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Predictors of Organizational Commitment: An Empirical Evidence from FMCG Sector in Oman

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Abstract

The paper attempts to identify the significant predictors of organizational commitment among select FMCG employees in Sultanate of Oman. Quantitative approach has been used to study the influence of demographic variables and work environment on organizational commitment. Data were collected from the 100 employees through the questionnaires. In the sample, there were 60 male and 40 female employees. Data were analyzed by using appropriate statistical tests like mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient and regression analysis. Study revealed that FMCG employees reported moderate level of scores on work environment and organizational commitment. Correlation analysis indicated that age and job experience showed the positive significant relationship with organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The positive and significant relationship is also found between work environment, job contents, supervision practices, pay, promotional practices, coworkers and organizational commitment. Regression analysis showed that age, job experience, supervision practices, pay and promotional opportunities emerged as the significant predictors of organizational commitment.

1. Introduction

Employees do not work in isolation, but they work together in an environment for the achievement of both individual and organizational goals. The work environment would refer to the various psychosocial conditions and factors, which make up a workplace and may have a direct influence on the employee beha-

viour. It is determined by various factors such as physical setting, characteristics of the job itself, characteristics of organization and relationship with other employees.

The work environment varies from organization to organization and from time to time in the case of the same organization. Some organizations reflect a positive work environment that is determined by manageable and clearly defined tasks, participation, feedback and autonomy that result in a high level of organizational commitment and productivity. Other organizations that might be characterized by a negative work environment indicate high job demand, lack of support, inadequate resources and unfair treatment leading to negative emotions such as boredom and dissatisfaction. Certain characteristics of the work environment have also been associated with positive emotional states and organizational productivity level variables e.g., satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover, absenteeism, and job performance (Leka & Houdmont, 2010). Employees' high level of commitment with the organization is entirely a result of a better work environment (Salin, 2003). Furthermore, employees who feel comfortable about their working environment are likely to work more effectively and enjoy the working process as compared to those who feel uncomfortable (Khuong & Le Vu, 2014).

Over the last decades, a remarkable change in various facets of the work environment has been observed. The main reason is the tremendous change in socio-cultural values rising due to growth of industries, pressures in urban areas, quantitative growth in population, information technology and numerous other factors that are now an integral part of modern life. People's life patterns have become relatively more complicated, demanding, challenging and dependent.

This has brought drastic changes in the socio-cultural environment of the modern organization and even the lifestyle of people at large. The organization needs to pay more attention in identifying and assessing the work environment that helps in providing a positive work environment to increase the favourable feelings and behaviour among the employees, which ultimately leads towards high performance. The good work environment always helps in reducing absenteeism and turnover, as employees remain committed to continue their job with high motivation, and personally align their goals with organizational goals to gain success.

Organizational commitment is one of the organizational related attitudes that have received considerable attention from researchers around the world. This is because organizational commitment is directly related to employees' performance (Jaramillo et al., 2005; Meyer et al., 2002) organizational profitability (Abdullah & Ramay, 2012). Studies have shown that organizational commitment is strongly associated with various factors such as work environment (Brierley, 2000; Painter & Akroyd, 1998); supervision practices (Mobley et al., 1979); organizational support (Johnson & Chang, 2008; Casper et al., 2002), demographics (Khan et al., 2016).

The predictors of organizational commitment have been studied widely in

various organizations in other parts of the globe. However, they are not studied in the same way in Sultanate of Oman. The present study is conducted to investigate the significant predictors of the organizational commitment among the employees working in the FMCG sector. Demographic characteristics (Age, Gender, Marital Status and Job Experience) and Work Environment (Job Content, Supervision Practices, Pay & Promotional Opportunities and Relationship with Coworkers) are selected as Predictors and Organizational Commitment as criterion.

