

Organizational climate an antecedent to organizational commitment: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

Organizational climate is often described as outward, tangible, and measurable properties of inner core of organizational culture, which is nurtured by a variety of mores and morals. Organizational commitment is an attitude which projects the involvement and belief of the employees in a particular organization. Strength of any organization can be measured by the perception of the employees about their organization. The present study investigated perceived organizational climate and its effect on employees' organizational commitment. Six hundred fifty nine participants took part in the study, answering a pool of 20 items related to organizational climate and 15 items related to commitments aspects of the organization. The data subjected to Principal Axis Factoring Technique with varimax rotation procedure yielded 3 factors of organizational climate that exist Indian organization. Similarly, factor analysis revealed two factors of organizational commitment of the employees. Multiple regression analysis of organizational climate on organizational commitment dimensions revealed unequivocal influence of hierarchical positioning of the organizational climate over the commitment dimensions of the employees.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Climate, Organizational Commitment, Attitude, Perception, Culture, Employees.

INTRODUCTION

Perception of the employees' about the organization has important consequences for organization. Organizational Climate manipulate the motivation, behavior, attitudes and potential level of employees in turn organizational success, ability to continue, productivity and commitment can be predicted (Adenike, 2011; Litwin & Stringer, 1968). Suitable organizational climate develop positive attitudes among the employees, in turn they become more committed towards the organization.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

Organizational climate is defined as a global impression of one's organization and personal impact of the work environment, which influences the individual's work behaviors, perception of employees toward their organization, linked to work and job related attitudes (Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Tagiuri, & Litwin ,1968; Dawson et al., 2008), it is the set of measurable properties of the work environment that is either directly or indirectly perceived by the employees who work within the organizational environment

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that influences and motivates their behavior (Holloway, 2012; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Moghimi & Subramaniam, 2013), reflects workers' emotional responses to the characteristics of the work environment (Glisson & James, 2002; James, Hater, Gent, & Bruni, 1978; James & Sells, 1981). It incorporate organizational norms, sharing values, beliefs ,grouping of anticipated behaviors, languages, ideology and postulations that allow the workplace to perform at a suitable pace (Ahmad et al., 2012; Giles, 2010). More positive organizational climate also predicts more positive work attitudes (Glisson & James, 2002; Morris & Bloom, 2002). There are various approaches of organizational climate which can be classified as: structuralism / objectivist, subjectivist, and interactive. (Ashforth, 1995; Furnham & Gunter, 1993; Johnston, 1976; James, Joyce & Slocum, 1988; Koys & DeCottis, 1991). Organizational climate has several dimensions, for example: structure, responsibility, risk, reward, warmth and support, (Litwin & Stringer 1968), conflict and approval rating for actions, (Furnham & Gunter, 1993; DeCottis & Summers, 1987). Apart from organizational work environment, organizational climate is very much influenced by the social interactions of the individual (Rousseau, 1978). Climate or atmosphere in workplace has impact on employee's motivation, behavior, attitudes, and potentials, which, in turn is predicted to influence organizational productivity (Adenike, 2011).

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment is an attitude, defined as the relative strength of, and individual's identification with, and involvement in a particular

organization (Porter, 1974; Mowday, 1998; Meyer et al, 2002). Main approaches of organizational commitment are: attitudinal, behavioral, normative, and multidimensional (Suliman & Isles, 2000b). The attitudinal approach emphasized commitment largely as an employee attitude or more specifically as a set of behavioral intentions (Mowday et al., 1979). Behavioral approach viewed that employee continues their employment with an organization because investments such as time spent in organization, friendship formed, pension benefits etc. they have made to the organization (Suliman and Isles, 2000b). Normative approach suggested that congruency between employee goals; values and organizational aims make the employee feel obliged to their organization. (Becker, Randall & Reige, 1995). Multidimensional approach argued that Organizational commitment develops because of the interaction of all above said components (Suliaman, & Isles, 2000b). Dimensions of the organizational commitment are: continuance, affective and normative commitment (Karrasch, 2003; Turner & Chelladurai, 2005; Boehman, 2006; Canipe, 2006). Affective commitment is the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Continuance commitment is the willingness to remain in an organization due to investment that the employee has with "nontransferable" investments special to the organization (Reichers, 1985, Elele et al., 2010). Normative commitment (Bolon, 1993) is the generalized value of loyalty and duty (Elele et al., 2010) which determined by employees' cultural, social, and familial background and experiences, attitudes and values

generally before joining the organizations (Newman et al., 2011). Organizational Commitment is one of the important concepts to make organization successful (Westover et al., 2010). Individuals stay at their organizations, because of having emotional commitment toward their organization. The components of commitment could experience simultaneously with different levels (Elele et al., 2010; Myer & Allen, 1991).

