



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2015; 1(12): 538-540
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 14-09-2015
Accepted: 17-10-2015

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Career stage effect on organisational commitment in corporate sector

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Abstract

Employee commitment is very important for an organization. Committed employees towards their organization are considered to serve their employers better, they stay satisfied and committed towards the organization and consequently the organization will face little turnover and absenteeism and increased motivation towards their work. The basic objective of the study is to find out the effect of career stage on organizational commitment. Age is taken as career stage and Organizational Commitment contain its three dimensions I.e. Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. The data was collected from various employees by using questionnaire using 5 point Likert scale. The result indicated that the older employees are more committed to their organizational as compared to their younger employees.

Keywords: affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, career stage, organisational commitment

1. Introduction

Organisational commitment is the bond employees experience with their organisation. Broadly speaking, employees who are committed to their organisation generally feel a connection with their organisation, feel that they fit in and, feel they understand the goals of the organisation.

Definition of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment may be viewed as an organizational member's psychological attachment to the organization. Organizational commitment plays a very large role in determining whether a member will stay with the organization and zealously work towards organizational goals.

Theory of Organizational Commitment

A prominent theory in organizational commitment is the three-component model (or TCM). The model argues that organizational commitment has three distinctive components:

1.1 Affective commitment is your emotional attachment to an organization. If you have a high level of affective commitment, you enjoy your relationship with the organization and are likely to stay. You stay because you want to stay.

1.2 Continuance commitment is the degree with which you believe that leaving the organization would be costly. If you have a high level of continuance commitment, you will stay with an organization because you feel that you must stay. For example, you may feel quitting your job may lead to an unacceptable length of unemployment. On the other hand, you may feel you will lose a certain degree of status if you leave a well-respected organization such as a top law firm or research company.

1.3 Normative commitment is the degree you feel obligated to the organization or believe that staying is the right thing to do. Here, you believe you ought to stay.

Drawing on the early works of Porter and his colleagues (Porter *et al.*, 1974; Mowday *et al.*, 1982) and Becker (1960), Meyer and Allen (1984) ^[1] first conceptualized OC as bi-dimensional construct. The first dimension termed as affective commitment, was defined as 'positive feelings of identification with, attachment to, and involvement in the work organization' (Meyer and Allen, 1984, p.375) ^[1]. The second dimension of organizational

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commitment (based on Becker's *side-bet* theory) called continuance commitment, was defined as 'the extent to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving (e.g., investments or lack of attractive alternatives)' (Meyer and Allen, 1984, p. 375) ^[1]. Later, they added a third dimension, normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990) which was defined as the employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organization (Weiner, 1982). They viewed these three components as separate and distinguishable components, rather than types of attitudinal commitment. This means that employees can experience each of these psychological states to varying degrees. For example, some employees may feel both a strong need and a strong obligation to stay within the organization but may have no desire to stay on. Some others may feel neither a strong need nor a strong obligation to stay within the organization, but not may have a strong desire to remain in the organization. Thus, net sum of an employee's commitment to the organization would reflect each of the three separable psychological states. Meyer and Allen (1997) argued that one can achieve a better understanding of an employee's relationship with an organization when all three forms of commitment are considered together. These components have also been found to correlate differentially with variables purported to be antecedents of commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1993; Lok and Crawford, 2004; Meyer *et al.*, 2002; Park and Rainey, 2007; Shore and Tetrick, 1991). Each component develops as the result of different experiences and has different implications for on-the-job behavior and performance (Hackett *et al.*, 1994; Meyer and Allen, 1997; Randall *et al.*, 1990; Park and Rainey, 2007; Shore and Barksdale, 1998; Wasti, 2003; Wasti and Can, 2008). Employees, whose experiences within the organization are consistent with their expectations and satisfy their basic needs, tend to develop a stronger affective attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment presumably develops as employees recognize that they have accumulated investments or side-bets that would be lost if they were to leave the organization or as they recognize that the availability of comparable alternatives is limited. Finally, normative commitment develops in response to various pre-entry experiences, and as the result of socialization experiences that emphasize the appropriateness of remaining loyal to one's employer.

1.4 Career Stage

Identifiable periods in one's work life which are distinguished by one's changing activities, concerns, motives, and needs.

The proper way to analyze and discuss careers is to look at them as made up of stages. We can identify five career stages that most people will go through during their adult years, regardless of the type of work they do. These stages are exploration, establishment, mid-career, late career and decline.

1. Exploration

Many of the critical choices individuals make about their careers are made prior to entering the workforce on a paid basis. Very early in our lives, our parents and teachers begin to narrow our alternatives and lead us in certain directions. The careers of our parents, their aspirations for their children and their financial sources are crucial factors in determining our perception of what careers are open to us.

