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## The Effect of Job Security on the Secretary's Job Performance

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### **Abstract:**

*A secretary's Job security has a great influence on his/her level of commitment and poses a threat to the overall performance and productivity of and organization. In view of this, the paper examines job security and its effect on a secretary's job performance. The paper argues Secretaries are the pillar of every organization; hence need to be secure on the job for the development of any organization. Since job security is concerned with the possibility or probability of an individual keeping his/her job and a means through which an individual retains their work, the secretary being "an assistant to an executive, possessing mastery of office skills and ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, can displays initiative, exercises judgment, and take decisions within the scope of authority" their job security is paramount to organizational and national development. The paper emphasised the need for organizations to find a way of assuring that employees tolt is therefore recommended that the secretarial profession should be given the required recognition and technology to enable effectiveness and efficiency which will boost the employee's morale and national development in the long-run.*

**Keywords:** Secretary, job security, organization and performance

### **1. Introduction**

The term job security has become an important aspect in the life of every employee in any organization as the most important desire of every employee is to keep their jobs for as long as they wish. This can only be achieved when and where the job one does brings satisfaction and economic benefits. According to Geoffrey James (2012), job security has a significant effect on the overall performance of the team as well as on the organisation's performance. He noted that organizations with worker with low job security cause people to lose faith in their future which consequently affect performance. He confirms that the more an employee enjoys high job security the more likely he would effectively perform his task which will reflect in the overall performance in the organization.

James (2012) defines job security as the assurance in an employee's job. Thus, Employee in an organization need to be secured in their areas of specialization. Adebayo and Lucy (2012) agreed that job security has become indispensable in employee and organization preference list. These have led to one of the most crucial and important factors among the employee preference list as well as the organization (Schappel, 2012, KPMG, 2012). This implies that security is far beyond a situation free of dangers, but is an 'insurance'. With the shift of focus from protection against concrete dangers towards insurance, security has become "a general 'societal idea of value 'and a universally employed 'normative concept' that is used with different meanings in an affirmative manner" (Makropoulos 1995: 749). Continuity due to the general economic conditions in the country.

However, the most desirable part of every employee is to keep their job for a long period of time. Therefore, the problems most organization faced is not just to employ staff, but to ensure that such employee is retain by securing their job. Security is the degree of resistance to, or protection from harm. Therefore, security can be defined as a way through which an employee is assured of his work.

A secretary is an indispensable employee in an organization, the personal attributes and roles of a secretary has made her somebody to reckon with in an organization. A secretary according to Hornby (2001), "is an employee in an office who deals with correspondence, keeps records, makes arrangements and appointments for a particular member of the staff". A secretary is a major communicating link between the executive, colleagues and the public. As a result of this, a secretary plays a vital role in helping to create and maintain the smooth running of an organization. Thus, a secretary can be seen as the backbone and image of any organization which makes her to be somebody that needs to be secured on the job because of the importance her job function in the organization.

### 1.1. *The Concept of Job Security*

According to Arabi 2000, job security is the feeling of having a proper job and the assurance of its continuance in future as well as the absence of threatening factors. In other words, an employee will feel continuity in his job without any threat. Job security is one of the implications of security. In job security, there are issues such as job changes, missing the job and non-achieving proper jobs. According to industrial and organizational psychologists, job security is one of the creators of job satisfaction and commitment (Thomas et al., 2006). Job satisfaction is individual's overall attitude on his/her job (Robbins, 1999). Adebayo & Lucky (2012) said job security is with the possibility or probability of an individual keeping his/her job. It is a means through which an individual retains their work. Simon (2011) stated that it is a chance of employees keeping their jobs in order not to be unemployed. A job or occupation is a person's role in society. It is an activity, often regular and performed in exchange for payment (for a living). <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/job>. Job performance relates to the act of doing a job efficiently. Job performance is a means to reach a goal or set of goals within a job, role or organization (Campbell 1990), but not the actual consequences of the acts performed within a job. Campbell (1990) affirms that job performance is not a single action but rather a "complex activity", performance in a job is strictly a behaviour and a separate entity from the outcomes of a particular job which relate to success and productivity. Erving (1959) define "performance" as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants. Taking an employee as a point of contact we realized that some employee will be watching, some will be listening and others may be co-participated in the work. The pre-established pattern of action which is unfolded during a performance and which may be presented or played through on other occasions may be called a "part" or a "routine." These situational terms can easily be related to conventional structural ones. When an individual or performer plays the same part to the same audience on different occasions, a social relationship is likely to arise.

### 1.2. *Job Security and Secretarial Job Performance*

In business, to perform means doing a job efficiently with maximum productivity. In the corporate world, people, machines, systems, departments, and organizations are required to perform.

At least since the advent of the factory in the nineteenth century, there has been a merging of the human, the technical, and the organizational. This has led to an increase in material wealth – and also the sense that individuals are just "part of the machine. Individual performance is of high relevance for organizations and individuals alike. Showing high performance when accomplishing tasks results in satisfaction, feelings of self- efficacy and mastery (Bandura, 1997; Kanfer et al, 2005). However, an individual who performed more than others are well paid, promoted, respected and honoured; such individual is more secure on the job rather than those who did not perform up to expectations.

