

A Glance at Organizational Commitment, Antecedents and Consequences (1960-2005)

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Abstract

This paper elaborates the distinctiveness of major dimensions to organizational commitment as of the commencement of the idea of organizational commitment Becker (1960) till Buitendach & De Witte (2005), provides diverse sphere of influence. This paper will support some ideas which have been developed in this regard so far and will provide the building block for signifying a conceptualization which will present the organizational commitment in a better way. Some future possible researches are discussed at the end.

Keywords: Organizational commitment, Continuous commitment, Normative commitment, Antecedents, Consequences

The idea of organizational commitment was given by Becker (1960). According to him the concept of organizational commitment is, when the individual will have to sacrifice some settlement when changing the organization and the individual can benefit from these profits while supporting in the organization so the commitment means persistence of an act similar to keep on with the organization. He named it “*consistent lines of activity*” (p. 33). Employees create a few “side bets” reimbursement like pension and other diverse types of funds depend upon the continuation by the personality in particular organization and will have to lose this reimbursement by quitting that organization. Acknowledgment of such benefits binds the person by the organization.

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Other researcher like Salancik, (1977) and Mowday, Porter & Steers (1982) recognized two fundamental types of commitment which are attitudinal commitment and behavioral commitment. In the attitudinal commitment the exploration has been aimed at recognizing the antecedent and conditions of the commitment that expand the organizational commitment (Steers 1977). Attitudinal commitment essentially focuses on the way in which people believe over that; what is their association with the organization, and gives the impression of being into, how their goals and ambitions are identical with that of the organizational goals (Mowday et al. 1982). In the same course Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested that in the attitudinal commitment the outcomes of behavioral commitment may have their pressure either in stabilizing or varying the commitment. The view on the subject of attitudinal commitment is linked to emotional and psychological relation to an organization in the logic of faithfulness, consistence and trust on the organizational goal (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Pferre and Lawler (1980) originated on the topic of the behavioral commitment that the research first and foremost was paying attention on clarifying the circumstances payable to which the behavior one time experienced, would be repeated or not, and what are the belongings of such behavior due to which an individual's attitude can be changed. In Behavioral commitment the individual is one way or another bound with some organization and in what behavior he/she tackles with this area under discussion (Mowday et al. 1982). Meyer and Allen (1991) explained that in behavioral commitment those attitudes which effect from behavior possibly will take place once more in future.

Nature of Organizational Commitment

Commitment is the employee's desire to sustain with an organization (Grusky, 1966). Kanter (1968) recommended that organizational commitment can be the devotion exercised by an individual. He further recommended three components of organizational commitment, continuance commitment, cohesion commitment, and control commitment. Continuance commitment is connected to personal reserves completed by individuals; it funds that while leave-taking the existing organization the individual will have to put up with a quantity of some charge. Likewise in organizational societies the individual has refrained from formally obtainable social affiliation, it thus develops the coherence and logic of subordination within the present organization, these consequences in cohesion commitment. Control commitment is related with organizational codes, which affects the predictable performance of the employees.

Sheldon (1971) elaborated that organizational commitment is the dedication of time and effort given by individual to organization to make the identification with that organization. Similarly Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian (1974) found that organizational commitment is on the whole vision of the individual about particular organization. Other researcher like Schneider, Hall & Nygren, (1974); Sheldon, (1971) confirmed that Commitment is the pressure or level to which an employee is connected with the principles and goals of an organization. Commitment encircles attachment (Buchanan, 1974), job relationship (Weiner & Gechman, 1977), job affection (Koch & Steers, 1978), occupational responsibility (Farrell & Peterson, 1984). Mowday, Streers & Porter (1979) cleared that organizational commitment is touching response which moves away from inactive allegiance to an organization.

