

Jon Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in a Malaysian Public University's Library

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ABSTRACT

As the employees are the most important asset for a successful organization, there is no doubt that increasing their job satisfaction is one of the vital tasks to be deeply taken into considerations by an organization's management in order to enhance its employees' commitment. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees in Malaysia. The framework of this study composed of three factors of job satisfaction, i.e. job design, salary and welfare, and the management which were based on the works of Herzberg's (1959) Two Factors Theory. While the dimensions of organizational commitment, i.e. affective, continuance and normative were conceptualized based on the model developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). The respondents were collected from one of the Malaysian public universities in Malaysia and a total of 103 employees answered questionnaires. The data gathered was analyzed with various analyses methods such as Pearson correlations and multiple regressions using SPSS package. The findings suggest that there is a significant weak relationship between job design and affective commitment, and no significant relationship between other factors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Recommendations and discussions for future research are provided

Keyword: Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Library, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Turnover rate in today's organization is pretty high. One way to address the issue of turnover is to determine what will affect the level of commitment. Turnover and organizational commitment receive considerable attention from industrial and organizational psychologists, management academician and sociologists. In 1991, Hodson claims that commitment is a step in the right direction as it expresses an employee's behavioral intentions (the intention to remain with the organization being primary). As noted by Robbins and Judge (2007), when an employee has a low level of commitment to the organization, he or she will tend to have low productivity and consequently, the profit of an organization will be affected. Indeed, this will also lead to bad image to its customers. Finally, it will lead to high turnover rate.

In another aspect, job satisfaction has been recognized as a part of organizational commitment (Kovach, 1977). According to Locke (1969), job satisfaction is a state of pleasure gained from applying one's values to a job. It can be an important indicator of how employees are aware of their jobs and a predictor of work behaviors such as organizational citizenship, absenteeism, and turnover. Consequently, managers today have positioned great importance on the issue of job satisfaction of their employees due to the employees who are satisfied are more likely to be committed to their organizations. These workers, in return, are more likely to take pride in organizational membership, believe in the objectives and values of the

organization and therefore, exhibit higher levels of performance and productivity (Robbins and Judge, 2007).

In a nutshell, organizational commitment concerns with employees' relationship with their organization, how they influence employees' behaviour, well-being, and contributions to organizational effectiveness (Meyer and Allen, 1997). On the other hand, job satisfaction is found to be an important variable that closely associated with commitment in the research literature. This paper makes an attempt to identify the determinants that may influence the employees' organizational commitment. Based on the literature reviewed, we strongly believe that three factors of job satisfaction, i.e. job design, salary and welfare, and the management which were based on the works of Herzberg's (1959) Two Factors Theory are key determinants of organizational commitment, i.e. affective, continuance and normative, which were conceptualized by Meyer and Allen (1991). The employees of a Malaysian public university were chosen as the population of the study. The findings of the present paper can contribute in the following manner: if job design, salary and welfare, and the management were significant in influencing the employees' organizational commitment, the Malaysian organizations should then emphasize and focus on these determinants to ensure their employees to become committed to their organizations.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational commitment has been defined in many ways. Steers (1977) is among the first to view organizational commitment as an employee attitude and as a set of behavioural intentions; the willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization. Then, Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979; 1982) refined the concept by characterizing into at least three factors:

- A strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organization's goals and values,
- A willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and,
- A strong desire to remain in the organization.

