



AN INVESTIGATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND EDUCATION LEVEL AMONG EMPLOYEES

KEYWORDS

Organizational Commitment, Affective Commitment, Education.

S.Jailapdeen

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

ABSTRACT Commitment is becoming an increasingly important issue in competitive business environment for organizations. Positive outcomes of organizational commitment; like low turnover rates and absenteeism, improvement in customer satisfaction, higher work motivation, greater organizational citizenship behaviour, higher job performance, and indicator of the effectiveness of an organization have been extensively researched; however, the relationship between demographic factors and organizational commitment has not been fully explored. The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between education level and organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative) among employees. A questionnaire study was undertaken with 269 respondents. Results showed that there are statistically significant relationship between education level and organizational commitment.

Introduction

One aspect of employee-organization linkages that has received broad attention from both managers and behavioural scientists is the concept of employee commitment. The concept's popularity is increasing due to the assumed impact organizational commitment has on employees and organizational performance. Employees in modern organizations are increasingly expected to show effort, motivation and initiative. The success of an organization depends not only on how the organization makes the most human competences, but also how it encourages commitment to an organization.

Review of Literature

In the literature, commitment has been analyzed from several perspectives. It has served as both a dependent variable for antecedents such as age, education and tenure and as a predictor of various outcomes such as intention to leave, turnover, absenteeism, and performance. Some writers regard commitment as a dimension of organizational effectiveness, or as a force that contributes to increased organizational effectiveness by improving employees' performance and reducing turnover. Therefore, employee commitment, together with a competent workforce, seems to be of decisive importance for an organization to get competitive advantage and to increase performance.

Mowday et al. define commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". They mention three characteristics of commitment:

- A belief and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization,
- a strong willingness to put in effort for the organization, and
- The desire to remain with the organization. Other authors define commitment as:
- Psychological link between the employee and his or her organization.
- a binding of an individual to behavioural acts
- The strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization
- Being a partisan affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization, to one's roles in relation to the goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake,

apart from its purely instrumental worth

- The attachment, emotionally and functionally, to one's place of work

In the literature there are different definitions of organizational commitment. Several reviews and meta-analyses (such as) conducted on the topic of organizational commitment indicate that no one view of commitment is fundamentally 'correct'. A singular focus on a given view of commitment is, therefore, gradually being replaced with a multiple components model of commitment. One of them is Meyer and Allen's a three component model links each component of commitment to specific work outcomes such as employee retention and on-the-job behaviour. Each component of commitment has different behavioural outcomes and is likely to influence job performance, absenteeism and citizenship behaviour differently.

Affective commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in an organization characterized by acceptance of organizational values and by willingness to remain with the organization. Strong affective commitment refers that individuals want to stay in an organization, and they accept its goals. Continuance commitment means an awareness of the costs related to leaving an organization. Individuals' link to the organization is based on the belief that they need to do so. Continuance commitment can develop as a result of any event that increases the costs of leaving, provided the individual notices that these costs have been incurred. Strong continuance commitment suggests the employees remain because they feel they have few options otherwise, while strong affective commitment implies that employees stay with an organization because they want to. Normative commitment is a feeling of obligation to stay in the organization and continue employment. Therefore, individuals think that they ought to stay with an organization and, thus, they remain by virtue of their belief that it is morally right to do so.

Problem Statement

Organizational commitment has variously been found to be positively related to such organizational outcomes as job satisfaction, motivation and attendance and negatively related to outcomes such as absenteeism and labor turnover. According to Scholl whatever the interpretation, commitment has become a

variable of interest because of the belief that increased commitment leads, in some way, to increased organizational effectiveness, and is thus something worth developing in employees. In this study Meyer and Allen's a three component model of organizational commitment was used to study the relationship between employees' education level and their organizational commitment. Mowday et al. suggest four categories of variables affecting organizational commitment.

- Personal characteristics,
- Job characteristics,
- Work experiences, and
- Structural characteristics

Methods & Materials
Objective of the Study

This paper aims to investigate the relationship between the employees' education level and their organizational commitment. This is a quantitative study where the data were gathered by using the questionnaire method. The unit of analysis is the individuals who responded to the questionnaire

Sample

The population for the study consisted of employees in a construction equipments manufacturing industries based in Thiruvallur districts of Tamil Nadu. 350 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 275 returns were received – a response rate of 78,6 percent. Of these returns, 269 were usable for further analysis. Six questionnaires had to be discarded because too many of the questions were left un-responded

Measures of the Study Variables

Regarding organizational commitment, Meyer and Allen's a three-component model of commitment was used. The three components are affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The three components were measured by using Meyer and Allen's scales. For each component, the multiple item scale was used. In the questionnaire respondents were presented with a series of statements and asked to mention their personal opinions about each one. On the research questionnaire, the respondents were given 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") to record their answers. Before doing other analyses the reliability analysis was conducted. As can be seen from the Table 1 reliability coefficients for all three components of organizational commitment exceeded .80

A scale for each component was constructed by averaging the responses across relevant items by using COMPUTE MEAN option of SPSS for Windows programme

Table 1. Sample Alpha of the Study Variables.

