Antecedents of Professional commitment

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ABSTRACT

Despite the increasing attention of organizational commitment in the management literature, most studies predominantly focus on full-time workers in traditional work settings. The results of this study highlight important directions for implementing strategies to increase casual academic's organizational commitment. Organization commitment is important because it is known association with other important organizational variables such as turnover, absenteeism and work effort. This study provides the first step in better understanding the factors that affect the organization commitment

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Introduction

Corporate collapses of past decade have affected all stakeholders through a loss of public confidence, loss of jobs and loss of shareholders' funds. We have seen poor business decisions, extravagant business acquisitions, lack of attention to detail, exorbitant directors fees, lack of board scrutiny and inadequate disclosure internationally Improved corporate governance is increasingly being seen as the answer to these problems as 'every one of the mechanisms set up to provide checks and balances failed at the same time' (Monks and Minow, 2004:1). In today world, that is organization world, human resources are as one of valuable organizational resources, and is one basic axies of organization activities and play important role to reaching organizations aims. Human resources give proper meaning and concept to organization and prepare proper condition for growing. Lester taro states that one of most important competitive advantages for organizations in third minimum is wise and knowledge of human. He believe that oil and human resources cannot create wealth but human wise and knowledge can direct society to growing. If human wants play a role in this new challenge there is no way just improving their knowledge on the other hand one essential element and production on are communities and organizations. We must adopt situation technically, physiologically and economical states was such a staff satisfaction and fair ness in paying wages according to their work . Now, satisfied staff and creative staff with loyal human resources are important organizational scoured, so with regard to staff needs and how replay them we can answer to satisfaction between staff and so improve organizational commitment between them (pat 1376) organizational commitment and professional commitment has potential effects on organizational behavior and can predict effectiveness of organization. Williams and Herzl states there is an obvious relationship between job satisfaction and commitment and is prerequisite of commitment (Tamilson and Jankiz 1376). Organizational commitment with drop out has indirect relationship (Karim zadeh 1378(Porter and co finds that

Organizational commitment with drop out and absence in work has indirect relationship (Harimzadeh 1378).

Commitment

In the early 1980s, organizational commitment of staff was one of the most important issues that had attracted attention of more researchers and extensive research on this subject was done. Even Klein and Ryty in their book entitled "Understanding organizational behaviors", have pointed to the importance of commitment. They say:" lack of commitment is much more dangerous than something that as a "lack of morality" is referred. Lack of commitment casts a shadow over the organization and can reduce the effectiveness of it in almost all activities (Jyue & Fang,1984:12 (But in 1980, Walton, in his famous article entitled "Management's commitment to the" published. He reminded need to move management based on control to management based on commitment and he gave direction to researches in this areas with his work. There is very little agreement on the nature of commitment. (MC Kenna,S, 2005;16) Commitment is often defined as a desire to maintain their relationship. Sometimes, it's defined as commitment of one person to another. Recently, commitment is defined as resistance to change. Commitment is rooted in identification, shared values, belonging, dedication and parallelism (Fullerton, 2003:334. (In simpler terms, commitment means allocate themselves or a part of their power for a specific purpose(Amiri and Zamani, 2000: 188 .(Because most of people's time is spent in organizations, therefore, investigation the various forms of commitment in the workplace is necessary to understand the behavior of individuals in organizations (Baruch & Cohen, 2007:241)

Organizational Commitment

Intense international competition fuelled by globalization has prompted a number of changes in the way work is organized and the way people are deployed. One significant area of workplace change is the increased use of flexible employment practices, particularly the increased use of temporary/casual workers in organizations. Improved efficiency and productivity were the anticipated outcomes of implementing flexible

