



EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED EXTERNAL PRESTIGE, NEED SATISFACTION, COMMUNICATION CLIMATE AND JOB SATISFACTION ON ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

Commerce

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ABSTRACT

The study attempts to investigate the influence of perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate and job satisfaction on organizational identification. The study is based upon the responses obtained from 260 permanent teachers of Jammu University only excluding other employees of other universities. The data were generated through questionnaire based on both primary and secondary data. The initial study dependent on pilot survey for generalization of items taken from 64 respondents. The results reveals that perceived external prestige and need satisfaction are significant predictors of organizational identification whereas communication climate and job satisfaction have insignificant influence on organizational identification.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Organizational identification is a particular form of social identification where the individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in a particular organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1995). For every individual the concept of identification is different, however, in broader sense, identification implies degree of belongingness, loyalty, or shared characteristics. The concept of identification as shared characteristics implies the similarities in quality between the individual and others in the organization. Such shared characteristics may include demographic, attitudinal, and organizational variables such as educational qualification, experience, sex, race, age, tenure, job level, and type of work (Lee, 1971). Different individuals identify with their work organization differently. If the individuals identify strongly with their organization, then the attributes they use to define the organization, define them also (Dutton et al., 1994). Organizational identification is assumed to be the degree of the individual's broad personal identification with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Miller et al., (2000) defined organizational identification as whether or not an employee believes he is part of an organization, identifies himself with the organization's mission, ideas, standards and goals, and takes organizational welfare as prime while taking decisions.

Individual's cognitive connection with his organization is derived from images that each individual has for his organization. The first image is 'perceived organizational identity' i.e., what the individual believes is distinctive, central and permanent about the organization. The second image is 'construed external image' i.e., what the individuals believe outsiders think about the organization (Dutton & Dukerish, 1991). Construed external prestige is also known as perceived external prestige (Dutton et al., 1994). When a person's self-concept contains the same attributes as those in the perceived organizational identity, this cognitive connection is defined as organizational identification. Thus, organizational identification is the degree to which an individual defines himself by the same attributes that he believes define his organization.

As part of the commitment process, the level of organizational identification indicates the degree to which people come to see the organization as part of their own. Organizational identification is the form of psychological attachment that occurs when individuals adopt the defining characteristics of organization as defining characteristics for themselves (Dutton et al., 1994). Ashforth & Mael (1989) described organizational identification as a process of self-categorization. Organizational identification refers to whether employees view themselves as part of the organization and agree with the organization's mission, goal and principles. Organizational identification captures the psychological attachment that one has with an organization, i.e., the extent to which individuals perceive the organization's successes and failures as their own (Bamber & Iyer, 2002).

The perception of an organization's identity from the outside is captured by an idea of organizational image, i.e., the externally produced symbols and interpretations made about the company by outsiders (Whetten & Mackey, 2002). Though external in nature, organizational image also has an influence on employees, as they

receive and interpret various messages from diverse external constituencies and from these messages they form an opinion about how outsiders perceive the company (Smidts et al., 2001). Dutton et al., (1994) suggested that construed external image is related to identification when the person views the construed external image as attractive. An organization's image is attractive when it contributes to an individual's self-continuity, self-distinctiveness and self-enhancement (Dutton et al., 1994). Carmeli & Freund (2006) claimed that perceived external prestige and organizational commitment are related under the concept of organizational effectiveness (Carmeli & Freund, 2002; Freund, 2006), where Mayer & Schorman (1998) found direct relation between value commitment and organizational prestige (Mayer & Schoorman, 1998). Also March & Simon (1958) mentioned that prestige perceptions develop emotional bond with organization and individual, where others investigated concepts are related without considering organizational identification effect (Herrbach et al., 2004; Carmeli & Freund, 2002; Carmeli, 2005; Freund, 2006). However, only Ellemers et al., (1999) and Bergami & Bagozzi (2000) examined organizational commitment and identification interaction in perceived external prestige relation model by Tajfel's (1982) three-dimensional identification construct.

