

Career Stage Effect on Organizational Commitment

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Abstract: *The basic objective of the study is to find out the effect of career stage on organizational commitment. Age is taken as career stage and Organizational Commitment contain its three dimensions I.e. Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. The data was collected from the teachers of University of Gujrat by using questionnaire by Meyer and Allen 1997 using 5 point Likert scale. The result indicate that Affective and Normative Commitment are significantly related to career stage whereas insignificant relationship was found between career stage and Normative Commitment and the study also shows that the older employees are more committed to their organizational as compared to their younger employees.*

Keywords: Organizational Commitment, affective commitment, normative commitment, continuance commitment, career stages.

1. Introduction

Employee commitment is very important for an organization. Committed employees towards their organization are considered to serve their employers better, they stay satisfied and committed towards the organization and consequently the organization will face little turnover and absentseem and increased motivation towards their work. The concept of organizational commitment has occupied an enormous attention of different researchers and the scholars like psychology, the department of business administration, and of many other practitioners. This significance of organizational commitment is sustained by different studies investigating the relations between OC and its antecedents and outcomes (Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). A number of researchers have found that age and tenure has an effect on Organizational Commitment. Allen and Meyer found that commitment was related to increase in organizational tenure. They also found that as age increases, their responsibility and desire in order to stay with the organization also increases. Finegold et. Al made a suggestion that age has a small effect on an employee's commitment. Meyer and Allen (1984) conceptualized Organizational commitment in three dimensions:

Affective commitment: Affective commitment is the positive feeling of recognition with, attachment to, and association in the work organization (Meyer and Allen, 1984, p.375)

Continuance commitment: Continuance commitment is defined as the degree to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving (e.g., investments or lack of attractive alternatives) (Meyer and Allen, 1984, p. 375).

Normative commitment: Normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990) which was defined as the employees feelings of obligation to remain with the organization (Weiner, 1982).

They argued that employees with affective commitment within an organization because they want to. Those remain with continuance commitment because they are required to and those with strong normative commitment remain with

the organization they believe they are supposed to. Meyer and Allen made a suggestion that individuals may display all the three forms of commitment to changeable degrees. Therefore, the broadly used definitions which put emphasis on commitment to organizational goals are challenging because according to this definition, people can be committed to an organization for reasons rather than commitment to its goals.

2. Statement of Problem

Educational institutions are regarded as service industry to have an important role in developing well educated, smart, talented human capital for the future. Hence, the primary players are teachers who are responsible to generate human capital for the future which is a requirement of the nation. When committed lecturers leave the organization they take with them their skills and knowledge which creates a load on the organization. Considering such problems, there is a need to carry out a study that focuses on career stages that will influence organizational commitment among teachers. This study will examine if career stage such as age increases the level of commitment among employees or not.

3. Significance

Organizational commitment is a focus point within the organization, employee commitment towards their job and with the organization, and satisfaction with their job will increase their tenure with the organization. It is said that organizational commitment increases with age. Career stages have an important effect on the commitment of employees. High career commitment and self efficacy will result in career success both subjective and objective (Ballout, 2009). The purpose of this study is to contribute further the impact of career stages on the organizational commitment of teachers.

4. Objective

The main objective of this research is to examine the effect of career stages on organizational commitment. We hope that the findings will remove the research gap because smaller number of studies has been conducted among teachers or lecturers on organizational commitment.

Sub Objectives

- To find out the relationship between affective with age of the employees.
- To find out the relationship between Continuance Commitment with age of employees.
- To find out the relationship between Normative Commitment and age of the employees.

5. Literature Review

Career Stages:

Working life of every person passes through usual evolutionary phases called career stages. Super (1957, 1984) projected a theory that people pass through particular career stages during their span of life. These stages are differentiated by a variety of essential activities and psychological adjustments which have to be made by the people, no matter what their occupation or background is (Arthur, Hall, and Lawrence, 1989; Brown and Brooks, 1996; Ornstein, Cron, and Slocum 1989; Levinson, 1986; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and Mckee, 1978; Lynn et al., 1996; Super, Savickas, and Super, 1996). According to Super's (1957) theory a person's occupational career consists of three phases over age 25-65 years: exploration, establishment, and last one are maintenance. These three career stages are based on the qualitatively unusual psychological task. Levinson et al. (1978) documented "life areas" in four phases: Childhood (0-20 yrs.), early adulthood (20-40 yrs.), middle adulthood (40-60 yrs.), and late adulthood (over 60 yrs.). Brooks and Seers (1991) evaluated five (18-21, 22-27, 28-32, 33-40, 41 and older). Other researchers also explained that Career stage research is based on the supposition that individuals go through their occupational stages in their organizational career, every stage is characterized by variation in work attitudes and behaviors, relationship types and the part of work that are valued (Araye, Chay & Chew, 1994, Slocum Jr. and Cron, 1985).