employment practices (Hartman and Bambacas, 2000). A number of researchers, however, have raised concerns about the level of employee loyalty and commitment that can be expected in an environment of less secure and shorter term employment contracts (e.g. McClurg, 1999; Hartman and Bambacas, 2000; Gallagher and Sverke, 2005). Organizational commitment in this context remains important because of its potential effect on employees' identification with the organization's goals, the desire to Commitment, particularly in the area of work, has been analysed from several perspectives (Martin and O'Laughlin, 1984; Morrow, 1983; Mowday et al., 1982). It has served as both a dependent variable for antecedents such as age, tenure, gender and education (Ferris and Aranya, 1983; Hunt *et al.*, 1985; Luthans *et al.*, 1985), and as a predictor of various outcomes such as turnover (Rusbult and Farrell, 1983), intention to leave (Ferris and Aranya, 1983) and absenteeism retain membership with the organization and the level of effort exerted (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Hartman and Bambacas, 2000; Jaramillo et al., 2005; Van Breugel et al. 2005).

One other type of analysis using commitment as the measure of interest has been emphasized in the literature. This involves the distinction between moral commitment which focuses on attachment or loyalty (Porter and Lawler, 1968) versus calculative commitment which emphasizes potential benefits derived from the employees belonging to the organization (Hrebiniak and Alutto, 1972).

Findings reported by Ferris and Aranya (1983) and Wiener and Vardi (1980) seem to indicate that the former is more predictive and stable than the latter. Kidron (1978) found that work values were related more to moral than to calculative commitment. According to these findings, the present study focused on the moral dimension as the indicator of commitment. (Ivancevich, 1985).

Organizational commitment represents a psychological attachment to the employing organization, and according to Allen and Meyer (1990), may take different forms. Two well-accepted dimensions of commitment are affective and continuance commitment.

Allen and Meyer (1990, p. 1) define affective commitment as "employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization" and continuance commitment refers to "commitment based on costs that employees associate with leaving the organization." Normative commitment (an employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organization) was not included in the study because there is less support for this commitment dimension in the literature (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999).

Academics and human resource practitioners alike maintain a keen interest in organizational commitment because of its association with desirable outcomes, such as reduced absenteeism, reduced turnover, and improved job performance (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1997; Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999; Jaramillo et al., 2005).

Whilst the link between organizational commitment and various outcome indicators has been well established, antecedent conditions for organizational commitment is less well understood. Prior research investigating the antecedents of organizational commitment (Steers, 1977; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999; McClurg, 1999), suggests three categories of predictors relevant to the current study: personal characteristics, job-related factors and job involvement factors.

Organizational commitment is an important research topic having both practical and theoretical implications. Organizations are intended to have more highly committed workforce, because the research results show that organizational commitment leads to important outcomes such as decreased turnover, higher motivation, higher organization citizenship behaviour and organizational support (Kwon and Banks, 2004). Managers could benefit from understanding the predictors of committed manpower because they can initiate the interventions when the problem exists. They can adopt, for example, the appropriate leadership behaviour in order to improve the level of organizational commitment and, in turn, the levels of job satisfaction and job performance (Yousef, 2000). Research shows that understanding organizational commitment can provide insight into how organizational commitment is related to the intentions to leave. The turnover is always costly to the organizations in all sectors given the large investment made in the selection, training and development of personnel (Stallworth, 2004, 2003). Also there are some findings that any effort to improve organizational commitment is beneficial in lowering stress levels in the job concerning areas such as staffing and the perceived pressure of the job (Savery and Syme, 1996). The problem is especially important in the developing countries, Eastern European countries, such as Lithuania. Organizations and workforce there are experiencing tremendous changes that result in high levels of stress and distrust in organizations as employers. With the increasing speed and scale of change in organizations, managers are constantly seeking ways to generate greater employees' commitment and competitive advantage (Petkeviciute and Kalinina, 2004; Kazlauskaite et al., 2006; Brewer, 1996). The number of international companies in Lithuania and other Baltic States increases, so trans-culturally competent managers in the Baltic countries find themselves in front of the challenge to build the bridge from the West to the East (Dickerson et al., 2006).

