

Full Length Research Paper

A study on involvement and commitment of employees in Turkey

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The previous searches indicate that job involvement of individuals in the workplace have important effect on individual and organizational outcomes. In theoretical level, this study aimed to explore the relationship between employees' job involvement and their feeling of organizational commitment. For that aim, the survey was performed among the employees currently working at two multinational companies in Turkey. The survey data that was collected from 210 questionnaires were analyzed and evaluated. Within the analysis, it was seen that the job involvement perceptions of the employees in Turkey had an effect on their organizational commitment. The demographical factors were examined in terms of their impact on the relationship between employees' job involvement and organizational commitment. It was seen that some of the findings were contradictory to the "job model" theory. As further, the findings of the study were interpreted in the conclusion part and relevant suggestions were made for future studies.

Key words: Job involvement, organizational commitment, employee involvement, Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

Today with fast developing computer and internet era and increasing trend toward globalization traditional management views are changing rapidly. Although the usage of technology increases, the demand for human skills is still at a considerable level, because employees have high impact over organizations. The best way of increasing organizational performance is increasing the performance of the employees working in the organizations. Organizational commitment is getting more attention because it aims to improve the general performance of the organization, through increasing the involvement of each employee to all progress in organizational flows. On the other hand, job involvement also has a key role in the overall performance of organization. Individuals spend a large portion of their time on the job and the job becomes an important aspect of life. The quality of one's entire life experience can be greatly affected by one's degree of involvement in or alienation from work.¹ For this reason job involvement can be counted as one of the important factors which has crucial role over organization's general performance.

Organizational commitments' and job involvements' role over organizational performance is being discussed within last 30 years. Today, the aspect of organizational commitment and job involvement are even more

important since they are considered as the driving forces behind an organization's overall performance. Organizational commitment and job involvement are independent variable which varies from one culture to other culture. Because of that reason much values research has focused on how individuals, groups, organizations, and cultures differ in the values they hold, and how these differences affect behavior (Abbott et al., 2005: 531).

Organizational commitment

Since the first day of organizational commitment is being discussed by researchers, exact and common definition of organizational commitment has not been made yet. Commitment has been variably and extensively defined, measured, and researched. However, it continues to draw criticism for a lack of precision and for concept redundancy (Reichers, 1985: 465). There are many different definitions of organizational commitment which have been declared from different researchers.

According to Porter et al. (1979: 603 as cited in Becher, 1992: 232), "commitment is the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization." Commitment comes into being when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity" (Becher, 1992: 232).

¹Steven P. Brown, A meta analysis and review of Organizational Research on Job Involvement, Psychological Bulletin, 1996, pg. 235.

Organizational commitment as; “Having desire to stay within the organization, identifying him or herself with the organizational goals primarily without caring financial benefits” (Becher, 1992: 232).

Buchanan has described the organizational commitment as: “Commitment is a partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization, to one’s role in relation to the goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake” (Buchanan, 1974: 11).

Another organizational commitment have been made by Salancik as; “... a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and through these actions to belief that sustain activities of his involvement” (Salancik, 1977: 62).

Another organizational commitment definition can be made as a psychological link between the employee and the organization that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organization (Abbott et al., 2005: 532).

After all definitions from well known researchers’ a general organizational commitment definition can be made as; the relative strength of an employee’s attachment or involvement with the organization where s/he is employed. (Stup, 2006: 1).

As explained above, there is no single definition of organizational commitment. All researchers have categorized organizational commitment in different ways. All researchers have applied different criterions for their classification of organizational commitment approaches. But all researchers in their definitions have tried to emphasize the relationship between the employee and the organization.

Organizational commitment researchers and social psychologists have handled organizational commitment totally in different ways, because of this reason it is mainly divided into two main segments as attitudinal and behavioral commitment (Mowday et al., 1982: 24). Organizational commitment researchers have focused on rationalist issues while psychologists have handled the subject on irrational terms. The researchers as Porter, Buchanan, Mowday, Penley and Gould, Etzioni, and O’Reilly and Chatman are the flag carriers of attitudinal commitment and the researchers as Becker, Salancik and Kiesler are the flag carriers of behavioral commitment (Kim and Rowley, 2005: 109).

