Normative Commitment Among Employees: Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Occupational Hardiness

*Varsha Anand**

Abstract

The quality of employees' motivation, performance, and functioning has recently been acrucial topic among academics and practitioners looking for ways to improve employees' working experiences and organizational success. In this context present study intended to examine if perceived organizational support and occupational hardiness, as well as demographic variables (age and gender),can serve as indicators for normative commitment. In this study 415 employees from diverse private firms were selected through purposive sampling. Perceived organizational support scale, occupational hardiness questionnaire and normative commitment dimension of organizational commitment scales were administered. The obtained quantitative data were analyzed in terms of descriptivestatistics, Pearson r and hierarchical regression analysis. Finding revealed that out of the twelve predictors examined understudy eight predictors: extraeffort, employees' satisfaction, employees' well-being, improved performance, perceived organizational support as a whole, control along with two demographic variables (age and gender) were significantly correlated with normative commitment. It was observed that age, employee satisfaction, and control were significant predictors ofnormative commitment. The shortcomings, future directions, and implications were also discussed.

Keywords: Hardiness, perceived organizational support, normative commitment, organizational commitment.

*PhD Scholar, Centre for Health Psychology, University of Hyderabad

The nature of employment and jobs changed drastically in recent years due to factors like globalization. Globalization not only opens gates for new opportunities but also increased the level of insecurity which is leading to stress and anxiety (Avey, Luthans, Smith & Palmer, 2010; Meyer & Maltin, 2010). Corporate enterprises strive to achieve high levels of performance and low levels of absenteeism and turnover in their workplaces. Organizational commitment is seen to be a crucial aspect in accomplishing this goal, although it may be influenced by a number of variables, including the perceived organizational support and hardiness. Business enterprises must establish teams that are deeply devoted to their strategic goals as well as organized and productive. Human resource management is seen as one of the most important positions inside an organization, with a focus on working conditions, employee welfare, and job satisfaction, all of which contribute to high levels of organizational commitment (Tiwari and Singh, 2014; Kurtessis et al., 2017). Employees that are committed provide value to the firm by being determined, proactive, productive, and quality conscious. Employees who aren't invested in the company's success may work against it and stifle its expansion.

Organizational Commitment

Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) defined commitment as the degree to which an individual is identified with and engaged in a particular organization. Meyer and Allen's three-component commitment model, which differentiates three distinct characteristics – affective, normative, and continuance – has remained the cornerstone of current commitment theory (Matthew & Ogbonna, 2009). The affective commitment is defined as "positive feelings of identification with, attachment to and involvement in the work of the organization". The continuance commitment is defined as "the extent to which employees feel committed to their organization by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving." Normative commitment is defined as "the employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organization" According to Meyer and Allen (1991), normative commitment emerges because of the organization's investments in the employee. There may be an imbalance in the employee/organization

relationship as a result of the company's investments, prompting workers to feel obligated to repay the debt by committing to the organization until the debt is paid off (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Perceived Organizational Support.

Perceived organizational support was the biggest predictor of affective organizational commitment in Meyer et al study. .'s (2002). Numerous studies have found a positive correlation between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990). If workers' attitudes and behavior reflect their perceptions of the company's actions, employees' loyalty to the organization will be connected to perceived organizational support. Several studies have shown a strong relationship between the two concepts. According to Eisenberger et al., POS is a precursor of commitment (1991). The reciprocation of positive regard and care, as well as the absorption of organizational membership into the social identity, attenuated the connections of good work experience with emotional commitment, according to Rhoades et al. (2001). According to Fuller, Barnett, Hester, and Relyea, the social identity theory, which claims that employees feel acknowledged inside an organization when their employer recognizes their contributions to the company, helps explain this relationship (2003). Recognition of their work and position within the business helps to meet their socio-emotional needs, which helps to create their social identity and, as a consequence, boosts their sense of belonging and pride in the organization.

Occupational Hardiness

Hardiness was initially characterized as a group of personality qualities that serve as a flexible resource amid difficult life situations by Kobasa et al. (1982). Many studies employed this concept of hardiness as well (Breed, Cilliers & Visser, 2006; Kobasa, Maddi & Zola, 1985). Individuals with a high level of hardiness are more inclined to participate (commit) actively in whatever they are doing. They also believe and act as though they have influence over the events that create their life, and they view change as both normal and stimulating (challenging) (Azeem, 2010; Delahaij, Gailard & Van Dam, 2010; Hystad et al., 2010). According to studies, boosting an individual's hardiness (i.e., their ability to deal resourcefully with challenging and demanding conditions) can lead to higher performance, a better ability to deal with stress proactively, and can help employees become more resilient (Maddi, 2006; Maddi & Khoshaba,