Similarly Mowday, Porter & Steers (1982) suggested that the organizational commitment can be further explored as the fundamental power of the employee's gratitude with and contribution in a precise organization. This further may be characterized by three factors: (a) conviction and acceptance of the goals and standards of the organization (b) an enthusiasm to apply significant attempt to achieve those and (c) a tough longing to uphold association with the organization

Reicher (1985) projected that organizational commitment can be separated into three forms, attributes, exchange and matching goals involving individual and organization. The attribute idea is connected to the association stuck between the person and their behavior. The perception of exchange commitment explains that the commitment by individuals will be constructive or high if he/she observes payback form the organization, and if individual is not receiving any kinds of repayment, the commitment will be near to the ground or unconstructive. The last impression in this regard which has the similarity between the person and organization focuses on the commitment which can be pragmatic when employee identifies and dedicates to the values and goals of organization. In the matching decade O'Reily and Chatman (1986) found that the accessory of an individual to an organization can be the inclined by the level of association and recognition with the association of that organization, and internalization based on the congruency of the individual and organizational values.

In the unchanged direction Allen and Meyer (1996) explained that organizational commitment is similar to a mental relation of an worker by the organization payable to which there is smaller amount of probability that worker will depart the organization eagerly.

According to Lee, Cheng, and Lin (2000) organizational commitment is instinctive information about the worker behavior within the organization. In the similar circumstance Reyes (2001) cleared organizational commitment as a supporter, electrifying association to the organizational goals and principles, the individual's position in satisfying the goals and values of the organization for its personal profit, unconnectedly it's merely dynamic worth.

Components of Commitment

Components of organizational commitment are given as under.

Affective Commitment

Kantner (1968) considered affective commitment like "cohesion commitment as" *the attachment of an individual's fund of affecting and emotion to the group* (p.507).

Porter, Streers, Mowday and Boulian (1974) defined affective commitment as (i) belief in and acceptance of the organizational goals and values. (ii) a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization to achieve its goals. (iii) a desire to maintain organizational membership. Mowday, Streers and Porter (1979) demonstrates regarding affective commitment that affective commitment is when an employee continuing job with any organization and accepts the responsibility to fulfill its goals is due to the reason of maintaining association to facilitate the goals.

Mowday et al (1982) defined commitment as "positive feelings recognition with, affection and participation in the organization". O'Reily and Chantman (1986) elaborated affective commitment as "the emotional attachment, identification and involvement of an employee with the organization.

"Affective commitment refers to identification with, involvement in, and emotional attachment to the organization. Thus, employees with strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they want to do so" (Allen & Meyer, 1996 p. 02).

Bagraim (2003) explained that affective commitment develops if employees are capable to accumulate their potential and accomplish their obligation within the organization.

Continuance Commitment

Becker (1960) defined continuance commitment as the regular outline of action (p.13) if this line is discontinued, the activity will also be disconnected.

In the same context Stabbins (1970) explained continuance commitment as the alertness of the unfeasibility of selecting different communal characteristics. Kanter (1977. p.504) defined continuance commitment as “*Profit associated with continued participation and a “cost” associated with leaving*”.

Meyer and Allen (1984) defined continuance commitment as the willingness to stay in an organization due to the reason that the employee has with “non transferable” investment.

According to Reichers (1985) continuance commitment comprises factors like years of employment or benefits that the employee may receive.

Continuance commitment is the commitment which is created when employee attach some cost if an individual leaves the organization. Employees who have strong continuance commitment will stay with the organization because they “have to do so” (Allen & Meyer, 1996).

According to Bull (2003) to continue the job in an organization is due to some speculations such as contributed to non-vested annuity plans, growth of organizational precise skills, apparent charge of departure may be exacerbated by a professed need of alternatives return or make up for the foreign venture.

Buitendach & Dewitte (2005) hypothesized the outlook that continuance commitment can be conceptualized as the tendency for employees to experience commitment to their organization based on their perceptions of the connected cost of leaving the organization.

Normative Commitment

Weiner (1982) defined normative commitment as “sum of internalized normative pressure to act in a way which achieves organizational goals”. It can be explained by other commitment like marriage, family, religion etc therefore when it comes to one’s commitment to the place of work; the individuals often sense similar an ethical commitment to the organization as to themselves.

According to Meyer & Allen (1991) normative commitment is “a feeling of obligation”. It means that in this type of commitment employee feels that it is his/her responsibility and obligation to stay in the organization. Normative commitment is when the employee feels “*sense of obligation*” to the organization” When the employee has strong

normative commitment he will stay with the organization because they think “*They ought to do so*” (Allen and Mayer, 1996).