Variables (Three-component model of commitment)	Number of Items	Sample Alpha
Affective Commitment	8	0.83
Continuance Commitment	9	0.82
Normative Commitment	6	0.81

Analytic Procedure (statistical analysis)

Prior to statistical analysis, all questionnaire data were computer-coded for use with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows. Frequency analysis was used to indicate the respondent's opinions for each questionnaire items. Then, as the main aim of the study is to find out the relationship between employees' education level and their organizational commitment ANOVA analysis was used.

Results & Discussion

Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The administration of the questionnaire resulted in 269 usable returns. When asked to specify their personal characteristics, 92.2% were male and 7,8% were female. Regarding their marital status, 64,0% were married, 34,5% were single, and remaining 1,5% were others (widowed, divorced or separated). Regarding their age, 32,7% were under 25 years old, 38,3% were the ages between 26 and 30, and the remaining 29,0% were over 31 years old. When asked to specify their highest education level, the following was reported: primary school (8,2%), secondary school (20,1%), high school (60,1%), vocational school (5,2%), and university (6,4%). Of all respondents, when asked to specify their job status, the following was reported: senior manager (2,2%), middle level manager (1,9%), first line manager (4,9%), clerical or secretarial (3,4%), technical (17,2%), and "other – worker who are the person with no specific job qualification" (70,5%). 72,4% of respondents had been with the company for two years or longer, while remaining 27,6% had been with the company for less than two years

The Relationship between Education Level and Organizational Commitment

In order to find out the data on the respondents' education level, the respondents were requested to answer the following question "What is your highest education level?" As can be seen from the Table 5, the respondents were offered five options to present their answers regarding the education level. As the main aim of this study is to find out the relationship between employees' education level and their organizational commitment, ANOVA analysis was used. Organizational commitment was measured by using Meyer and Allen's a three-component model of commitment (affective, continuance, and normative commitment)

Education Level and Affective Commitment

As can be seen from the below table, regarding the education level, there are statistically significant ($p < .01$) differences in the employees' affective commitment. Employees who graduated from the vocational school have the highest level of affective commitment, followed by the employees graduated from the university, secondary school and primary school. Employees with high school degree reported the lowest level of affective commitment.

The relationship between education level and affective commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig.
Primary School	22	3.54	0.95	3.346	0.01
Secondary School	54	3.04	1.08		
High School	161	3.21	1.10		
Vocational (College) School	14	3.85	0.59		
University	17	3.76	0.66		
Total	268	3.39	1.05		p < .01

Education Level and Continuance Commitment

Below Table shows, regarding the education level, there are statistically significant ($p < .05$) differences in the employees' continuance commitment. The employees who graduated from secondary school, vocational school and university reported the higher level of continuance commitment than the employees, who graduated from the primary school and high school, did

The relationship between education level and continuance commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig.
Primary School	22	3.22	1.11	2.571	0.03
Secondary School	54	3.72	1.04		
High School	161	3.29	1.09		
Vocational (College) School	14	3.71	0.73		
University	17	3.76	0.83		
Total	268	3.42	1.06		$p \leq 0.002$

Education Level and Normative Commitment

As it can be seen from the Table 7, employees with different education level reported statistically significant ($p < .001$) differences in their normative commitment. Employees who graduated from the university, vocational school and secondary school are the higher committed employees than the employees graduated from primary school and high school

The relationship between education level and normative commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig.
Primary School	22	3.13	1.08	3.246	0.01
Secondary School	54	3.75	1.10		
High School	161	3.30	1.13		
Vocational (College) School	14	3.71	0.91		
University	17	3.76	0.83		
Total	268	3.42	1.06		$p \leq 0.01$

Conclusion

The analysis of the data showed that there are statistically significant relationship between education level and organizational commitment. Regarding their education levels the employees were divided into five groups; employees graduated from (1) primary school, (2) secondary school, (3) high school, (4) vocational school, and (5) university. Within these groups, the three employee groups (namely, graduated from university, vocational school and secondary school) reported higher levels of organizational commitment than the remaining two groups (namely, graduated from high school and primary school). So, with the exception of the employee group graduated from high school, the higher educated employee groups are more committed groups than the lower educated employee groups. By the increase in their education levels, employees' commitment to their organizations becomes more and more strong.

The main limitation of this study is that the data were gathered in only two organizations. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized. Apart from that, the study ca not explains the behaviour of the employees with high school graduation. While the employees graduated from university and vocational school reported higher level of organizational commitment than the employees with the lower education levels (graduated from primary school and secondary school) did, the employees with high school graduation did not report higher level of organizational commitment than the employees with the lower education levels did.

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