2005). Uncertainty, worry, and stress in the workplace have an impact on employee morale, performance, and organizational commitment (Carr et al.,2011; Emberland & Rundmo, 2010). The Psychological Hardiness concept was created as three interwoven beliefs - Commitment, Control, and Challenge - that deal with the self-world relationship. It has its roots in existential philosophy (Kobasa, 1979; Maddi & Kobasa, 1984). Commitment is defined as the desire to be concerned and engaged in the people and things around you. Control is defined as the belief in one's power to influence the outcomes of life events. The problem is to believe that change is positive and will allow for growth and development. Since Kobasa's first article on executive hardiness and health (kobasa,1979), a vast body of research has accumulated showing that hardiness protects against the harmful effects of stress on health and performance. In research involving a range of occupational groups, hardiness has been shown to be a significant modulator or buffer of stress (kobasa et al,1982; Roth etal,1989).

Only a few research argue that demographic characteristics are linked to organizational commitment in any way. Although Agyeman and Ponniah (2014) identified a positive, albeit statistically insignificant, link between gender and organizational commitment, Ahmad and Abubakar (2003) found no such link. According to Opayemi (2004)'s research, women were consistently more committed to the organization than men. Older employees are more committed to the organization, according to Affum-Osei, Acquaah, and Acheampong (2015), because younger employees can leave at any time for future job opportunities, whereas older employees have invested significantly in the organization and their turnover intention decreases with years of employment tenure. Despite the fact that the majority of studies suggest that older workers are more devoted to their occupations, Meyer and Allen (1984) observed that younger people are more committed to their jobs since they have fewer job possibilities and less experience.

Rationale

Though a number of studies have been conducted yet studies on organizational commitment related to occupational hardiness, and perceived organizational support, have not been done in India. Hence this study will help to improve the relationship between organizational commitment and job-related behaviors and attitudes in the field of organizational behavior and management.

The objectives of the present study were framed as: (I) to investigate the relationship between demographic variables, perceived organizational support, occupational hardiness, and normative commitment among employees, and (ii) to investigate the role of demographic variables, organizational support, occupational hardiness in predicting normative commitment among employees.

Taking the objectives into account the hypotheses of the study were:

(i) There will be a relationship between demographic variables, organizational support, occupational hardiness, and normative commitment among employees.

(ii) Demographic variables, organizational support, and occupational hardiness would predict normativecommitment among employees

Method

The study was conducted using a correlational design. The normative commitment was the criterion variable and the predictor variables were demographic characteristics (age and gender), organizational support, and occupational hardiness.

Participants and Procedure

The study included purposive sampling by which 415 participants from various private sectors [200 men and 215 women, ranging in age from 22 to 59 years (M =32, SD=5.96)] were included. After a brief overview of the study, participants were requested to sign consent forms indicating their willingness to take part in it. Then they were asked to fill the perceived organizational support scale, occupational hardiness questionnaire and normative dimension of organizational commitment scale in addition to demographic data sheet. The scales were administered to them individually and in groups.IBM SPSS Statistics 23 was used to examine the quantitative data that had been collected. The tools used in this study were as follows:

Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS)

The SPOS developed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986) consisted of 8 items representing six dimensions namely employee's performance, extra effort, employee's

satisfaction, employee's wellbeing, response to employee's complaints performance. SPOS measure employees' perception about the degree to which an organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. A higher score indicates higher levels of perceived organizational support.The items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree. The scale's Cronbach's alpha level was found to be 0.97.

Occupational Hardiness Questionnaire (OHQ)

OHQ developed by Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2013) consisted of 15 items spanning three dimensions namely commitment, control, and challenge, measures resilience at work. The items were measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale where 1=completely disagree to 4= completely agree. The scale's Cronbach's alpha level was found to be 0.83.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), the scale consisted of 24 items divided into three subscales: affective, continuation, and normative commitment. The items were anchored on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree. For the present study, normative commitment subscale was included. Normative commitment measures feeling of obligation to continue to work. The subscale's Cronbach's alpha level was found to be 0.79.

Results

SPSS version 23.0 was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics(Pearson's product moment correlation and multiple hierarchical regression) were used to examine the data. The results are detailed below.

Relationship Among the Measures

To determine the relationships between demographic variables, organizational support, hardiness, andnormative commitment, Pearson's correlation (r) was employed. Table 1 shows the intercorrelation coefficients.