Organizational communication generally considered to be crucial for organizational success (Hargie & Tourish, 2000). Kitchen & Daly (2002) even claimed that supportive communication is the most important factor for the existence of an organization. The quality of organizational communication is often referred to in terms of communication climate, an organization has to communicate to its employees what exactly will change, how these changes will take place and how the changed organization will face the future. Frank & Brownell (1989) defined organizational communication as 'the communication transactions between individuals and/or groups at various levels and in different areas of specialization that are intended to design and redesign organizations, to implement design and to coordinate day-to-day activities'. Communication is a multi-dimensional construct (Smidts et al., 2001). Hence, employees are not satisfied or dissatisfied with communication in general, but can express varying degrees of satisfaction about definite aspects of communication generally has two goals (Francis, 1989); first is to inform employees about issues such as their tasks and organizational policies; and second is to communicate as a means to create a community within the organization. Hence, a distinction can be made between organizational communications with a purpose to provide information and organizational communication as a means to create a community spirit (Francis, 1989; Postmes et al., 2001; De Ridder, 2005). Communication helps in creating shared meaning because it provides social context cues (Sproull & Kiesler, 1991) and creates a shared interpretive context among organizational members (Zaich, 1993). Shared meaning provides organizational members with a clear sense of the organization's identity and thus, strengthens member identification. Pfeffer (1981) proposed that frequent communication by management leads to the development of a common set of shared meanings about the organization that provides members with a sense of belongingness and identity. Therefore, communication can strengthen member identification because it provides organizational

members with an opportunity to create and share their subjective perceptions of the organization's defining features – its norms, values and culture. Knowledge of this aspect of the organization creates a sense of shared meaning among employees (Erturk et al., 2005).

The term need has been used most commonly to refer to a person's conscious wants, desires, or motive (Baard et al., 2004) and work and organizational psychology (Latham & Budworth, 2006). Murray (1938) postulated various socially acquired needs as the needs for achievement, affiliation, and power. Maslow (1943), in contrast, proposed a limited set of inborn needs such as the needs for self-actualization and social recognition (Broeck et al., 2008). Gagne & Deci (2005) proposed that need satisfaction relates to favorable work outcomes indirectly through increased autonomous motivation. A basic assumption of all the theories of needs is that when deficiencies of a need exist, individuals are motivated to take action to remove them in order to satisfy the need (Steers & Porter, 1991). Consistent with Sirgy et al., (2001), Singhapakdi & Sirgy, (2007) conceptualized quality of work life as employee's satisfaction of seven major needs with each major need divided into several dimensions of needs viz., health and safety needs, economic and family needs, social needs, esteem needs, actualization needs, knowledge needs and aesthetic needs. These need dimensions are collapsed into two major sets; lower-order needs and higher-order needs. Lower-order needs comprise health/safety needs and economic/family needs. Higher-order needs involve social needs, esteem needs, self-actualization needs, knowledge needs and aesthetic needs. Quality of work life refers to employee satisfaction with a variety of needs through resources, activities and outcomes stemming from participation in the workplace (Sirgy et al., 2001). Thus, need satisfaction resulting from work place experiences contributes to job satisfaction and satisfaction in other life domains.

Job satisfaction is the reflection of feelings of an employees about his job whether he is contented with his job or not (Odon et al., 1990; Demir, 2002). Job satisfaction is the employee's perceived different between what he deserves and what he has from his job (Cranny et al., 1992). Job satisfaction is an attitudinal response of an employee towards his organization (Kumar & Gupta, 2010). Job satisfaction is important is important for an organization because it could prevent employee's psychological frustration and low productivity (Cranny et al., 1992). Job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their job and different aspects of their job. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their job (Spector, 1997). Thus, it may ultimately lead to organizational satisfaction and organizational dissatisfaction; and creates turnover intentions (Stahl et al., 2009). Job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state that arises when people appraise their job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction has a negative relationship to turnover intentions (Kumar & Gupta, 2008) and job dissatisfaction leads to the employee's intentions to leave the organization (Samad, 2006). According to Armstrong (2003) job satisfaction is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. These factors are further termed motivational and hygiene factors by Herzber (1959). Motivational factors are those factors that are internal to the job and they include variables such as the work itself, recognition, responsibility, feedback and growth (Herzberg et al., 1993) while extrinsic or hygiene factors include company policy, supervision, salary, interpersonal relationship and working conditions (Chiboiwa et al., 2011).

