

“Employee Attitude towards Organisational Commitment: A Literature Survey”

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Abstract: Every Organisation that employs people come from a diverse background for a common purpose of fulfilling the goals of the organisation and also commit themselves to work towards achieving the objectives of the organisation. This paper reviews the studies conducted to establish the relationship between Employee Attitude and their Commitment towards the Organisation in meeting the requirements and following their policies and principles. The objectives of the paper is to understand the relationship between Employee Attitudes and Commitment towards the organisation and to find out if there is any significant impact of employee attitude towards their commitment to the organisation leading to increased loyalty. The paper also tries find out whether the employees’ attitudes leads to job satisfaction which will result in organisational commitment. The reviews of various researches clearly indicate that organisational commitment is the outcome of employees’ attitudes which has led to job satisfaction. A satisfied employee remains in the firm even if he has to face challenges like no rise in the pay, not so comfortable working environment or no high position in the organisation. It is not only the remuneration and perquisites that make an employee committed to the organisation, but also the attitudes that determine the commitment towards the organisation.

Keywords: Employee Attitudes, Job satisfaction, Organisation, Commitment.

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I. Introduction

In a world where Organisations are trying their level best of hire the highly efficient workforce to meet the growing demands, certain attributes like Attitudes and Commitment towards the organisation cannot be easily identified. Many studies and Organisational models describe the way an employee behaves in a given situation, which in turn helps to analyse the outcome. An employee’s Attitude which is related to satisfaction in job and Organisational Commitment are of vital interest to the field of organisational behavior and practice of human resource management. The employee’s attitude towards the overall commitment towards the organisation is directly connected to job satisfaction and loyalty.

Matheiu & Zajac (1990) are of the opinion that there is no significant evidence regarding relationship between satisfaction and commitment, although most authors consider satisfaction and commitment are inter-connected. Though job satisfaction has received the most attention of all work-related attitudes, organisational commitment has become increasingly recognized in the organisational behavior researches (Meyer, 1993). Therefore it is understood that certain attitudes may reflect the employees’ satisfaction level while they perform a given job.

II. Conceptual Analysis

Attitudes

One of the most noticeable behavior in any workplace is the attitudes of the employees towards any situation or performance. Attitudes have been defined by many authors based on the way people behave or react. Eagly and Chaiken (1933) defined an attitude as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” Here the authors have said that an attitude is a psychological inclination which is always evaluated with some level of positivity or negativity. Some kinds of attitudes found in employees help the organisation to function without any hindrance, whereas some employees whose psychological orientation is negative will have a negative approach, which is evaluated negatively and not favorable to achieve the goals of the organisation. Gordon Allport (1935) who was one of the founders of attitude research, noted that “the concept of attitude is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology” In view of this definition, it can be understood that an attitude differs from person to person. It is the most essential element to be studied and

understood in any organisation of modern times. According to Fishbein and Ajzen(1974) attitude is a positive or negative feeling or mental state of readiness, learned and organized through experience that exerts specific influence on a person's response to people, objects and situations. In this view an Attitude is a kind of feeling that is expressed when an employee goes through a particular situation, the way he/she responds not only to persons but also to objects that influence their behaviour. The feelings could be positive ones which may display readiness to do some work enthusiastically; it may be also learned through experiences. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly(1991) stated that "values and attitudes develop from early childhood onward as a result of upbringing, education and experience of life." They further declared that some people's attitudes are set by their late twenties/ early thirties, and others seem to be able to retain certain flexibility throughout their life. The authors are of the opinion that values and attitudes are formed during the childhood and the environment in which they were brought up, their educational background and the various experiences they encountered. These attitudes will later take shape when they reach late twenties and they don't change very easily. In some others these attitudes keep changing as long as they live. Robbins (2003) said attitudes is an evaluative feature and they can be either favorable or unfavorable concerning objects, people, or events. Therefore, they reflect how one feels about something. In general an "Attitude" can be understood as an individual's general opinion or a reaction, or an evaluation of some situation or an event. It can also be a positive or negative behavior, which can cause favorable or unfavorable outcomes, when dealing with people in an organisation. .