6. Organizational Commitment

Commitment has been considered from so many different theoretical perspectives, however, that Hall (1977) stated that we might better discard the term overall and deal instead with a bunch of concepts, each paying attention on one or another aspect of commitment. The term "commitment" has been applied as, to explain such varied phenomena as the willingness of social actors to provide their energy and loyalty to social systems. Commitment has been defined as an attitude which involves loyalty of employees to the organization with those individuals who are prepared to contribute a bit of themselves to their organization. Organizational Commitment usually involves the internalization of individual goals and employee readiness to get involved in the accomplishment of these objectives and values, stay with the organization in the context of these objectives and values and to put forth efforts afar that generally required in the concern of these objectives and values (Jans, 1989). Salancik (1977) considered commitment as a position in which a person becomes restricted by his actions and these are those actions that sustain his activities and association. Conclusion can be

made from the definition that three features of behavior are very important in binding individuals to perform: visibility of work, the amount to which the outcomes are constant; and the amount to which the person carry out the action gladly. As a result, to Salancik, commitment can be improved to get support for the organizational ends and interests through such things as part in making decisions.

(Abdul Rahim, Ibrahim, Omar, & Noordin) Studied the effects of career stages on organizational commitment among Australian managers and the relationship between career stage and organizational commitment. Career stage was described on the basis of age, positional tenure and organizational tenure. The researchers concluded that there exists a positive relationship between organizational commitment and age and it increases with the passage of age.

(Allen & Meyer, 1996) Examined the work attitudes from the perspective of a career stage which deals with two problems: changes in attitudes across stages and the relationship between work experiences and attitudes at different stages. In this study, affective, continuance, & normative commitment towards the organization were inspected and results indicated that affective and normative commitment increases greatly with employee age, extension in continuance commitment are associated to enhance in organizational and positional tenure. Furthermore, the associations between work experiences and affective commitment differs only a little across tenure levels and not at all across employee age groups a function of all three career stage variables.

(Bentein, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Stinglhamber, 2005) Examined the role of change in the relationship between commitment and turnover. A considerable relationship was found between the change trajectories such that the steeper the decline in an individual's affective and normative commitments over time, the greater the rate of increase in intention of a person to leave and further, the larger the likelihood that the person in reality left the organization in coming 9 months. Findings concerning continuance commitment and its components were mixed.

(Chang, 1999) Investigated the moderating role of career commitment on the relationships between employees' perception of company practices and organizational commitment and between organizational commitment and turn over intention. It was found that (1) career commitment was supposed to be different from the two dimensions of organizational commitment (affective and continuance) (2) career commitment moderated the effect of employee s' perception of supervisory support on affective commitment; and (3) career commitment also moderated the effect of affective commitment on turnover intention.

(Cohen, 1993) Investigated that career stage may moderate the relationship between organizational commitment and outcomes. The Hunter et al. (1982) and Hunter & Schmidt (1990) meta-analysis procedure was used for this research. The researcher arrived at a conclusion that the relationship between commitment and turnover is stronger in the early career stage than in the mid and late career stages. The associations of commitment with performance and absenteeism are strongest in the late career stage.

(Conway, 2003) Examined whether career stage has a moderating influence on the HR-commitment relationship. The empirical research was based on an employee attitude survey within three financial service organizations in Ireland. Researchers discovered that attitudes towards HR practices and commitment were related to career stage differentially.

(Gould & Hawkins, 1978) Examined the relationship between performance and dimensions of job satisfaction. The researcher used the sample of 132 employees of a public agency which were situated in a large southwestern city. The results of their study indicated that the association between performance and a particular dimension of job satisfaction may be a function of a career stage of an individual within the organization.