Normative commitment is “*when an employee has accountability to organization*”. (Bagrain, 2003, p.14). Sparrow & Cooper (2003) stated that normative commitment shows the pressure and accountability of the individual’s towards a particular organization and is based on move toward the attachment and answerability.

Antecedents of Affective Commitment

The antecedents of the Affective organizational commitment are given below in detail.

Personal characteristic

According to Hackman & Oldman (1976) the individuals whose work is agreeable with his / her personal and natural attitude, have defined attitude towards his / her job. The demographic characteristic like age, sex, education can be associated with commitment but this relation is not strong enough to remain constant. This relation was not clear when it was linked to commitment (Salancik, 1977).

Griffin & Bateman (1986) found that the above mentioned characteristics differ among employees regarding their commitment to an organization. For example positive relation between tenure and commitment, the status and quality of the job will be evaluated and at the same time the attitude and behavior of senior employees, who has been with the firm for many years, will also be evaluated. In that case the decision will be based on observation and experience with which Mottaz (1988) was disagreed to the extent that these negative demographic characteristics were temporary because they will be disappeared when the reward and incentive has been received.

According to Meyer & Allen (1991) personal characteristics such as affiliation, personal work ethics, and locus of control and life interest in work have been correlated with commitment. They suggested that the inclination of commitment can be effected by the interaction of an employee with environmental factors.

Organizational Structure

Very few studies have been conducted regarding the relationship between commitment and organizational characteristics but it has also been found that commitment is not related to the centralized decision making (Moris & Steers, 1980).

These types of studies have been conducted on individual basis instead of organizational level (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This may be due

to the reason that the structural characteristics have been no direct impact on commitment but this influence is due to other reasons like relation with supervisor, role clarity etc.

Work Experience

The development of commitment is due to the satisfaction of an employee in the sense of needs or their values. (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Considering the Herzberg (1966) theory of Hygiene/motivator the work can also be divided into two categories, one is related to comfortable work environment and the second is related to the feelings of an employee regarding competitive role in work place. Meyer & Allen (1991) described some changeable factors in console group which was recognized to associate through commitment is fairness in reward allocation, organizational loyalty, organizational hold, and position simplicity, liberty from disagreement and administrator reflection. They further described some variables in competence related experience such as autonomy, fairness of performance based reward, job scope, opportunity for advancement and participation in decision making.

Antecedents of Continuance Commitment

According to Becker (1960) the commitment evolves gradually due to some course of action and it declines if that specific course of action gets on its declining. This specific course of action may be work or non work related. For example if an employee spends time on acquiring skills and then there is a threat of losing it, losing lucrative benefits can be considered as possible costs of leaving an organization.

Meyer & Allen (1991) criticized the Becker's concept regarding the antecedents of continuance commitment by describing that the costs related to leaving the organization will be different from person to person. This has been correlated to proxy variable like age and tenure, with dimension which resulted the Becker's side-bet commitment, on the supposition that number and enormity increases with the passage of time. They further described that the age and tenure have been considered to commitment but others have not. They explained that if the findings of these studies were constant still it would be very difficult to explain the specific results. As the continuance commitment is related to cost related while leaving the organization, so anything which gives positive direction to this cost, will be considered the antecedents of continuance commitment. The most repeated antecedents which have been studied are side-bets, investments and availability of alternatives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Hellman (1997) explained that due to lesser investment by younger individuals they tend to have more mobility in sense of

switching jobs. The older individuals do not want to sacrifice their investment; stay in organization. If the commitment develops and increases with the passage of time and the knowledge and skills get polish, the possibility will still be there that after certain time period employees can get a better opportunity in other organization due to experience than their juniors (Harrison & Hubbard, 1998).

Antecedents of Normative Commitment

Acknowledgements of these investments from organization side may generate disparity in the relation of employee and organization; the employees remain committed to the organization till these investments have been repaid to organization (Scholl 1981). In the same context Weiner (1982) recommended that the normative commitment may be developed before entering to an organization in sense of cultural socialization or organizational socialization.