Attitudinal commitment can be explained as the strength of an individual’s loyalty to the organization and emphasize the individual’s identification and involvement within the organization. Attitudinal commitment focuses on the process by which people come to think about their relationship with the organization. Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem” (Mowday et al., 1982: 26). Attitudinal commitment is the widely accepted concept in where commonly organizational commitment researchers have interested.

The attitudes of employees in a certain organization form the attitudinal commitment.

Job involvement

Large numbers of empirical studies were conducted until a constant definition of job involvement was made by Lodahl and Kejner (1965: 292). After job involvement is introduced and accepted by literature, various definitions of job involvement are made by different researchers.

From an organizational perspective, job involvement has been considered the key to activating employee motivation and a fundamental basis for establishing competitive advantage in business markets. From an individual perspective, it has been considered a key personal growth and satisfaction within the workplace as well as to motivation and goal directed behavior (Brown, 1996: 236). Either in personal or organizational perspective, job involvement is defined as a positive subject who has impact over organizational and personal performance. The person spends a large portion time at job and the job of person directly influences the quality of person’s life. A state of involvement implies a positive and relatively complete state of engagement of core aspects of the self in the job, whereas a state of alienation implies a loss of individuality and separation of the self from the work environment (Kanungo, 1982: 341).

Job involvement has been divided into two separate approaches. First approach is viewed as an individual difference variable, job involvement is believed to occur when the possession of certain needs, values or personal characteristics predispose individuals to become more or less involved in their jobs. The second approach views job involvement as a response to specific work situation characteristics. In other words certain types of jobs or characteristics of the work situation influence the degree to which an individual becomes involved in his/her job (Chungtai, 2008: 169).

Dubin conceptualized job involvement as; the degree to which the total job situation is a “central life interest”, that is, the degree to which it is perceived to be a major source for the satisfaction of important needs (Dubin, 1956: 131).

Lawler and Hall (1970) defined the job involvement as; the degree to which a person perceives his total work situation to be an important part of his life and to be central to him and his identity because of the opportunity it affords him to satisfy his important needs.

In parallel to above definitions, the most common and widely accepted definition is made by Lodahl and Kejner (1965: 292). They defined job involvement as; the degree of importance of one’s work in ones total self-image. The scale developed by Lodahl and Kejner is one of the mostly used by authors to evaluate the job involvement. Lodahl and Kejner’s scale measures the central life interest type of involvement (example, the most important things that happen to me involve my work; I live, eat and breathe my job) (Saleh and Hosek, 1976: 213).

Guion proposed that job involvement is characterized by the employee’s perception of the job as being of extreme importance (Guion, 1958: 60). Allport

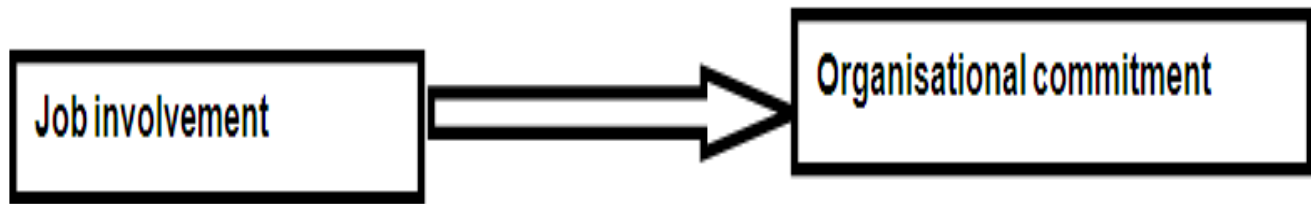


Figure 1. Job involvement and organizational commitment function as interactive orientations.

conceptualized the job involvement as; the degree to which an employee is participating in his job and meeting such needs as prestige, self-respect, autonomy, and self-regard (Allport, 1943: 451). Gurin et al. (1960) indicated that personal involvement in the job depends on the extent to which an individual seeks some self-expression and actualization in his work. Wickert (1951: 185) suggests that the opportunity to make job decisions, the feeling that one is making an important contribution to company success, the chance to set one's own pace, and self determination lead to the strengthening of job involvement.

The construct of job involvement is somewhat similar to organizational commitment in that they are both concerned with an employee's identification with the work experience (Chungtai, 2008: 169). Both definitions have typical similarities and correlations that have important roles over individuals work life. Both definitions are clearly stated to evaluate and understand the degree of belongingness to their job and organization.

