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Studying the Predictability of Employees' Perceived Violation of Norms of Justice, Organizational Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support for the Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

The present research work was done to study the predictability of Employees' Perception of Violation of Norms of Justice, Organizational Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support in an Organization on Organizational Commitment. The study was done on 250 employees of public and private organizations (125 from each). On the basis of interview done on some of the employees from both the sectors i.e. Public and Private, a scale for measuring perceived violation of norms was developed. For measuring Organizational Commitment, Organization Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support standard scales were used. Results showed that employees felt perception of violation of norms of justice, Organization Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support predict Organizational Commitment.

Introduction

Justice matters. Even small children understand justice in their own way "That's not fair" (Wilson, 1993). In other words it can be said that "justice" is essential to our social functioning as is indicated by the fact that the concept of justice (as well as its violation) often dominates our daily experiences and discussions (e.g., Finkel, 2001; Folger, 1984). A brief survey of contemporary public issues supports the contention that justice is a growing concern; yet agreement about what is just remains far from being universal. While justice

concerns can be individual as well as social, the context of justice may also vary from social to organizational. We can understand why justice is important by remembering that fairness concerns itself with what things get allocated and how these allocations take place. Thus, to say that justice matters, are more or less synonymous with maintaining that people care about how they are with others. The roots of justice can be found in our inclination to affiliate with other people. This is also well explained by Sampson (1975) "Just solution-promote cohesion and order, including a state of psychological balance. Thus, Justice is essential for psychological functioning and well-being of the individual. Issues relating to fairness become more salient in case of organizational work setting. Theorists have recognized justice as a key organizational value (Lind and Tyler, 1988) - "the morale problem for years to come will one of justice. The modern survey to maximally useful, will centre more on problems of fairness procedures of payment of promotion and so forth, than on conditions of work as the closeness of supervisions per se." People become no less animated by justice when they arrive at work. In fact, concerns over injustice have provided impetus to the labour movement (Fantasia, 1988). Presently, the language of justice is shaping dialogue concerning global capitalism in developing nations (Greider,1997). And also research conducted across a variety of contexts (e.g., layoffs, drug testing, and pay cuts) in both laboratory and field settings demonstrates the importance of treating employees in a fair manner (Konovsky,2000). Recent reviews and meta-analytic studies examining justice at the individual level indicate fairness is a correlate or predictor of a no. of notable organizational outcomes. For example, perceptions of fairness have been positively associated with favorable employees attitudes and behaviors including organizational commitment, organizational support, OCBs, work performance, and trust in management(e.g., Cohen-Charash & Spector,2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng,2001;).However, when treated unfairly, employees are likely to react in unfavorable ways such as engaging in counterproductive work behaviours (e.g., damaging company property or spreading rumors), turnover, and theft (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel & Rupp,2001).Thus, it is clear that justice matters and that people care about justice for a variety of reasons (i.e., people may even defend the view that justice is omnipresent and that the pursuit of justice is in itself a guiding and moral directive in our social lives.

Different Norms of Justice

At most general level, organizational justice is a psychological inquiry that focuses on perceptions of fairness in the workplace. Instances of justice take a variety of forms and researchers have throughout the last few decades devoted much attention to distinguishing among different "types" of justice (e.g. Bies & Moag, 1986;Greenberg & Colquitt,2005; Thiabout & Walker, 1975). More precisely, justice involves issues of distribution, treatment, formal and informal decision making procedures, and so forth. So it can be said that

individuals' perceptions of fairness in organizational settings have been conceptualized in terms of at least three separate types of organizational justice.

Distributive Justice: It is a kind of justice in which fairness was defined in terms of the outcomes as a resource allocation decision. Three rules have been identified as the basis people use for distributive justice i.e. equity, equality and need.

Procedural Justice: In the organizational context, procedural justice is considered an important resource in social exchange. Procedural justice is an appraisal of the process by which an allocation decision is (or was) made. Evidence now shows that when people believe that decision-making processes are unjust, they show less commitment to their employers, more theft, higher turnover intentions, lower performance, and fewer helpful citizenship behaviors (for recent reviews, see Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997).

Interactional Justice: The literature on employee-employer relations shows that an employee expects the organization to treat him/her with respect, dignity, honesty and to extend equal treatment to all members (Janssens, Sels, & Van den Brande, 2003; Kickul & Liao Troth, 2003). Bies & Moag (1986) referred to this notion as interactional justice, which is the perception of the quality of treatment an employee receives when policies and procedures are implemented in the workplace. Perceptions of interactional justice play a role in the determination of employees' attitudes and behaviour (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Yee Ng, 2001).

As the literature reviews show that a no. of researches have done relating different types of justice to different type of outcomes, but there is meager studies showing the relationship of overall justice to organizational outcomes.

Responses to Violation of Norms of Justice:

Overall, the result of studies done, suggests that organizational justice may be predictive of different attitudes and behaviors (Greenberg, 1990). The different reactions are like outcome satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, agent-referenced evaluations, withdrawal, organizational citizenship behaviour, negative reactions, perceived organizational support and many more like that. The present research undertakes to study how organizational level outcome variables such as perceived organizational support, organizational commitment get influenced when there is the perception of violation of norms in the organizations. The reason for taking these variables lies in their importance to organizations as a whole because if the employees in the organization do not feel perceived organizational support and show organizational commitment than it will adversely affect the both growth and production of the organizations. And the issues become more salient in the context of Public and Private Organizations.

