observe others perform an action and then rehearse them until we become comfortable performing them when there is a need for it. The application of the social learning principles to the training and development of individuals were labelled a long time ago as behavioural modelling technique (Goldstein and Sorcher, 1974).

2.3. Empirical Studies

Examine the influence of knowledge transferred on organizational development in Mali using six manufacturing companies. The study was guided by three research questions and descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study consists of 301 staff and 150 was sampled using simple random sample of 50 % of the population. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the aid of statistical package for social science. The findings revealed that knowledge transferred has a significant effect on organizational development. The study recommends that manufacturing firms should develop their existing employees so as to have effective knowledge transferred to new employees.

Allen and Bartle (2014) carried out a study on the impact of knowledge transferred on employee competence in Thailand using twelve rice manufacturing companies. The study was guided by two research questions and descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study consists of 688 staff and 124 was sampled using simple random sample of 20 % of the population. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using Z-test and the statistical package used was SPSS version 17. The findings revealed that knowledge transferred has a significant impact on employee competence.

Argote (2013) examine organizational memory as correlate of employee retention in Singapore using four plastic manufacturing companies. Two research questions were used and correlational survey design was adopted. The population of the study consists of 275 staff and 100 staff was sampled. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using one Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS, 17). The findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational memory and employee retention. The study recommends that manufacturing firms should maintain effective and secured organizational memory so as to improve employee retention.

Bartsch and Maurer (2013) examine organizational memory as correlate of employee competence in Zimbabwe using five manufacturing companies. The study was guided by three research questions and descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study consists of 532 staff and 163 was sampled using simple random sample. Primary was used and it was collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using Correlation. The findings revealed that is a significant weak relationship between organizational memory and employee competence.

Bhatt (2011) examine innovative retention as correlate of employee retention in Indonesia using eight rice manufacturing companies. The study was guided by four research questions and expo facto survey design was used. The population of the study consists of 1075 staff and 300 staff was sampled. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using one, simple percentage, arithmetic mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS, 17). The findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between innovative retention and employee retention. The study recommends that manufacturing firms should train their employee on how to adapt to change so as to improve employee retention.

Borgatti and Carboni (2007) examine shared knowledge as correlate of employee competence in Spain using four manufacturing companies. The study was guided by two research questions and descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study consists of 319 staff and 90 staff was sampled. The data used was a primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using one Correlation. The findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between shared knowledge and employee competence. The study recommends that manufacturing firms should encourage the old and experience employee to train the new employee so as to have effective shared knowledge and as such increase employee competence.

This study focused on organizational memory and employee performance of federal parastatals in Enugu state. Organization memory (OM) was explained as the means by which knowledge from the past is brought to bear on present activities, thus resulting in higher or lower levels of organizational effectiveness. Employee performance was viewed as a process for establishing a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organization level. This study was anchored on social learning theory. Different related literature was reviewed but none of the study focused on organizational memory and employee performance with respect to innovative retention, shared knowledge and employee commitment in parastatals Enugu state put together which is the gap the study intends to cover.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted correlational survey design and attention was paid to the variables of the study which are innovative retention, shared knowledge, skill retention, (independent variables measured with organizational memory) and the dependent variable such as employee competence, employee commitment and employee retention measured with employee performance.

The study is delimited to the three federal parastatals in Enugu state which include Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) with a population of 50 staff, Nigerian Deposit insurance Corporation (NDIC) South East regional

office with a population of 35 staff and Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET) with a population of 35 staff giving a total of 120 staff (Source: Field survey, 2018).

Table-1. Sampling frame of federal parastatals in Enugu State.

S/N	Parastatal	Population
1	Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS).	50
2	Nigerian Deposit insurance Corporation (NDIC).	35
3	Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET).	35
4	Nigerian Civil Defence Corps.	22
5	Nigerian Geological Survey Agency.	31
6	Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Agency.	34
7	Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria.	34
8	Nigerian Airspace Management Agency.	28
9	Corporate Affairs Commission.	30
10	National Bureau of Statistics.	33

Source: Field survey, 2019.

From the distribution Table 1, Judgmental sampling was applied thereby taking parastatal with the highest numerical staff strength. In accordance with the judgmental sampling technique, this thereby led the researcher to select 25 percent of the total number of parastatals in the sampling frame.

