Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Faculty Members

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ABSTRACT

The present study has accepted that there is a relationship among perceived organizational support, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior among the faculty members. 212 faculty members of the university were the sample of the current study. Data-collecting tools were three questionnaires including organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment and organizational support. Their reliability has been approved by Cronbach alpha at 0.83, 0.89 and 0.84 respectively. Data analysis was performed using structural equation method. The results revealed that there was a meaningful and positive relationship between perceived organizational support, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, they showed a meaningful and positive relationship with all aspects of organizational citizenship behavior including altruism, work ethics, integrity, citizenship, modesty, honor and chivalry as well as all aspects of organizational commitment (normative, continuous and normative). There was a meaningful and positive relationship between organizational commitment and its corresponding aspects with organizational citizenship behavior.

KEY WORDS: perceived organizational support, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior

INTRODUCTION

The staff of a given organization develop a special trust and interest towards the system based on the extent of value that the organization put on their welfare, comfort and security. Such trust is referred to as perceived organizational support. In fact, perceived organizational support reflects the quality of social interactions that take place between the employees and the employer (Eisenberger et al, 2008). Organizational civil behavior explains actions and voluntary efforts and willingness of the staff to sacrifice in order to provide welfare and comfort for others. Today's competitive workplaces requires the staff who are good citizens in a way that they tend to express activities which will lead to promoting cooperation, helping coworkers, employers and clients (Podsakoff et al, 2000). Value creator staff members are committed members to the organization and with the commitment they demonstrate, create a sort of identity and affiliation which is called organizational commitment. In fact, organizational commitment includes the relative strength of individual identity in a particular organization (Tung Chen et al, 2005). Today, the role of faculty members in the universities has changed to a great extent. As a result, the universities and educational institutions' permanence depends on instructors with high organizational commitment and their tendency to perform extra-role behaviors which is not feasible unless they have sufficient and necessary understanding of the organization's support (Jamali et al, 2009). The present article seeks to find out if there is any relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment as well as organizational citizenship behavior in the faculty of a university.

Theoretical foundations of organizational support are social exchange theory. According to this theory, in social relations when someone does a favor to another, he finds himself obliged to compensate his kindness. Organizational support theory suggests that the staff develop an overview of the extent of the organization's support of them and in exchange for this support, pay attention to organizational goals and their realization (Eisenberger et al, 2001). Perceived organizational support structure is, in fact, derived from the more traditional ideas about the relationship between employers and employees, based on mutual goals and commitments. Accordingly, if organizational commitment is defined as the extent of the individual's identification and involvement with a given organization, which has characteristics such as firm belief in the goals and values of the organization and their acceptance, using considerable effort because of the organization and strong tendency to maintain their membership in it (Azizi et al, 2010), another form of commitment can be raised whose direction is from the organization to the individuals and personnel (Eisenberger et al, 1986).

Eisenberger (Eisenberger et al, 1986) believes that in conceptualizations made regarding organizational commitment, perceived involvement of the employees in the organization should be taken into account. Perceived

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organizational commitment is an essential element in exchange relations associated with organizational commitment and also, research supports a strong positive relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment (Wayne et al, 1997).

Organizational commitment is defined as a situation in which the employees of a particular organization can be identified with its goals and likes to maintain their membership in the organization (Blau et al, 1987). Another definition has stated that organizational commitment expresses the power of detection and identification with a given organization (Nelson et al, 1997).

Allen and Meyer consider organizational commitment to be a psychological state that indicates a desire, need and obligation to continue employment in an organization and includes three following dimensions:

1. **Affective commitment:** The staffs' emotional attachment to and identification with the organization, and their involvement in organizational activities (Somers et al, 1995).

2. **Continuance commitment:** The commitment that is based on valuing the organization and that an employee involves in organizational life.

3. **Normative Commitment:** The individual commits to and remains with an organization because of feelings of obligation. Individuals who have a strong normative commitment, stay in the organization because they feel that they must normally be so (Tung Chen. L, 2005).

Organizational citizenship behavior: These behaviors fall into the realm of collaborative and constructive processes which are not part of a job description and are not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system (Allen et al, 2000).