In order to determine the factors that may relate to organizational commitment, first of all we need to understand the concept of commitment. It is quite new in Lithuanian organizational psychology, although the concept is common in other countries. Porter et al. (1974) developed the following three-part definition of organizational commitment: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to remain in the organization. Generally "organizational commitment refers to the attachment, emotionally and functionally, to one's place of work" (Elizur and Koslowsky, 2001, p. 594). Allen and Meyer (1990) identify three general themes in attitudinal conceptualizations of organizational commitment: affective attachment, perceived costs, and obligation. The three-dimensional construct is defined as follows:

The affective component of organizational commitment . . . refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. The continuance component refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization. Finally, the normative component refers to the employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organization (Allen and Meyer, 1990, p. 1). The three components of commitment are considered to be psychological states which employees experience to differing degrees. Each individual is assumed to experience the components of commitment in varying strengths

(Stallworth, 2003). This model is perhaps the mostly empirically tested (Marchiori and Henkin, 2004; Stallworth, 2003) and says that employees with high affective commitment stay in the organization, because they wish; employees with high continuance commitment stay because they need; employees with high normative commitment stay, because they must. All components may be dependent upon different antecedents, for example, personal traits, work characteristics, tenure and others. We used this model as a theoretical background for our investigation. So, one purpose of this study was to determine whether the same multidimensionality of organizational commitment is valid in Lithuanian population.

Lee et al. (2001, p. 610) state that the three commitment constructs are likely to be conceptually and functionally similar across cultures, but there might be a need to refine the measures for cross-cultural research. Although literature provides arguments that western theories could be valid in non western settings (Yousef, 2000), differences in the relevance of items to constructs across cultures have also been found (Vanderberghe, 1996). Some authors state that many of the people representing companies in the Baltic States are finding themselves reconciling the cultural differences between themselves, members of neighbouring Baltic States, Russia, European countries, the USA and Asia (Dickerson et al., 2006). So it is possible that there exist some cultural differences in organizational commitment or its correlates.

In the literature organizational commitment has been analyzed from several perspectives – as a dependent variable for antecedents such as age, tenure and education (Dunham et al., 1994) and as a predictor of various outcomes such as job satisfaction, work motivation, turnover, intention to leave, absenteeism, and performance (Weiner and Vardi, 1980; Meyer et al., 2004; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

One of the most popular demographic variables in commitment studies is gender. Some researchers state that men are more committed to the organization (Singh et al., 2004; Savery and Syme, 1996) than women; others do not find gender differences (Powell, in Singh et al., 2004). Contrary to these results, Singh et al. (2004), Marchiori and Henkin (2004) and Dixon et al. (2005) have found that women have higher levels of organizational commitment.

Also there is no clear answer how age, education and tenure are related to the organizational commitment. Some investigations reveal that age and tenure is positively related to the commitment, because senior workers are more satisfied with the organizations, they have higher positions at work, also they have less possibilities to get the new job suggestions (Allen and Meyer, 1990). But there are also investigations with opposite results (Savery and Syme, 1996). Based on this evidence we hypothesized that regardless of the cause women have higher levels of commitment than men, and age and tenure is positively related to commitment. Consequently, education should be negatively related to the organizational commitment, at least to the normative (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999). This hypothesis is based upon the arguments that more highly educated individuals have higher expectations. They are therefore more likely to feel that they are not being rewarded adequately by their employers, and so the level of organizational commitment is diminished (Lok and Crawford, 2001, p. 598).

Some authors argue that the potential role of individual characteristics on their attitudes toward their organization has not been studied extensively, for example "the big five has been extensively studied in many settings, but limited in relation to job satisfaction and organizational commitment" (Silva, 2006, p. 319). Some researchers have found the relations between personality traits (for example, negative affect, empathy) and organizational commitment (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999; Bozionelos, 2004). Erdheim et al. (2006) in their study present the results that extraversion is significantly related to affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment; neurotism, conscientiousness and openness to experience are significantly related to continuance commitment; agreeableness is significantly related to continuance commitment. Silva (2006) and Morrison (1997) suggested that people who are extraverted, conscientious, and emotionally stable tend to be more committed employees. But they did not find the relationship between organizational commitment and agreeableness or openness to experience. Other researchers have found that organizational commitment was related to work motivation (Meyer et al., 2004) and locus of control (Silva, 2006). But it seems that the list of personality traits in relation to organizational commitment is not completed.