The literature on normative commitment is theoretical. Any organization providing the 'reward in advance' or sustain noteworthy costs in providing employment like on the job training may result in the development of normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

The Consequences of Commitment

Katz (1964) suggested that just to keep the steady workforce does not respond to organization's effectiveness but the employees will have to carry out the allotted duties consistently and they must be willing to take on those activities further than their current role.

Weiner and Vardi (1980) also concluded that there is positive relation between normative commitment and efforts. The correlates which were studied the most connected to commitment are the possession of term or turnover. But if the main anxiety is turnover, then the diverse concepts about commitment develop into unsuitable and one part of commitment can be as first-class as other. To stay in the organization is not sufficient situation. It is obvious from studies that the connection involving commitment and on job behavior has set blend consequences. For example commitment is optimistically or positively connected to attendance or behavior but in some studies the undo is optimistic. In the same means commitment has been set up in positive course with individual or group level performance and vice versa. An employee who desires to keep on with the organization possibly will not be further possible to those who need to belong or sense pressure to the organization. It is of great value by mentioning that those researches which have resulted between commitment and performance positively have used events of affective commitment. When there is liability to

continue with the organization it would expand the way to positive payment towards the organization. This leads to the optimistic connection between efforts and performance. It is obvious that continuance commitment is minimum probable connected to performance. If the circumstances are standards or regular then the workers whose residence in organization is due to need, gives smaller anxiety to recognize more tasks which are ahead of the occupation obligation. In the last all the modules of commitment have diverse belongings on particular performance, so by creating any particular link between mechanism of commitment and behavior will not be so straightforward. For example if the continuance commitment is elevated then the worker may stay in organization and the worker having minute continuance commitment leaves the organization regardless of the tiny continuance commitment the worker may linger in organization on his/her desire or due to various other tasks (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Positive Consequences of Low Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Low committed employee can put forward innovation in the environment of conflict and uncertainty (Thompson, 1965).

Individual having low degree of commitment may go for alternative employment (Angle & Perry, 1981). This may improve their mental and work capacity in the new organization. Positive consequences for the organization can be explained in a way that the individuals who are poor performer will leave the organization; this may lead to high turnover and absenteeism but the damages which could be created in their presence would be finished. After the resignation by an employee the organization may hire a person having challenging skills and more potential (Mowday et al, 1982). According to Dozier & Miceli (1985) Whistle blowing caused by low degree of commitment can be positive consequences for organization and the organization may benefit from this practice in a sense that by performing informal internal audit, before the organization's image can be damaged.

Negative Consequences of Low Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Gouldner (1957) found that sever problems can be caused for the organization due to low degree of commitment. Individuals having outside referent group, and having more metropolitan orientation may be difficult to control. Low committed employees either leave the organization or waste their capabilities in defeating organizational goals (Schein, 1968).

Kanter (1977) explained that manager pick up those employees who can be trusted and those who are not committed, are eliminated. In the same vein Hacker (1978) found that without showing high level of commitment promotion to top position cannot be an easy task. As top management consider this practice disloyalty in general. Individual gets up to high level job in the organization very rarely.

DeGeorge (1982) suggested that Individuals, concerned with the practice of whistle blowing can cause sever negative consequences. Ermann & Lundman (1982) concluded that negative consequences for individual in general include loss of income, no participation in decision making and meetings, less work assignment, more workload and direct criticism. In spite of that healthy professional orientation by individuals can develop the organization in better ways (Bowen, 1962). On the other hand if the managers are having low commitment, the performance of individual will not be in positive direction and the whole organization can be damaged (Mowday et al, 1982). Commitment and recognition to specific profession may not be constant with the demand for success and achievements in organization (Raelin, 1984).

Individual's careers can be affected negatively due to low degree of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Positive Consequences of Moderate Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Moderate degree of commitment does not mean that commitment by individuals will be unbounded but they do not want to be enveloped and accept the system easily. In the same direction moderate level of commitment glasses the capability accepting organizational values up to some extent and not in full (Katz & Khan, 1966). According to Schein (1968) individual with moderate level of commitment accepts the central and cardinal norms and values and at the same time the rejection of secondary values take place. Employees maintain honesty while fulfilling the requirement.

Greater job satisfaction can also be in the circle of positive consequences of the organization (Hall & Schneider, 1972). Steers (1977) has also found that moderate level of commitment makes lesser the intentions to leave the organization.