Some researchers have considered the perceived support from the organization similar to organizational commitment from theoretical and conceptual viewpoint. However, empirical studies revealed that these two concepts are distinct from each other. In other words, the support the employees feel from the organization differs from the commitment they feel for the organization (Bishop et al, 2003).

METHOD

The present study was applied. The participants were 212 faculty members of the Iranian universities. Data collecting tool includes questionnaire on perceived organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al, 1990) consisting eight questions, an organizational commitment questionnaire (Allen & Meyer, 1991) which deals with the evaluation of the three components of organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment and consists of 24 questions and organizational citizenship behavior of Organ (1990) which includes the five dimensions, namely friendship, loyalty, fairness, social etiquette and propriety and 20 questions. All three questionnaires have been geaded based on Likert four-value scale (1 to 4). Using Cronbach Alpha the reliability of the organizational support questionnaire with 0.84, organizational commitment with 0.89 and organizational citizenship behavior with 0.83 were admitted. In order to analyze data structural equation modeling using Lisrel8.8 software and Pearson correlation coefficient were used.

Findings

The population in the present research consisted of 212 people; out of them 179 (84.43%) completed the questionnaires and returned them. In data analysis of the anthropological questions, 54% of the participants were male and 46% of them were females. From the viewpoint of educational level, 22% were post graduates, 44% PhD holders, 31% specialist physicians, and 3% subspecialty holders. In terms of work experience, 25% between 1 and 10 years, 75% between 10 and 20 years and 18% had more than 20 years of experience.

Picture 1. The results of Lisrel test
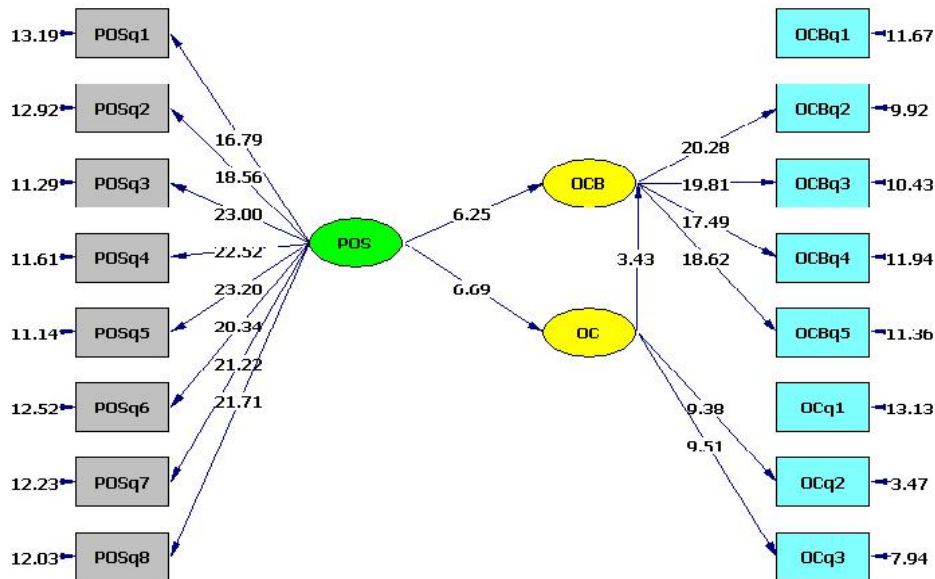
Chi-Square=210.35, df=101, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.044

Table 1. Fit indices for structural equation modeling

Fit Index	Acceptable Range	Sum	Result
$\dfrac{x^2}{df}$	<3	2.08	Fit
CFI	>0.9	0.96	Fit
GFI	>0.9	0.96	Fit
AGFI	>0.9	0.95	Fit
NFI	>0.9	0.98	Fit
NNFI	>0.9	0.95	Fit
RMSEA	<0.05	0.044	Fit

As seen in the above table, all fitting coefficients are in the accepted range. The ratio of Chi-square to its degree of freedom equals 2.08 and CFI, GFI, AGFI, NFI and NNFI indexes are all higher than 0.9 and RMSEA is less than 0.05.

The following table shows the path coefficients and the significance among the variables of the study. As it is shown, path coefficients for all three relationships at 0.05 level (t>1.96) have been meaningful.

