

## Perceived Organizational Climate in Relation to Affective Commitment

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### Abstract

Committed employees are increasingly becoming valued asset in organizations. Commitment to an organization is somewhere affected by the appraisal of work and environment of workplace by employees. Organizational climate affects organizational performance by influencing employee motivation. In most jobs, there is a gulf between what employees need do to get by and what they can do if they perform at their fullest potential. A positive organizational climate is said to be the catalyst that will encourage this discretionary effort and commitment. The present study is therefore aimed at assessing the relationship between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment among executives. The sample consisted of 60 telecom executives in the age group 25-35 years. Subsequently, perceived organizational climate was measured using Organizational Climate Scale developed by Pethe, Chaudhari & Dhar (2001) and affective commitment was assessed using Affective Commitment Scale developed by Allen & Meyer (1990). In order to analyze the results Product Moment correlation were computed. Results demonstrated that a significant correlation was found between affective commitment and perceived organizational climate.

**Keywords:** Perceived organizational climate, affective commitment, telecom executives

### Introduction

Organizational climate seems to be a crucial organizational construct as it represents the soul and beliefs of the organization, which differentiates it from others via values and behaviors. Actually, organizational climate is a product of interaction among organizational circumstances, members and management applications. Organizational climate is defined by the employees' perception of what the organization is like in terms of practices, policies procedures, routines, expected behaviour and rewards (James & Johns, 1974).

Perceived organizational climate give rise to motivation and further encourages organizational behaviors like satisfaction, productivity or performance, and eventually to organizational commitment. Under organizational conditions where managers provide guidance for employees, delegate the authority and provide help for facilitating the work, employees consubstantiate themselves with the organization and respond by staying within the organization.

Organizational commitment can also be seen as a psychological condition that causes employees to remain in the organization. In fact, organizational commitment can be discussed under three subheadings; continuance, normative, and affective commitment. Continuance commitment refers to knowledge of the costs associated with parting the organization. Normative commitment is employee's commitment to the organization due to obligations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Specifically, affective commitment is a commitment type in which employee identifies him with the organization while continuance commitment presents stability in the course of individual's interests has been met. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a higher affective commitment maintain association with the organization because they desire to do so.

Affective commitment is defined as an employee's emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with his/her organization and its goals (Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1993; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Porter et al. (1974) further characterize affective commitment by three factors (1) "belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization achieve its goals, and (3) a desire to maintain organizational membership".

Affectively committed employees are seen as having a sense of belonging and identification that increases their involvement in the organization's activities, their willingness to pursue the organization goals, and their desire to remain with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Past research findings have revealed that there exist relationships between the dimensions of organizational climate and organizational commitment. For example, Spector (1997) cites that job satisfaction is a correlate and predictor of organizational commitment; Gregersen & Black (1996) posited that commitment among employees can be increased through work process aimed at enhancing a sense of felt responsibility; Varona (2002) found that there is a relationship between communication and organizational

commitment in terms of feedback and responses from both upper level and employees; Mitchell et al. (2001), Orsburn et al. (1990), and Wellins, Byham, and Wilson (1991) indicate that teams contribute to better outcomes for business organization due to employees commitment to the organizations; and Angle and Perry (1981) posit that proper leadership and motivation influence commitment and would result in organizational effectiveness. Finally, organizational commitment has been often cited in the literature to be both a dependent variable as well as variable for antecedents such as age, tenure, and education (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1979; Dunham et al., 1994; Fauziah, 2008).

Thus, in the present research, we attempt to study a less explored dimension of organizational commitment, named, affective commitment in relation with perceived organizational climate.

### **Objective**

To study the relationship between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment among employees.

### **Hypothesis**

Perceived organizational climate will be positively related to affective commitment among employees.

### **Method**

#### **Sample**

The sample comprised sales and marketing executives in the telecom industry. The sample had 60 male executives with minimum 2 years of service in the current organization. These engineers had an experience of 2 to 5 years in the same organization ( $M = 3.4$  years). The age of these professionals ranged between 25 to 35 years ( $M = 29.6$  years). The sample was drawn from telecom centers of Jaipur city.

### **Measures**

Affective Commitment Questionnaire (Allen & Meyer, 1990) is an eight item questionnaire. Each scale item had a seven-point response format 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. The reliability coefficient(alpha) of

the questionnaire is 0.87 and it has a high convergent validity. Sample items are like "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own", "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization", etc.