Onifade (2004) defined a Secretary as "An assistant to an executive, possessing mastery of office skills and ability, assumes responsibility without direct supervision, displays initiative, exercises judgment, and makes decisions within the scope of her authority." Collins Gem Business Dictionary (1975) defined the secretary as the official manager of the day-to-day business of a society of board. Similarly, a secretary can be defined as an assistant to an executive that deals with the daily running of an organization. Hence, a Secretary must be secure, in other to promote the day-to-day activities of an organization. Hornsby (2000) defined a secretary as "an employee in an office, usually working for another person dealing with letter typing, filling and making appointments and arrangement". The definition is not only too narrow for, it is also primitive and totally out of place. The word secretary today is more encompassing. Secretary of this generation has a wider function to perform in an organization. Austin (1994) defines a secretary a person who has acquires the basic secretarial skill of shorthand and typewriter and has enough knowledge and practical experience in the office work to be able to cope with filing simple office machinery and reception duties. Job security has become something that is not widely known to workers, they only need a job, and they are not after security. It is a commodity in a global economy that offers no lack of cheap labour alternatives. However, it is not enough reasons to dismiss the importance of job security for your career. Employees who has worked for a long period of time are more likely to achieve long-term career goals, better position financially, and gain more skills on their job. All these are factors that provide sufficient importance striving toward job security.

### 1.3. *Objective of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to examine job security and its effect on the secretary's performance.

## 2. **Benefits of Job Security on Secretary Performance**

- Organizational development
- Build good image of the organization
- Career stability
- Improved motivation
- Interpersonal relationship
- High productivity
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### 2.1. *Organizational Development*

According to Bottomley (1983), development is "a specified state of growth or advancement: a new and advanced product or idea; an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation". While Cole (2000), says development is "a course of action designed to enable the individual realize his potential for growth in the organization". It relates to the future rather than present job. An organization is a social unit of people that is structured and managed to meet a need or

to pursue collective goals. Job security brings about organizational development, it will lead to the advancement of the organization. An organization which provides security for his secretary or workers will be more developed than those who employ without looking at the aspect of security.

#### 2.1.1. Build Good Image of the Organization

According to Carvell (2001), good image is the integration of people into a work situation that motivates them to work together productively, co-operatively and with economic, psychological and social satisfaction. Thus, it aims at making people to produce, cooperate through mutual interest and gain satisfaction from their relationship. From the above definition, it will be seen that job security enhances the image of an organization. It is also the development of awareness towards others and their needs having the willingness and ability to respond to their needs. Also, Keith (2000) defined good image as the exertion of interpersonal influence for the purpose of creating a desired impression of influencing of thoughts, words and actions of others along desires visitors and co-workers. According to Hanna et al (2003), it is the skill in dealing with people inside and outside the office can be worth incalculable dollars in goodwill. This means that job security of a secretary is very important. Secretaries always build the image of an organization through their personal attributes.

#### 2.1.2. Career Stability

Cambridge English dictionary defined job stability is the fact of an employee, or a group of employees, being able to keep the same job for a long time. [www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/job-stability](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/job-stability) Job security brings career and financial stability. A secretary will be stable on a job if there is job security, this will lead to more experience on the job instead of moving from one job to another. A secretary needs a stable job to be effective performance and in the long run improve the development of an organization.

#### 2.1.3. Improved Motivation

Employees who has no fear for the loss of their jobs are more likely to perform at a higher level and feel greater commitment to an employer. However, job security works when there is motivation, the employees see a connection between job retention and their own performance. Secretaries perform several jobs especially amidst assisting their boss and feels secured on their jobs when motivated appropriately.

#### 2.1.4. Interpersonal Relationship

An interpersonal relationship is a strong, deep or close association or acquaintance between two or more people that may range in duration from brief to enduring. This association may be based on inference, love, solidarity, regular business interactions or some other type of social commitment. Job security bring out interpersonal relationship among other workers. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/interpersonal\\_relationship](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/interpersonal_relationship). Interpersonal relationship is one of the attributes of a secretary, which is one of the skills that developed the organization. A secretary that is more secure will maintain a good human relationship.

#### 2.1.5. High Productivity

Business Dictionary defines productivity as a measure of the efficiency of a person, machine, factory, system, etc. in converting inputs into useful outputs. Job security brings about high productivity especially when the staff in the organization is well secured. A secretary is an assistance of an executive who represent the boss needs to be secure for the organization to be more productive effectively.

### *2.2. Causes of Insecurity on Secretary Performance*

- Educational qualification
- Technological problem

#### 2.2.1. Educational Qualification

Education is the process of receiving or giving knowledge in the school between a teacher and the students. Education qualification is what you have acquired in the school. The level of your education will determine your job security especially in private companies. Educational qualifications are the degrees diplomas, certificates, professional titles and so forth that an individual has acquired whether by full-time study, part-time study or private study, whether conferred in the home country or abroad, and whether conferred by educational authorities, special examining bodies or professional bodies. <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=744> A low educational standard will definitely affect the secretary's job security.

#### 2.2.2 Technological Problem

According to Burchfield (2005), Technology is the branch of knowledge that deals with the industrial arts and science, utilization of such knowledge and means used to produce material necessities of a society. Secretaries today cannot do without information and communication technology, and some secretaries are not familiar with these new technological tools for their day-to-day activities. Information and communication technology are the use of electronic equipment, especially computers, for processing, storing, analysing and sending out of information. The new technological

tools possess a lot of challenges to secretaries in such a way that some secretary could not make use of this equipment and this can affect their job security.

### 3. Conclusion

Job security has become an important aspect in the life of every employee in an organization. A secretary is a major communicating link between the executive, colleagues and the public. As a result of this, a secretary plays a vital role in creating and maintaining the smooth running of an organization. Thus, a secretary can be seen as the backbone and image of any organization as a result the importance of their job function, hence their job needs to be secured.

### 4. Recommendation

The following recommendations were made:

- Secretarial profession should be given the required recognition and technology to enable effectiveness and efficiency which will boost national development in the long-run.
- Secretaries should develop themselves by acquiring more knowledge on their area of specialization in order to secure their job.
- Secretaries should know the right and duties of the organization in order to know how they are secure on the job.
- The Government and Educational Bodies should review the Post-graduate curriculum to accommodate Office Technology and Management as an independent discipline.

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