Learning Theories that form the Attitudes:

Various learning theories have clearly indicated that the behavioral outcome forms an Attitude among the learners or employees. Any behavior of an employee can be analyzed on the basis of its occurrence and its effect on the organisation. Behaviors which transform into attitudes can be further analyzed based on its theoretical constructs discussed by authors.

Classical conditioning theory :

Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) proposed a theory based on learning attitudes. This theory was based on Classical conditioning – where a non-verbal behavior will activate an emotional response.

Instrumental or operant or conditioning:

This theory was described by B.F. Skinner(1938) which meant changing the behavior or attitudes by using reinforcement, where he identified three types of responses – (1)Neutral operants – where the attitudes do not change (2) Reinforcers – negative or positive reinforcers increases the possibility of repeated behavior or attitudes (3) Punishers – decreases the possibility of a behavior being repeated.

Cognitive Consistency Theories:

It is found that one of the most earliest consistency theory was proposed by Heider (1946, 1958) as Heider's Balance Theory which was concerned with individual's perceptions of the relationships between (1) himself(person) (2)another (other person) (3) impersonal entity (issue/object). There will be a balance among the three elements, when all the relationships are positive, or two are negative and one is positive and all three elements gel together with no stress. Heider also says, the imbalanced state can be rewarding and exciting, because it stimulates a person to think deeper and further, to understand and get a solution to the problem that caused imbalance.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory :

Leon Festinger (1957) suggests that people have an inner feeling to embrace all our attitudes and beliefs in synchronization and avoid disharmony or dissonance. This is also known as the principle of cognitive consistency.

Functional Approach Theory:

(Kelman, 1958) has given an approach where he distinguished three processes of attitude formation and change, that is (1) Compliance- where attitude is formed or changed to gain positive impression from others (2) Identification – attitudes are formed or changed to establish self identifying relationship with others (3) Internalisation – adopting an attitude because it is congruent with self and other systems. This functional approach has made a vital contribution towards understanding the maintenance and stability of attitudinal changes. Daniel Katz (1960) proposed a **Functionalist** theory of Attitudes which was based on (1) Instrumental function where we develop attitudes that help us achieve the goals. (2) The Ego-defensive function where we protect ourselves from harsh realities of the world. (3) The value Expressive function where an individual gets satisfaction by expressing attitudes which is related to their personal values. (4) The Knowledge function in which attitudes give meaning, clarity and order in our life.

Bem’s Self-perception Theory:

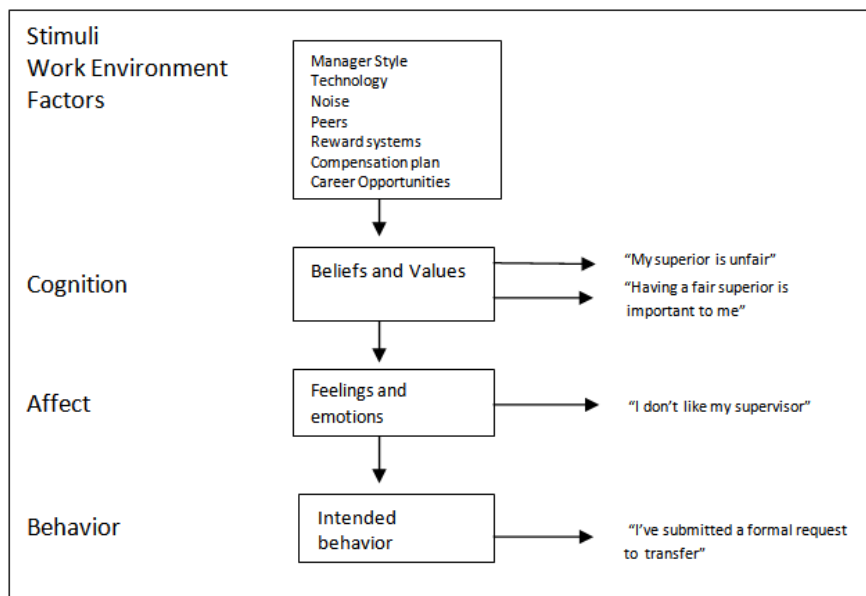
Psychologist Daryl Bem(1960) developed this theory of attitude formation, which describes the practice in which people who lacked preliminary attitudes or emotional responses, develop them by observing their own behavior and evaluating themselves as to what attitudes or behaviors must have caused to behave in a particular manner.