(Lynn, Cao, & Horn, 1996) Examined the relationship between career stage and work attitudes of male and females accounting professional. Job involvement, organizational commitment, and extrinsic & intrinsic rewards satisfaction are positively associated to professional tenure. Intentions of organizational turnover are negatively associated to professional tenure for male accounting professionals. There is no such key variation in attitude towards work across career stages for female accounting professionals.

(Morrow & McElroy, 1987) Four measures of work commitment five job satisfaction aspects, and six personal characteristics were examined under three career stages in this study: age, organizational tenure, and positional tenure. They took the sample of 2200 public agency employees specified that the selection of a career stage operationalization effect results which relates to organizational commitment and purpose to remain while job involvement, job satisfaction, work ethic endorsement, and personal characteristics are quite unchanged by the chosen operationalization. Age was seen to clarify more difference in the variables, when compared to the tenure measures. However, the overall levels of explained variation are low.

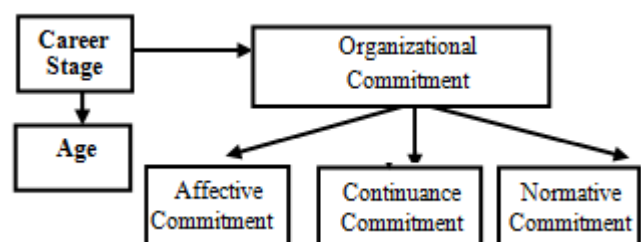
(Noordin, Abdul Rahim, Ibrahim, & Omar) Studied the effects of career stages on organizational commitment among Malaysian managers and the relationship between career stage and organizational commitment. Career stage was done on the basis of age, organizational tenure and positional tenure. The study explained that neither organizational tenure nor positional tenure considerably affected any of the components of organizational commitment among the Malaysian managers. Only age was found to have an important impact on managers, and it is controlled to the affective component of organizational commitment.

(Pettit, Donohue, & Cieri, 2004) Analyzed the impact of age and tenure on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. From their research, they concluded that age does not drastically affect organizational commitment. However, age does control the amount employee will connect to OCB. No major relationship was found between tenure, organizational commitment or OCB.

(Singh & Singh, 2010) In this study the researchers used the career stage model of super; they identified the levels of organizational citizenship behavior in different career stages. The research was done on 210 front level Indian managers. The results discovered that the executives showed considerably high level of OCB in establishment and maintenance stage than trial stage of the career. While, variation of mean score of OCB in establishment and maintenance stage of insignificant.

7. Theoretical Framework

In this study two variables are studied which are career stages and organizational commitment. We will study that how different career stages effect an individual's performance and commitment towards its work and with the organization. We will study in this research the effect of age and its effect on organizational commitment with the support of previous research.



Variables:

Career stage is considered to be independent variable which can be measured with the help of age of the employee. Organizational commitment is considered to be dependent variable which includes Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment.

8. Hypothesis

Age is expected to be an essential determinant of organizational commitment in the early-career stage because those employees who are in the early stage of their career have more intention to leave their organization than those of other age groups. Level of commitment of employees at this stage fluctuates and they generally depend on the substitute job opportunities. Those employees who are at late career stage have a tendency to be more committed and satisfied with their organization than younger employees. Meyer and Allen (1984) propose that older workers become more committed to an organization for a different reasons, which includes greater amount of job satisfaction, in order to acquire advancement, and having "cognitively justified" their remaining in an organization. Salancik (1977) also suggests that the positive relationship between age and commitment could be because of self-justification procedure

H0: Affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment will vary according to career stage, as measured by employee age

H1: Older employees will show higher level of affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment as compared to their younger colleagues.

9. Methodology

Research Approach

Research Paradigms are fundamental set of researcher's beliefs and values that lead execution of ideas and offer guidance to actions. A philosophical undertaking or motivation to do so of the researcher to conduct his research (Cohen & Manion, 1994) likewise another study defines paradigms as "it is a set of different types of presumptions, propositions, concepts or the indicators which provide orientation to thinking and do research. (Bodgan & Biklin, 1998) The approach we have used for this study is post-positivism because in the positivism view one starts by adapting a theory and to accept or reject of the theory collects the relevant data and gives own point of view about the phenomena. Post-positivism is a research approach which is mostly used in quantitative research gather and analyzes the data in by using qualitative tools. (Silverman, 2000) It shows deductive approach it decreases the data into small set of ideas; recognize the problems or the causes which can affect the results and the outcomes. (Creswell, 2009) We will use random sampling in our study because in the collection of data we have used questionnaire and everyone have equal chance to participate in the study.

