

Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment among Public Sector Employees in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The present study investigates the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees working in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia. The study further investigates the relationships among demographic variables (Age and Tenure), job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The sample consisted of 210 employees from different government offices located in Yanbu City. Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and Organizational Commitment questionnaires were used to collect information on the variables under study. Correlation coefficient and multiple regression analyses were used to analyze the data. Findings show a moderate level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment among the respondents. Job satisfaction facets and organizational commitment are found to be positively related. As far as the demographic variables are concerned, only tenure was found significantly related to commitment. Job satisfaction facets and job tenure were the significant predictors of organizational commitment.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Age, and Tenure

1. Introduction

In this complex and dynamic business environment, organizations pay more attention on to develop job satisfaction and organizational commitment among their employees in order to retain them and at the same time to be more productive. Issues such as high turnover rate, absenteeism, role conflict, job stress, burnout etc. are posing challenges for the organizations which are due to lack of job satisfaction and commitment among employees. Although, the concept of job satisfaction and organizational commitment are studied widely in public and private sector organizations in other parts of the world yet not studied in the same way in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this piece of research is intended to explore job satisfaction and organizational commitment among Saudi employees working in public sector organizations. It is important to understand what contributes to develop satisfaction and commitment among public sector employees which could subsequently enhance their performance.

2. Literature Review

Organization's success does not depend only on how it develops workers competencies but also how it develops commitment toward the organization (Beukhof et. al., 1998; Thornhill et. al., 1996). Organizational commitment has been proved to be beneficial for the employees and the organization such as it enhances feeling of belongingness, job security, career advancement, better compensation and more intrinsic rewards (Rowden, 2000). Benefits to the organization can include, increased employee tenure, low turnover rate, low training costs, improved job satisfaction, achievement of organizational goals, and improved quality of product and services (Mowday et. al., 1982).

Organizational commitment was defined by many authors in light of their backgrounds and personal experiences. Due to variedly defined it was measured differently too. Mowday et al. (1982) defined organizational commitment as employee's strong belief and in organization's goals, values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of an organization and a strong desire to continue as a member of the organization. Mullins (1999) defined organizational commitment as an employee's level of identification and involvement in the organization. Meyer and Allens (1997) defined it as a psychological state of an employee that characterizes his/her relationship with organization and willingness to continue membership in the organization.

Several research findings suggest that certain demographic factors such as age and work experience significantly related to organizational commitment (McCue and Wright, 1996; Mannheim, et. al., 1997; Morrow, 1993; Wiedmer, 1998; Dockel, 2003; Chughtai and Zafar, 2006; Newstrom, 2007; Salami, 2008; Azeem, 2010; Iqbal, 2010; Padala, 2011; Kahtani, 2012; kanchana and Panchanatham, 2012; Luchman and Kaplan, 2012).

Luthans (1998) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. It is the outcome of employee's perception of how well their job fulfills their needs that they view as important. According to Evan (2001) job satisfaction is a feeling resulted from an individual's degree of perception about the fulfillment of his/her needs.

Numerous research findings have shown that job satisfaction leads to commitment among workers (Vedamanickam, 2001; Samaratunge, 2003; Kanter, 2004; McNulty and Ferlie, 2004; George and Jones, 2008; Mohamadkhani and Nasiri, 2012; Kahtani, 2012). Job satisfaction serves as an intervening variable to the relationship between co-workers' relationship and organizational commitment (Lin and Lin, 2011). Ilhami (2012) suggested that high levels of job satisfaction results in higher commitment. Extrinsic, intrinsic and general satisfaction is found to be related to organizational commitment (Samavi, 2011; Hashmi and Naqvi, 2012).

In the light of previous findings the present study is intended to measure job satisfaction and commitment level among Saudi employees working in public sector organizations. Furthermore, the study tries to find out the relationship among several job facets and commitment.

Following hypotheses are drawn after reviewing the previous research finding:

1. There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction facets and organizational commitment.
2. There is a significant relationship between demographic variables (age and tenure) and organizational commitment.
3. There is a significant and positive impact of demographic variables on organizational commitment.
4. There is significant and positive impact of job satisfaction facets on organizational commitment.