According to Rue & Byars (2005), job satisfaction leads to an increased commitment to one's organization and Jemigan & Beggs (2010) concluded that more substantial attention has to be given to the relationship that exists between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which may generate findings that may be useful in developing the understanding of the links between satisfaction and management substitutes. Gautam et al., (2006) argued that job satisfaction of an employee either in public or private organization is a topic that has received considerable attention by researchers and managers and Roznowski & Hulin (1992) reported that the most essential information to have regarding an employee in an organization is a validated measure of his or her level of job satisfaction. Ali & Akhtar (1999) explored the effect of organizational climate on job satisfaction and they reported that those who scored high on organizational climate also differed significantly on job satisfaction scale (Jain et al., 2007).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hall et al., (1970) examined the personal factors associated with organizational identification in the US Forest Service (Kaufman, 1960). The study hypothesized that the forester's identification with the forest service increases over the course of his career, will increase his identification and importance to organization's goals; need satisfaction is related to the strength of organizational identification, and satisfaction of needs for autonomy and self-fulfillment is correlated with organizational identification; and organizational identification is related to personal orientation consistent with public service and public land management. A sample of 200 foresters was chosen randomly, out of which 156 completed questionnaires were returned. 141 usable returns were analyzed. Job attitudes were measured through a modification of a technique developed by Lodahl & Kejner (1965) and used by Hall & Lawler (1970). Needs satisfaction and importance were assessed by a questionnaire developed by Porter (1961), which assessed a hierarchy of needs patterned after Maslow (1954). Self-identity was measured by the semantic differential technique with items developed by Hall & Schneider (1969). It was found that an increase in the length of time in the forest service is associated with an increase in identification and with importance to organizational goals when compared with importance for personal need fulfillment opportunities. Identification with forest service is consistently and significantly related to the satisfaction of the foresters (i.e., needs, esteem, autonomy, and self-fulfillment) but the importance of identification is not related to the satisfaction of need for esteem. Supportiveness and involvement are strongly related to the degree and importance of identification. They are interpersonal or socially oriented factors. The foresters who identify and value this identification tend to be socially oriented.

Lee (1971) analyzed the broad spectrum of variables that are associated with the scientists' organizational identification and explored the relationship of organizational identification to job attitudes and motivation. Study population was division of the Federal Public Health Service. The study was based on data extracted from 170 scientific employees and their immediate supervisors. In addition to the variables measured through questionnaire, a number of additional variables were created through transgeneration. In order to investigate the relationship of organizational identification to various personal and job variables, especially those related to job attitudes and motivation, the differences in these variables were analyzed between the high and low organizational identification groups. The classification of high- and low- organizational identification groups was made by selecting 25% of the sample exhibiting the highest and the lowest organizational identification. There were 43 scientists in each group. The analytical technique used to determine organizational identification was the multiple stepwise regression and factor analysis. The significance of difference was tested through t-test. Study findings reveal that organizational identification is best explained by a different set of variables according to the educational level of the individual scientist. Those with high organizational identification are generally more productive, better motivated and rewarded; more satisfied and have fewer propensities to leave the organization than scientists with low organizational identification.

Mael & Ashforth (1992) operationalized the conceptualization of organization identification and provide a partial test of the associated model of antecedents and consequences. The model was applied to the alumni of a religious college. The study hypothesized that the identification of alumni with their alma mater is related to organizational antecedents; the identification of alumni with their alma mater is related to organizational consequences. The sample was drawn from all male college in the north-eastern United States. Approximately 700 alumni were randomly selected from a total alumni body of approximately 2000. Questionnaires were mailed and a follow up postcard was mailed one month later. A total of 297 usable questionnaires were received, resulting into 42% response rate. Identification was measured by a six-item scale in a sample of employed business and psychology; and managers from a variety of organizations and hierarchical levels. Five-item scale was utilized in two samples of Army Squad members and in two samples of squad leaders, perceived organizational distinctiveness and satisfaction with the alma mater's contribution fulfillment of student objectives were measured by a fifteen-item scale, perceived organizational prestige and intra-organizational competition were assessed by an eight-item scale, perceived inter-organizational competition and sentimentality were measured by a seven-item scale. It was found that three of the four