The most interesting and more practically valuable investigations of organizational commitment are in the field of turnover or intention to leave the organization. Aryee et al. (1991) have found that commitment explain 37 per cent of variance in intention to leave the organization. Of course, this does not mean that all individuals that are intended to leave their organization will do so. Despite the evidence that intentions are the best predictors of behaviour, many individuals who intend to quit their jobs do not do that (Allen et al., 2005). Personality traits may moderate the intentions – turnover relationship. Nevertheless, human recourse specialists often treat turnover intentions as the most direct precursor of turnover behaviour. Allen and Meyer (1990) argue that intention to leave the organization is negatively related to all three components of organizational commitment. Other authors state that three commitment constructs describe different reasons why employees stay with (or leave) their organization, so these commitment constructs each contribute independently to the prediction of turnover intention (Lee et al., 2001). In addition, some investigators revealed that intention to leave may be predicted from affective commitment and the real turnover may be predicted from continuance commitment (Randall et al., 1997). That might be the reason why managers tend to have more committed employees.

Nevertheless, Kalbers and Fogarty (1995) did not found the relation between the commitment and intention to leave. Such controversies in research results may be due to the fact that turnover intention is more complex construct than many researchers think. Also it may be complicated to measure (for example, due to social desirability effects or cultural effects). Our prediction in this investigation was the following: all components of the organizational commitment are negatively related to the intention to leave, but the best prediction of intention to leave the organization (on the individual level) can be made from individual factors (age, gender, education and tenure, personality traits) and organizational commitment together.

Professional commitment

The term of professional commitment, is taken from the psychology and it's developed from more common concept of organizational commitment. Its trajectory study is similar to organizational commitment (Hall etal,2005:90) Definitions

related to the professional commitment varies from the extent to which one person get involved specific tasks to the extent of importance that the job plays in the person's life (Somech &Bogler, 2002:557) Professional commitment is considered as a one of the most important factors determining the behavior of person's work and it's the topic that it has attracted attention of many executives and people in the educational environment (Kannan & Pillai,2008:218) "Theory of professional commitment" also states that how much a person invests on commitment to a series of things, its commitment is more difficult to deny. So how much a person be encouraged to enter the job and how much more work be done to encourage, more likely to that the person remains committed to the job (Tayler,1988:48). Professionals, see themselves as persons that are engaged in a full-time career and they should spend their best efforts and they should have unconditional commitment to their careers because they believe that this is a worthwhile career (Favela&Fuzessery,1974:320) Professional commitment as a person's attitude towards his job or career is defined(Fjortof & W.l. lee,1994:370). Professional commitment makes reference to the attachment that people have to their careers. Indeed professional commitment include having faith in the goals and values of the career and believing them, tending to show considerable efforts for the career, and maintaining membership in the job) Elias,2006:84) .Professional commitment as a degree of allocation was defined as a degree of allocation by the working standards of performance (Jones,2000:52). Wallace and colleagues definition of professional commitment is similar to Allen and Meyer's definition of organizational commitment, the researcher and his colleagues have distinguished three dimensions of effective, continuous and normative for professional commitment and they defined professional commitment as sense of identity by a job, need for service continuity in a job, and high sense of responsibility towards that (Osinsky & Mueller.2004:197).

Arniya, Pollack, and Ermnick in a study about professional commitment of accountants, with replacing the word of professional instead of organizational in the Porter's definition of organizational commitment, have defined professional commitment as follows:

-1 Having faith in the goals and values of the career and believing them;

-2 Tending to show considerable efforts for the career;

-3 Tending to continue and maintain membership in the job.