The sample size was determined using Taro Yamene formula. Since the population is large, the researcher adopted Taro Yamene to sample the population. This is shown as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

where,

n = sample size.

N = population size.

e = error of significance.

1 = constant.

Using the formula, we have.

Therefore, let n? N = 120, e = 5% or 0.05

$$n = \frac{120}{1+120(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 92 \cong 92$$

The source of data for this work is both primary and secondary data. The primary source of the data will be sourced using structured questionnaire. The primary data will be elicited by administering questionnaire to the respondents while the secondary data will be collected from journals, textbooks and statistical bulletins.

The researcher used structured questionnaire as major instrument of data collection. Questionnaire will be used because it helps in gathering information in a survey and also provide a quick means of obtaining respondents view on the whole range of subject. The questionnaire is made up of two sections A & B. Section A contains personal data of respondents while section B contains questions with respect to the research questions.

To ensure that the instrument elicit consistent result, it was tested for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha test. The pilot study was conducted using twenty five percent (25%) of the sample size of the study which is twenty-three (23) copies of questionnaire. At the end, nineteen (19) copies were retrieved representing twenty one percent (21%) of the sample size. The result obtained is shown in the Table 2.

Table-2. Reliability statistics of the test instrument.

Cronbach's alpha	N. of items
.901	19

Source: Field survey (pilot study), 2017.

3.1. Computation: SPSS ver. 23

From the result obtained, the reliability coefficient was .901 which if converted into percentage is 90%. This signifies that the instrument is reliable and capable of eliciting consistent result.

3.2. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for the study would be presented in table and analyzed using frequency distributions and percentage. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient will be employed in analyzing the statistical data with the aim of establishing the strength of relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Therefore, the three hypotheses; H_{01} , H_{02} and H_{03} will be tested using Pearson product moment correlation.

$$r^2 = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{(n \sum x^2 - \sum (x)^2)(n \sum y^2 - \sum (y)^2)}$$

$$0 < r^2 < 1$$

Decision Rule: accept the null hypothesis when the alpha value is greater than the probability values, otherwise we reject. Also, to accept the item, mean response (\bar{x}) must be greater than mean of weight (\bar{x}) otherwise the item is rejected.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the questionnaire distributed to the individual firms and their response rate are shown. This will help to identify the firm with the highest number of questionnaires distributed, the firm with the highest returned questionnaires and how it will influence the analysis.

Table-3. Responses from respondents on perception of shared knowledge.

S/N	Items on shared knowledge	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total
13	Effective coaching help increases organizational development.	34(38%)	51(57.7%)		3(3%)	2(2%)	90(100%)
14	Effective mentoring increases employee performance.	32(36%)	53(59%)	2(2%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	90(100%)
15	Shared knowledge reduces cost and loss in running parastatals.	32(36%)	55(61%)		1(1%)	2(2%)	90(100%)
16	Effective shared knowledge leads to improve customer's satisfaction.	36(40%)	40(44%)	3(3%)	5(5%)	6(7%)	90(100%)
17	Effective shared knowledge encourages smooth organizational management.	49(54%)	30(33%)	1(1%)	5(5%)	5(5%)	90(100%)
18	Employee ability to educate younger encourages employee retention.	53(59%)	32(36%)	1(1%)	2(2%)	2(2%)	90(100%)

Source: Field survey, 2019.

From the analysis **Table 3**, it shows that 38 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Effective coaching help increases organizational development, 57 percent agree, 3 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree.

From the analysis, it shows that 36 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Effective mentoring increases employee performance, 59 percent agree, 2 percent disagree, 1 percent strongly disagree while 1 percent was undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 36 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge reduces cost and loss in running parastatals, 61 percent agree, 1 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree.

From the analysis, it shows that 40 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Effective shared knowledge leads to improve customer’s satisfaction, 44 percent agree, 3 percent disagree, 5 percent strongly disagree while 7 percent were undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 54 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Effective shared knowledge encourages smooth organizational management, 33 percent agree, 1 percent disagree, 5 percent strongly disagree while 5 percent were undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 59 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Employee ability to educate younger encourages employee retention, 36 percent agree, 1 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree while 2 percent were undecided.

Table-4. Responses from respondents on perception of employee commitment.