2. Literature Review

The concept of work environment is defined in varied ways by the researchers. The working environment is defined as settings, situations, conditions, and circumstances under which people of an organization work (Abrahamson, 2000). The work environment is also regarded as an internal or psychological environment of an organization (Malik, 2018). The working environment is linked to a specific company's atmosphere in which its workers conduct their duties (Danish et al., 2013). The work environment is anything that involves the physical and psychological aspects that will directly or indirectly affect employees (Suyono et al., 2021). Work environment is a composite of three major sub-environments including the technical environment, the human environment and the organizational environment. Technical environment refers to tools, equipment, technological infrastructure and other physical or technical elements. This is a basis to attain maximum productivity. The human environment includes peer relationship with each other, interaction among employees, communication between employer and employees, leader-follower relationship, etc. Organizational environment includes systems, procedures, practices, values and philosophies (Opperman, 2002). Factors of the working environment have changed a lot with the passage of time due to the changes of external environment conditions like social environment, information technology and flexible ways of doing a job (Noe et al., 2006). Environmental factors represent the immediate job environment that contains skills required to perform a job, authority, autonomy, relationship with supervisors and co-workers and other working conditions (Abdulla et al., 2010).

The concept of organizational commitment has been defined in different ways by different researchers over the past few years. In the beginning, organizational commitment is referred to as company loyalty, associated with an acceptance of an organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization and a desire to remain with the organization (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Organizational commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization with its implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization (Meyer & Allens, 1997). A bond or linking of the individual to the organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Meyer & Allen (1991) proposed three dimensions model of organizational commitment namely affective commitment, continuance commitment

and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Normative commitment refers to a feeling of obligation to continue employment.

A lot of researchers have tried to examine the relationship between work environment and organizational commitment. Researchers have explained that various work environmental factors such as job content is significant contributor of organizational commitment (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Glisson & Durick, 1988; Griffin, 1983; Landau & Hammer, 1986; Pearson & Chong, 1997), supervision practices influence employees' affective responses (Mobley, Griffith, Hand, & Meglino, 1979); coworkers support leads towards the increase of organizational commitment at the workplace (Yousef, 2001), promotional opportunities shows positive relationship with organizational commitment (Gaertner & Nollen, 1989; Chughtai & Zafar, 2006) and high pay shows positive relationship with organizational commitment (McElroy, 2001).

Furthermore, various demographic factors such as age, gender, educational level and experience have been frequently studied by earlier researchers to see their effects on organizational commitment. Previous studies reported that Age and work experience have a significant relationship with organizational commitment (Morrow, 1993; Mannheim, 1997; Wiedmer, 1998; Azeem, 2010). Other studies showed age and experience are significant predictors of organizational commitment (Salami, 2008; Azeem, 2010). Affective commitment was more strongly associated with age than tenure (Allen & Meyer, 1993). However, some researchers have confirmed the existence of no relationship between Age and organizational commitment (Chugtai & Zafar, 2006; Iqbal, 2010; Kwon & Banks, 2004). Women showed more commitment level as compared to men (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). However, some studies reported no relationship between gender and organizational commitment (Kacmar et al., 1999; Van der Velde et al., 2003). Age, education, and marital status were significantly correlated with organizational commitment. Staff members who were more committed tended to be older, married and more educated (Sikorska-Simmons, 2005). But other studies reported more educated employees show lower levels of commitment, most likely because they have higher expectations or greater alternative job opportunities (Grau et al., 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Employers should give more attention to retain talented or valuable employees (Bodjrenou et al., 2019).

The purpose of the present study is to identify the predictors of organizational commitment among the employees working in the FMCG sector. In the present study work environment and demographic variables are selected as the predictors of organizational commitment. As it is evident from the previous studies that several researchers have reported mixed findings on the relationship between work environment, demographic characteristics and organizational commitment. However, the majority of the researchers showed that work environment and demographics have a significant impact on organizational commitment. The Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector is chosen for this re-

search, as it is one of the most important sectors of the Sultanate of Oman. The FMCG sector represents one of the largest sectors worldwide. This sector plays an important role in the economic development of the country because of the continuous increase in consumer demands. The nature of work that FMCG employees perform is relatively more demanding and challenging, as they usually perform duties like reaching out to customers, establishing long-term relationships and ensuring customer satisfaction. Thus, in the FMCG sector, meeting consumer demands is one of the important challenges which influence the business results. To meet such challenges, organizational commitment is of great importance among the employees. Work environment, demographic factors and organizational commitment has been studied several times by earlier researchers in the context of various organizational settings, but not in the context of FMCG. It is important to determine how the FMCG sector is ensuring organizational commitment of its employees by understanding and providing a favourable working environment to their employees.

