

Induction Age, Training Duration & Job Performance on Organizational Commitment & Job Satisfaction

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This study was carried out as part of a larger study in a public sector organization with an all India presence. The study explored the influence of induction age, training duration and job permanence of organizational commitment and job satisfaction among 220 participants from a large public sector organization who rated 18 items commitment scale developed by Meyer & Allen and 15 items self-developed job satisfaction scale. Results found that employees inducted at a younger age and trained by the organization for a longer duration are more committed to the organization normatively. Furthermore, permanent employees were found to be more committed normatively and also exhibited higher job satisfaction as compared to contract employees.

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Introduction

Organizational commitment has an important place in the study of organizational behaviour. A vast number of studies have found relationships between organizational commitment and attitudes and behaviours in the workplace (Porter et al 1974, Koch & Steers 1978). The literature has multiple definitions of organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen (1991) identified three types of commitments; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. They defined affective commitment as the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with his organization and its goals. While normative commitment is a feeling of obligation towards the organization continuance commitment is the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has which are non-transferable. Affective and normative commitments have been found to be predictors of positive organizational behaviour, including increased work performance and satisfaction, tenure and attendance (Allen & Meyer 1996). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, has been found to be

negatively related or unrelated to positive organizational behaviours.

Locke & Lathan (1976) give a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important. Luthan (1998) posited that there are three important dimensions to job satisfaction: (a) Job satisfaction is an emotional response to a job situation, as such it cannot be seen, it can only be inferred, (b) Job satisfaction is often determined by how well outcome meet or exceed expectations, and (c) Job satisfaction represents several related attitudes such as work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision and co-workers which are most important characteristics of a job about which people have effective response. Job satisfaction is so important that its absence often leads to lethargy and reduced organizational commitment (Moser 1997).

Organizations are thought to influence the values, attitudes, and behaviours of members through the processes of socialization (Caplow 1964, Fogarty & Dirsmith 2001). However, the process by which that occurs and the relative outcomes are challenged often, or at least not fully understood (Bachman, Sigelman & Diamond 1987, Faris 1976). Organizational socialization is a process of mutual adjustment that reduces uncertainty in tasks and environments by creating common behaviours and shared orienta-

tions among members (Fogarty & Dirsmith 2001, Jones 1983). Several scholars (e.g. Becker & Strauss 1956, Gecas 1990, Kraimer 1997, Pfeffer 1998) have reported the importance of socialization that occurs in organizations, primarily that which prepares individuals for work and occupations, is one of the most significant influences on individuals who are in or approaching adulthood. One of the most predominant modes of formal socialization followed in organizations is 'training'. It therefore, suggests that younger the age of induction and longer the duration of training better will be the internalization of organizational orientations and norms resulting in higher commitment and job satisfaction.

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Another antecedent of commitment and job satisfaction which has not been explored much by scholars is the permanence of job. Perry & Wise (1990) argued that public sector employees have high levels of commitment to the organization and its goals because they are a different type of employees, with strong ethics and job security. In the same vein, Lio (1995: 241) has stated that "facing today's difficult times, many public employees appreciate the relatively secure job situation associated with public employment and consider it a major reason for their organizational commitment".

Given the importance of commitment and job satisfaction for organizational effectiveness, it is aimed here to examine the affect of induction age, initial training and permanence of job on organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Though there are no previous findings in the Indian context, it is hypothesized that respondents who have been inducted early and trained for longer duration will exhibit higher affective and normative commitment and will also exhibit higher job satisfaction. Also, permanent employees will exhibit higher affective and normative commitments and job satisfaction.

