The relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment among faculty members

[1]Abdollahi, Farhad M.A, [2]Piri, Moosa Associate, [3]Azimi, Mohammad M. A

[1]Curriculum Development, School of Educational Sciences and psychology, University of Azarbaijan
Shahid Madani ,Iran, Tabriz, azarshahr,
[2]Curriculum Development, School of Educational Sciences and psychology, University of Azarbaijan
Shahid Madani ,Iran, Tabriz, azarshahr,
[3]Educational Reaserch

Abstract: The purpose of this research was to study relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment among faculty members. The research hypotheses were examined while considering dimensions of organizational commitment including affective, continuance and normative and perceived organizational support. This study was conducted using the correlation method. The statistical population consisted of 502 faculty members in the university from the year 2011 till 2012; from the 502, 100 were chosen by using stratified randomized sampling. The information gathering tools were organizational commitment with 24 items and perceived organizational support with 36 items. 100 questionnaires were distributed to targeted population. Out of 100 questionnaires we received 89 completed questionnaires. Analysis of the results indicated that mean the organizational commitment in dimensions of affective, continuance and normative was bigger than average. The results indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment.

Key words: Organizational Commitment, Perceived Organizational Support, University, Faculty members.

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1990s, perceived organizational support (POS) has aroused a great deal of interest among researchers in the fields of psychology and management (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2004). In 2002, Rhoades and Eisenberger published a meta-analysis on the antecedents and consequences of POS based on 70 empirical papers. Since this meta-analysis was published, Eisenberger *et al.* (2004) estimate that about 50 additional research papers have been published on the subject. Perceived organizational support (POS) reflects employees "general belief that their work organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Moreover, POS "may be used by employees as an indicator of the organization's benevolent or malevolent intent in the expression of exchange of employee effort for reward and recognition" (Lynch *et al.*, 1999). The exchange relationship with the organization is of great significance to employees. With respect to employees' exchange relationship with the organization, one way in which these unspecified obligations develop for employees is through perceptions of perceived organizational support.

POS develops through multiple exchanges between employees and their employers over time, and reflects the degree, to which employees perceive that their organization values their contributions, respects them and genuinely cares about their personal well-being (……). Research has discussed POS as a resource capable of influencing performance by neutralizing stressors (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002) and increasing affective commitment to the organization (Meyer *et al.*, 2002).

Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) propose that high POS will raise an employee's expectancy and engender a commitment to repay the organization for the support received. In turn, the organization is rewarded through the greater effort made toward meeting organizational goals. Thus, high POS should be associated with a greater organizational commitment. In accordance with social exchange theory, POS is positively related to affective commitment (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades *et al.*, 2001; Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006).

Although POS and organizational commitment differ from one another conceptually and empirically (Bishop *et al.*, 2005; Eisenberger *et al.*, 1990; Shore and Tetrick, 1991), these two notions are somewhat analogous. Indeed, the first concerns the commitment of the organization to employees, and the second refers to the degree to which employees are committed to the organization that employs them (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986).

Organizational commitment is a stabilizing force that binds individuals to organizations (Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe, & Stinglhamber, (2005), Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Organizational commitment is one of the most commonly examined attitudes in the organizational sciences literature (see Meyer *et al.*, 2002

Corresponding Author: Abdollahi, Farhad M.A, Curriculum Development, School of Educational Sciences and psychology, University of Azarbaijan Shahid Madani ,Iran, Tabriz, azarshahr,
Tel: 00989143182431; E-mail: sins20sina27@yahoo.com

for a quantitative review) and has particularly interested researchers since Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed a three-dimension model of the construct.