The feelings loyalty and performance can be enhanced by individuals with the growth of commitment to the firm (Weiner & Vardi, 1980). Moreover sense of belongingness, security and effectiveness can be in positive direction due to commitment, Positive consequences for the organization may be longer tenure by employees (Mowday et al, 1982).

Negative Consequences of Moderate Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Negative consequences for the organization may be in a sense that the individuals showing their partial commitment may not be able to perform extra duties than their parent duties and responsibilities (Katz, 1964). Kantz & Kahn (1966) added that the individuals having moderate degree of commitment can make compromises to the organization which may not be comfortable.

According to Mowday et al (1982) the degree of moderate level of commitment is not considered in the favor of organization. The individuals who do not show partial commitment to their organization can pace very slow to get the high position. In the situation of conflict between the responsibilities to remain loyal to organization and responsible to the public the individuals having moderate degree of commitment will show their inclination to consider the social aspect rather than to remain loyal to organization (Randall, 1987).

Positive Consequences of High Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Whyte (1956) added that if an individual will be loyal and committed to the organization, the organization will also be loyal to that individual.

The organization is guaranteed to high and productive performance and achieving its goals (Mowday, Porter & Dubin, 1974). According to Ezioni (1975) explained that the individuals realize and agree to the demand for more production in the organization. According to Steers (1977) strong and fast work can be provided by the employees having high degree of commitment.

Ermann & Lundman (1982) elaborated that the degree of high commitment can be the path to career advancement. The organization normally rewards employees with granting more powers as a feedback of showing the high degree of commitment (Biggart & Hamilton, 1984).

Negative Consequences of High Level of Commitment for Individuals and Organization

Resistance to change can be observed if an individual is highly committed to the norms and values of organization (Merton, 1938).

Thompson (1965) suggested that creativity and innovation can be suppressed. The individuals who are highly committed to organization may not be able to have alternative job (Coser, 1974). Similarly Stress in family can be caused due to high level of commitment as the work and family roles are mutually dependent (Kanter, 1977). According to

Salancik (1977) organizational flexibility can be reduced due to high commitment. Post policies can be trusted and in result the establishment of traditional exercises can be observed. In the same decade Schein (1978) explained that academics and scientists who were highly committed and kept themselves heavily engaged in their work had low family involvement. Bartolome & Evans (1979) found that the managers in spite of high level of commitment can balance their work life involvement but to exercise this they will have to do more work and efforts in professions than family life. Tension can be created in other relations due to commitment in a sense that an employee can ignore the 'self' factor and can be unfriendly to the society (Korman & Korman, 1980).

According to Korman, Witting, Berman & Lang (1981) the individuals having high degree of commitment are normally overloaded, may not be able to categorize their routine and spend more energy in their job, left little energy for their personal lives. In the same year (Rowan, 1981), it was found that due to high degree of commitment the young employee may not switch to other organization. They may not enjoy the job, may waste their potential and at the same time will not be profitable for the organization. Mowday et al (1982) explained that enthusiastic employees may create hurdles for the employer and for the other employees as well. Negative consequences for the individual can be in the way that high degree of commitment can reduce the opportunities due to the reason of staying in the organization. Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) explained that accomplishing success in job requires much time and commitment to the work or duty which leads to cause of conflict due to denying the family life. According to Randall (1987) the high committed employees most of the time remain active in illegal activities or unethical behavior. In case of conflict high committed employees consider their own preferences rather than organizational and corporate values.

Conclusion

From the beginning of side bet theory of commitment till the multidimensional concept of organizational commitment the researcher have acknowledged diverse theories to elaborate the connection between the antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment. Due to continuous contact and punctual feedback from the targets of employees' commitment, they are expected to work in a way that matches the goals and values of the organization. The employees react in different way according to the feedback and support from their employer and organization. They show positive behavior and attitudes to those goals

and targets which they think are important for them and for organization as well. In the current era due to the merger and acquisition of organizations the job insecurity is at high level. The telecommuting concept of meeting the desired targets may result in other consequences and new challenges will be there in this regard which may turn the concept of organizational commitment into a new avenue. This review paper highlights the journey of the concept of organizational commitment and the consideration in this regulation.

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