The conceptualization of organizational commitment is commonly known as the Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of organizational commitment, which are listed as follows:

- *Affective commitment*: employee's emotional attachment to the organization. Employees with strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they want to do so.
- *Continuance commitment*: employee perceives that leaving the organization will be costly. Employees with strong continuance commitment remain because they have to do so.
- *Normative commitment*: employee's feelings of obligation to the organization and the belief that staying is the 'right thing' to do. Employees with strong normative commitment remain because they feel that they ought to do so (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Job Satisfaction

According to Robbins and Judge (2007), job satisfaction is defined as the positive feeling about one's job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristic. It has been defined differently by various scholars. Among the most accepted definition of job satisfaction is by Locke (1969), who defined job satisfaction as a positive emotional feeling, a result of one's evaluation towards his job or his job experience by comparing between what he expects from his job and what he actually gets from it. Citing the work of O'Reilly and Caldwell (1980), Nasurdin and Ramayah (2003) indicated that both task and organizational rewards contribute to job satisfaction. Task rewards are essential rewards directly associated with the job such as

interesting and challenging work, variety and opportunities to use one's skills. Organizational rewards are the tangible rewards that are visible to others such as salary, promotion and comfortable working conditions.

Among various behavioral theories long generally believed and embraced by American business are those of Frederick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow. Herzberg, a psychologist, proposed a theory about job factors that motivate employees. Maslow, a behavioral scientist and contemporary of Herzberg's, developed a theory about the rank and satisfaction of various human needs and how people pursue these needs. These theories are widely cited in the business literature. In 1943, Maslow has constructed a hierarchy of five levels of basic needs. Beyond these needs, higher levels of needs exist. With lowest levels of the pyramid made up of the most basic needs and more complex needs are at the top of the pyramid. Needs at the bottom of the pyramid are basic physical requirements including the need for food, water, sleep and warmth. Once these lower-level needs have been met, people can move on to the next level of needs, which are for safety and security. Figure 1 shows Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

On the other hand, Two Factor Theory (also known as Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory) was developed by Frederick Herzberg, a psychologist who found that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction acted independently of each other. Two Factor Theory states that there are certain factors in the workplace that cause job satisfaction, while a separate set of factors cause dissatisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, 1959).

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) has been constructed in accordance to the research objective generalized for this study.

Figure 1: The Research Framework

The following hypotheses are developed to address the specific issues underpinning the research objective as follows:

- H1a:* The higher the level of satisfaction with job design, the greater the level of affective commitment.
- H1b:* The higher the level of satisfaction with salary and welfare, the greater the level of affective commitment.
- H1c:* The higher the level of satisfaction with the management, the greater the level of affective commitment.

- H2a:* The higher the level of satisfaction with job design, the greater the level of continuance commitment.
- H2b:* The higher the level of satisfaction with salary and welfare, the greater the level of continuance commitment.
- H2c:* The higher the level of satisfaction with the management, the greater the level of continuance commitment.

- H3a:* The higher the level of satisfaction with job design, the greater the level of normative commitment.
- H3b:* The higher the level of satisfaction with salary and welfare, the greater the level of normative commitment.
- H3c:* The higher the level of satisfaction with the management, the greater the

level of normative commitment.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The population of this study was the employees of one public university's library in Malaysia. Out of 103 questionnaires distributed, 97 (94.17%) of them were collected for data analysis. The profile of the respondents is depicted in Table 1. The sample shows that female (69.1%) respondents were quite higher than male (30.9%) respondents. In terms of race, there is a major representation of Malay (98.9%) respondents, and followed by Chinese (1.1%). The sample shows that the largest age responded were those from 21 to 30 years old (43.3%), followed by age 31 to 40 (35%), age 41-50 (17.5%) and age 51 and above (4.1%). More than 80 percent of the respondents were married (80.4%). Majority of the respondents were earning RM2001 and above per month. As for the educational level, majority of 52.6% of the respondents were having secondary level qualification, followed by degree level (29.9%), diploma level (12.4%) and about 5.1 were having master degree.

