An examination of the relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment (Case study Kurdistan province electric staff)

Vorya Jafari  
Department of management sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad university, sanandaj, Iran  
Mohamad ali moradi  
Department of management sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad university, sanandaj, Iran  
Mohamad Ahanchi  
Department of management sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad university, sanandaj, Iran

Abstract
This study was done to examine the relationship between employees’ empowerment and their commitment to organization of electronic in Kurdistan province. Data were collected from 126 employees of electronic organization in Kurdistan province. SPSS software was used for data operation. The results of correlation showed a significant positive relationship between employees’ empowerment and their commitment to organization while a significant negative relationship between employees’ empowerment and turnover intention was noted. The results of simple regression also showed a significant positive impact of employees’ empowerment on employees’ commitment to their organization and a negative impact on turnover intention was noted. Both analyses also revealed a significant negative relationship between employees’ commitment to organization and their turnover intention.

Keywords: Employees’ empowerment; Employees’ Commitment; Turnover Intention; electric organization; Kurdistan, Iran
Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has an important place in the study of organizational behavior. This is in part due to the vast number of works that have found relationships between organizational commitment and attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Porter et al., 1974, 1976; Koch and Steers, 1978; Angle and Perry, 1981). Furthermore, Batemen and Strasser (1984) state that the reasons for studying organizational commitment are related to “(a) employee behaviors and performance effectiveness, (b) attitudinal, affective, and cognitive constructs such as job satisfaction, (c) characteristics of the employee’s job and role, such as responsibility and (d) personal characteristics of the employee such as age, job tenure” (p. 95-96).

Organizational commitment has been studied in the public, private, and non-profit sector, and more recently internationally. Early research focused on defining the concept and current research continues to examine organizational commitment through two popular approaches, commitment-related attitudes and commitment-related behaviors. A variety of antecedents and outcomes have been identified in the past thirty years (Angle and Perry, 1981; Mowday et al (1979; Hall, 1977).

Definition of Commitment

Multiple definitions of organizational commitment are found in the literature. Bateman and Strasser state that organizational commitment has been operationally defined as “multidimensional in nature, involving an employee’s loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, degree of goal and value congruency with the organization, and desire to maintain membership” (p.95). Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) identified commitment-related attitudes and commitment-related behaviors. Porter et al. (1974) discuss three major components of organizational commitment as being “a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership”. Sheldon (1971) defines commitments as being a positive evaluation of the organization and the organizations goals. According to Buchanan (1974) most scholars define commitment as being a bond between an individual (the employee) and the organization (the employer), though his own definition of commitment
Meyer and Allen (1991) and Dunham et al (1994) identified three types of commitment; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Normative commitment is a relatively new aspect of organizational commitment having been defined by Bolon in 1993. Affective commitment is defined as the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals (Mowday et al, 1979, Meyer & Allen, 1993; O’Reily & Chatman). 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”. Mowday et al (1979) further state that affective communication is “when the employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals in order to maintain membership to facilitate the goal” (p.225). Meyer and Allen (1997) continue to say that employees retain membership out of choice and this is their commitment to the organization.

Continuance commitment is the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with “nontransferable” investments. Nontransferable investments include things such as retirement, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization (Reichers, 1985). Continuance commitment also includes factors such as years of employment or benefits that the employee may receive that are unique to the organization (Reichers, 1985). Meyer and Allen (1997) further explain that employees who share continuance commitment with their employer often make it very difficult for an employee to leave the organization.

Normative commitment (Bolon, 1993) is the commitment that a person believes that they have to the organization or their feeling of obligation to their workplace. In 1982, Weiner discusses normative commitment as being a “generalized value of loyalty and duty”. Meyer and Allen (1991) supported this type of commitment prior to Bolon’s definition, with their definition of normative commitment being “a feeling of obligation”. It is argues that normative commitment is only natural due to the way we are raised in society. Normative commitment can be explained by other commitments such as marriage, family, religion, etc. therefore when it comes to one’s commitment to their place of employment they often feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization (Wiener, 1982).
Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993) say that the three types of commitment are a psychological state “that either characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization or has the implications to affect whether the employee will continue with the organization”. Meyer et al (1993) continue to say that generally the research shows that those employee’s with a strong affective commitment will remain with an organization because they want to, those with a strong continuance commitment remain because they have to, and those with a normative commitment remain because they fell that they have to. Meyer & Allen (1997) define a committed employee as being one “stays with an organization, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in the organizational goals”. This employee positively contributes to the organization because of its commitment to the organization.

**EMPLOYEES’ empowerment**

EMPLOYEES’ empowerment is a process of giving authority to the employees to make necessary important decisions on their own about their day to day activities (Hass, 2010). In order to expedite the process of providing quick services to the customers, it is inevitable for the employees to take quick corrective actions so as to save the precious time of customers. If cases are procrastinated, the organization may lose many of its customers. Empowered employees are expected to perform their work more effectively and efficiently than non-empowered employees. The importance of employees’ empowerment in service industry like electronic industry cannot be condoned.

