

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF PERSONALITY ATTRIBUTES AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Organizational commitment is an important factor for understanding the work related behaviors of organizational members. Although, there are no standard factors for understanding the organizational commitment as whole, a wide range of factors have been found useful in interpreting organizational commitment. Personality attributes being the most stable structures in the individual is functionally influential in determining one's behavior in various situations at work place. The present study is an attempt to study the level of personality attributes (Self Esteem, Self Efficacy, Self Monitoring & Locus of Control) and work place attitude (Organizational Commitment), further it explores the relationship between them. A sample of employees working in private sector banks of Northern Region has been taken into consideration. Descriptive statistics and correlational analysis were applied for each of the four attributes of personality i.e. self esteem, self efficacy, self monitoring, locus of control and one workplace attitude i.e. organizational commitment. Results revealed that respondents (banking employees) have high self esteem i.e. they hold very positive views about themselves. They have high beliefs in their abilities of accomplishing their tasks. Further respondents have moderately low level of self monitoring suggesting thereby that banking employees may not adapt their behaviors as per the expectation of the situation easily. The banking employees have balanced locus of control which indicates that outcomes are attributed to external as well as internal factors. It is also found that employees are highly committed to their respective organizations. Further the general trend of relationship between various personality traits and organizational commitment has been found positive. A positive and significant correlation has been found between self esteem and organizational commitment

Key words: *Personality attributes- Self esteem, self efficacy, self monitoring, locus of control and organizational commitment.*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1990s, workplace restructuring and flexibility pressures have destabilized the traditional employment relationship in which employees exchange commitment and loyalty to a firm for a credible promise of long-term employment. The concept of organizational commitment has grown in popularity in the literature of psychology. In the light of “downsizing syndrome” of modern organization commitment deserves special attention. It has been identified as an important variable for understanding the work-related behavior of organizational members (Angel & Perry, 1981 and Mowday et al., 1979). The concept of organizational commitment suggests a growth process whereby commitment to an organization is developed over time as the individual perceives that his or her goals and values are consistent with those of the organization. They become gradually more involved in their organizational role in the service of those goals and values (Mowday et al., 1979 and Steers, 1977). Individuals come in organization with specific skills, satisfy their desires and achieve their goals. To the extent the organization is perceived as facilitating these ends, organizational commitment is likely to increase. On the other hand, if the organization is perceived as failing to provide sufficient opportunities along these lines organizational commitment is likely to diminish (Steers, 1977). In most of the studies organizational commitment has been repeatedly identified as an important factor influencing the work performance of employees in a variety of organizations (Allen & Smith, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1984; and Meyer et al., 1989). Consequently, the term organizational commitment is broadly used to refer to antecedents and consequences, as well as the process. As an antecedent, organizational commitment has been used to predict employees’ absenteeism, performance, turnover and other behaviors. As a consequence, organizational commitment has been linked to several personal variables, role stress and aspects of the work environment, ranging from job characteristics to dimensions of organizational structure. According to Hall (1979) the definition of commitment includes a number of variables which should be separated with respect to both attitudes and behavioral intentions. For example, the attitudes which all seem to tap moral development, include identification with the organization. Secondly involvement in the organizational work role and warm affective regard for or loyalty to the organization. The behavioral intention variables include a willingness to exert efforts, and a desire or willingness to remain in the organization.

Organizational commitment was a one-dimensional concept before long (Mowday, Steers, &

Porter, 1979). However, Meyer and Allen (1991) introduced a three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment this way: “Affective commitment refers to the psychological attachment to the organization, continuance commitment refers to the costs associated with leaving the organization, and normative commitment refers to a perceived obligation to remain with the organization”. This multidimensional construct of organizational commitment is now more accepted and widely used by researchers (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) is defined as the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy as an organizational member. OBSE is a self-evaluation of one’s personal adequacy (worthiness) as an organizational member. .” Consistent with Korman’s (1966, 1970, 1971 & 1976) view of self-esteem, people with strong organization-based self-esteem have a sense of having satisfied their needs through their organizational roles. Individuals who come to feel efficacious and competent, derived from their own experiences (e.g., successful completion of a project), come to hold positive images of themselves. Generally speaking, experiences of success in an organization will bolster an individual’s organization-based self-esteem, while the experience of failure will have the opposite effect.