In the light of literature reviewed and realizing the significance of this study following hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Work environment and its various dimensions (Job contents, Supervision practices, Pay, Promotional Opportunities and Relationship with coworkers) will significantly predict organizational commitment.

H2: Demographic factors (Age, Gender, Marital Status and Job Experience) will significantly predict organizational commitment.

3. Conceptual Framework

Based on literature reviewed, the conceptual framework for this study is presented below:
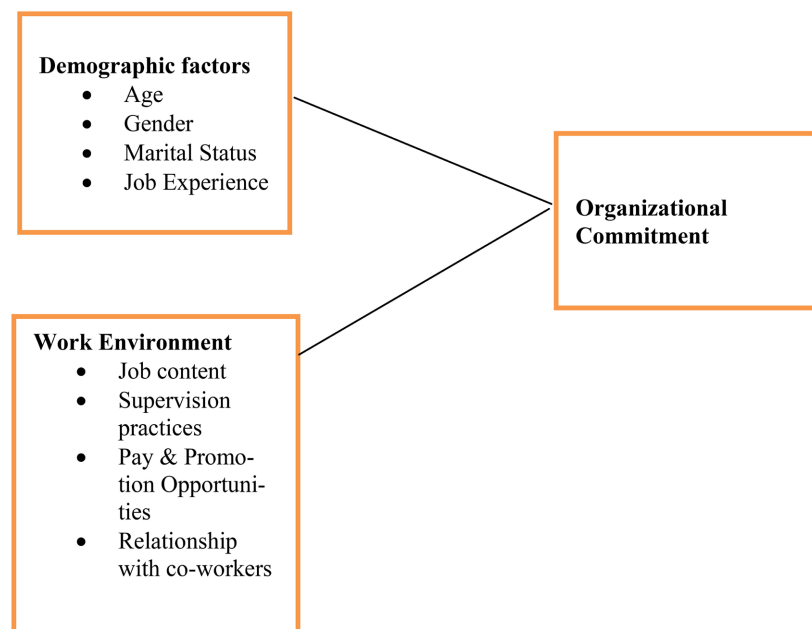
4. Research Methodology

In this study quantitative approach has been used to identify the influence of work environment and demographic factors on organizational commitment among the employees. To achieve the research objectives, correlational research design has been used. Keeping in mind the challenges of collecting data during the pandemic situation the convenience sampling method has been used to select 100 middle level employees from four FMCG organizations as it was easy to approach the participants. The participants were contacted through personal and professional networks of the researcher. 130 Structured questionnaires were distributed among Middle level management employees working in different departments. However, only 108 questionnaires were received from the participants, out of which 6 questionnaires were incomplete and finally researcher decided to include responses of 100 participants in the data analysis.

4.1. Research Instrumentation

The biographical information sheet was used to collect information on the demographic characteristics of the participants such as age, gender, marital status and job experience.

Work environment was measured by using 20 statements. These statements were formulated by the researcher after reviewing the questionnaires developed by previous researchers. Each statement was required to be rated on five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Statements 1 - 5 measure the Job contents, statements 6 - 10 determine the supervision practices. Statements 11 - 15 measure the pay and promotional opportunities, and 16 - 20 statements measure relationships with coworkers. The overall scale reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.89 and congruent validity was 0.76.

Organizational commitment was measured by the scale developed by Meyer & Allen (1997). The scale consists of 18 items with a 5-point Likert format. The three dimensions of the organizational commitment questionnaire measure affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Each dimension contains 6 items. Internal consistency using coefficient alpha for affective, continuance and normative scales have been reported as 0.85, 0.79 and 0.73 respectively.

4.2. Data Analysis

Based on the nature of the data and the design of this research the appropriate statistical technique has been used to analyze the data. In the present research work, data has been analyzed by means of the SPSS package. The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics, the mean, standard deviation and percentages have been calculated to describe the characteristics of the variables. In inferential statistics, the correlation coefficient has been calculated to find out the relationship between demographic characteristics, work environment and organizational commitment. Fur-

thermore, regression analysis was carried out to identify the significant predictors of organizational commitment.