Data Collection Method

In this section, there would be an explanation about the method that we will use to collect the data in order to empirically test the created hypotheses. We have used primary data for this purpose and we have used questionnaire in this study in order to measure the definite nature of organizational commitment.

Sampling Design

Targeted Population and Sample

Targeted population is the specified group of people or object for which questions can be asked or to be observed to develop requires data structure and information (Hair, 2006). We have Targeted teachers of university of Gujrat. The sample of our study is 100 university teachers with different age group and different tenure within the organization.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire will be used for the collection of data. Responses given to each item are made on a 5-point Likert scale with anchors where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. Career stage was operational zed on the basis of age of the employee in the organization. Age was categorized into three groups: up to 30 years which indicate early career stage, 31-44 years which shows mid career and 45 and above which indicates late career stage.. The main reason of using questionnaire is that effective data can be collected in a very short period of time.

Statistical Tool

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the level of affective, continuance, and normative organizational

commitment across career stages. In order to test the internal consistency reliability of the organizational commitment scale, Cronbach alpha was calculated. One- way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to study the impact of career stage on different dimensions of organizational commitment. To determine the accurate nature of the differentiation between groups, Turkey's Honestly Significant Difference of multiple comparisons (post-hoc) has been employed (Hair et al., 2005). Spss has been used for data processing.

Statistical Analysis

Internal consistency reliability of Organizational Commitment scale was determined using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha coefficients in this study were found to be 0.83 for Affective Commitment, 0.77 for Continuance Commitment, and 0.82 for Normative Commitment scale.

Table 1

Gender		
	Frequency	Percent %
Male	77	51.3
Female	73	48.7
Age		
	Frequency	Percent %
Up to 30 years	88	58.7
31-44 years	48	32.0
45 and above	14	9.3
Tenure		
	Frequency	Percent %
Up to 2 years	66	44.0
3- 6 years	59	39.3
More than 6 years	25	16.7

The above table shows the descriptive statistics of the respondents in our study. According to gender the number of male respondents in our study was 77 (51.3%) whereas the female respondents were 73 (48.7%) in number. According to age, 88(58.7%) respondents fall within the category of up to 30 years of age, 48 (32.0%) and 14 (9.3%) fall within the category of 31-44 years and 45 and above respectively. Total number of respondents according to tenure of up to 2 years within the organization was 66 (44.0%). 59 (39.3%) respondents have spent 3-6 years in the organization and 25 (16.7%) have a tenure of more than 6 years.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Commitment according to Career Stages

Dimension of OC	Age	N	Mean	S.D
	Groups(yrs.)			
Affective Commitment	Up to 30	88	18.00	5.08
	31-44	48	18.68	3.56
	45 and above	14	24.92	1.97
Continuance Commitment	Up to 30	88	20.88	6.31
	31-44	48	21.93	5.47
	45 and above	14	23.00	3.32
Normative Commitment	Up to 30	88	19.69	5.51
	31-44	48	20.95	4.46
	45 and above	14	24.14	4.65

The above table represents the descriptive statistics for affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment across career stages classified on the basis of chronological age. Employees in the early-career stage have

lowest mean score on all the dimensions of organizational commitment. Level of commitment goes on increasing as they move from early to mid-career and then to late-career stage.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

Dimensions of Organizational Commitment	Source of Variance	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Sig.
Affective Commitment	Between Groups	298.862	149.431	5.494	0.005
	Within Groups	3998.31	27.199		
Continuance Commitment	Between Groups	61.692	30.846	.904	.407
	Within Groups	5015.8	34.121		
Normative Commitment	Between Groups	197.79	98.895	3.832	0.024
	Within Groups	3793.7	25.808		

In order to determine the significance of difference among the levels of affective, continuance and normative commitment across career stages, one-way ANOVA was undertaken. Examination of the results of the analysis indicates that there was significant difference in affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment across career stages with F-ratio respectively. Thus, hypothesis one (1) was supported in the current study. Although one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) resulted in the rejection of null hypothesis of equal means for the three career stages, this did not indicate where exactly the differences between the groups lie. To determine the precise nature of the differentiation between groups, Turkey's Honestly Significant Difference test was undertaken as a post-hoc measure to determine the precise nature of the differentiation between the age groups