hypothesized organizational antecedents and four of six individual antecedents were significantly correlated with organizational identification. Collectively, the antecedents accounted for 35% of the variance in organizational identification. Finally, the results suggest that organizational identification at least partially mediates the impact of the antecedents on the outcomes.

Russo (1998) examined organizational and professional identification among professional employees and investigated the relationships between identifications, autonomy and job satisfaction. The population under study was 281 editorial employees of a major metropolitan newspaper. These methods were used viz., questionnaire, individual interviews and observation. Questionnaires were completed by 170 editorial professionals, representing 63% of the total population. Organizational and professional identification were measured by two matched-item subsets of the organizational identification questionnaire (OIQ; Cheney, 1982). Seven-point Likert-type scale was used. Audiotape interviews were conducted with 58 newsroom professionals. Tapes were transcribed using word-for-word transcription, producing nearly 1000 double-spaced pages. Observation focused on understanding how news was assigned, monitored and edited; how newsroom members give and receive feedback; what stories they created and repeated about their social environment; and how used language to refer to their work, the newspaper product, and the organization. It was found that identification with the profession of journalism is significantly higher than the respondents' employing newspaper. There is statistically significant positive correlation between organizational and professional identification, a finding consistent with Wallace's (1993) meta-analytical results. 68% of the respondents reported that they always or almost always had the ability to select the stories they covered. Thus, autonomy is positively and significantly correlated with organizational identification and professional identification. 12% of the journalists reported themselves very satisfied. However another 41% reported being somewhat satisfied. Job satisfaction was fairly high and professional identification. Job satisfaction was significantly correlated with autonomy in line with other research findings.

Smidts et al., (2001) examined whether the relative impact of employee communication and perceived external prestige on organizational identification differ between organizations, which were attributed to differences in reputation of the companies. The study hypothesized that the higher the perceived external prestige of the organization, the more adequate information employees receive about their company and on their personal roles in a company. Further, positive communication climate evaluated by employee's leads to stronger identification is mediated by communication climate. Data were collected from three different organizations, i.e., a large non-profit customer services organization, a nationally operating utilities company, and a bank. From organization 1, a stratified random sample of 775 employees was drawn from the selected units; in organization 2, a random sample of 620 employees was drawn; and in organization 3, the sample size was 4000. An organizational identification scale was developed, consisting of five-items measured on five-point scale. Items were based on the concept of social identity (Tajfel, 1978) and on existing scales (Abrams, 1992; Cheney, 1983; Doosje et al., 1995). The perceived external prestige was measured through Mael&Ashforth's (1992) organizational prestige scale. Communication audits have been developed (Greenbaun et al., 1988) to measure employee communication in an organization. To investigate the discriminant validity of the organizational identification scale, job satisfaction was measured with a subscale of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Spector, 1997). It was found that the communication climate fully mediated the impact of information content on organizational identification. When a communication climate is open, when employees feel they are being taken seriously by the top management and coworkers, and they feel they have a voice, organizational identification is increased. The effect of perceived external prestige is significantly larger than the effect of communication climate on organizational identification. The adequacy of the information of employee receive about the organization and his personal role increases his organizational identification through the communication climate. The effect of organizational information seems to be larger than the effect of personal information, although this difference is not significant.