3. Methodology

Participants

Keeping in mind the constraints in collecting the data from public sector organizations, convenient sampling is chosen as a technique to collect information from the respondents. Response is received from 210 employees from 7 public sector organizations in Yanbu Industrial City.

Measures

Biographical Information Sheet: Participants were provided with a biographical data sheet to collect demographic information.

Job Satisfaction:

Job Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith et al. (1969) was used to measure job satisfaction. The scale is widely used by organizational researchers to measure employee reactions to various aspects or facets of his/her job.

The job facets include:

- Nature of work;
- Pay;
- Supervision;
- Promotion opportunities;
- Relationships with co-workers.

There are 72 items in the scale. Work, supervision and co-workers subscales are described by 18 items. Pay and promotion subscales consist 9 items each. The scale contains both positively and negatively worded items. Respondents were instructed how to fill out each subscale. Key to score the positively worded items as Y = 3, ? = 2 and N = 1 and the negative items as Y = 1, ? = 2 and N = 3.

Organizational Commitment:

15 items Organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) scale developed by Mowday et al. (1982) was used to measure organizational commitment. Items are measured by using 7-point scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Nine items are positively worded and six are negatively worded. Responses to all the items are totaled and divided by 15 to calculate overall commitment of individual respondent

4. Results

Correlation coefficients and regression analysis were applied to analyze the obtained data.

Table 1 shows that the obtained means scores for the work, supervision, and co-worker subscales are 41, 40.6, and 42.4 respectively.

Mean score of 36 represents an average level of satisfaction on these subscales. Based on the obtained mean scores, it can be concluded that employees in the sample are moderately satisfied with the assigned work, the co-workers and the supervision.

Table.1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Nature of Work	210	41.0000	5.86531
Pay	210	19.4381	3.93955
Supervision	210	40.6667	8.47023
Promotion	210	17.3143	5.15838
Co-workers	210	42.4857	8.98655
JIG	210	43.6000	7.51725
OC	210	74.6714	14.88783
Tenure	210	10.7667	5.48228
Age	210	38.4000	4.88058
Valid N (listwise)	210		

Pay and promotion scales received 19.4 and 17.3 mean scores which are quite close to an approximate mean score of 18 represented by these scales. Obtained scores are indicative of employees' satisfaction with the pay they receive and the promotion opportunities.

Mean and standard deviation scores for organizational commitment are obtained as 74.6 and 14.8 respectively. Approximately a score of 60 is considered as an average level of organizational commitment. It appears from the obtained scores that chosen employees demonstrate more than average level of organizational commitment.

In order to determine the relationship between the variables in the study, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed.

Results in Table 2 show that job satisfaction facets and organizational commitment are positively related. These findings provide support to the first hypothesis. Job tenure was found to be positively related with organizational commitment as well ($r = .199$, $p < .01$) which partially supports the second hypothesis. Other demographic variable (age) considered in the study was not found significantly related to commitment among the respondents.

There is a moderate strength of relationship found between job satisfaction facets and organizational commitment ($r = 0.57$, $r = 0.25$, $r = 0.56$, $r = 0.38$, $r = 0.51$ and $r = 0.54$ respectively). This strength of relationship entails that if the level of job satisfaction changes, then organizational commitment would also change accordingly.

Table.2: Correlation Matrix

		Correlations								
		Work	Pay	Supervision	Promotion	People	JIG	OC	Tenure	Age
Work	Pearson Correlation	1	.246**	.619**	.250**	.352**	.730**	.576**	.066	.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.341	.505
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Pay	Pearson Correlation	.246**	1	.100	-.106	.154*	.167*	.251**	.137*	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.150	.124	.025	.015	.000	.047	.225
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Supervision	Pearson Correlation	.619**	.100	1	.286**	.306**	.464**	.562**	.071	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.150		.000	.000	.000	.000	.304	.568
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Promotion	Pearson Correlation	.250**	-.106	.286**	1	.205**	.151*	.387**	-.070	-.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.124	.000		.003	.029	.000	.309	.100
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
People	Pearson Correlation	.352**	.154*	.306**	.205**	1	.685**	.517**	.033	.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.025	.000	.003		.000	.000	.634	.729
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
JIG	Pearson Correlation	.730**	.167*	.464**	.151*	.685**	1	.541**	.116	.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.015	.000	.029	.000		.000	.093	.051
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
OC	Pearson Correlation	.576**	.251**	.562**	.387**	.517**	.541**	1	.199**	.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.004	.173
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Tenure	Pearson Correlation	.066	.137*	.071	-.070	.033	.116	.199**	1	.641**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.341	.047	.304	.309	.634	.093	.004		.000
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Age	Pearson Correlation	.046	.084	.040	-.114	.024	.135	.094	.641**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.505	.225	.568	.100	.729	.051	.173	.000	
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Stepwise regression analysis was used to find out whether demographical variables (age and Job tenure) and job satisfaction facets are influencing organizational commitment.