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Studies have shown significant relationship between dimensions of organizational climate and organizational commitment (Khosravian et al., 2009). Employees tend to believe and internalize the climate of the organization. They are persistent, innovative, and helpful in unexpected problem when they perceive that there is employee oriented politics in the organization; conversely, they exhibit counterproductive behavior (Wolf et al., 2012; Fagbohunge et al., 2012).

Though the previous studies have shown positive relationship between organizational climate and organizational commitment, only a few studies have seen the direct influence of organizational climate on organizational Commitment. Main objective of the present study was to find out relationship between Organizational Climate and Organizational Commitment in Indian organization context.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of above the objective of the study was framed as follows.

-To find out how organizational climate that has been transformed exert influences in the development of organizational commitment.

H1 Organizational climate is the ingrained patterns of behavior, attitudes, and feelings which are more related to atmosphere and values of the organization (Aiswarya and Ramasundaram, 2012; Moghimi and Subramaniam, 2013), also organizational climate related with positive and negative organizational behavior of the employees (Fagbohunge et al., 2012; Wolf et al., 2012). Employees' perception of their organization's climate can influence their commitment positively or negatively (Litzky et al., 2006). Employees tend to lower their counterproductive behavior when they perceived more socially and emotionally supported organizational climate (Kidwell and Valentine, 2009). Based on the various findings,

It was hypothesized that organizational climate will have its effect in creating employees commitment.

SAMPLE

The study was conducted in various IT and Pharmaceutical companies located in Western Region of India. The sample was obtained in a manner that ensured sticking to the probability sampling method. The sample represented a cross-section of industries with varied background and differing functional groupings of managers. Some degree of heterogeneity of the sample ensured varying level of attainments of leaders at different hierarchal levels of the organization. In all, 615 executives responded to the questionnaire, of which 11 per cent belonged

to upper and 89 per cent to the middle management cadre. The age of respondents varied from 22 years to 40 years with median age being 31 years. The work experience ranged from 4 to 21 years with median 8 years of work experience.

INSTRUMENTS

Organizational climate The scale used for measuring organizational climate consisted of 20 items based upon the Steers and Braunstein (1976) Manifest need questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on motivational orientation of organizational climate. The items were modified by Pandey (1992) to enable the respondents to assess the climate of their organization. The scale items were rated on 7 point scale ranging from 1 "not at all agree" to 7 "strongly agree".

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

One of the most widely accepted scale to measure the organizational commitment of a 15 items developed by Porter et al (1974) was used to measure the organizational commitment rated on 7 point scale ranging from 1 "not at all agree" to 7 "strongly agree". This scale has been consistently

tested and shown to have high reliability and validity scores with coefficient alpha ranging from .81 to .93 (Hochwarter, Perrew, Feris, & Gercio,1999). Though scale was designed as a unidimensional instrument, in the present study two factors of the organizational commitment were found, named as - affective commitment and continuance commitment.

RESULT

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE MEASURE

The factor structure was extracted several times using varying number of factors so as to accept a given internal structure of organizational climate items, that explains maximum percentage of variance and also reflects higher degree of semantic closeness of items within a given factor the attributes of organizational climate, which in the final analysis, resulted in three unique but related dimensions of organizational climate described as below. Table 1 presents various rotated factor structure comprising three major dimensions of Organizational Climate.

TABLE 1
FACTOR ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ITEMS WITH VARIMAX

Item No.	Factors	TR	JGSF	OPD
V01	In this organization ,supervisors treat their subordinate s with respect	69	-20	17.
V02	In this organization subordinates usually trust the statements which are made by superiors	70	-14	16
V03	In this organization superiors pay attention to what their subordinates say	60	-21	-04
V04	In this organization superiors willing listen to subordinates problems.	63	-21	-04
V05	In this organization supervisors are friendly and easy to approach	60	17	23
V06	In this organization it is up to us to decide how our job should be best done.	-15	57	05
V07	In this organization there are opportunities for independent thoughts and actions on our jobs.	-07	52	-06
V08	In this organization we are free to set our own performance goals.	13	72	-53
V09	This organization prefers to be its own boss even where it needs assistance or where a joint effort is required	22	01	72
V10	This organization provides lot of power and control to upper management.	24	41	65

Note: TR= Trusting Relationship, JGSF=Job and Goal Setting Freedom, OPD= Organizational Power Direction

ROTATION

Factor 1: TRUSTING RELATIONSHIP: this factor comprise five items and explained organizational climate in terms of widespread trust experienced members of the organization. The subordinates perceived to be respectfully treated, their competencies are considered as a contributing factor to relate professionally with each other and develop trusting relationship within the group. Subordinates perceived their superiors as trust worthy and approachable for discussing and solving a variety of work related problem.