5. Result and Discussion

Demographic information of the participants showed that 30% of the participants' ages were between 37 to 42 years, 25% of them were between 25 to 30 years, 23% of them were between 31 to 36 years, and 22% of them were between 43 and above age. 60% of participants were male and 40% of participants were female. 18% of participants were unmarried and 82% of the participants were married. 21% of the participants have job experience of fewer than 3 years, 30% of the participants have a job experience between 4 to 6 years, 26% of the respondents have job experience between 7 to 9 years and 23% of respondents have experience of more than 10 years (Table 1).

Descriptive statistics are presented in the Table 2 to describe the characteristics of the participants in relation to variables selected in the research. The mean score on Job content (Mean = 17.43), Supervision practices (Mean = 17.60), Pay and Promotional opportunities (Mean = 18.03), Relationship with coworkers (Mean = 18.77) and work environment (Mean = 68.73) are reported by the employees working in FMCG companies. This indicates that employees reported moderate level of scores on the work environment and its dimensions. Furthermore, the mean score obtained on Affective commitment (Mean = 19.72), Continuance commitment (Mean = 21.28), Normative commitment (Mean = 17.90) and Organizational commitment (60.40) showed that employees reported moderate level of total organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants.

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
25 - 30 years	25	25%
31 - 36 years	23	23%
37 - 42 years	30	30%
43 and above	22	22%
Gender		
Male	60	60%
Female	40	40%
Marital Status		
Married	82	82%
Unmarried	18	18%
Job experience		
>3 years	21	21%
4 - 6 years	30	30%
7 - 9 years	26	26%
10 years & more	23	23%

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of work environment and organizational commitment.

Variables	Mean	SD
Work Environment	68.73	4.45
Job Contents	17.43	2.71
Supervision practices	17.60	2.37
Pay & Promotional Opportunities	18.03	2.92
Relationship with Coworkers	18.77	2.17
Organization Commitment	60.40	8.96
Affective Commitment	19.72	2.59
Continuance Commitment	21.28	2.41
Normative Commitment	17.90	2.65

Results presented in Table 3 indicated that age of the employees showed positive significant relationship with affective commitment ($r = 0.93$, $p < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$), normative commitment ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$) and organizational commitment ($r = 0.81$). Similarly, job experience showed a positive significant relationship with organizational commitment ($r = 0.81$, $p < 0.01$), affective commitment (0.98, $p < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.01$) and normative commitment ($r = 0.54$, $p < 0.01$). The obtained findings are in line with the previous research studies that reported that age and work experience have significant relationship with organizational commitment (Morrow, 1993; Mannheim, 1997; Wiedmer, 1998; Azeem, 2010). However, no significant relationship was found between the gender and organizational commitment. Similarly, marital status showed very weak insignificant relations with organizational commitment and its dimensions. Furthermore, positive and significant relations are observed between work environment and organizational commitment ($r = 0.53$, $p < 0.01$). Job content showed positive significant relation with organizational commitment ($r = 0.56$, $p < 0.01$), affective commitment ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$) and normative commitment ($r = 0.20$, $p < 0.05$). Likewise, a positive significant correlation is observed between the supervision practices and organizational commitment ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$). The positive significant relations are also found between the supervision practices and all the dimensions of organizational commitment, affective commitment ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) and normative commitment ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$). Pay and promotional opportunities also showed positive significant relation with organizational commitment ($r = 0.56$, $p < 0.01$), affective commitment ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$), continuance commitments ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$) and normative commitment ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$). Also, relationships with coworkers showed positive and significant relations with organizational commitment ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$), affective commitment ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$) and continuance commitment ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.05$). However, an insignificant relationship is found between the normative commitment and coworkers.