Respondents

Questionnaires were distributed to 220 employees of a large public sector organization. All the 220 people returned the completed questionnaire, yielding a return rate of 100%. Fifty eight per cent (N = 128) of respondents were selected by the organization when they were at the age of 18 years and were trained extensively (four years) for occupations within the organization and 42% (N = 92) of the respondents were selected around the age of 22-23 years, after they had finished their education and were trained for a very short period (1 year) by the organization. The respondents belonged to both the categories of employment namely, permanent and contract. Seventy five per cent (N = 164) of the respondents were permanent employees - who enjoy job security till superannuation and the remaining 25 % (N = 56) of the respondents were contract employees with an initial contract period of 10 years which is extendable to 14 years in some cases.

Measures

Organizational commitment. To measure organizational commitment the scale developed by Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993) was used. This scale measured commitment in three components namely affective, normative and continuance commitments and has 18-items in it with six items measuring one particular component of the commitment. This scale has been widely used in the field and has median reliabilities (assessed using coefficient alphas) across many studies of .85 for affective commitment, .73 for normative commitment and .79 for continuance commitment. A detailed discussion of the construct validity of this scale is found in Allen and Meyer (1996). Respondents were asked to record their response against each statement on a 7 point scale, 1 being very strongly disagree and 7 being very strongly agree.

Job satisfaction. A 15 item scale was developed to measure job satisfaction. The coefficient alpha was .92. The maximum and minimum score ranged from 105 to 15 respectively. To determine how different items of job satisfaction scale could be grouped into higher-order categories, a principal component factor analysis with a varimax rotation was run on the ratings. Although, the resulting solution displayed three factors with eigen values greater than one, an examination of the screen plot suggested a two-factor solution accounting for 59.61% of the variance with the individual factors contributing 34.75 and

24.85 % of variance, respectively. Items with rotated factor loadings of .484 or more were summed together to define a component scale. The results of the two-factor solution were used to create scales. The subscales are briefly described below.

Factor 1: Intrinsic Job Satisfaction. The ratings of the items which loaded on the first factor (i.e. items 2, 4, 7, 11, 12, 14 & 15 of the scale) were summed. The coefficient alpha was .91. This grouping was labelled ‘intrinsic job satisfaction’ as they were more to do with aspects like recognition, growth etc.

Factor 2: Extrinsic Job Satisfaction. The second scale, labelled ‘Extrinsic Job Satisfaction’ consisted of items 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 13. The coefficient alpha was .86. This grouping was labelled ‘extrinsic job satisfaction’ as they were more to do with material aspects like pay and perks.

The *third factor* included only one item i.e. item 1 which was related to sal-

ary with a loading of .863. But the same was not taken as a separate factor. Instead it was considered with the composite score in order to partial out the affect of salary. The coefficient alpha was .92.

The participants were asked to read each statement carefully and record their responses on a 7 point scale, 1 being very highly dissatisfied and 7 being very highly satisfied.

Procedure

The participants were selected at random and assembled in small groups in various locations of the organization. Questionnaires were distributed and collected personally. Participants were assured that their responses will be completely confidential and anonymous, and that no individual questionnaire would be shown to any member of the organization.

Results

The findings of study are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Difference of Commitment and Job Satisfaction Across Age and Type of Entry and Job Permanence

	Age and Type of Entry			Job Permanence		
	Adolescents with long training N=128	Adult with short training N=92	t	Permanent Employee N=164	Contract Employee N=56	t
Commitment						
1. Affective	29.0547	28.1957	.919	29.1707	27.3036	1.774
2. Normative	29.7187	27.2935	2.71**	29.5854	26.1250	3.45**
3. Continuance	25.8516	24.9457	1.17	25.8598	24.3393	1.747
Job Satisfaction						
1. Intrinsic	34.4141	32.5217	1.828	34.1707	32.0179	1.837
2. Extrinsic	33.6875	32.6630	1.110	33.6707	32.0536	1.552
3. Total Job Satisfaction	74.2656	70.7826	1.878	73.9207	69.5536	2.084*

** p<.001; * p< .005

It is seen that respondents who were inducted at a younger age and trained intensively for a period of four years were found to be more committed to the organization normatively as compared to the respondents who joined at a later age after completing their education. There was no significant difference on any other components of commitment and job satisfaction. Further more, respondents who are permanent employees of the organization exhibited higher normative commitment and total job satisfaction. Once again there is no significant difference on any other components of commitment and job satisfaction.