Factor 2: JOB AND GOAL -SETTING

FREEDOM: this factor consists of three items and explained the organizational climate in terms of perception of people related to performance goals and opportunities for independent thoughts and action that can help them and the organization alike. It is also perceived by the subordinate that it gives full freedom to decide about completing their assigned job.

Factor 3: ORGANIZATIONAL POWER

DIRECTION: this factor based on content of two items, signifies direction of power in

channelizing organizational energies. Similarly, due to great show of power or power possessiveness it tends to assign more power to its upper echelon and sets higher standards of performance so as to lead other organizations in the same field as that of organization itself.

Item analysis carried out on the finally accepted items of the organizational climate. The reliabilities ranged from low of .51 for Organizational Power Direction to a high of .82 for Trusting Relationship. Another dimension namely Job and Goal Setting Freedom has alpha reliabilities of .66 accordingly. Table 3 presents summary of item analysis.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

factor structure comprising two major dimensions of Organizational Commitment.

MEASURE

The factor structure was extracted several times using varying number of factors so as to accept a given internal structure of organizational commitment items that explains maximum percentage of variance and also reflects higher degree of semantic closeness of items within a given factor the attributes of organizational commitment, which in the final analysis, resulted in two unique but related dimensions of organizational commitment described as below. Table 2 presents summary of various rotated

TABLE 2
FACTOR ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ITEMS WITH VARIMAX ROTATION

Item No.	Statement	AC	CC
V01	For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work	0.64	0.11
V02	I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined	0.61	0.17
V03	I am glad to tell others that I am part of this organization	0.60	0.13
V04	I am willing to put in great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to in order to help this organization to be successful.	0.46	0.13
V05	I find that my values and organization's values are very similar	0.56	-0.07
V06	I really care about the fate of this organization	0.47	-0.06
V07	I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for	0.70	0.07
V08	I would accept almost any type of job/assignment to keep working for this organization	0.55	-0.05
V09	The organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	0.49	0.07
V10	Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.	0.09	0.59
V11	I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar	-0.01	0.59
V12	I feel very little loyalty to this organization	-0.07	0.70
V13	Often I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees	0.15	0.49
Vv14	There is not too much to be gained by sticking to this organization indefinitely	0.10	0.69

Note: AC=Affective Commitment, CC= Continuance Commitment

Factor 1: AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT:

Affective commitment includes the items like emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals, a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization achieve its goals, and a desire to maintain organizational membership.

not having positive opinion about the present organization where employees are working, they have less liking for the present organization.

The reliabilities ranged from low of .79 for Continuance Commitment to a high of .83 for Affective Commitment. Table 3 presents summary of descriptive statistics and item analysis carried out on the finally accepted items of the organizational commitments.

Factor 2: CONTINUANCE

COMMITMENT: Contains the items related to

TABLE 3

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS & INTER-CORRELATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND COMMITMENT (DIAGONAL LINE PRESENTS ALPHA COEFFICIENT)

	mean	sd	TR	JGSF	OPD	AC	CC
TR	39.2	7.53	82	.56**	.14**	.73**	.034
JGSF	37.8	7.72	.56**	66	.55**	.43**	.31**
OPD	35.2	9.66	.14**	.55**	51	.063	.63**
AC	15.95	5.74	.73**	.43**	.063	83	-.10
CC	26.61	9.68	.034	.32**	.63**	-.10	79

Note: TR= Trusting Relationship, JGSF=Job and goal setting freedom, OPD= organizational power direction, AC=affective Commitment, CC= continuance commitment. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. N=615

Table 4 revealed that **Trusting Relationship** ($\beta = .21, p=.000$), **Job and Goal -setting freedom** ($\beta = .62, p=.000$), factors of organizational climate were positively correlated with Affective commitment. Regression coefficients were significant beyond the confidence level of one per cent for the organizational commitment.

