Research Article

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE VARIABLES ON AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT: CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF TVS AND SONS EMPLOYEES IN RENAULT KOCHI

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Abstract: *In the 21st century, organizations are playing hard to retain their employees. Unlike earlier century, the employees shift from one workplace to another, wherever they feel comfort and patronage. Affective commitment of the employees becomes a debatable title in the minds of Human Resources recruiters and trainers, because of their bulky investment in the employees. This article presents the relationship between different workplace variables and affective commitment of the employees and the impact of them on the affective commitment of the employees. The results of this article clearly, indicate that employees' perceptions of their work environment have a greater impact on the affective commitment of the employees, than any other workplace variables.*
Keywords: Affective Commitment, Workplace Variables, Employee's Perceptions

Introduction

In an era, when organizations had shifted from conventional workplaces to 'hybrid' workplace frameworks, the commitment of employees towards their organizations is an oscillating phenomenon. When the workplace norms and culture differ from previous eras, it is wiser to find those workplace variables, which affects 'emotional attachment' of the employees, with their organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

One of the recent research works concluded that the uprising millennials in managerial levels need different treatment on enhancing their job engagement and long-term commitment with their organization. Employers should identify their communication channels to satisfy their work-related informative needs and provide them with adequate feedbacks to meet job expectations (Walden, Jung, & Westerman, 2017). Therefore, this research revolves to find the workplace variables that impact affective commitment of the employees, belonging to Renault Kochi outlet.

Literature Review

On assessing the three-component model of organizational commitment, it was identified that employees who feel 'comfortable and competent' in their job roles, are attached emotionally to their organization. The antecedent work experience variables showed strong correlation

with their first canonical variate. However, the affective and normative dimensions overlapped with each other and created ambiguity (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Even though, the affective and normative commitment constructs were highly correlated, they did not end up at unity. Those two constructs displayed similar correlation patterns with their antecedent, correlate and consequence variables. However, their magnitudes differed (Meyer, Stanley, Hersovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

This ambiguity and variations in magnitudes were rectified through the four-component commitment model. The normative commitment was rechristened as 'a propensity' which has to be examined, before an employee enters into an organization. This model divided bases of commitment into instrumental attachment and psychological attachment (Cohen, 2007).

It can be said that the affective commitment develops, when an individual is intrinsically motivated towards an action/objective and finds 'value-relevance' of association with an entity or derive an identity from that entity (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

Affective commitment of the employees portrays an 'emotional attachment' to the organization, as a 'target' and never focuses on their behavioural responses towards the organization. Positive attitudes towards habits fuels affective commitment. Even though, habits are predictors for a behaviour, intentions and attitudes towards the behaviour determine the 'strength' of the organizational commitment (Solinger, Olffen, & Roe, 2008).

The research work which was surveyed among 210 nursing employees in Australia had concluded that affective commitment is positively and significantly correlated with innovative behaviour of the employees. It was concluded that effective workplace relationships promote employees' commitment towards their organization (Xerri & Brunetto, 2013).

Primarily, work environment significantly affects the retention of employees in the automobile industry. The empirical research work proved that there is an existence of positive relationship between employee retention and their working environment (Mandhanya, 2015).

Due to numerous changes in business environment, virtual teams emerged as a major breakthrough in employees' communication. In this complex cooperative and competitive setup, the employees changed their expectations towards their organization, considerably (Townsend, DeMarie, & Hendrickson, 1998).

Apart from this, job expectations and perceptions of the employees differ, based on their career stages. Career starters focus on learning opportunities however veterans expect

positive outcomes, for their prolonged association with the organization. Hence, there are requisitions for various 'media' by an organization, to get commitment from its employees (Malik & Subramanian, 2015). Along with career stages, national culture plays a vital role in determining employees' commitment. Highly collectivistic and hierarchical culture values existence of social rewards in the workplace (Miao, Newman, Sun, & Xu, 2013).

The inter-relationship among employee engagement, employee empowerment and organizational commitment delivered new outcomes. It was found that both employee engagement and empowerment activities doesn't hold strong relationship with organizational commitment of employees (Prathiba, 2016).

An extensive empirical framework derived based on 'Network-Effects' model, gave conclusion that instrumental network centrality and friendship network proximity constitutes the effects of network interaction on employee's perceptions. It supported the statement that 'different types of perceptions may be affected by different types of network mechanisms' (Ibarra & Andrews, 1993).