The exploration period ends for most of us in our mid-twenties as we make the transition from college to work. From an organisational standpoint this stage has little relevance since it occurs prior to employment.

However, this period is not irrelevant because it is a time when a number of expectations about one's career are developed, many of which are unrealistic. Such expectations may lie dormant for years and then pop up later to frustrate both the employee and the employer.

2. Establishment

The establishment period begins with the search for work and includes our First job, being accepted by our peers, learning the job and gaining the first tangible evidence of success or failure in the real world. It is a time which begins with uncertainties, anxieties and risks.

It is also marked by making mistakes and learning from these mistakes and the gradual assumption of increased responsibilities. However, the individual in this stage has yet to reach his peak productivity and rarely gets the job that carries great power or high status.

3. Mid-career

Most people do not face their first severe dilemmas until they reach their mid-career stage. This is a time when individuals may continue their prior improvements in performance or begin to deteriorate. At this point in a career, one is expected to have moved beyond apprenticeship to worker-status.

Those who make a successful transition assume greater responsibilities and get rewards. For others, it may be a time for reassessment, job changes, adjustment of priorities or the pursuit of alternative lifestyles.

4. Late career

For those who continue to grow through the mid-career stage, the late career usually is a pleasant time when one is allowed the luxury to relax a bit. It is the time when one can enjoy the respect given to him by younger employees. During the late career, individuals are no longer learning, they teach others on the basis of the knowledge they have gained.

To those who have stagnated during the previous stage, the late career brings the reality that they cannot change the world as they had once thought.

It is a time when individuals have decreased work mobility and may be locked into their current job. One starts looking forward to retirement and the opportunities of doing something different.

5. Decline

The final stage in one's career is difficult for everyone but it is hardest for those who have had continued successes in the earlier stages. After several decades of continuous achievements and high levels of performance, the time has come for retirement.

Managers should be more concerned with the match for new employees and those just beginning their employment careers. Successful placement at this stage should provide significant advantages to both the organisation and the individual.

2. Objective

1. To examine the effect of career stages on organisational commitment.
2. To find out relationship between 3 dimensions of organisational commitment with different stages.

3. Research Methodology

In this section, there would be an explanation about the method that I have used to collect data. I have used primary data for this purpose and used questionnaire in this study in order to measure the definite nature of organizational commitment.

H0: Older employees will not show higher level of affective, continuance and normative organisational commitment as compared to their younger colleagues.

H1: Older employees will show higher level of affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment as compared to their younger colleagues.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire will be used for the collection of data. Responses given to each item are made on a 5-point Likert scale with anchors where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. Age was categorized into three groups: up to 30 years which indicate early career stage, 31-45 years which shows mid-career and 46 and above which indicates late career stage.

Targeted Population and Sample

Targeted population is the specified group of people or object for which questions can be asked or to be observed to develop requires data structure and information. I have Targeted 4 companies of corporate sector with different age groups and tenure in organisation.

Statistical Tool

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the level of affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment across career stages. In order to test organizational commitment, One- way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to study the impact of career stage on different dimensions of organizational commitment.

4. Analysis

Dimensions	Age Group	Mean
Affective commitment	Upto 30 yrs	14
	31-45 yrs	14.68
	46 and above	24.75
Continuance commitment	Upto 30 yrs	20.88
	31-45 yrs	21.84
	46 and above	23
Normative commitment	Upto 30 yrs	19.69
	31-45 yrs	20.95
	46 and above	24.14

The above table shows that Employees in the early-career stage have lowest mean score on all the dimensions of organizational commitment. Level of commitment goes on increasing as they move from early to mid-career and then to late-career stage.

Analysis of variance

Dimensions	F	Sig. Of diff.
Affective commitment	5.494	0.005
Continuance commitment	.904	.407
Normative commitment	3.832	0.024

In order to determine the significance of difference among the levels of affective, continuance and normative commitment across career stages, one-way ANOVA was

undertaken. Examination of the results of the analysis indicates that there was significant difference in affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment across career stages with F-ratio respectively. Thus, H1 was supported in the current study, older employees show more commitment to organisation then younger employees.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of career stage on Organizational Commitment on employees of corporate sector. In this study, age is taken as a career stage and to find out its impact on three different dimensions of the Organizational Commitment I.e. Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. The Commitment of the employees was measured with the help of questionnaire on a 5 point Likert scale. It is concluded from the study that the employees in the late career stage are more committed to their organization as compared to the employees in early or mid-career stage.

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