Self-efficacy is as “people/s belief about his or her chances of successfully accomplishing a specific task. Self- efficacy as “people’s judgment and their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986). Bandura (1997) has defined self-efficacy as one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. One's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges. People generally avoid tasks where their self-efficacy is low, but will engage in tasks where their self-efficacy is high. People with a self-efficacy significantly beyond their actual ability often overestimate their ability to complete tasks, which can lead to difficulties. On the other hand, people with a self-efficacy significantly lower than their ability are unlikely to grow and expand their skills. Research shows that the ‘optimum’ level of self-efficacy is a little above ability, which encourages people to tackle challenging tasks and gain valuable experience.

Self-monitoring personality trait has been identified as a significant factor in many organizational activities. This personality has received increasing attention (Snyder, 1987). It refers to an individual’s ability to adjust his or her behavior to external situational factors. Self-monitoring is a personality trait referring to an individual’s tendency to observe and control his or her expressive behavior according to interpersonal cues for situational appropriateness

(Snyder, 1974). Self-monitoring theory accounts for motivational, behavioral, and situational components to explain social behavior (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). According to the theory, people are internally or externally motivated (Snyder, 1974). Gangestad & Snyder (2000) describe the differences in cross-situational consistency of behavior between high and low self-monitors in the following way: High self-monitors, seeking to promote a desired public image, are sensitive to situational and interpersonal cues and regulate their expressive self-presentation. Low self-monitors lack either the motivation or the ability to regulate their expressive behavior in this way and express behavior that is consistent with their inner attitudes and beliefs.

Individuals vary in terms of how much responsibility they take for their behavior and its consequences. Rotter, a personality researcher identified a dimension and personality he labeled 'Locus of control' to explain these differences. He proposed that people tend to attribute the cause of their behavior primarily either themselves or environmental factors (Rotter, 1954). This personality trait produces distinctly different behavior patterns. People who believe they control the events and consequences that affect their lives are said to possess an internal locus of control. Such a person tends to attribute positive outcomes. On the other side of this personality dimension are those who believe their performance is the product of circumstances beyond their immediate control. These individuals are said to possess an external locus of control and tend to attribute outcomes to environmental courses such as luck or fate. External tend to be more anxious than internals (Spector, 1982).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of researches have been conducted on organizational commitment. Several empirical investigations provide us with insight into the relationship between Personality attributes and work place attitudes. Satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two work-related attitudes that have received virtually all of the research attention. Individuals who value themselves at higher levels (higher self-esteem) have been shown to have more organizational commitment and experience or focus on more positive aspects of their work (Judge & Bono, 2001). A significant and positive relationship between organization based self esteem (OBSE) and commitment has been observed by Gardner & Pierce (1998&2001); Ragins et al. (2000); Phillips & Hall (2001); Riordan et al. (2001); Lee (2003); and Van Dyne & Pierce (2004). Their findings suggest that employees with high levels of self-esteem are more committed to their organizations than their low self-esteem counterparts.

Previous research findings have linked organizational commitment and self-efficacy. Researchers (Kanter, 1977&1993 and Gardner & Pierce, 1998) found that self-efficacy was positively related to organizational commitment. However, neither of these studies used the Allen & Meyer (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment.

Schyns & von Collani (2002) found first evidence for its usefulness in organizational research and practice as indicated by the positive correlation between occupational self-efficacy and job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment. Individuals high on generalized self-efficacy are likely to see themselves as competent and able to do well at any task at hand. Hence, their desire to stay in the organization because of lack of alternatives or due to high sacrifice required to change the job would be low. Therefore, a negative relationship would be expected between generalized self efficacy of an individual and his or her continuance commitment.