A detailed modern research on 'employee volunteering' showed that an employee can be perceived positively, when he/she performs tasks for personal enjoyment. However, the results displayed that there may be stigmas, if an employee performs tasks for impression management (Rodell & Lynch, 2016).

Organizational involvement has positive consequences for employees. It was found that employees who have strong attachment to their organizations, need not be absorbed in jobs or workaholics. Indeed, those employees show high involvement to their family and social activities (Romzek, 1989).
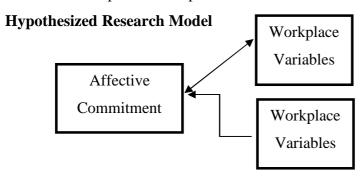
In the professional service firms of Europe, employees perceived performance management practices support their career prospects. The best recruitment practices and training and development methods served as a 'backward' push for increasing organizational commitment of the employees (Jorgensen & Becker, 2015).

Research Questions

- Is there any relationship between workplace variables and the affective commitment of the employees?

- Is there any impact of workplace variables on the affective commitment of the employees?

Research Objectives

- Find the relationship between workplace variables and the affective commitment of the employees

- Find the impact of workplace variables on the affective commitment of the employees

Hypothesized Research Model

a) The null hypothesis which corresponds the first research objective is:

H_0: There is a relationship between workplace variables and the affective commitment of the employees

b) The null hypothesis which corresponds the second research objective is:

H_0: There is an impact of workplace variables on the affective commitment of the employees

Research Methodology

Causal research design (i.e. effects of one variable over another variable) was adopted and the sampling frame consisted of 87 employees of Renault Kochi. 72 employees were chosen from the sampling frame, by simple random sampling technique. The primary data was collected from the employees, with the help of highly structured interview schedule. The schedule consisted of 53 Likert scale statements, from the degree of 1 to 5 (1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree, 5- Strongly Agree). The reliability of the interview schedule was 0.876 (Cronbach's Alpha). The maximum duration for conducting an interview with an employee was scheduled for 35 minutes. The data collection was conducted from June 2019 to September 2019.

Demographic data such as gender, division, educational qualification and work experience were collected, along with the data collection instrument. Correlation and Regression analysis were used to fulfil the research objectives. IBM SPSS 25 and MS Excel 2016 were used for the data analysis.

Through intensive literature review, various workplace variables had been identified. Those were: Power Autonomy, Work Conditions, Value of Feedback about Performance

Behaviours, Problem-Solving Nature of Job, Handling Work Stress, Communication in Workplace, Task Significance, Perceived Values Congruence, Role Overload, Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment, Trust in Co-workers.

Four statements for Task Significance, four statements for Problem-Solving Nature of Job and five statements for Work Conditions were retrieved from (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Communication in Workplace (includes horizontal communication and top management communication) comprised of seven statements from (Zwijze-Koning & de Jong, 2007).

Four statements for Role Overload, four statements for Power Autonomy and five statements for Trust in Co-workers were retrieved from (Boxall & Macky, 2014). Handling Work Stress comprised of three statements from (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012). Value of Feedback about Performance Behaviours measured with the six statements from (Ashford, 1986).

Three statements for Perceived Values Congruence were retrieved from (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Four statements were used to measure the affective commitment of the TVS and Sons employees, which had been retrieved from (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Four self-constructed statements were used to measure the employee's perceptions of work environment. Those were: "Overall, my job in TVS suits with my skills and abilities", "Overall, I perform well in TVS environment", "Overall, HR practices in TVS environment provide wellness and fairness to each employee" and "Overall, there are no difficulties in fulfilling my job duties and responsibilities in TVS".

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

In Renault Kochi, out of 72 respondents, 62 respondents were male and 10 respondents were female. 38 respondents belonged to Service division, 16 respondents belonged to Sales Division, 11 respondents belonged to Administration/ Management, 7 respondents belonged to Accounts/Finance.

Only one respondent had SSLC course as the maximum educational qualification, 3 respondents completed Higher Secondary Course, 14 respondents completed Diploma course, 13 respondents passed ITI course, 9 respondents graduated from Science and Humanities, 8 respondents pursued engineering courses and 24 respondents hailed from Business Administration and Commerce field.

