

**ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT:
A STUDY OF EMPLOYEES RESPONSES FROM SELECT NGOS**

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Abstract : Organizational commitment as an important employee attitude has received much popularity since many of the outcomes of it are useful to the organisations. Evidences show that this aspect of HRM is not studied much in non-governmental organisations. This study of 112 employees from 20 select NGOs reveal that employees significantly vary in their commitment scores according to their sex, designation and years of experience. Thus, the hypothesis tested in this study is partially supported. Implications are also drawn for the management of NGOs for improving the commitment levels of their employees.

Introduction

NGOs in India have been trying to sensitize, organize, and mobilize people at village, local community and various other levels, and also interest groups particularly the most marginal groups, disadvantaged groups, destitute women and children to enable them to pursue self-development, fight for their basic rights and apply pressure on the government when needed for pro-peoples' policies. All these involve a process of education, organization, struggle and reconstruction. Amazingly, this process is completely carried out by the members employed by these organizations. Therefore, commitment to their jobs and their organizations is of cardinal concern to the overall effectiveness of the NGO movement in the country and to the realization of egalitarian society, which was a dream of Gandhiji.

Management always looks into the aspects of erosion of authority, re-structuring the organisation, and the impact of technology on its people and performances. For maintaining overall organisational efficiency human resource is the key for any organisation, which cannot be overlooked, even in this modern advanced technological era, although, the entire emphasis is still to improve the quality, which can never, be

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relaxed. Quality, which in essence, means customer satisfaction, is achieved through people and in accordance with a basic HRM principle “invest in people” is a pre-requisite for achieving high quality standards. It is often observed that maintenance of high standards of product quality is more important to organisation’s success. It is continuous improvement in creating an environment where each individual employee is committed to seeking ways of enhancing performance (Luthans, 1992; Mayer and Allen, 1991; Mowdey, et.al, 1982).

It is fact that job satisfaction as an attitude has received most attention over the years. Recently, the more global term organisational commitment as an attitude emerged out of the research as being important one to understand and predict organisational behaviour. The term “organisational commitment” as with other topics of organisational behaviour has wide variety of definitions and measures. Organisational commitment is most often defined as (i) strong desire to remain a member of a particular organisation, (ii) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation, (iii) a definite belief in, and acceptance of, the values and the goals of the organisation (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982).

Apart from aforementioned issue, it is necessary to point that very little number of studies on organisational commitment with reference to the staff of NGOs have been found so far as the survey of literature is concerned. Job satisfaction studies also support a positive relationship between organisational commitment and desirable outcomes such as performance, turnover, and absenteeism (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Evidence has already been adduced from the study of Luthans et.al (1992). They emphasised in their study that employees’ commitment relates to other desirable outcomes such as, the increased performance and supportive organisational climate.

Having surveyed the available literature on organisational commitment, it has been observed that organisational commitment studies are negligible generally in Indian context and specifically in non-governmental organisations. Therefore it requires much more attention as OC is very necessary for organisational growth and development, and

in turn the growth of national income at large. More pertinently, the OC among NGOs' staff is bound to improve the service delivery systems, which in turn improves the quality of life of the disadvantaged and underprivileged communities in our societies.

Therefore, the present investigation was planned to study the organisational commitment amongst staff members of selected non-governmental organisations.

The objective of the present study is to examine the null hypothesis that "there is no difference among NGO staff in their level of organisational commitment according to their personal background variables".

The Method

With the help of stratified disproportionate random sampling technique, 120 employees from 20 select NGOs in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad were selected, to whom a structured questionnaire consisting of a scale to measure organisational commitment and elicit responses to certain personal characteristics of the respondents. Only 112 have returned the filled in questionnaire. Thus their responses are processed for this study.

Tools : organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1970) was adopted. The OCQ is designed and composed of 15 questions scaled from 1 being strongly disagree to 7 being strongly agree. The items in the scale are summed and divided by 15 to get an overall OC index to evaluate the commitment of the individual. The scale is designed to evaluate three factors: 1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, 2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organizations and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. The OCQ has shown high reliability and validity when examined in Organizational Behavior literature. The reliability of the scale was tested with the coefficient of alpha, which yielded a value of 0.87 indicating that the scale is highly reliable.

Results and discussion

In order to test the null hypothesis “ that the employees in NGOs need not differ in their levels of commitment to their organisation according to their personal background variables; means and standard deviations and F-values were computed for the study variables and result are reported in table 1.