Previous studies (Spector, 1988; Witt, 1990; and Coleman et al., 1999) found that locus of control is related to organizational variables such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Coleman & colleagues (1999) found that internal locus of control was associated with affective commitment and external locus of control was associated with continuance commitment. That is, participants with high levels of internal locus of control (internals) also reported higher levels of affective commitment; in contrast, research participants identified as externals (high levels of external locus of control) reported high levels of continuance commitment. Further, Coleman found significant correlations between work locus of control and affective and continuance commitment; work locus negatively related with affective commitment and positively related with continuance commitment is observed. Spector (1988) also reported that internals were more satisfied with their jobs than externals.

METHOD

Objectives of Study

1. To study the nature and level of personality attributes- self esteem, self efficacy, self monitoring, locus of control and Work Place Attitude i.e. Organizational Commitment.
2. To study the relationship between various Personality Attributes and Organizational Commitment

Sampling Plan

A sample of 400 respondents was drawn from employees working at different levels in their respective banks such as ICICI bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, situated in North Zone of India.

The participation of the employees was voluntary. The sample was drawn using convenient sampling procedure. The age of the respondents ranged between 23-45 years. Minimum educational qualification of the respondents was graduate.

Tools Used

For measuring Organizational Commitment, Scale developed by Mowday et al. (1979) was used. It consisted of 15 items. The items were measured on 7 point scale.

Self esteem was assessed by using a questionnaire as recommended by Pierce et al. (1989). The author developed a 10 item questionnaire. Likert's scale was used to obtain the overall index. The responses for each item is measured on 5 point scale.

Self efficacy scale was adapted from Sood (2000). The scale consisted of 11 items with range from very high to very low.

Self monitoring questionnaire was adapted from Synder and Gangestad (1986) consisting of 10 items. Responses were recorded with the key suggested by the author. As per the key norms provided by author the scoring ranging from 1 to 3 was considered low self monitors, 4 to 5 was considered moderately low self monitors, 6 to 7 was moderately high self monitors and 8 to 10 was considered high self monitors.

Locus of control scale was comprised of 7 items as adapted from the original locus of control scale (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control was scored on the basis of key provided by the author As per the key the scoring ranging from 1 to 3 was considered external locus of control, 4 was considered balanced internal and external locus of control and 5 to 7 was considered internal locus of control.

RESULTS

In order to fulfill the main research objectives of the present study, the obtained data were processed for the computation of means, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, large sample Z test and Pearson's Correlation.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics and Z values of Personal attributes

Table-1

Sr. No	Variables	Observed Mean	Standard Mean	SD	SE	Z Values	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Self esteem	41.83	30	4.23	.21	56.33	-.24	-.46
2	Self efficacy	43.20	33	4.12	.20	51	.08	.11
3	Self monitoring	4.97	5	1.56	.07	-0.42	.23	-.11
4	Locus of control	4.28	3.5	1.41	.07	11	.01	-.30
5	Organizational Commitment	71.80	60	8.30	.41	28.78	-.72	.82

Note: Z value significant 1.96 at 5% and 2.58 at 1%.

In the present investigation the observed mean scores for these indicators are shown in the table-1 i.e. 41.83, 43.20, 4.97, 4.28 and 71.80 respectively and the corresponding Standard mean scores are of the order of 30, 33, 5, 3.5 and 60 respectively.

Further to test the departure of the observed mean score from the standard mean scores and to test the hypothesis of no difference, Z test was used.

From the table- 1 it is clear that the respondents are having a high degree of self esteem as observed mean score of 41.83 is higher than the standard mean score of 30. Further Z score (56.33) is found significant at 1% level of probability, indicating thereby that the respondents hold very positive views about themselves.

A perusal of the table-1 reveals that the observed mean score of 43.20 is found to be greater than the standard mean score of 33. So self efficacy was found higher than the standard mean score. Further the departure from expectations was tested by applying Z test. The value of Z (51) is found significant .01 level. The test indicates a rejection of the null hypothesis ($p < .01$). It is evident from the above test that employees of the banking sector have high beliefs in the abilities of successfully accomplishing their tasks.