Carmeli et al., (2006) examined the influence of employees' personal beliefs about the way three stakeholder groups – customers,

competitors and suppliers – evaluate the organization's prestige (i.e., perceived external prestige) regarding organizational members' cognitive identification and affective commitment. The study hypothesized that perceived external prestige among competitors, customers and suppliers is positively related to cognitive organizational identification, which in turn mediated the relationship between perceived external prestige among competitor, customers and suppliers, and affective commitment. 182 employees were surveyed, who work for four organizations, which operate in the electronics and media industries in Israel. Affective commitment was measured by six-items from the measure developed by Allen & Meyer (1990). Organizational identification was assessed by three-items from Mael&Ashforth (1992). Perceived external prestige was measured by Mael&Ashforth's (1992) measure of perceived organizational prestige. Mean, standard deviation and correlations were used. Further, regression analysis was performed. It was found that perceived external prestige (competitors, customers and suppliers) is positively related to cognitive organizational identification. The mediators and cognitive organizational identification effects remained significant. Therefore, cognitive organizational identification mediates the relationship between perceived external prestige among competitors, customers and suppliers, and affective commitment.

Ciftcioglu (2010) perceived external prestige influence on employee's emotional appeals toward working organization. The study postulated that perceived external prestige has a positive influence on employee's organizational identification and commitment. Data were taken from a textile industry firms in Bursa and 200 usable questionnaires were received. All items were measured on five-point scale. Organizational commitment was measured with a six-item scale developed by Meyer et al., (1993). Organizational identification was measured with six-item scale of Mael&Ashforth's (1992). Perceived external prestige was assessed by Mael&Ashforth's eight-item scale. Job satisfaction was measured by three-item scale from Michigan Organizational Evaluation Scale's shorten sub-scales (Spector, 1997). Gender, age, tenure and educational level were control variables. Mean, standard deviation and correlations were used. It was found that perceived organizational prestige is significantly and highly related to affective commitment, organizational identification and job satisfaction. It is though weak but significantly related to age and educational level of employees. Organizational identification is significantly correlated with affective commitment, job satisfaction and education level. Employee's affective commitment to organization is also related to his job satisfaction. To conclude, organizational identification and job satisfaction has full mediating role between perceived external prestige and organizational commitment relationship.

Hypothesis and objectives of the study

Present study makes an effort to unearth the impact of perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate and job satisfaction on organizational identification.

Hyp 1: Perceived external prestige significantly predicts organizational identification.

Obj 1: To study the impact of perceived external prestige on organizational identification.

Hyp 2: Need satisfaction significantly influences organizational identification.

Obj 2: To study the relationship of need satisfaction with organizational identification.

Hyp 3: Communication climatesignificantly determines organizational identification.

Obj 3: To study the influence of communication climate on organizational identification.

Hyp 4: Job satisfaction is a significant predictor of organizational identification.

Obj 4: To study the effect of job satisfaction on organizational identification.

Need of the study

The present study is an outcome of the review of related literature pertaining to perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate, job satisfaction and organizational identification. Previous studies have examined organizational identification; and the impact of perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate and job satisfaction on organizational identification.

Hall et al., (1970) examined the personal factors associated with organizational identification in the US Forest Service. Mael&Ashforth (1992) operationalize the conceptualization of organizational identification and provide a partial test of the associated model of antecedents and consequences. Smidts et al., analysed that both communication content and climate affect organizational identification. Erturk et al., (2005) examined the effects of organizational communication and commitment on organizational identification. Mignonac et al., (2006) tested the impact of perceived external prestige on turnover intentions and assumed that the influence is moderated by individuals' need for organizational identification. Fuller et al., (2006) investigated the need for esteem as a moderator of the relationship between construed external image and organizational identification.

Ciftcioglu (2010) explored the influence of perceived external prestige on employee's emotional appeals toward working organization. There is a need to examine the perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate, job satisfaction and organizational identification.

Collection of data

Both primary and secondary sources have been considered appropriate for collecting necessary information pertaining to present research work. Primary data, being firsthand information, were gathered from the teachers through self-modified and well-structured questionnaires. Secondary information from books, journal and internet was also used to substantiate primary data.