S/N	Items on employee commitment	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total
19	Shared knowledge increases employee output.	25(27%)	54(60%)	5(5%)	5(5%)	1(1%)	90(100%)
20	Shared knowledge increases employee commitment.	31(34%)	50(56%)	1(1%)	6(6%)	2(2%)	90(100%)
21	Shared knowledge reduces organizational loss.	55(61%)	25(27%)	1(1%)	7(7%)	2(2%)	90(100%)
22	Shared knowledge reduces employee stress.	32(35%)	50(56%)		5(6%)	3(3%)	90(100%)
23	Shared knowledge maximizes organizational profit.	53(59%)	20(23%)	3(3%)	5(5%)	9(10%)	90(100%)
24	Employee ability to make profit for organization increases employee commitment.	20(22%)	65(72%)	2(2%)	1(1%)	2(2%)	90(100%)

Source: Field survey, 2019.

From the analysis Table 4, it shows that 27 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge increases employee output, 60 percent agree, 5 percent disagree, 1 percent strongly disagree while 5 percent were undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 34 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge increases employee commitment, 56 percent agree, 6 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree while 1 percent were undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 61 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge reduces organizational loss, 27 percent agree, 7 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree while 1 percent were undecided.

From the analysis, it shows that 35 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge reduces employee stress, 56 percent agree, 6 percent disagree, 3 percent strongly disagree.

From the analysis, it shows that 59 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Shared knowledge maximizes organizational profit, 23 percent agree, 5 percent disagree, 10 percent strongly disagree while 3 percent of the respondent disagree.

From the analysis, it shows that 22 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Employee ability to make profit for organization increases employee commitment, 72 percent agree, 1 percent disagree, 2 percent strongly disagree while 2 percent of the respondent disagree.

4.1. Test of Hypothesis

Decision rule: We accept the null hypothesis when the probability value is greater than the alpha value, otherwise we reject it.

4.2. Hypothesis 1

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

H_a : There is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

Table-5. Descriptive statistics computed from responses on shared knowledge and employee commitment by the respondents.

Descriptive statistics			
Variables of the study	Mean	Std. deviation	N
Shared knowledge	18.000	16.000	5
Employee commitment	18.000	17.216	5

Source: Field survey, 2019.

Table-6. Correlations result from the responses on shared knowledge and employee commitment from the respondents.

Correlations			
		Shared knowledge	Employee commitment
Shared knowledge	Pearson correlation	1	.794
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.0021
	N	5	5
Employee commitment	Pearson correlation	.794	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0021	
	N	5	5

Source: Field survey, 2019.

From the analysis, it shows that the probability value (0.0021) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher accepts the alternative hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state with a correlation value of 0.794. This shows that there is a strong positive relationship between knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of Findings

From the discussion of findings, the summary was made;

The findings show that effective coaching help increases organizational development, effective mentoring increases employee performance, shared knowledge reduces cost and loss in running parastatals, effective shared knowledge leads to improve customers satisfaction, effective shared knowledge encourages smooth organizational management and that employee ability to educate younger encourages employee retention. This finding was in accordance with the study carried out by Crossan (2015). The study also shows that shared knowledge increases employee output, shared knowledge increases employee commitment, shared knowledge reduces organizational loss, shared knowledge reduces employee stress, shared knowledge maximizes organizational profit and that employee ability to make profit for organization increases employee commitment.

From the analysis, it shows that the probability value (0.0021) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher accepts the alternative hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state with a correlation value of 0.794. This shows that there is a strong positive relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state. This was in line with the study carried out Sabherwal (2011) which revealed that shared knowledge has a

positive relationship with employee commitment. There is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state.

$$(P - value = 0.0021 < 0.05; 95\% confidence interval, r = 0.794)$$

5.2. Conclusion

From the discussion of findings, the researcher concluded that there is a significant relationship between shared knowledge and employee commitment of the parastatals in Enugu state. These show that organizational memory has a great impact on employee performance.

5.3. Recommendations

Having discussed the findings and drawn some conclusions therein, the following recommendations were made;

1. The parastatal should ensure that their employees are competent so as to measure to the innovative changes in the organization.
2. Federal parastatal should make sure that they employ workers with high skill so as to create room for knowledge sharing.
3. Employee should ensure that they are committed to their parastatal so as to receive maximum retention in their respective organization.

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