Table 3. Correlation between demographics, work environment and organizational commitment.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative commitment	Organizational Commitment
Work Environment	0.59**	0.45**	0.24**	0.53**
Job Contents	0.67**	O.50**	0.20*	0.56**
Supervision Practices	0.63**	0.49**	0.27**	0.60**
Pay and Promotional Opportunities	0.60**	0.48**	0.30**	0.56**
Relationship with coworkers	0.30**	0.23*	0.02	0.27**
Age	0.93**	0.73**	0.57**	0.81**
Gender	0.05	−0.05	−0.09	0.04
Marital Status	−0.13	0.01	−0.06	−0.05
Job Experience	0.98**	0.74**	0.54**	0.81**

Notes: For the table, N = 100. Gender and Marital Status were coded as dichotomous variables (1, 2). *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$.

The obtained findings as presented in Table 4 clearly show that work environment (t = 1.99, $p < 0.05$), supervision practices (t = 4.00, $p < 0.01$), pay and promotional opportunities (t = 3.65, $p < 0.01$) emerged as the significant predictors of the organizational commitment. But job contents and relationships with coworkers have not emerged as the significant predictors of organizational commitment. Moreover, work environment, supervision practices, pay and promotional opportunities accounted for 53% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.53$) in the organizational commitment. Additionally, if the work environment, supervision practices, pay & promotional opportunities is increased by 1 unit it will result to increase the organizational commitment among the employees by 0.43 units (β = 0.43). Thus, proposed hypotheses H_1 is partially accepted related to work environment, supervision practices, pay & promotional opportunities.

Furthermore, age and job experience emerged as the significant predictors of organizational commitment (t = 2.86, $p > 0.01$) and (t = 2.81, $p < 0.01$) respectively. However, gender and marital status have not emerged as the significant predictors of organizational commitment. Age and job experience accounted for 69% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.69$) in the criterion variable i.e., organizational commitment. As evident from the obtained findings that if age and job experience is increased by 1 unit it will result to increase the organizational commitment among the employees by 0.43 units (β = 0.43) and 0.42 units (β = 0.43) respectively; Thus, proposed hypotheses H2 is partially accepted related to age and job experience.

The findings of the study indicated that in predicting organizational commitment, work environment and its some dimensions like supervision practices, pay and promotional opportunities emerged as the significant predictors. These findings are supported by earlier researchers who found that promotional opportunities showed a positive relationship with organizational commitment

Table 4. Regression analysis of demographics and work environment with organizational commitment.

Predictors	R	R²	β	t
Step 1				
Age			0.43	2.86**
Gender	0.83	0.69	0.02	0.27
Marital Status			0.08	1.37
Job Experience			0.42	2.81**
Step 2				
Job Contents			0.16	1.541
Supervision Practices			0.36	4.00**
Pay and Promotional Opportunities	0.73	0.53	0.30	3.65**
Relationship with Coworkers			−0.14	−1.71
Work Environment			0.19	1.99*

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$.

(Gaertner & Nollen, 1989; Chughtai & Zafar, 2006) and high pay shows positive relationship with organizational commitment (McElroy, 2001). Moreover, as per the obtained findings, age and job experience also emerged as the significant predictors of the organizational commitment. Previous findings also reported age and experience are significant predictors of organizational commitment (Salami, 2008; Azeem, 2010).

6. Conclusion

The present study provided empirical evidence for identifying the significant predictors of the organizational commitment among employees working in the FMCG companies. The findings of the research have shown that that age and job experience accounted for 69% of the variance in the criterion variable i.e., organizational commitment. Employers should focus on the demographic characteristics of the employees as age and job experience are found significant predictors of organizational commitment. Furthermore, work environment and its some dimensions like supervision practices, pay and promotional opportunities significantly predicted organizational commitment and accounted for 53% of the variance in the organizational commitment. Considering the obtained findings, the study suggests that employers need to consider work environment, supervision practices, pay and promotional opportunities to increase employees' commitment to their organization. The nature of work that FMCG employees perform is relatively more demanding and challenging. They usually perform duties like reaching out to customers, establishing long-term relationships and ensuring customer satisfaction. To meet such challenges, organizational commitment is of great importance among the employees. The efforts should be made to provide a conducive work environment that includes mutual respects, value, trust,

creative job, sense of belongingness, fair pay and promotional procedures and supportive supervision practices.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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