Dimensions of OC	I- Age Groups (yrs.)	(J) Age groups (Yrs.)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Affective Commitment	Up to 30	31-44	-276	.768
		45 and above	-4.73*	.002
	31- 44	Up to 30	-.2765	.768
		45 and above	-5.01*	.002
	45 and above	Up to 30	4.73*	.002
		31-44	5.01*	.002
Continuance Commitment	Up to 30	31-44	-.926	.378
		45 and above	-1.98	.239
	31-44	Up to 30	.926	.378
		45 and above	-1.06	.550
	45 and above	Up to 30	1.98	.239
		31-44	1.06	.550
Normative Commitment	Up to 30	31-44	-.689	.451
		45 and above	-4.04*	.006
	31-44	Up to 30	.689	.451
		45 and above	-3.35*	.031
	45 and above	Up to 30	4.04*	.006
		31-44	3.35*	.031

*Mean difference is significant at 0.05 levels.

The above table indicates that there is a significant relationship between Affective and Normative Commitment with age but Continuance Commitment has an insignificant relationship with the career stage. It also shows that the employees in the late career stage are more committed to their organization rather than employees in early career or mid career which leads to support our 2nd hypothesis.

10. Results

The study was conducted to explore the effect of career stages on Organizational commitment. Organizational commitment was viewed as a multidimensional concept, and has been measured by Meyer et al (1993) Organizational Commitment Scale. While life span theory suggests that the factors associated with chronological age cause changes in behavior and attitudes so age was used for the purpose of this study.

Hypothesis was made that organizational commitment will vary according to the career stage of the employee. The result shows that teachers in the mid and late career stage will show higher level of commitment than in the early career and the hypothesis is accepted. Results are consistent with the findings of (Allen and Meyer, 1993; Cohen, 1991; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Suliman and Iles, 2000) that commitment will vary over the course of people's careers due to differences in their perceptions caused by life experiences. Significant relationship was found between affective and normative commitment with the career stage but an insignificant relationship between career stage and Continuance commitment. This finding supports the study of Mahnaz Kargar which says that increase or decrease in age do not lead to increase or decrease in Organizational Commitment. Another study by Trisha Pettit, Ross Donohue and Helen De Cieri show an insignificant relationship between age and organizational commitment.

The second hypothesis was that older employees will have higher commitment than the younger ones. The results show higher level of commitment in older employees than the young ones.

11. Limitations

Although this study has a significant contribution to the existing literature, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. First limitation was that the teachers were so aggressive to give response to the questionnaires and did not cooperate and similarly time constraints also limits our study and exact data was not collected due to time constraints. Another limitation of our study was that it covers small geographical area that is university of Gujrat which is not much recognized and large institution.

12. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of career stage on Organizational Commitment on teachers of University of Gujrat. In this study, age is taken as a career stage and to find out its impact on three different dimensions of the Organizational Commitment I.e. Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. The Commitment of the teachers was measured with the help of questionnaire designed by Meyer and Allen 1997 containing 19 items on a 5 point Likert scale. It is concluded from the study that Affective and Normative Commitment of the teachers is significantly related to the career stage while Continuance Commitment is insignificantly related. Moreover, it is also concluded that the employees in the late career stage are

more committed to their organization as compared to the employees in early or mid career stage.

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Appendix

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer and Allen' 1997)

The following statements express the level of commitment of employees towards their organization.

Where

- SD= Strongly Agree
- D= Disagree
- N= Neutral
- A= Agree
- SA= Strongly Agree

Age:

- a) Up to 30 years b) 31- 44 years c) 45 and above years

Job Tenure:

- a) Up to 2 years b) 3 -6 years c) More than 6 years

Gender:

- a) Male b) Female

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.					
2	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.					
3	I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.					
4	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.					
5	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.					
6	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.					
7	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.					
8	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.					
9	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.					
10	I believe that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.					
11	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.					
12	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice; another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here					
13	If I had not already put so much of myself into the organization, I might consider working elsewhere					
14	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.					
15	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.					
16	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now					
17	This organization deserves my loyalty					
18	I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it					
19	I owe a great deal to my organization.					