Organizational Climate Scale (Pethe, Chaudhari & Dhar, 2001) is a 7 bipolar scale with affirmative and negative poles or ends, developed among Indian executives. It contains 22 items that belong to the different attributes namely results, rewards and interpersonal relations, organizational processes, clarity of roles and sharing of information and altruistic behavior. The split half reliability coefficient was 0.87. The sample items include "People help others" at one pole and "People do not help others" at other pole; "New ideas are encouraged" and "New ideas are not encouraged"; etc.

### **Procedure**

In order to study the relationship between the two constructs under study, data were collected from male executives by means of questionnaires. While collecting data, the first step was to seek the permission from the HR managers of the telecom companies to administer certain psychological test on their employees. Once access had been granted, the questionnaires were supplied to human resources department at the organization. A participant information sheet outlining the research and explaining its purpose was attached to each questionnaire. Employees willing to participate in the research were asked to leave their completed questionnaires in a closed sealed box on HR executive desk. The completed questionnaires were collected.

### **Results**

The current study was conducted with the aim to study the relationship between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment in marketing executive of the telecom sector.

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) were conducted to determine whether a relationship existed between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment. The correlation value was found to be 0.289 which was significant at 0.05 level.

A close look over the coefficient of correlation provides support to our proposed hypothesis. It reflects a positive and significant correlation between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment.

## **Discussion**

The basic objective of the present study is to advance the literature by examining the relationship between organizational climate as perceived by employee and their affective commitment. The perceived organizational climate refers to those aspects of the environment that are consciously perceived by organizational members (Armstrong, 2003). It refers to how the members of an organization perceive it as it goes about its daily business.

Affective commitment is the employees' emotional bond to the organization. It is an important construct as it determines the loyalty, commitment and dedication of an employee to his/her organization. Affective commitment provides employees, a sense of belonging and identification with the work and organization, which increase their involvement in the organization's activities, their willingness to remain with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982).

Current study has found a positive relationship between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment, which is in same direction of the previous findings. A positively perceived organizational climate increases the likelihood of achieving strategic goals (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

On one hand, greater job involvement of employees is related to their recognition and identification with their jobs, while, on the other hand, affective commitment foster positive feeling towards their organization and wish to remain a member in it. Consequently, employees with high levels of both attitudes are behaviorally motivated as, they are both attracted by their job and their organization. Alternatively, employees may distance themselves from their jobs and their organization and may become apathetic employees if they perceive the work environment as alienating and unfriendly (Drummond & Chell, 2001).

Employees' perception regarding the climate of organization can be better explained by organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995), which states that employees assess the extent of support their organization provides to them, in terms of the value and acknowledgement organization gives to their contributions to it (perceived organizational support [POS]). This accreditation is very important as it serves to gratify employees' socio-emotional needs and provides a positive reinforcement to their persistent efforts towards the growth of organization.

Perceived organizational support may reciprocate itself in the form of a feeling of obligation in employees to give their maximum to the organization and promote organization's growth and welfare. This may in turn, lead to greater affective commitment and increased efforts to meet the organization's goals (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Mowday et al., 1982; Rousseau, 1989; Schein, 1980; Wayne, Shore & Liden, 1997). The felt obligation has been observed to mediate a part of the relationship between POS and affective commitment & performance (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

POS satisfy persons' needs for esteem, approval, and affiliation, which increase the affective commitment and ultimately, lead to incorporation of organizational membership and role status into social identity. This has been supported by a research finding, suggesting a higher correlation between POS and performance among employees having high socio-emotional needs (Armeli et al., 1998).

Hence, the environment that an organization offers can influence the emotional attachment of an employee.

### **Practical implications**

A positive organizational climate encourages commitment to the organization. Thus policy makers should do all they possibly can, to help create positive employee perceptions since such positive perceptions are the heart of the organization's climate and employee commitment. Also, they must gain information as to what employees consider to be the main constraints in developing positive perceptions about the organization. Hence, the top management should prepare a plan of action to deal with the negative perceptions that could lead to an unhealthy climate.

### **Conclusion**

Various researches have documented that perceived climate of workplace is differentially related to various components of organizational commitment. Current study was aimed at assessing the relationship between perceived organizational climate and affective commitment. Results reveal a positive correlation between the two variables that are in similar direction as was hypothesized by the researchers.

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