Relationship Between Demographic Variables, Organizational Support, Hardiness and

Normative Commitment

Table 1 provides the result of correlation between Demographic variables, organizational support, hardiness, and normative commitment. The results indicated that the correlation between age and normative commitment was found to be positive, with r (413) =0.29, p<.01. This means that as an individual's age increases, so does his or her normative commitment. Gender and normative commitment had a significant and positive connection (r (413) = 0.18, p<01). Thissuggests that the normative commitment is more among women than men. Significant and positive correlations were observed between normative commitment and different dimensions of perceived organizational support such as Extra effort r (413) = 0.18, p<.01, Employee's satisfaction r (413) =0 .18, p<.01, Employee wellbeing r (413) = 0.16, p<.01 Improved performance r (413) = 0.14, p<.01, Perceived organizational support as a whole r (413) =0 .12, p<.01, and control dimension of hardiness r (413) = 0.16, p<.01. This explains that when there is an increment in the levels of these variables, there is an increase in the normative commitment aspect of the individual.

Table 1

Inter-correlations, Means, Standard Deviations for the demographic Variables, Perceived Organizational Support, Hardiness and Normative Commitment.

Predictor Variables	Criterion variable	Mean	SD
Age	.29**	31.95	5.96
Gender	.18**		
Employee performance	.06	12.94	1.63
Extra effort	.18**	2.09	1.08
Employees satisfaction	.18**	4.02	0.67
Employee wellbeing	.16**	12.09	2.0
Response to employeespossible complaints	-.06	2.00	1.22
Improved performance	.14**	5.82	1.20

Perceived organizational support (whole)	.12*	38.96	3.7
Challenge	.05	14.46	1.01
Control	.16**	13.36	1.19
Commitment	.06	15.55	1.14
	Normative Commitment	32.53	4.00

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Impact of Demographic Variables, dimensions of Organizational Support and Control (Dimension of Hardiness) Predicting Normative Commitment

The influence of organizational support and occupational hardiness in predicting normative commitmentamong employees was investigated using multiple hierarchical regression. All the assumptions of multiple hierarchical regression were checked before the analysis. The assumptions checked were: normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, absence of outliers, and absence of multicollinearity among predictors. Only predictors with significant correlation between criterion variable were considered to be included in the model for analysis. The findings are shown in the table 2.

Multiple Hierarchical Regression for Normative Commitment

Table 2 displays the summary of multiple hierarchical regression. The significantly correlated predictors, which are the dimensions of demographic variables, organizational support and occupational hardiness were entered hierarchically in three models- Model 1 (age and gender), Model 2 (dimensions of support),and Model 3 (control dimension of hardiness).

Table 2

Summary of Multiple Hierarchical Regression Analysis for demographics (age and gender) organizational support and occupational hardiness Predicting normative

commitment (N=415)

Model	*R*	*R^2*	*ΔR^2*	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*t*
*Model1(C=26.69,F=18.95***)*	*.29*	*.08*					
Demographics							
Age				*.17*	*.04*	*.26*	*4.90****
Gender				*.40*	*.43*	*.05*	*.93*
*Model2(C=21.66, F=11.75***)*	*.38*	*.15*	*.07*				
Social support							
Age				*.15*	*.04*	*.22*	*4.06****
Gender				*.58*	*.42*	*.07*	*1.37*
Extra effort				*-.46*	*.18*	*-.12*	*-2.51**
Employee satisfaction				*1.08*	*.27*	*.18*	*3.96****
Employee well-being				*.10*	*.12*	*.05*	*.85*
Improved performance				*.22*	*.20*	*.07*	*1.11*
*Model3(C=29.25,F=12.00***)*	*.41*	*.17*	*.02*				
Hardiness							
Age				*.14*	*.04*	*.20*	*3.80****
Gender				*.72*	*.42*	*.09*	*1.72*
Effort				*-.33*	*.18*	*-.09*	*-1.78*
Employee satisfaction				*1.41*	*.28*	*.24*	*4.92****
Employee well-being				*.03*	*.12*	*.02*	*.26*
Improved				*.20*	*.19*	*.06*	*1.05*
Control				*-.60*	*.17*	*-.18*	*-3.42***

Note. C=constant, ΔR^2= R^2 change, B = unstandardized coefficient, SEB = standardized errorof beta, β = standardized coefficient. ***p < .001,**p < .01, *p<05.