Organizational commitment handles the relation between organization and individual and tries to explain how the individual have been attached to organization. The type of commitment alters the behaviors of the individual against the organization. On the other hand job involvement is related how the job takes place in individual life. As much as an individual is positively affected by his job, the willingness and performance will automatically increase.

Organizational commitment and job involvement are crucial factors which have direct effect over organizational performance. The person who has high organizational commitment and job involvement puts outstanding efforts since they are totally satisfied and happy with their organization, as well as job. Workers with high levels of both job involvement and organizational commitment should be the most motivated because they are attracted by both the job and the organization.

As such, job involvement and organizational commitment may function as interactive "orientations" (Blau and Boal, 1987: 288). Job involvement as a specific belief regarding one's relationship with one's present job is also different from an organizational commitment which refers to a general attitude toward an organization as a whole (Kanungo, 1982: 342)

Based on this literature review the aim of this research is to analyze the effect of job involvement on organizational commitment (Figure 1).

METHODOLOGY

Survey instrument

The questionnaire consists of 35 questions. The questionnaire was a blend of Porter's 15-itemed scale which was developed in 1974 in the article of "organizational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover among psychiatric technicians" is used to measure organizational commitment and the 20-itemed scale prepared in 1965 by Lodahl and Kejner from the article of "The definition and measurement of job involvement" is used to measure the job involvement. Both scales are widely accepted and used forms in the literature. The original scales are translated into Turkish and they are checked by professional people who speak English at mother language level. The first 20 questions were asked to measure the job involvement and the rest 15 were asked to measure the organizational commitment.

Sample

This study was conducted among employees currently working at two multinational companies in Turkey. The questionnaire was distributed to 300 employees and 210 questionnaires were collected.

FINDINGS

It was revealed from our study that 63 and 80% of our sample are female and 36 and 20% are male. The 65 and 72% of our sample are married and the rest representing 34, 28% are single. The distribution of educational level is as follows; 10 and 48% of our sample are high school graduates, 66 and 66% of our sample are university graduates, 20.00% had master degree, and 2 and 86% had PhD degree. Among the participants of our research 74 and 29% of the workers are working in their companies between 1 to 4 years, 20 and 95% of participants are working between 5 to 9 years, 2 and 86% of the participants is working between 10 to 15 years, and 1 and 90% of participants are working in their company for more than 16 years (Tables 1 and 2).

According to t-test results male workers are more involved to their jobs when compared with the female workers ($p=0.044 < 0.05$). Similarly organizational commitment of the male workers are higher than the female workers ($p=0.018 < 0.05$).

In terms of job involvement and marital status there is no difference between married workers and single workers ($p=0.980 > 0.05$). Similarly there is no difference between married workers and single workers in terms of

Table 1. The results of t-test between job involvement and gender.

Gender	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation	t-test	Significance (p)
Male	74	53.43	10.35	2.413	0.018
Female	134	48.30	10.45		

Table 2. The results of t-test between organizational commitment and gender.

Gender	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation	t-test	Significance (p)
Male	74	68.95	6.93	2.045	0.044
Female	134	65.93	7.69		

Table 3. The results of t-test between job involvement and marital status.

Marital status	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation	t-test	Significance (p)
Single	72	67.04	7.42	0.025	0.980
Married	138	67.08	7.83		

Table 4. The results of t-test between organizational commitment and marital status.

Marital status	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation	t-test	Significance (p)
Single	72	49.22	11,38	1.1371	0.174
Married	138	51.97	8.82		

Table 5. The results of ANOVA analysis between job involvement and educational level.

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F	Significance (p)
Between groups	131.349	3	43.783	0.768	0.514
Within groups	5.756308	101	56.993		
Total	5.887657	104			

Table 6. The results of ANOVA between organizational commitment and educational variables.

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F	Significance (p)
Between groups	205.437	3	68.479	0.601	0.616
Within groups	11.508810	101	113.949		
Total	11.714248	104			

organizational commitment ($p=0.174 > 0.05$) (Tables 3 and 4).

According to one way ANOVA analysis there is no significant difference between educational levels in terms of job involvement ($p=0.514 > 0.05$). Also there is no significant difference between educational levels in terms of organizational commitment ($p=0.616 > 0.05$) (Tables 5 and 6).