Table 3 indicates that nature of work, pay, supervision, promotion, co-workers and job tenure (adjusted R = 0.55, F = 33.31, P < 0.00) have contributed toward the R2 value. Based on the R square value of 0.57, these facets of job satisfaction could explain 57% in the variation of employees’ organizational commitment. Third hypothesis is partly supported by the obtained result as tenure is found significantly predicting organizational commitment. Hypothesis four is fully supported by the obtained result as all the job facets are found significantly predicting organizational commitment.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-9.406	8.468		-1.111	.268
	Nature of Work	.623	.216	.245	2.880	.004
	Pay	.477	.188	.126	2.541	.012
	Supervision	.431	.106	.245	4.066	.000
	Promotion	.635	.147	.220	4.333	.000
	People	.516	.116	.312	4.458	.000
	JIG	-.073	.188	-.037	-.388	.699
	Tenure	.475	.165	.175	2.883	.004
	Age	-.082	.186	-.027	-.439	.661

a. Dependent Variable: OC; b. R square=0.57, Adjusted R square=0.55; c. F=33.313 (p=.000)

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Among the demographical variables used in the study (age and tenure) only tenure was found significantly related to organizational commitment. Results are supported by previous research findings (McCue and Wright, 1996; Mannheim, et. al., 1997; Morrow, 1993; Wiedmer, 1998; Dockel, 2003; Salami, 2008; Azeem, 2010; Padala, 2011, Kahtani, 2012). It means, as experience with the organization increases the level of job satisfaction also increases. The probable reason to this connection could be better financial and non-financial rewards received by the employees as they become senior in the organization.

The findings of several researches pointed out pay as a key human resources practice which affects employee satisfaction and commitment (Dolliver, 2004; Ducharme et al., 2005; Abdelrahman et al., 2012; Saimir and Jonida, 2013).

Promotion is found positively related to organizational commitment due to the opportunities for the public sector employees to advance their career. This finding is supported by (Vedal et al., 2007; Abdelrahman et al., 2012).

The characteristics of the job or the kind of work given and performed by the workers affect their satisfaction. Interesting and rewarding job leads to job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Miller and Monge, 1986; Cotton and Tuttle, 1986; Bonache, 2005, Vidal et al., 2007; Abdelrahman et al., 2012; Saimir and Jonida, 2013)

Social support from co-worker networks serves as a resource that affects job satisfaction (Ducharme and Martin, 2000, Bonache, 2005; Abdelrahman et al., 2012). Previous research findings have shown that social support can be received from supervisor, colleagues, family, and friends (Lee, 2004). Raabe and Beehr (2003) stated that relationships with the coworker play an important role in developing organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Relationship with immediate supervisor is an important antecedent of employee's job satisfaction (Dupre and Day, 2007). A supervisor who considers his/her subordinates' feelings, well-being, and contributions is playing an important role in developing job satisfaction among employees (McCormack et al. 2006; Gagnon and Judd, 2004; Saimir and Jonida, 2013). Employees who have supportive supervisors experience higher level of job dissatisfaction than employees without supportive supervisors (Hisam, 1997).

Overall, the findings of the present study indicate that Saudi employees working in public sector organizations are moderately satisfied with the nature of the work they do, the supervision they receive, and the co-workers they work with. They are less satisfied with the pay they receive and promotional opportunities to grow. Employees in the sample show moderate level of organizational commitment with organization they currently work with. All the job facets are found significantly related to organizational commitment. Tenure is also found to be positively related to organizational commitment of the sample in the study. The results cannot be generalized as they are specific to the sample that was selected from the government organizations located in Yanbu city only. Yet the finding could help the researchers to further explore the similar variables across the country to draw a solid conclusion for actions.

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