Work experience- based classification delivered that 54 respondents had 'Less than five years' of work experience in TVS. In terms of work experience in TVS, 13 respondents fell

in the range of 5 years – 10 years, 2 respondents fell in the range of 10 years – 15 years and 3 respondents had been working for TVS, for more than 15 years.

Inferential Statistics

Through correlation matrix, it had been identified that certain workplace variables such as Task Significance, Work Conditions, Role Overload had no relationship between the affective commitment of the employees. Other variables had a relationship with the affective commitment of the employees (Refer Table 1).

Very low-level of correlation was observed between the affective commitment of the employees and the problem-solving nature of job. The same coefficient value was observed between the affective commitment of the employees and the value of feedback about performance behaviours.

Moderate level of correlation was observed between the affective commitment of the employees and a few other workplace variables such as Communication in Workplace, Trust in Co-workers, Handling Work Stress, Power Autonomy. Comparatively, higher correlation values were obtained for the workplace variables Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment and Perceived Values Congruence.

Through regression analysis, Linear Regression Coefficient (R = 0.793) indicated that there was a strong correlation between the affective commitment of the employees and the workplace variables. The square of multiple correlation coefficient indicated the variability within the respondents i.e. 62.9% of respondents agreed that there was an impact on their affective commitment, because of the identified workplace variables (Refer Table 2).

The results of ANOVA test (p=0.000) indicated that there was a significant impact on the affective commitment of the employees, because of the identified workplace variables, at 99% confidence interval. Setting the confidence interval at 95% and analysing the workplace variables' individual effect on the affective commitment of the employees, Task Significance had a moderate negative effect on the affective commitment of the employees. However, Handling Work Stress had a moderate positive impact on the affective commitment of the employees. Comparatively, higher positive impacts were imposed by the workplace variables such as Perceived Values Congruence and Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment. Individually, other workplace variables had no significant impact on the affective commitment of the employees. Therefore, the regression model obtained was,

Affective Commitment of the employees = -1.682 + (-0.349) * Task Significance + 0.364 * Handling Work Stress + 0.416 * Perceived Values Congruence + 0.519 * Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment

Results

The first objective of this research was to find whether there exists any relationship between workplace variables and the affective commitment of the employees. The data analysis showed that Problem-Solving Nature of Job, Value of Feedback about Performance Behaviours, Communication in Workplace, Trust in Co-workers, Handling Work Stress, Power Autonomy, Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment and Perceived Values Congruence had a positive correlation with the affective commitment of the employees.

The second objective of this research was to find whether there is an impact of workplace variables on the affective commitment of the employees. Regression analysis indicated that 62.9% of respondents agreed that there was an impact on their affective commitment, because of the identified workplace variables. The obtained equation showed especially Task Significance, Handling Work Stress, Perceived Values Congruence and Employee's Perceptions of Work Environment had a significant impact on the affective commitment of the employees.

Conclusion

The results indicated that employee's perceptions of work environment (co-efficient value in the regression equation = 0.519) had greater impact on affective commitment of the employees, than any other workplace variables. The outcome of this research gave an extended value to the research outcomes of (Garg & Punia, 2015). These researchers found that High Performance Work Practices (HPWPs) were perceived effective or highly effective by 72% of their respondents. Also, they explored perceptual variations among gender and sector (public or private) of the respondents. According to them, any favourable employee's perception of HR practices leads to effective implementation and facilitation.

This research work gave further support to the research findings of (Ansari, 2011). He enquired the relationship between employees' perception of Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) and their organizational commitment. According to him, if the employees perceive that HRMPs are supportive for their wellbeing, then they show affective commitment to their organization. Similarly, this research work concluded that affective commitment of the employees is ensured by their high positive perceptions towards their work environment.

Limitation

The research design was a cross-sectional analysis. If the longitudinal analysis of the respondents was conducted, it could have provided clear-cut variations in the responses of the

employees. The individual's psychological state as how they faced interviews was not considered in this research work. If the research work was carried out in other outlets of Kerala, which had a huge representative sample size, there could be significant changes in the results.

Since the research design was highly structured, the employees' general viewpoints had been restricted in the data collection process. The interview duration was fixed earlier and there were no open-ended questions during the interview. The individual workplace variables were taken into account and the conflicts and synergy of the employees' team environment were not considered in the research work.

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