As per the norms of this scale the score lying between 1 to 3 is considered as low self monitors, score of 4 to 5 is considered as moderately low self monitors, score ranging from 6 to 7 is considered as moderately high self monitors, score lying between 8 to 10 is considered as high self monitors. So in our present investigation the score of 4.97 indicates that respondents are moderately low self monitors. Further it may be concluded that because observed mean score is

lower than the standard mean score explain that the respondents are low self monitors indicating thereby that banking employees may not adapt their behaviors as per the expectation of the situation easily rather will try to behave as per the set standards of work behavior in banking organizations.

Table-1 indicates that the observed mean score for locus of control was 4.28. As per the norms of this scale the score of 1 to 3 is considered as external locus of control, the score of 4 is considered as balanced locus of control and score of 5 to 7 is considered as internal locus of control. So in the present investigation the score of 4.28 is considered as balanced locus of control. They are in between the two extremes of internal and external locus of control suggesting thereby that the respondents express the outcomes to external as well as internal factors.

The observed mean score of 71.28 is higher than the standard mean score of 60. Further the departure from expectations was tested by applying Z test. The value of Z (28.78) is found significant .01 level. Thus the obtained findings reveal that employees are highly committed to their respective organizations.

Correlation Matrix

In the forgoing table relationship between all the dimensions of Personality Attributes and Organizational Commitment was studied with the help of Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation

Inter correlation matrix between personal attributes and work place attitudes

(N-400)

Table-2

S. no.	Variables	Organizational commitment
1	Self esteem	.134**
2	Self efficacy	0.003
3	Self monitoring	0.042
4	Locus of control	0.021

.098 at .05 level and .128 at .01 level

The correlations between the variables of personal attributes and work place attitudes of respondents have been presented in table-2.

Among all the attributes of Personality only Self esteem was found to have significant and positive co-relation with Organizational Commitment (.134, $p < .01$), remaining all other attributes of Personality were found to have non-significant co-relation with Organizational Commitment indicating thereby that employees with high self esteem tend to be more committed to their respective organizations. Suggesting thereby that the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be significant, and worthy as an organizational member will be more committed towards their respective organization.

DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to understand nature & level of Personality Attributes (self esteem, self efficacy, self monitoring, and locus of control) and Work place attitudes (organizational commitment), and their relationship. The research objectives have been addressed in terms of descriptive statistics, Z test and Parson's correlation.

Employees working in private sector banks are high in self esteem, self efficacy and locus of control but are low on self monitoring indicating thereby that respondents are having a high degree of organization based self esteem i.e. they hold very positive views about themselves, they possess high degree of self efficacy i.e. employees of the banking sector have high beliefs in their abilities to perform their jobs. However on the other hand respondents were low self monitors and they may not adapt to external situations easily. These findings Suggest that they conform to the laid down policies and procedures of their banks while performing their jobs rather than acting as per the wishes of the people or situational factors. The findings also reveal that the employees have balanced locus of control indicating that whatever is their performance outcome that is attributed to both internal as well as external factors suggesting thereby that they are pragmatic in their attributional analysis. The obtained findings also reveal that bank employees are highly committed to their respective organizations.

Regarding the relationships of personality attributes and work place attitudes, the correaltional analysis show that only self esteem correlates positively only with organizational commitment. show that self esteem correlates positively only with organizational commitment. Similar patterns of correlations have been reported by Gardner & Pierce (1998 & 2001); Ragins et al. (2000); Phillips & Hall (2001); Riordan et al. (2001); Lee (2003a); and Van Dyne & Pierce (2004) who reported a significant and positive relationship between Organizational Based Self Esteem and commitment. These findings suggest that employees with high levels of self-esteem

are more committed to their organizations than their low self-esteem counterparts.

Other remaining attributes of personality were found to be non significant relationship with organizational commitment.

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