The results of different empowerment studies conducted in different settings are inconsistent. For example, Bhatnagar (2007) conducted his study in India and concluded that some of the empowerment dimensions were positively related to organizational commitment and some other dimensions were negatively or not related to organizational commitment.

Similarly Chen and Chen (2008) conducted study in Taiwan and found an inconsistence relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment; some dimensions of empowerment were negatively correlated to organizational commitment while some others positively or not correlated to organizational commitment.

The effects of employees’ empowerment on organizational commitment are also inconsistent. For example, Kim 2005 and Moynihan and Landuyt (2008) found a significant negative
correlation between employees’ empowerment and turnover intention and Mastracci (2009) found a significant positive correlation between employees’ empowerment and turnover intention. Due to inconsistent results, it is important to conduct this present study to investigate the actual picture of the relationship between employees’ empowerment and employees’ commitment to their organization in electric organization in Kurdistan province. For this study, the following three hypotheses are developed:

H1: Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with commitment to their organization
H2: Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with their turnover intention
H3: Employees’ commitment to their organization has a significant relationship with their turnover intention

METHODOLOGY

A. Sample and Data collection

For this study data were collected from the employees of Electronic in Kurdistan province. For data collection, is distributed 200 questionnaires physically. Out of 200, 167 questionnaires were returned showing a return rate of 77.4 percent. 33 questionnaires were eliminated because of incomplete information.

B. Statistical Tools

Two statistical tools which are Correlation and Simple Regression, were used to investigate the relationship between employees’ empowerment, commitment and turnover intention. To operate the data SPSS 15 Version was used.

C. Employees’ Empowerment

Employees’ perception about empowerment at work was measured by using employees’ empowerment scales. The responses were measured through 5-point likert scale, 1 indicating strongly disagrees, 5 strongly agree. In order to know about the internal consistency of the items, reliability test was performed. The value of Cronbach’s Alfa was 0.892 indicating a very good reliability of the items.
D. Employees’ Commitment to Organization

Employees’ commitment to their organization was measured by using organizational commitment scale. This scale contains 14 items. 5-point likert scale (1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree) was used to record the responses. For testing the internal consistency of items, Cronbach’s Alfa was calculated. The value of Cronbach’s Alfa was 0.953 that indicates a good reliability.

E. Employees’ Turnover Intention

Employees’ turnover intention was measured through 3 items which were adapted from Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. 5-point likert scale (1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree) was used to record the responses. The reliability of the items was 0.91 indicating a very good consistency of the 3 items.

III. RESULTS

The correlation matrix indicates that employees’ empowerment has a significant correlation with employees’ commitment to their organization and their turnover intention. Thus, Hypotheses H1 (Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with commitment to their organization) and H2 (Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with their turnover intention) are supported. Employees’ empowerment showed a positive relationship with employees’ commitment to organization (r= 0.472, p<.01) and a negative relationship with employees’ turnover intention (r= -0.62, p<.01). Further, the results showed a significant negative correlation between employees’ commitment to their organization and their turnover intention (r= -0.724, p<.01). Thus H3 (Employees’ commitment to their organization has a significant relationship with their turnover intention) is also supported.

The results of simple regression indicate that 22.20 percent of the variance in employees’ commitment to organization can be accounted for by employees’ empowerment. The greater the employees are empowered, the more committed they will be to their organization. The t value indicates the relationship between variables. The t value is high (t=14.035), therefore the
relationship is strong. The F value is 196.975 and it is significant at .000 level, indicating that employees’ empowerment has a significant positive impact on their commitment to organization. Thus, simple regression supported H1 that states that Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with commitment to their organization.

The results of simple regression indicate that 38.40 percent of the variance in employees’ turnover intention can be accounted for by employees’ empowerment. The greater the employees are empowered, the less intention they will have to quit their organization.

The t value indicates the relationship between variables. The t value is high (t= -20.700), therefore the relationship is strong. The F value is 428.503 and it is significant at .000 level, indicating that employees’ empowerment has a significant negative impact on employees’ turnover intention.

Thus, simple regression supported H2 that states that Employees’ empowerment has a significant relationship with their turnover intention.

The results of simple regression indicate that 52.40 percent of the variance in employees’ turnover intention can be accounted for by employees’ commitment to their organization. The greater the employees are commitment to their organization, the less intention they will have to quit their organization. The t value is high (t= -27.514), therefore the relationship is strong.

The F value is 757.019 and it is significant at .000 level, indicating that employees’ commitment has a significant negative impact on employees’ turnover intention. Thus, simple regression supported H3 that states that Employees’ commitment to their organization has a significant relationship with their turnover intention.

IV. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between employees’ empowerment, employees’ commitment to their organization and their turnover intention. For testing this relationship, I used two statistical tools which were correlation and simple regression through SPSS-15. The results of correlation proved that there was a significant positive relationship between employees’ empowerment and employees’ commitment to their organization and a negative relationship between employees’ empowerment and turnover.
intention was noted. A significant negative correlation between employees’ commitment to their organization and their turnover intention was also found. The results of simple regression also confirmed all the developed hypotheses.
REFERENCES