Table 2 explains that in the first model, age and gender were entered as predictor variables. This model was found to be significant, F (2, 412) = 18.95, *p*< .001, and explained 8% of significant proportion of variance (Adjusted R^2 = .08) in normative commitment. From the analysis, age (β= .26, *p*< .001) was found as significant predictor for normative commitment. After entering different dimensions of organizational support in model 2, the model was found to be statistically significant, F (6, 408) = 11.75, *p*< .001, and explained 7% additional significant proportion for normative commitment (R^2 Change= .07, *p*< .001) amounting to total 15% significant proportion of psychological well-being (Adjusted R^2= .14). From theanalysis, age (β= .22, *p*< .001), Extra effort (β= -.12, *p*< .05) and Employee satisfaction (β= .18, *p*< .001)were found to be significant predictors for normative commitment in model 2. After entering control in model 3, the model was found to be statistically significant, F (7, 407) = 12.00, *p*< .001, and explained 2% additional significant proportion of psychological well-being (R^2 Change= .02, *p*< .001) amountingto total 17% significant proportion of normative commitment (Adjusted R^2= .16). In the final adjusted model the age, employee satisfaction, and control variables were statistically significant, with employee satisfaction recording a higher Beta value (β= .24, *p*< .001), than age = (β= .20, *p*< .001),and control (β= -.18, *p*< .01).

Discussion

The current study investigates the influence of occupational hardiness, organizational support, anddemographic information on normative commitment. The Pearson's r correlation analysis confirmed the positive relationship between demographic variables (age and gender), perceived organizational support dimensions such as extra effort, employee satisfaction,employee well-being, improved performance, overall perceived organizational support, control dimension of occupational hardiness and normative commitment.

To address the objective of the study, the major indicators of normative commitment were

identified. Out of twelve predictors, eight predictors -extra effort, employees satisfaction, employees wellbeing, improved performance, and perceived organizational support as a whole and control along with two demographic variables (age and gender) were found to be significantly correlated with normative commitment.

The correlation between age and normative commitment was shown to be positive. This means that as the age of an individual increase, so does his or her normative commitment. This can be explained from the point of view of experience. Through experience, employees believe that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. As a result, people feel more obliged for their work which is the main criterion of normative commitment. This result is in accordance with the study by Mamia and Koivumäki (2006) on Finnish employees. Their result showed that older employees showed greater levels of organizational involvement and were more dedicated to their work as they grew older.

Gender and normative commitment had a significant positive relationship as noted in the result. This suggests that men are more normatively committed to their work than women. This can be explained by the traditional view that men are considered as the breadwinner of a family and women as homemakers. This view of family roles leads to men to exhibit higher levels of commitment. Several research claims that men show more commitment to their work (Aydin, Sarier, and Uysal, 2015; Kumasey, Delle, and Ofei (2014).

The significant positive correlation between dimensions of social support (extra effort, employee satisfaction, employee wellbeing, and improved performance) and normative commitment can be explained on the basis of a feeling of cohesiveness, interpersonal relationships, and teamwork in the organization. Employees feel an obligation to help the organization to reach its objectives when they think that the organization is there to support them. This is supported by the results of the study by Yang et al. (2019) that supervisor and coworker support can enhance worker commitment to an organization.

According to a study, increasing an individual's hardiness (i.e., their capacity to deal

resourcefully with difficult and demanding situations) can lead to improved levels of performance, a better ability to deal withstress proactively, and can help employees become more resilient (Maddi, 2006; Maddi & Khoshaba, 2005). Hardy people have an intense sense of dedication to their lives and jobs, a higher sense of control, and are more adaptable to change and obstacles. They tend to see difficult and painful experiences as aregular part of life, one that is intriguing and useful in the end (kobasa and maddi,1977).

Conclusion

The study met its goal of demonstrating that workers' normative commitment is influenced by perceived organizational support and organizational hardiness. While evaluating the findings, it's important to keep in mind some of the study's limitations. For starters, the present study has been limited to participants predominantly employed in the IT field in the Indian organizational context, the findings cannot be generalized to other occupational contexts, race or gender groups. Second, self-report surveys may lead toexaggerated results. Nonetheless, the study's findings point to the necessity for intervention programmesto strengthen employees' hardiness and resilience so that their productivity is mirrored in their degree of job engagement. Organizational commitment is aided by organizational support, but other psychological factors must be considered to improve the workplace environment and employees' mental health.

Chinese healthcare workers are becoming more important to policy-makers hoping to achieve the Healthy China 2030 goals. However, healthcare workers are exposed to considerable job stress and lack sufficient social support. This study found that to promote medical reform in China and cope with these challenges in Chinese hospitals, appropriate supervisor support and coworker support are critical in limiting presenteeism and sustaining high organizational commitment among healthcare workers.

Limitations

The study examined only one determinants of organizational commitment. Third, this was a cross-

sectional study; thus, our findings regarding presenteeism require confirmation in a cohort study. Fourth, the number of hospitals and research areas should be expanded in the future study and different types of Chinese hospitals would be useful.

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