Social Judgement Theory:

This theory explains how existing attitudes generate distortions of attitude related matters and how these judgments intervene change in attitudes. Therefore a person’s initial attitude towards an issue will provide a base to judge or evaluate other opinions.

Social Learning or Observation Theory:

Albert Bandura(1977) believed that associations and direct reinforcement will not help in learning attitudes instead it happens through observation. Attitudes are formed by watching people around and imitating what is seen. Based on the various theories of Attitudes an appropriate Tri-component model, is used to study its components.



Source : John M. Ivancevich, Robert Konopaske, Michael T. Matteson., Understanding & Managing Individual Behavior. Pg76

The above figure illustrates in what way a work environment can influence the three components of attitudes. The Stimuli will activate “Cognitive” (thought), “Affective”(emotional), and “Behavior” responses. These three components form a distinctive attitude in a person, which he exhibits in his decisions and in his/her dealings within the organisation.

Job Satisfaction:

In general if an employee in any organisation is found to be doing his job with enthusiasm and interest, may be considered to have job satisfaction, which is the most important element of measuring commitment in the organisation. Various researchers have defined this element after evaluating the criterions of Job satisfaction among the employees. Hoppock (1935) says job satisfaction is “any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say I am satisfied with my job.” The author made it clear that it is not only one element of psychology that makes a person say that he is satisfied with the job, instead it is a combination or a good blend of psychological, physiological and environmental situations that makes a person to say that he or she is satisfied with the job entrusted to them. Vroom(1964) observed that job satisfaction focuses on the role of the employee in the workplace. Thus job satisfaction is an affective orientations on the part of individuals toward work roles which they are presently occupying. A person can say he is satisfied with the job, when his sentiments are respected. The role that is played in the workplace satisfies one’s feeling of being accepted and they feel that they are doing justice to the job that is given to them. McNamara (1999) explained that one’s feelings or state of mind regarding the nature of their work is job satisfaction. It can be influenced by a variety of factors, e.g. the quality of one’s relationship with their

supervisor, the quality of the physical environment in which they work, degree of the fulfillment of their work, etc. It has been understood that the main influencing factor to know the job satisfaction in employees is to see if the relationship with the superiors is good or bad. According to Guimareas(1996) “Job satisfaction” is when employees recognize that they are contributing to the overall achievement of organisational goals. The employees are satisfied with their jobs if they are recognized that they are the ones who are responsible in contributing to the achievement of the organisation’s goals and objectives. Schwepker (2001) said job satisfaction is the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating one’s values. It refers to the feelings people have towards their job. A person may feel satisfied when they are appreciated for the work done or for achieving a mile stone. As per a research conducted by (Leite, Rodrigues, & Albuquerque, 2014) compared two structural models to find out if job satisfaction had a direct or mediation role in predicting commitment among the 10,052 Brazilian Military Police Organisation. It was found that satisfaction with relationships is an antecedent of commitment, which mediates its relationships with other variables, such as work and personal characteristics; however it played a small role in mediation of the individual variable investigated, which showed a direct impact on the organisational commitment. As per an extensive research conducted by SHRM in 2016, an USA based society, found that 88% of US employees reported overall satisfaction with their current job, which marked the highest over the last 10years. It was noted that respectful treatment of all employees at all levels was very important by 67%, making it the top contributor to overall job satisfaction. With regard to employee engagement which is one of the basic elements of organisational commitment, it was found that there was 77% overall satisfaction with respect to relationship with co-workers which was one of the top most conditions. (Raziq & Maulabaksh, 2015) in their study on Job satisfaction among 210 employees in education, banking and telecommunication sector of Quetta, Pakistan found that there was a positive relationship between working environment and job satisfaction, as it is an important variable in measuring job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is considered by many researchers as one of the most important attitude that influence human behavior in the work place. Most of the research in the field of Organisational behaviour is to measure the job satisfaction level of employees and understand its consequences for people at work so that the ultimate aim of the organisations in meeting their objectives are fulfilled.