Table 1 *Profile of Respondents*

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	30	30.9
	Female	67	69.1
Age	18 - 20	0	0
	21 - 30	42	43.4
	31 - 40	34	35.0
	41 - 50	17	17.5
	51 and above	4	4.1
Race	Malay	96	98.9
	Chinese	1	1.1
	Indian	0	0
	Others	0	0
Marital status	Married	78	80.4
	Single	19	19.6
	Others	0	0
Educational level	Secondary	51	52.6
	Diploma	12	12.4
	Degree	29	29.9
	Master	5	5.1
	Others	0	0
Monthly income	Less than RM 500	0	0
	RM 501 - RM 1000	2	2.0
	RM 1001 - RM 1500	22	22.7
	RM 1501 - RM 2000	29	29.9
	RM 2001 and above	44	45.4

Measurement

In general, the measures employed in this study were adapted and modified from previous research. The measurement used to gauge job design (three items), salary and welfare (four items), the management (six items), affective commitment (six items), continuance commitment (three items) and normative commitment (six items) were adapted from Meyer and Allen's (1997) study. The respondents were asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 5 = "Strongly Agree"). The Cronbach's alpha for job design, salary

and welfare, the management, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment were 0.63, 0.62, 0.64, 0.76, 0.67 and 0.60 respectively, thus provide evidence of reliability. Stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed to test the relationship between the three components of organizational commitment i.e. affective, continuance and normative commitment and the three dimensions i.e. job design, salary and welfare, and the management of independent variable, namely job satisfaction.

RESULTS

Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the direct effect of job design, salary and welfare, and the management on three components of organizational commitment i.e. affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment and the results are summarized in Table 2, 3 and 4. As seen in Table 2, Results shows that the final model accounted for 6.1% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.061$). The only factor was found significantly associated with affective commitment was job design ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.05$). The value of adjusted R^2 implies that this model explained about 6.1% of the total variance in affective commitment. Whereas in Table 3 and 4, all the factors of job satisfaction were found not significantly associated with continuance and normative commitment respectively. The values of adjusted R^2 imply that both the models explained not more than 2.0% of the total variances in the two components of organizational commitment i.e. continuance and normative commitment. Overall, the findings show that all the developed hypotheses were rejected, except for *H1a*, where the higher the level of satisfaction with job design, the greater the level of affective commitment.

Table 2 Multiple regression results o job design, salary and welfare, and the management on dependent variable (affective commitment)

Factor	Affective Commitment
	Beta (β)
Job Design	0.21*
Salary and Welfare	-0.03
The Management	0.14
Adjusted R^2	0.06
R^2 Change#	0.03
Sig. F Change	2.03

Change in R^2

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 3 Multiple regression results o job design, salary and welfare, and the management on dependent variable (continuance commitment)

Factor	Affective Commitment
	Beta (β)
Job Design	-0.13
Salary and Welfare	0.20
The Management	0.02
Adjusted R^2	0.02
R^2 Change#	0.03
Sig. F Change	1.60

Change in R^2

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 4 Multiple regression results o job design, salary and welfare, and the management on dependent variable (normative commitment)

Factor	Affective Commitment
	Beta (β)
Job Design	0.08
Salary and Welfare	-0.09
The Management	0.05
Adjusted R ²	0.02
R ² Change#	0.03
Sig. F Change	0.47

Change in R²

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

Our findings reveal that among the three determinants, namely job design, salary and welfare, and the management tested, job design was found to have the impact on the affective commitment. This implies that job design influences the employee's emotional attachment to the organization. In other words, an employer should reassign the tasks as interesting and challenging tasks will increase the employees' job satisfaction, and would not feel bored easily and the turnover rate could be decreased. A task can help to increase the employee's job satisfaction once the task assigned to him or her is assumed as suitable, interesting and challenging (Lam *et al*, 2001). For as much the tasks assigned have an important role in influencing the level of affective commitment, an employer should take some actions such as job rotation to order to avoid employee's boredom.

This study is, however, not without limitations. Firstly, the numbers of sample could have been taken from at least two organizations to ensure accuracy and effectiveness in the data collected and would provide a space to make comparison between organizations. Next, apart from the three factors measured (job design, salary and welfare, and the management) that derived from Two Factor Theory (Herzberg, 1959), other factors should be taken into considerations that may have an influence on job satisfaction and subsequently lead to organizational commitment. Future studies could also include employing other data collection methods such as interviews or observations to collect data as it is believed to be more authentic and effective.

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