Discussion

Longer the training better will be the alignment which in turn will result into higher commitment and job satisfaction.

There were no earlier expectations from this study due to lack of earlier findings linking age of entry and initial training duration with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. However, having prior knowledge that organizational socialization, of which training is the predominant form, helps individuals in orienting with the organization and its norms, it was reasonable to expect that longer the training better will be the alignment which in turn will result into higher commitment and job satisfaction. Further, younger the subjects more effective will be the process of socialization as once the value system is internalized it remains enduring and is difficult to change. Thus, it is reasonable to expect the two cat-

egories of respondents to be significantly different on both the outcome measures of commitment and job satisfaction. However, the finding was quite surprising as there were no significant differences on any component of commitment and job satisfaction except normative commitment. Normative commitment is an outcome of a sense of obligation towards the organization. Since the respondents in this case were inducted at a very young age (18 yrs) and have been nurtured into adulthood, prepared for an occupation within the organization, it is natural that they will have higher sense of obligation and exhibit higher normative commitment as compared to their counterparts. On the other hand no significant difference on affective commitment indicate that induction age and training has nothing to do with developing emotional attachment with the organization or job satisfaction. Perhaps there are other antecedents of affective commitment and job satisfaction.

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In the case of job permanence, it is seen that permanent employees exhibited higher normative commitment and total job satisfaction. Once again there were no prior expectations due to lack of previous findings. The higher normative commitment can be explained in the light of Lio's (1995) finding that secure job situation is associated with organizational commitment. Additionally, it was found that

permanent employees exhibit higher total job satisfaction. A closer look at the composition of the subscales of job satisfaction would reveal that the first item of the scale which was related to 'salary' was not included in any of the two sub scales namely, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. However, the same was taken into the total job satisfaction scale (composite score). This was done to partial out the effect of 'salary'. As expected, the permanent employees were found to exhibit higher total job satisfaction though there were no significant differences in the case of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfactions. This goes to prove that constant flow of money throughout their work life results in a perception of higher job satisfaction for permanent employees when compared with the contract employees.

Secure job situation is associated with organizational commitment.

The most striking result of this study is that even though the normative commitment of the employees who have been trained for longer duration and the ones who enjoy job permanence is high, it is not resulting into higher intrinsic or extrinsic job satisfactions, which is against the earlier findings by Allen & Meyer (1996). Hence, it could be said that perhaps job satisfaction is not necessarily linked to normative commitment.

Relevance of the Study

Several public sector organizations induct employees at a much younger age and train them for specific occupations

within the organization. There has been wide spread criticism to this practice particularly when a large talent pool with adequate qualification is available in the country. Increasingly, even in the private sector, organizations are investing a lot of time and resource in training their people. This practice is very common in the IT and ITES sectors. One definite advantage of this as evidenced in this study is that employees will develop a feeling of obligation and be committed to the organization which will reduce the attrition rate. Further, it is often believed that job permanence results into complacency and low productivity. Perhaps this is not true. Job permanence provides financial security which takes care of the physiological needs of a person and if they are still found to be less productive the reasons have to be traced in other organizational processes relating to meeting the higher order needs of employees such as appraisal, working conditions, leadership etc. Thus, it could be said that job permanence in itself is not bad for the organization.

It is often believed that job permanence results into complacency and low productivity

Conclusion

In a crisp sum, it could be said that the early induction and long training duration results into higher normative commitment. Also, job permanence results into higher normative commitment and total job satisfaction. It could also be said that higher normative commitment does not necessarily lead to higher job satis-

faction. However, the regular flow of income enjoyed by permanent employees influences the general perception of job satisfaction.

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