Commitment:

According to Porter (1968) commitment involves willingness of employees to exert higher efforts on behalf of the organization, a strong desire to stay in the organization, and accept major goals and values of the organization. The willingness of doing something on own accord without being instructed, on behalf of the management reflects the attitude of commitment among the workers. This will also motivate them to remain in the organisation and be ready to accept higher goals and synchronize with the values of the organisation. Kanter (1968) viewed commitment as the willingness of social actors to give energy and loyalty to the organization. The attitude of showing willingness will result in doing a job with full energy and being loyal to the organisation even in times where the management is undergoing any sort of financial crisis. Porter et al., (1974)says the organizational commitment is believing and accepting the goals and values of organization and possessing and showing desire to be part of the organization which has three major components: (1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (3)a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. The components highlights the attitudes of believing and accepting the goals of the organisation, which is to be achieved by willingly exerting extra effort and a desire to have a strong relationship with the organisation. Wiener (1982) said that Organizational commitment is the aggregate internalized normative demands to perform in a manner which meets organizational objectives and interests. Commitment of employees can be seen when they perform as per the standards expected and those which meets the organisational objectives, goals and interests. According to Blau (1987) Organizational commitment is a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. This affirms that the commitment of an employee can be identified when an employee identifies the goals of the organisation and wishes willingly to be the part of the organisation. Dey (2012) says the term organizational commitment refers to the level of attachment of individuals to their employing organizations. Commitment to an organisation is seen as a connection that is established by the employee towards the organisation. When an employee gets connected or attached to the organisation at a higher level, one can assess the commitment level. In view of the above definitions, it can be perceived that Organisational commitment is a value which the employees willingly practice in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation. It also depicts the level of loyalty, commitment, attachment, strong relationship which the employees have towards the organisation, which in turn keeps them attached and bonded even in times of distress and temptations from the competing organisations or even within the organisation itself.

Attitudes and Job Satisfaction:

Ravlin(2015) in their book on Human Resource Management highlighted that employee job attitudes relate to important organizational outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover, and performance. Their evaluation is used both as an organizational assessment tool and to assess their level of satisfaction. Dalal (2012) is of the opinion that Job satisfaction is how people think and feel about their jobs, which is most expansively studied constructs in organizational psychology. Talei and Amirreza(2002) in their book “Job Attitudes” mention that, work attitudes are evaluations of an employee's job and work environment. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are two of the most globally studied work attitudes. Antecedents and consequences of work attitudes differ across cultural contexts. For example, extrinsic job characteristics such as job security and pay are positively related to job satisfaction across collectivistic cultures, whereas intrinsic job characteristics such as recognition and autonomy are more strongly related to job satisfaction in individualistic countries. Hulin and Charles(2003) in their handbook of Psychology say that “There is much overlap between social and job attitudes but conceptual similarities mask many differences. Empirical relations between job satisfaction and many job behaviors and estimated behavioral constructs demonstrate differences between job and social attitudes.” Harris (1988) explained in the study, which included information on attitudes towards benefits and pay satisfaction and was used to collect data from 153 Estonian, 157 Latvian, and 146 Lithuanian employees and 243 Latvian, 103 Estonian, and 109 Lithuanian entrepreneurs. The turnover of the employees and business owners was then followed over a four-year time period with assessments done each year allowing for an examination of temporal variations in the relationships over time. Actual salary/income data was also obtained from organizational records. This emphasized the fact that the attitudes of employees and their commitment towards the organisation did have an impact on the turnover of employees. According to Morris and David(1979) in their article, based on an extensive survey of employees within a Malaysian tertiary educational institution, explores employee attitudes and perceptions towards existing pay and promotional policies and the organizational implications thereof. It was found that sizeable components of the workforce were dissatisfied with existing procedures. The limitations of the present system highlighted the need to develop new models for organizing work and rewards within the state and quasi-state sectors, models that balance the need for effective service provision with financial sustainability; and that reconcile wider social needs with “best practices” of human resource management.