According to the results of our analysis number of years spent in the company (tenure) does not affect job involvement and organizational commitment level of the workers ($p=0.412 > 0.05$), ($p=0.686 > 0.05$) (Tables 7 and 8).

Finally the results of the regression analysis show that job involvement effects organizational commitment ($p=0.000 < 0.05$). R^2 helps us to explain how independent

Table 7. The results of ANOVA between job involvement and tenure variables.

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance (p)
Between groups	164.269	3	57.756	0.966	0.412
Within groups	5.723388	101	56.667		
Total	5.887657	104			

Table 8. The results of ANOVA between organizational commitment and tenure variables.

Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F	Significance (p)	Sum of squares
Between groups	170.109	3	56.703	0.496	0.686
Within groups	11.544139	101	114.298		
Total	11.714248	104			

Table 9. The model summary.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate
1	0.408	0.166	0.158	9.7378

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
1	Regression	1947.326	1	1947.326	20.536	0.000
	Residual	9766.921	103	94.824		
	Total	11714.248	104			

(a) Predictors: (Constant) job involvement scale.(b) Dependent variable: Organizational commitment scale.

Table 10. Regression analysis.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	significance	95% confidence interval for B	
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound
1	11.597	8.563		1.354	0.179	-5.386	28.580
	0.575	0.127	0,408	4.532	0.000	0.323	0.827

variables are effective over the dependent variables. In our analysis $R^2 = 0.166$, this means that organizational commitment of the employees who have participated in our study is effected by job involvement by only 16.66%. The rest 83.40% can be explained with the influence of factors other than job involvement (Tables 9 and 10).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to investigate how demographic variables effect organizational commitment and job involvement level of the workers in multinational companies in Turkey. The demographic variables studied in this paper are the gender, marital status, educational level and tenure. All these variables are stated as the

antecedents of organizational commitment. On the other hand organizational commitment appears as a consequence of job involvement.

According to results of analysis it was seen that the level of job involvement and organizational commitment differs between males and females. Males are more committed to their organizations and they are more involved in their jobs. In various researches, it is also accepted that males are more committed than females to companies. The reason behind this outcome can be explained with the role of male in the eyes of society. The male is more responsible to earn money or put out some extra efforts to continue their lives. Female is more dependent on their families or husbands who drive them to be less job involved or committed to organizations they belong (Aranya et al., 1986: 433-448). Our findings are

contradictory to the “job model” theory which suggests that women suffer from discrimination, and they are more committed once at work. This view says that gender alone has no effect but the work experience is the reason. Mowday et al. (1982) reported four studies where women are more attitudinally committed

Another aspect that we have discussed in the study was the difference between single and married peoples' approach against the companies in terms of organizational commitment and job involvement. According to our study, it is revealed that marital status is not a significant variable that has impact over organizational commitment and job involvement. As it is commonly accepted in the literature, marital status is positively correlated with organizational commitment and job involvement. Because it is thought that married employees are more committed and responsible because they may be financially more dependent on the organization. According to Mowday et al. (1982); married employees and/or employees with children take their spouse and/or children into consideration when making important decisions, such as changing company.²

Our findings say that organizational commitment and job involvement does not differ according to educational level segments. In fact it is generally accepted that the more educated people are less committed to their organizations or less involved to their jobs. According to Steers (1977: 46-56) there is a negative correlation between education and organizational commitment and he suggested that this could be due to more educated people being harder to satisfy which is a non-parallel outcome with our findings.

Our hypothesis that as the numbers of years spend in the company increase the individual becomes more committed or involved in their jobs is not supported. It is commonly accepted that tenure is positively related with organizational commitment and job involvement Allen and Meyer, 1993: 49-62). The investments and the expectations of individual increase as much as they spend more years within the organization. But a large group of people who are in the beginning of their careers were involved in our sample which might omit the influence of long tenure holders. The first group in our study which represents the tenure between 1 to 4 years should have the highest influence over the results.

As a result of our study, it can be said that the levels of organizational commitment and job involvement differs between males and females, but it does not make any sense in respect to marital status, educational level and tenure variables. The results of our study showed that only 16.66%.of the organizational commitment of the employees working in multinational companies can be explained by job involvement, the rest 83.40% can be explained with the influence of factors other than job involvement. For a further study, factors other than job involvement that effect the organizational commitment of the employees working in multinational companies can

be analyzed.

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²Richard T Mowday, p. 115.