Table 2. The results of direct relationship and significance coefficients of model assumptions

Path	Index	Path coefficient ( )	Significance (t)	Test result
Perceived organizational support >>> organizational commitment	POS --- OC	0.46	6.69	Accepted
Perceived organizational support >>> Organizational citizenship behavior	POS --- OCB	0.36	6.25	Accepted
Organizational commitment >>> Organizational citizenship behavior	OCB --- OC	0.21	3.43	Accepted

Direct and indirect relationship among the variables of the study in the final model of the study which represents the extent of direct and indirect relationship of the variables with each other is presented in table 3.

Table 3. The extent of variables relationship in the main model of the study

Type of relationship	POS and OC	POS and OCB	OC and OCB
Direct relationship	0.46	0.36	0.21
Indirect relationship	---	0.46×0.21=0.097	---
Total relationship	0.46	0.46	0.21

According to table 3, it can be stated that path coefficient of relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is 0.46.T-statistic for this coefficient is 6.69 which is greater than significance range (i.e. 1.96). Therefore, the first research hypothesis that is positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is confirmed.

As it is presented in table 3, path coefficient between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior is 0.36. T-statistic for this relationship is 6.25 which is greater than significance range (i.e. 1.96). Regarding the above it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, the second research hypothesis is confirmed.

The fitted model shows that path coefficient between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior stands at 0.21. As t amount for this coefficient is 3.43, it can be concluded that the gained coefficient is meaningful. Therefore, the third main research hypothesis is also confirmed. In other words, there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

CONCLUSION

Given the positive and meaningful correlation between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment, it can be stated that expanding and strengthening organizational commitment leads to increased organizational support, because organizational support increases the employee's dignity which can in turn be effective on their commitment. In the existence of organizational commitment, all the staff members consider themselves to be respected, valued and effective, and committed to the organization. Therefore, organization's support of the staff with activities such as the employees' engagement in decision-making and employing their opinions can boost the staff's sense of responsibility and commitment to the taken decisions. Accordingly, university managers should involve faculty members in developing organizational affairs due to their competence and efficiency and also respect their views regarding the university issues, enhancing their commitment to the organization. Changes in different dimensions of organizational commitment necessitate change in the methods of organizational support. As organizational commitment may change due to factors like authority management techniques, leadership styles, emotional and psychological characteristics of the employees, the university should support the faculty members in such a way that they become dedicated and committed to the organization. Feeling that the university is a firm support, the faculty members will be able to have a genuine partnership in the process of planning and setting goals of the university and feel that the university values their activities and therefore, they will believe the activities which are carried out affect their fate, meeting their basic needs. As a result, they perceive the goals and values of the university in line with their own goals and will not spare any efforts in achieving them. The positive and meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior in this research can be regarded logical based on the theories of organizational behavior management, because these theories explain situations in which an organization that has a humane relationship with its employees inculcates such a sense in the staff that the organization supports them. They tribute to the organization which values them and come forth seeking reciprocity. Therefore, the staff may exhibit organizational citizenship behavior due to reaping reward and their supervisors' support to maintain balance or equity in social exchanges with their organization. Therefore, the quality of exchange relationships in university can encourage the faculty members to do voluntary activities such as responsible participation in achieving the organization's objectives, being more tolerable and making less complaint from the organization, treating each other respectfully, showing more punctuality, cordiality, sympathy and empathy as well as making voluntary contributions to the organization, through increasing the sense of belonging, mutual trust and willingness to repay.

One more result was the fact that there is a positive meaningful relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. This latter result indicates that if an organization possesses committed employees, it is expected that they express citizenship behaviors. Therefore, the higher the extent of organizational commitment among the employees, the greater its impact will be on citizenship behavior which in turn will consolidate citizenship behavior and effectiveness and efficiency in the organization. Loyal workforce, consistent with the objectives and organizational values and willing to maintain membership in the organization who is willing to work beyond the stipulated duties, can be an important factor in the effectiveness of that organization. The presence of such workforce in an organization will be accompanied by a higher performance level and a reduction in absenteeism, delay and turn over. Moreover, the organization will be regarded more prestigious in the society and the context will be provided for growth and development.

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