While **organizational Power direction** ($\beta = -.07, p=.03$), shown the negative relationship with affective commitment Taken together three dimensions of the organizational climate explained 52.2 per cents of variance, significant well beyond the .01 level of confidence.

TABLE 4
STEPWISE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate		
	.722 ^a	.522	.520		.50221		
			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
			B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	1.417	.119			11.926	.000
	Job & goal setting freedom	.201	.037		.214	5.409	.000
	Trusting relationship	.519	.026		.623	19.746	.000
	Org'l power direction	-.054	.025		-.077	-2.134	.033

a. Dependent Variable: Affective commitment

Table 5 revealed that **organizational Power direction** ($\beta = .38, p=.000$), **Job and Goal - setting freedom**, ($\beta = .16, p=.001$), factors of organizational climate were positively correlated with Continuance commitment. Regression coefficients were significant beyond the confidence level of one per cent for the organizational

commitment. While **Trusting Relationship** ($\beta = -.18, p=.000$), shown the negative relationship with continuance commitment. Taken together three dimensions of the organizational climate explained 24.2 per cents of variance, significant well beyond the .01 level of confidence.

TABLE 5
STEPWISE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
	.492 ^a	.242	.239	.93987		
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.717	.222		7.723	.000	
independent relationship	.227	.070	.163	3.270	.001	
power	-.227	.049	-.183	-4.617	.000	
	.401	.048	.383	8.419	.000	

b. Dependent Variable: continuance Commitment

DISCUSSION

The main objective of the present study was to find out the relationship between organizational climate and commitment, in the process of finding the relationship the dimensions of organizational climate and commitment were also analyzed, the factor analysis revealed three factors of organizational climate namely; Trusting Relationship, Job and Goal -setting freedom, Organizational Power direction, two factors of organizational commitment were affective and continuance, the regression analysis result revealed that organizational climate is an antecedent to develop the organizational commitment. It is worth

to note that organizational Power direction oriented organizational climate is the negative predictor for the affective commitment, while trusting relationship and Job and Goal-setting freedom oriented organizational climate was strongly correlated with affective organizational commitment. Result indicated organizational power direction where full authority is given to senior managers will generate negative feelings, in turn create continuance commitment among employees, leaving them with intention to leave the organization at the suitable and appropriate time, suggesting delegation of power is essential, to create affective commitment among employees.

Job and Goal-setting freedom climate is related with both affective and continuance commitment respectively revealing that to certain level of independency is accepted by the subordinate as long as they are assured that at the critical point of time they will be given required guidance and support by the seniors, else it will have reverse impact. Trusting Relationship oriented climate is preferred and generates an emotional commitment towards the organization, it is expected by the employees that there seniors shall always be approachable; they can express themselves and get required advice from the superiors.

Therefore result indicates that employee wants to work in a free environment where they can decide on how to do the job and set their own goal independently, where higher authorities are approachable and ready to help to the subordinates.

Similarly, power and job & goal setting oriented organizational climate was the main predictor of continuance commitment, however trusting relationship was perceived as a negative interpreter, demonstrating trust and relationship oriented organizational climate will generate affective commitment. Thus the study recommended that it is essential to create the climate which gives the freedom to perform independently; also there is a trust between superior and subordinate. Power oriented organizational climate is generating continuance commitment among the employee indicates that they are not happy working in a climate where directions are imposed on them, may leave the organization either very soon or at the time of need. The present study supports other studies

(Giles, 2010; Choudhury, 2011).

It is interesting to note that Job and goal-setting freedom was related to both affective and continuance commitment, can be understood that many time it is required to supervise the subordinate even if they are being given full freedom to work, they look for guidance, if it is not given at the time of need they feel pressurized, uncomfortable, not knowing from where to get the support and feel like quitting the organization, due to lack of initiative nature.

With changing scenarios in the world economy if companies want smart, professional, innovative, and positive team members, they should promote a healthy work environment and climate, so that the employees feel free to exhibit positive behaviors and committed towards the organization.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Wellbeing of any organization can be measured by evaluating individuals' perception about their organizational climate. It expose how well employees are treated, successively how committed they will be. Present study result strongly suggests that a relationship and independent oriented organizational climate will increase the affective commitment among the employees, organization should try to refrain from imposing their power upon the employee, it may create dissatisfaction, which lead to the quitting the organization, or lack of commitment . It is essential to form feel good climate to the employees as they are the key resources of an organization.

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QUOTE

The biggest risk is not taking any risk... In a world that changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks.

Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook