ENHANCING ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT THROUGH WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

As organizations consists of groups of people working towards common goal so when a person starts working in an organization the workplace relationships s/he develops with colleagues helps her/him in adjusting in her/his role and with the organization. Workplace relationships are unique interpersonal relationships and have significant impact on the success of the employee as well as on the success of the organization. The present study focuses on the impact of workplace relationships on the organizational commitment. The commitment of the employee depends on his/her positive working experiences in the organization. These experiences help in developing the feeling of attachment or identification with the organization. For the success of the organization healthy working relationships among employees and their commitment towards organization are significant. This paper identifies the role of healthy workplace relationships in enhancing organizational commitment among the employees. The committed employee is more determined in work and shows high productivity thus ensuring organizational success.

Key words: Organisational Commitment, Organizational Identification, Organizational Success, Teamwork, Workplace Relationship


1. INTRODUCTION

An organization is built upon working relationships which provides help and cooperation to complete work (Schein, 2009; Lazega, 2001). The relationships at workplace build a sense of common identity through which people are able to relate to each other (Sharma, 2015). Klinger (1977) states that for many people relationships matters the most in life as they believe that these relationships makes life meaningful. In the opinion of Baumeister & Leary (1995) relationships fulfill the human need of
belongingness. Although some studies have been done on workplace relationships and organizational commitment but yet this area needs to be explored more as it is critical to understand the most important resource of the organization and that is its employees. The workplace relationships are based on mutual expectations (Gabarro, 1987), loyalty and shared understanding (Reis & Shaver, 1988). In the opinion of Teboul & Cole (2005) individuals explore before forming work relationships. Employees seek to initiate relationships with the people who are similar to them (Sias & Cahill, 1998) and also to those who could be beneficial to them (Teboul & Cole, 2005). Workplace relationships develop and grow stronger as individuals work together by meeting each other’s expectations and exchanging information and play important role in forming individual’s organizational lives (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010). According to Sparrowe & Liden (2005) workplace relationships are a source of influence. Workplace relationships acts as social support and helps in achieving professional goals (Briscoe & Kellog, 2011; Lazega, 2001) and thus lead to development of more cohesive work groups in which employees develop sense of belongingness and commitment towards the organization.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
Employees’ attachment towards the organization can be referred as organizational commitment. According to Porter (1974) organizational commitment is the extent to which employees willingly accepts the goals and values of the organization and have the desire to remain the organization. In the opinion of Buchanan (1974) organizational commitment is defined as the emotional commitment of the employee in order to achieve the organizational objectives. According to Wiener (1982) organizational commitment refers to “the aggregate internalized normative demands to perform in a manner which meets organizational objectives and interests.” Marthis and Jackson (2000) states that employee commitment is the extent to which employees stay with the organizations and they are serious about the organizational objectives. Organizational commitment is a state in which an employee identify self with the organization and its goals and maintain his membership in the organization (Robbins, 2005). Thus organizational commitment refers to the individual’s dedication or the feeling of oneness (organizational identification) to the organization. Organizational commitment of employees is linked to working relationships. Workplace exhibits a patterned series of relationships which exists between people. Employee’s working relationships and employee’s organizational commitment is significant for the success of the organization and to face the challenges from external environment. According to Mowday et. al (1982) “organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization and can be characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization.” Meyer and Allen (1991) states that employees showing high organizational commitment are emotionally attached and identify themselves with their workplace. A committed employee develops emotional attachment towards the organization and is concerned about meeting the organizational goals.
3. POSITIVE ASPECTS OF HEALTHY WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Employee’s perception of social support from team members is positively related to organizational commitment (Cordrey, et al., 1991; Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Parris, 2003). Although in the definitions of teams interdependency or collective responsibility around tasks is highlighted (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Glassop, 2002; Devine, 2002) but at the same time from employee’s perspective the social dimension plays important role in assessing their own relationship or identification with the organization. According to Mason & Griffen (2003) the social integration or cohesion positively affects the employee’s attitude towards work or the organization. Trust and cooperation are positively related to attitudinal commitment (Costa, 2003). Social Exchange theory explains about the impact of different workplace exchange relationships on employees and also on the organization. These relationships are of various types like team or group relationships or supervisory relationships. In the opinion of Randall (1990) the supervisory relationship has direct impact on organizational commitment. If employees have healthy supervisory relationship then they feel more committed to the organization (Benkhoff, 1997). Healthy workplace relationships results into effective teamwork among the employees. Teams are formally established group of employees working together to accomplish a common goal. Team work benefits the organization as a team of employees is more productive than a single employee (Salas et al 2005). A team can effectively work if team members are inclined to work in collaboration instead of working in their own individual way (Sharma, 2015). Internal team social relations are vital for the teamwork. Internal team social relations refer to the provision of social support, unity, mutual respect, harmony, feeling of communication without hesitation, etc. Mutual trust, respect, social reciprocity of resources, support and participation in decision making are the predictable results of successful social relationship (Mueller & Lee, 2002). These relationships are significant as they help in goal accomplishment and career satisfaction.
4. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

![Conceptual Model Diagram]

The proposed model highlights how healthy workplace relationships result into developing an atmosphere for effective teamwork which enhances the belongingness of employees to the organization. The feeling of sense of belongingness results in the development of the organizational identification among the employees. Organizational identification is the identification or alignment of self to the organization interests or values. It results into the feeling of emotional attachment and positive emotions towards the organization and as this feeling of identifying self with the organization develops it results in developing a committed workforce ensuring employee satisfaction and organizational success and it again leads to strengthening of healthy workplace relationships.

According to Rasmussen & Jeppesen (2006) teamwork in organizations includes employees in assisting and supporting each other or doing complementary tasks teamwork results in increased organizational commitment among the employees and lower turnover intentions. According to Mathieu & Zajac (1990) if the employees find value through work relationships then they also show commitment to the organization. Cordial relations among team members’ results in good team work which has positive impact on employee’s commitment to the organization (Mitchell, Holton, Lee, Sablynski, & Erez, 2001). The most successful organizations are those...
that can create and maintain high productivity teams. High productive teams improve
the quality of work by encouraging innovation and it also increases employee
motivation and commitment.

If the work relationships are based on mutual respect among employees then it
results in the commitment of employees towards the organization. Employees having
high level of commitment demonstrate higher performance and productivity and
contribute positively to the organization. Researchers have shown that there is
positive correlation between organizational commitment and low turnover, low
absenteeism, high morale, job performance, satisfaction and productivity. In the
opinion of Saal & Knight (1987) the employees having high level of commitment take
greater efforts to work and perform and willingly invest their resources in the
organization. Committed employees tend to be innovative and creative. According to
Morrow (1993) committed employees are innovative oriented they focus on the ways
for improving their performance. Morrow (1993) states that, in the organization if the
employees are having low level of commitment then they become unproductive and
start demonstrating the characteristics of loafing in the organization. Morrow (1993)
further explains that low level of commitment is also one of the major causes of high
rate of staff turnover and absenteeism. Cohen (2003) has also discussed about the
impact of lack of organizational commitment resulting into employee absenteeism,
turnover, reduced effort expenditure, theft, job dissatisfaction and unwillingness to
relocate. For a stable and productive workforce organizational commitment is
essential (Morrow, 1993).

In the opinion of Meyer & Allen (1991) highly committed employees do not
leave the organization but tend to take the challenging work activities. According to
Cohen (2003) organizations in which the members have high level of commitment displays higher performance and productivity and has low level of absenteeism. In the
opinion of Luthans and Fred (2006) organizational commitment is the desire to be a
member of an organization and not to complain about their organization. Committed
employees show positive intentions to work for the organization and they think very
less about quitting the organization (Hunt and Morgan 1994). High commitment is
associated with low turnover intentions (Meyer et al. 2002). Thus committed
workforce creativity and innovation results in making organizational development
initiatives successful (Walton, 1985).

Organizational success requires more qualified and talented workforce but
committed workers are the true assets of an organization. The three component model
given by Meyer and Allen (1991) discusses that there are three components of
commitment: Affective commitment, Continuance commitment and Normative
commitment. According to Meyer and Allen, “the affective commitment refers to the
employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the
organization. The continuance commitment refers to the awareness of cost associated
with leaving the organization and the normative commitment refers to the perceived
obligation to stay in the organization.” Meyer and Allen further explain that
affectively and normatively committed members are more likely to maintain
organizational membership and show their contribution towards the organizational
success than continuance committed members. Kitchard and Strawser (2001) states
that satisfied employees develop high affective commitment for their organization.
5. CONCLUSION
In the opinion of Williams & Anderson (1991) organizational commitment among employees results in the feelings of affiliation and organizational identification which results in enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Thus the performance of the workers play vital role in determining the success of the organization. Brooke, Russell and Price (1988) state that “employee commitment and attachment to the organization can be increased through efforts made to improve the organizations social atmosphere and sense of purpose”. Employees’ accessibility for organizational, supervisor or colleagues support determines the effectiveness of workplace relationships. Both the organization and employees are benefitted by effective relationships as the effective relationships results into exchange of resources, knowledge and emotional support which are required to deal the challenges of job. Human beings constantly seek to maintain lasting and significant interpersonal relationships (Lawrence & Nohria, 2002). If at workplace good relationships exist among employees then it leads to the development of mutual understanding which not only benefits the individuals but also to the organization. Thus organizations depend on the committed employees for achieving success in the current competitive scenario and healthy workplace relationships plays significant role in developing committed workforce.

REFERENCES


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