The concept of organizational commitment is central to organizational behavior research. Organizational commitment is defined as an individual's attitude towards an organization that consists of (a) a strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday *et al.*, 1982). Organizational commitment has three primary components: (1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (3) a strong desire to remain with the organization (Porter *et al.*, 1974). Highly committed employees intend to stay within the organization and to work hard toward its goals (Luthans, McCaul, Dodd, 1985). Meyer & Allen (1991) argued that there were three types of organizational commitment: (1) Affective Commitment: refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement with the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so. (2) Continuance Commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so. (3) Normative Commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization. Career identity can be conceptually tied to work commitment (e.g. Dubin & Champoux, 1975), organizational commitment (Salancik, 1977) and organizational citizenship (Organ& Ryan 1995). Thus, career motivation may positively correlate with organizational commitment. Although affective, continuance, and normative commitment are used to capture the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment, affective commitment is considered a more effective measurement of organizational commitment. Employees with strong affective commitment would be motivated to higher levels of performance and make more meaningful contributions than employees who expressed continuance or normative commitment (Brown, 2003. Thus, affective commitment alone is one of the key concepts of employee behavior organizational commitment has also an important place in the study of organizational behaviors since the studies have found relationships between organizational commitment and attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Tsai, C, 2008). Pastore and Maguire (2006) defined organizational commitment as a strong belief in the organizations goals and values and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Commitment to organization is linked to very important work-related factors: employee turnover, absenteeism and performance (Pastore, & Maguire, 2006; Chu, *et al* 2003). Organizational commitment is regularly conceptualized as an affective attachment to an organization as a consequence of an individual sharing the organizations values, their desire to remain in the organization, and their willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization (Mowday *et al.*, 1979). Relationships between POS and organizational commitment are corroborated by many studies (e.g. Eisenberger *et al.*, 1990; Currie & Dollery. 2006; Caroline A, Vincent R, Estelle M. M 2007, Jones *et al.*, 2000; Rhoades *et al.*, 2001; Settoon *et al.*, 1996; Shore and Tetrick, 1991; Shore and Wayne, 1993). However, the strength of these relationships varies from one study to another (see the meta-analysis of Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). These variations in effect size may depend on the dimensions of organizational commitment that are considered and on different moderating factors. From this perspective, this study was the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and dimensions of Organizational Commitment among faculty members.

Hypothesis:

H1: The mean organizational commitment in the university is bigger than average.

H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and perceived organizational support of the faculty members.

H3: There is a significant relationship between affective commitment and perceived organizational support of the faculty members.

H4: There is a significant relationship between normative commitment and perceived organizational support of the faculty members.

H5: There is a significant relationship between continuance commitment and perceived organizational support of the faculty members.

Methodology:

This study was conducted using the correlation method. The statistical population consists of 502 individuals from the faculty members of university of Isfahan. The sample was selected by stratified randomized sampling proportional to the volume of 100 respondents. Table 1.

The tools for gathering data was a standard questionnaire for organizational commitment with 24 items (Meyer & Allen 2002) and perceived organizational support inquiry(Eisenberg and *et al*, 1986) with 36 items based on Likert five-point scale (5= strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree). In total, 100 questionnaires were circulated to targeted population. Out of 100 questionnaires we received 89 completed questionnaires. This

response rate is quite suitable for this type of study. By using Alpha cronbach coefficient, reliability coefficients were obtained equal to 0.89 for organizational commitment and 0.91 for perceived organizational support. Also, both questionnaires were confirmed by 10 faculty members and 19 experts in the university in terms of nominal and content validity. The analysis of the data was performed in inferential level (correlation coefficient and t-test), using SPSS17 statistical soft-ware.

Findings:

This section deals with the research findings, presented in Tables 2 through Table 4.

(Table 2) Analysis of the results related to H1 indicated that mean the organizational commitment in dimensions of affective, normative and continuance was bigger than average.

(Table 3) Analysis of the results related to H2 indicated that correlation coefficient between the organizational commitment and perceived organizational support of the faculty members was significant at the level of $P \leq 0.05$. The rate of relationship between two variables was r = 0.41, indicating an average and direct correlation between these two variables. Also, the determination coefficient showed that about 17% of variance of scores is related to the components of organizational commitment.

Analysis of the results from H3 indicated that the correlation coefficient between the affective commitment and the rate of POS was significant at the level of $P \leq 0.05$. The rate of correlation between two variables was r = 0.44, indicating a linear correlation between these variables. Also, the determination coefficient showed that affective commitment and the rate of POS share about 18% of variance of scores.