Employee attitudes and commitment:

It is important to know whether Organisational commitment is depended on employee attitudes. The reviews of some research highlight that there is a significant relationship between these two important constructs. Mowday, R.T., Steers, R.M., & Porter, L.W. (1979) emphasized in their research that, Organizational commitment is seen as a strong belief in accepting the organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Morris & Sherman (1981) said that the concept of organizational commitment has been conceptualized from various perspectives. From the behavioral approach, organizational commitment has been studied from the output of rewards/ contribution exchange processes between employers and employees. It may be noted that the psychological approach identified that Organisational commitment is an attachment and a kind of bonding or an identification of employees with organisation where they work.

A number of studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and employee behaviors and attitudes that enhance organizational effectiveness. Randall, Fedor & Longenecker(1990) and Angel and Perry (1981) showed in their research that organizational commitment correlates positively with employees' and organization's ability to adapt to unforeseeable events. According to Senge (1993), personnel commitment is one of the key requirements to become a learning organization. In their study of tourism employees, Feinstein and Vondrasek (2001) established that the level of satisfaction predicts organizational commitment. Another study conducted by Gaertner (1999) on the determinants of job satisfaction and organizational commitment established that job satisfaction is the basis of organizational commitment. Jernigan et al(2002) explored the role that particular determinants of job satisfaction played in predicting different types of commitment in an organization. They established that effective commitment differs according to an individual's satisfaction with the work context. In such cases, the role of the management cannot be overlooked because managers are the key people with the highest level of responsibility for moving the organization ahead. Research conducted by Maxwell and Steele (2008) among hotel managers identified principles that enhance the level of commitment in organizations. These include high and equitable remuneration, employers' interest on their workers, a high level of cooperation in the organization, and opportunities to take part in social activities.

Job satisfaction and Commitment:

Job satisfaction is one of the most regularly measured organizational variables and frequently referred to as an employee's global attitudinal or affective response to their job. Makanjee et al. (2006) explained that job satisfaction was basically the way individuals thought and felt about their multifaceted work experience. Loui (1995) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment among 109 workers and reported that there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Another study by Coleman & Cooper (1997) explained that job satisfaction was positively related to both affective and normative commitment. Study by Rajendran and Raduan (2005) also showed the same result that job satisfaction has a positive influence on affective and normative commitment.

III. Conclusion

Issues and suggestions: This paper has reviewed various studies based on the attitudes of the employees and the policies and practices of the management which has led to organisational commitment and satisfaction. The extensive reviews and surveys revealed that if the component of commitment is less among the employees, there will be major issues related to human resources in any organisation. Absenteeism and labour turnover is seen as a major problem, faced which needs to be handled with precision, as it will impact the performance. As per the various studies undertaken by researchers there has been a constructive relationship between the Employee Attitudes reflecting their commitment towards the Organisation and then leading to satisfaction. In order to achieve the objective of ensuring commitment among the employees, it is necessary to build positive attitudes, better working conditions and maintain cordial relationship. This may help the organisations to decide whether to continue the existing policies or whether to reconstruct them to achieve the required result in terms of loyal and committed employees who are also satisfied with their work.

It can be concluded that positive attitudes yield job satisfaction leading to organisational commitment, which in turn will create more number of loyal employees. To achieve this, it is necessary to measure the commitment level for better performance of the organisation.

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