Therefore people who have high commitment to their job, spend all their efforts to their job, that it leads to internalize business success and failure as their success and failure. (Giffords,2003:8)

Considering the commitment as a desirable professional value, rises from initial work which has been done on the professional features (Tayler,1988:48). Interest in professional commitment has been created more by Gouldner who identified a dichotomy between commitment to the organization and commitment to the profession. And in addition, this interest to professional commitment arose when the researchers realized that people's commitment to their profession has many positive effects (Hall et al,2005:90)

(Lee and others express four reasons to study the importance of professional commitment:

-1 One person spends too much time for working;

-2 Because professional commitment influence maintenance and retention and remembering, then has important implications for human resources management;

-3 Because professional skills occurs from work experience, then work performance can be associated with professional commitment;

-4 More studies on professional commitment may lead to understand this point that how persons combine and integrate types of commitment in workplace and outside it (Elias,2007:82).

Professional commitment is related to significant outputs such as improving work performance, reducing mobility intentions and more satisfaction in the enterprise-level and professional level(Elias,2006:85). Studies have shown that high levels of employee commitment leads to greater motivation and satisfaction and it reduces possibility of leaving the organization (Huang,2006:32).

Professional commitment likely has an impact on people's working behaviors such as their observable attitudes, their judgments about the work end, and their involvement in professional groups. Professional commitment is related to positive behaviors which is useful for organization and people with high levels of professional commitment subsequently are less involved in activities that is harmful to the organization(Greenfield,2008:422).

A committed person tends to continue membership or also shows great efforts, not because it has gains for him but because he believes that he should have such behavior because it is true and he is expected to (Raju & Shrivastava,1994:7)

In a survey conducted by Anderson Fele in 2004 as knowledge management and organizational commitment, model of organizational learning (OLSM) and Allen's organizational commitment framework were used. Based on the model of OLSM, knowledge management includes environmental deliberating, knowledge creation, sharing knowledge, and organizational memory and includes the model of Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment (affective, normative and continuance commitment). These seven variables of knowledge management and organizational commitment has been studied through the gauging method. Finally, after analyzing the solidarity, the correlation between these variables was significant and the requisite of establishment of knowledge management has been recognized existence of staff with high organizational commitment.

In a survey conducted by Annonuiazi in2005 as evaluation of the relation between knowledge management and professional commitment and in the transportation industry, 31 institutions active in this industry were studied from the viewpoint of technologies, persons and knowledge. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and qualitative data were collected through interviews and observation and they were analyzed. The research findings showed those who were allocated a high score to themselves, they also had achieved high scores in professional commitment.

Values and commitment

Several authors considered values in general and work values specifically as important variables in explaining organizational commitment (Kidron, 1978; Putti et al., 1989). According to Werkmeister (1967) commitment is a manifestation of the individual's own self, and reflects value standards that are basic to the individual's existence as a person. Some empirical support to this view was provided in studies

relating work values to commitment (Kidron, 1978). In a study of central life interest, Dubin et al. (1975), found that workers with a central life interest in work had a higher commitment to their work organization compared to those with a different central life interest. Kidron (1978) found a moderate relationship between work values and organizational commitment. Putti et al. (1989) analysed the relationships between work values and organizational commitment based on a sample of workers in Singapore.

Their findings indicate that intrinsic work values relate more closely to organizational commitment than extrinsic work values.

Discussion and conclusions

Organizational commitment and its antecedents or consequences become an important research issue in Lithuania. Especially, useful might be to know the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. As turnover intentions often lead to the leave from the organization, it is possible to suggest to employers to increase the levels of organizational commitment in order to keep employee retention stable. The research results may be useful for all Baltic countries where the employee emigration problem becomes more and more urgent. Employee turnover has lately considerably increased in some Lithuanian industry branches (for example, hospitality industry, health care sector) (Kazlauskaite et al., 2006), so the results of this study could make the contribution to solving this problem.

This study finds support for a multidimensional conception of organizational commitment. Consistent with other studies (Stallworth, 2003, 2004; Lee et al., 2001) the confirmatory factor analyses of our results indicate that the three-factor model is more descriptive than one-factor model of organizational commitment. As Lee et al. (2001, p. 610) stated, we can confirm, that "taken together, it appears that the three commitment constructs are likely to be conceptually and functionally similar (i.e. generalisable) across cultures" but some differences indicate that there might be a need to refine the measures. The future investigations might address this issue.

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