Generation of scale items

The present study indicates that a thorough review of literature is done by taking two dimensions viz., perceived external prestige (independent variable), need satisfaction (independent variable), communication climate (independent variable), job satisfaction (independent variable) and organizational identification (dependent variable); and the different items covering almost all the aspects of the study like discussion with experts, suggestions from respondents and review of pertinent literature. In order to gain the active involvement of respondents, face-to-face interviews were conducted while filling the instrument. The dimensions of the instrument are as under:-

a) Perceived external prestige: It is an independent variable with seven items in the scale. All of them were extracted from Mael&Ashforth (1992).

b) Need satisfaction: It is an independent variable, contained twenty items (ten for lower-order need satisfaction and remaining for higher-order need satisfaction). Five items of lower-order need satisfaction were taken from Teas (1981). Remaining five items of lower-order need satisfaction and all ten items of higher-order need satisfaction were extracted from Lee et al., (2007).

c) Communication climate: It is an independent variable included eleven items and all the items were borrowed from Pincus et al., (1990). Items were slightly modified and the word 'supervisor' was replaced with the 'colleagues'.

d) Job satisfaction: It is an independent variable, contained twelve items. Items of this sub-scale were borrowed from the scale used by Graves & Powell (1994). Three items were from the original thirty-item Job Description Index scale of Smith et al., (1969). One item was taken from Chen et al., (2003) job satisfaction indicators. Two widely used items were extracted from the scale developed by Cole (1979) and remaining four items were obtained from job satisfaction scale developed by Dubinsky et al., (1986).

e) Organizational identification: It is dependent variable, consisted of ten items. Eight items were borrowed from a 12-item index patterned after Brown (1969) and two from Mael&Ashforth (1992).

Data collection forms

The required information pertaining to perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate, job satisfaction and organizational identification was gathered from permanent teachers through self-modified questionnaire. Pilot survey was conducted in August, 2011. Data were gathered from 60 permanent teachers of Jammu University. Some statements were modified to ensure the best fit with the situation in the organization being studied and a final

questionnaire were settled of 60 items out of which 7 items relates to perceived external prestige, 20 items relates to need satisfaction, 11 relates to communication climate, 12 relates job satisfaction and remaining 10 items to organizational identification. All the items were framed on 5 point likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Findings of the study

The validity and reliability of the constructs have been checked through the confirmatory factor analysis and it has been determined that condition of standardized regression weights is fulfilled and; the conditions of composite reliability, cronbach alpha and discriminant validity have been satisfied for the constructs. The result reveals that perceived external prestige and need satisfaction significantly predict organizational identification; whereas communication climate and job satisfaction have no significant influence on organizational identification.

SEM provides significant 'p' value (0.005) for the relationship of perceived external prestige and need satisfaction with organizational identification; whereas insignificant 'p' value for the relationship of communication climate and job satisfaction with organizational identification.

As per Mael&Ashforth (1992) organizational prestige has a significant impact on organizational identification. Smidts et al., (2001) also revealed that perceived external prestige significantly predicts organizational identification; also found positive relationship between communication climate and organizational identification. Hall et al., revealed that the need satisfaction which the forester experiences in his work is related to the strength of his organizational identification. Bartels (2006) revealed that perceived quality of communication contributes to the member's identification with his organization, even post-merger identification.

SEM results give proves that higher perceived external prestige and need satisfaction give rise to higher organizational identification; also higher communication climate and job satisfaction does not influence organizational identification.

Limitations and future implications

1. The study have found teachers to be highly dissatisfied with the communication climate, it is suggested that there should be encouragement of open, free and two-way communication. The frequency of informal gatherings should be increased.

2. The generalizability of the findings is limited on account of study area. Due to the non-existence of successful private sector in Jammu city, the teachers have very less alternatives to switch, thus they do not switch even if they find things are not feasible.

3. The study was limited to teachers only, in future other employees can also be involved for better study.

4. Teachers might have hesitated to share correct information due to their defensive attitude.

Conclusion

This study is based on data collected from 260 respondents of Jammu University teachers by the way of filling of questionnaire by taking five dimensions viz., perceived external prestige, need satisfaction, communication climate, job satisfaction and organizational identification. The study indicates that perceived external prestige and need satisfaction have significant influence on organizational identification, whereas communication climate and job satisfaction have insignificant impact on organizational identification. In future, data will also be collected from employees of other university teachers prevailing in the J&K and other employees of university for having comprehensive results about these five dimensions.

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