**Table1:Means, SDs and F-values for Commitment Scores
By Respondents’ Profile**

I	Age (in yrs)	Mean	SD	F-value	P=
	17-24	39.25	8.36		
	25-32	42.91	7.07		
	33-45	41.07	10.17	1.918	0.152
II	Sex				
	Male	43.03	6.73		
	Female	40.07	9.44	3.656	0.058
III	Education				
	SSC	45.76	6.79		
	Intermediate	45	6.89		
	Graduation	40.04	9.35		
	Post Graduation	41	7.32	2.408	0.071
IV	Designation				
	Coordinator	40.14	9.96		
	Cluster Coordinators	43.45	5.27		
	Multipurpose social workers	46.81	7.44		
	Community organizers	39.02	7.81	5.653	0.001
V	Service (in yrs)				
	1--2	39.16	8.09		
	3--6	42.85	7.3		
	7--14	41.19	10.64	5.653	0.001
VI	Monthly Income (in Rs.)				
	1200-2500	40.85	7.87		
	2600-4300	40.45	8.38		
	4400-7000	44.17	8.61	1.921	0.151

It is evident from the table that among the age group of the respondents, those who are in 25 to 32 years have scored the highest mean score of 43 scores, followed by the older age group (mean=42.91) and the younger age group (mean=39.25). surprisingly, the f-value shows that such variation in their commitment is not statistically significant.

This indicates that the organizational commitment need not differ according to the age of the respondents.

With regard to sex of the respondents, the males scored the highest mean score (43.03) on commitment scale than their counterparts. Interestingly, such variation is statistically significant. These may be because of the nature of work performed in NGOs where the employees have to frequently visit villages, which are usually far away from the city. In such cases, females may not prefer to go and stay there or unwillingly travel to such distances owing to the domestic demands. As such males only are found to be performing such jobs since the programmes need to be conducted successfully for the sake of beneficiaries in the community.

With regard to education, the respondents who have studied upto SSC (mean=46.0) and intermediate (mean=45.0) have scored highest mean scores than those who have studied upto post graduation (mean=41.0) and graduation (mean=40.04). However, such variations in their means scores have not reached statistical level of significance. In other words, organisational commitment need not vary according to the educational level of the respondents.

As regards the designation, the multipurpose social workers (MPSW) scored highest mean score of 46.0 than cluster coordinators (mean=43.45), coordinators (40.14) and community organizers (COs) (means=39.02). Surprisingly, community organizers are found to be least committed to their organisations. Interestingly, such variation is found statistically significant. This may be due to the fact that the MPSWs often tend to perform highly varied and interesting jobs than the community organizers whose jobs involve almost always routine tasks, assignments and responsibilities, which need to be performed on a continuous basis. The chief task of COs is to mobilize or organize people at the community level and implement the programmes which demands more patience, tolerance and perseverance as bring all people to a common platform is not easy and timely. Whereas, the MPSWs are responsible for on to three villages for which they plan, implement, monitor the programmes, all of which, are of highly varied in nature.

With regard to years of experience, it is found from the table that participants who have been working for 3 to 6 years scored highest mean score of 42.85 than those who worked for 7 to 14 years (41.10) and those who worked for 1 to 2 years (39.16). Surprisingly, such variation is found to be statistically significant. In other words, it could be said that the commitment is least in the early years of the experience and tends to increase upto 6 years and then gradually reduce after 6 years of experience. One of the reasons is that the organizations have tendencies to encourage the youngsters for their aptitude for new skills, knowledge and attitudes. NGOs want to utilize such new resources from them often resulting in appreciating them. This results in some kind of discouragement among the older employees. NGOs often provide more opportunities for those who are the high performers. Therefore, it is common to commit to an organization, which provides more opportunities for experimenting and learning new ways of working.

Lastly, with regard to monthly income, participants in the monthly income of Rs.4400 to Rs. 7000, have scored the highest means scores (44.17) than their counter parts. However, such variation is not statistically significant.

In conclusion, it could be said that commitment to the organisation need not differ according to the monthly income of the respondents. It also refutes that idea that the monetary issues that govern the relationships between employees and the employers do not determine commitment.

Thus, it is quite clear from the above results that only in case of three variables namely, designation, length of service and sex, the respondents has varied in their commitment scores. Therefore, the null hypothesis is partially accepted.

Conclusion

Organisational commitment as an important attitude of employees of selected non-governmental organisations in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, has been addressed in this study. It is brought to light that the NGO staff had significantly varied in their levels of commitment to their organisations according to their designations, years of experience and sex. Thus, the hypothesis has been partially accepted.

It is also suggested that since the levels of commitment among the staff of NGOs is varying, it is expected that the management of the NGOs have to divert their immediate attention to this problem, because, a less committed employee would tend to be a poor performer, absents from job develops intentions to quite the job. Management may revise certain human resource management policies so that employees may perceive fairness in them and tend to internalize a positive attitude towards organisation and management. As far as possible, the management should express openness and the seriousness in carrying out the activities of the organisation so that the objectives or the aims of the organisation are met. This way, employees will also be enabled to show their commitment to their organisations. Further, there is a need to conduct studies like this for the sake of understanding several aspects related to the commitment among NGO employees. This will aid the decision-makers in taking serious decisions for realizing the missions or the purpose of the organisation.

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