By analyzing of the results from H4 it became clear that there was a significant relationship between the normative commitment and the rate of POS at the level of $P \leq 0.05$. According to the output of Pierson's correlation coefficient test, the value for r was equal to 0.60. And it indicates that these two variables have a direct correlation. Also, the determination coefficient showed that these two variables share 36% of variance of scores.

According to the analysis of results from H5, the relationship between continuance commitment and POS is 0.39 at level of $P \leq 0.05$. Also, the determination coefficient showed that these two variables share 15% of variance of scores.

Discussion:

Analysis of the results related to H1 indicated that mean the organizational commitment in dimensions of affective, normative and continuance was bigger than average.

Analysis of the results related to H2 indicated that correlation coefficient between the organizational commitments and POS of the faculty members was significant at the level of $P \leq 0.05$. The rate of relationship between two variables was r = 0.41, indicating an average and direct correlation between these two variables. Also, the determination coefficient showed that about 17% of variance of scores is related to the components of organizational commitment. Our findings support the statement that POS could have an effect on organizational commitment faculty member. This agrees with the assertions of previous relevant studies (Anil and Brian, 2004).

The analysis of the results from H3 indicated that the correlation coefficient between the affective commitment and the rate of POS was significant at the level of $P \leq 0.05$. The rate of correlation between two variables was r = 0.44, indicating a linear correlation between these variables. The determination coefficient also showed that 18% of variance of scores was common among the affective commitment and the rate of POS share about. A number of studies corroborate the relationship between POS and normative commitment (see the meta-analysis of Meyer *et al*., 2002). According to Eisenberger *et al*. (2004), this relationship can essentially be explained by the norm of reciprocity put forward by Gouldner (1960). This norm stipulates that when a person or an entity (e.g. group, organization) does someone a favor, the recipient of this favor feels the obligation to return the favor. Thus, when individuals perceive that their employer shows concern for their well-being and seek to meet their needs, they are more likely to feel indebted to the organization and show loyalty (Gakovic and Tetrick, 2003). Therefore POS is likely to increase the level of normative commitment. Compared to the relationship between POS and affective commitment, it appears to be more the economic aspect of the exchange between employees and the organization that explains the link between POS and normative commitment (Shore and Tetrick, 1991).

The analysis of results from the H4 showed that there was a significant relationship between the variables of normative and the rate of POS ($P \leq 0.05$). The value of r was equal to 0.6, based on the output of Pearson correlation coefficient test, and it can be said that there is an average and direct correlation between these two variables. The determination coefficient also showed that these two variables share 36% of the variance of scores. And According to the analysis of results from H5, the relationship continuance commitment and POS is 0.39 at level of $P \leq 0.05$. Also, the determination coefficient showed that these two variables share 15% of variance of scores.

Table 1: The sample of faculty members in the university

College	population	sample
Education	48	11
Physical Education	19	4
Foreign Languages	53	12
Human Science	99	20
Economic & Official Affaires	78	15
Basic Science	131	24
Technical & Engineering	74	14
Total	502	100

Table 2: t-test for mean of organizational commitment

variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	sig
affective	89	22.30	4.343	.34	24.311	.000
normative	89	29.44	7.151	.51	22.810	.000
continuance	89	32.80	8.17	.56	57.830	.000

Table 3: Results from correlation coefficient of components of organizational commitment and Perceived Organizational Support

hypotheses	variable	f	r	Sig.
H2	organizational commitment and Perceived Organizational Support	89	0.41	0.000
H3	affective commitment and Perceived Organizational Support	89	0.44	0.000
H4	normative commitment and Perceived Organizational Support	89	0.60	0.000
H5	continuance commitment and Perceived Organizational Support	89	0.39	0.011

Table 4: Regression coefficient of organizational commitment and Perceived Organizational Support

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	183.162	24.544	0	7.459	.000
affective	.091	.411	.020	.231	.823
normative	.123	.249	.041	.489	.620
continuance	.241	.241	.096	.991	.325

Continuance commitment can be distinguished from the other two forms of commitment by the fact that employees continue to work for the organization by default rather than because they really want to (affective commitment) or feel that it is their duty to stay (normative commitment). Moreover, several studies reveal that continuance commitment is not correlated in the same way as affective and normative commitment with the various antecedents of organizational commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1996; Meyer *et al*., 2002).

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