Organizational Commitment: Porter Steers, Mowday and Bolian (1974) defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification and

involvements with a particular organization. They have characterized it by three factors. These factors are, strong belief in the goals and values of the organization and acceptance of those organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. A review of organizational commitment research literature by Meyer and Allen (1991), and corroborated by Dunham, Gruba and Castaneda (1994), identified three types of organizational commitment: affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment is defined as employee emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization and its goals. Continuance commitment is defined as willingness to remain in an organization because of personal investment in the form of non-transferable investments such as close working relationships with co-workers, retirement investments and career investments, acquired job skills which are unique to a particular organization, years of employment in a particular organization, involvement in the community in which the employer is located, and other benefits that make it too costly for one to leave and seek employment elsewhere.

Normative commitment is induced by a feeling of obligation to remain with an organization. Such a feeling of obligation often results from what Wiener (1982) characterized as "generalized value of loyalty and duty." Common to all of the three types of commitment is the view that commitment is a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization, and (b) has implication for the decision to continue or discontinue membership in the organization. Organizational commitment is associated with many important work attitudes and behaviours, such as job satisfaction and work performance (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989; Mowday et al., 1982).

Organizational Based Self-Esteem: Pierce et al., developed a specific construct of self-esteem, organization-based self-esteem (OBSE), which is defined as „the degree to which organizational members believe that they can satisfy their needs by participating in roles within the context of an organization“ (1989: 625). This new construct has recently been investigated in the organizational context, and has been reported to be a significant predictor for some important organizational phenomena. For example, OBSE has been shown to be positively related to job-related affect and job performance (Gardner and Pierce, 1998), job satisfaction (Wei and Albright, 1998), organizational commitment (Tang and Gilbert, 1994; Wei and Albright, 1998), organizational citizenship behaviour and need for achievement (Tang and Gilbert, 1994). It is also reported that OBSE has a negative relation with intention to leave (Wei and Albright, 1998). Moreover, Hui and Lee (2000) study shows that OBSE acts as a buffer against organizational uncertainty (job insecurity and anticipation of organizational change). However, despite its predictive usefulness in the

organizational context and the increasing interest it has aroused, most research has searched for correlates of OBSE, especially in terms of several desirable organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. Self-esteem is a person's overall evaluation, reflecting what he/she thinks of himself/herself as an individual. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent of the individual's beliefs about himself/herself concerning his/her capability, significance, success and worth. Brockner (1988) argues that people are motivated to preserve positive self-esteem, i.e. people desire to think, feel and behave in ways that either increase or protect their feelings of personal worth. This is because, as Baumeister (1995) points out, a sense of self-worth is one of the pillars supporting a meaningful life regardless of cultural differences. Pierce and his colleagues (1989) extended the scope of self-esteem with a suggestion that employees' work-related attitudes and behaviour are strongly relevant to the beliefs about themselves that are formed from their roles within the context of an organization. As a concept for reflecting these personal beliefs, they introduced organization-based self-esteem (OBSE). OBSE, i.e. the self-perceived value individuals have of themselves within a specific organizational context, reflects the extent to which their need for self-esteem is fulfilled by performing organizational roles. Individuals whose OBSE is high believe that they are important, meaningful and worthwhile within their employing organization. Thus, the organization is important to them because it is a core component of their self-worth and identity (Van Dyne et al., 2000). In the context of a dynamic organization, as found in high-tech firms, OBSE can be developed by managers, specifically in workers' perceptions of the fulfillment of obligations in the work arrangement. Furthermore, OBSE has been found to influence workers' ratings of organizational citizenship behaviour.

Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction remains a dominant construct in the organizational literature for a variety of reasons, including the intrinsic desirability of employee satisfaction, job satisfaction's relationship to a variety of relevant workplace behaviours including job performance (Judge, Thoreson, Bono, & Patton, 2001), and withdrawal behaviours (Tett & Meyer, 1993), and its strong relationship to related constructs such as organizational commitment (e.g. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002) and Perceived Organizational Support (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002).

Job satisfaction is a result of employees' perception of how well their job provides those things which are viewed as important. Sekaran (1989) operationalized job satisfaction as an index of the affective responses of the employees to the work setting. These affective responses have been of keen interest to managers and administrators for decades. At the organizational level, low job satisfaction has been linked to increased absenteeism, job

turnover, decreased task performance and declining employee morale (Mathieu & Hamel, 1989; Petty, McGee & Cavender, 1984).

There are three important dimensions to job satisfaction. First, job satisfaction is an emotional response to a job situation. Second, job satisfaction is often determined by how well outcome meet or exceed expectations. Third, job satisfaction represents several related attitudes. Job satisfaction is more meaningfully related to more specific components of job performance, specifically workplace behaviours that are engaged in at the discretion of an employee and are less contingent on specific skill or knowledge sets. Among the most important of these volitional behaviours are Organizational Citizenship behaviours, counterproductive workplace behaviours and job withdrawal – each of which exerts an important influence on the organizations' success (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983; Sackett & DeVore, 2001).

Perceived Organizational Support (POS): Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) proposed that employees form global beliefs about the extent to which an organization values their contributions and cares about their well being. They called this set of beliefs Perceived Organizational Support (POS). In other words, POS can be viewed as an employee belief that the organization cares for and values his or her contribution to the success of organization (Kaufman et al., 2001). Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-La Mastro (1990) suggested that employees would consider positive discretionary activities by the organization that benefited them as evidence that the organization cared about their well being.

It appears then that, as suggested by Eisenberger and colleagues (1990), POS may be vital for determining if any attitudes or behaviors benefiting the organization, like affective commitment or citizenship behaviors, emerge from the employment relationship.

Objective of the Study

This research studies have been taken to do the Regression Analysis for the Criterion Variable Organizational Commitment on Predictors viz. Employees' Perceived Violation of Norms of Justice, Organizational Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support

Methods

Sample

The present study will be based on a sample of 250 employees. The sample will include employees from both sectors i.e., public and private. Data will be collected through questionnaire method.

Development of scale for measuring Perception of Justice:

In order to develop a scale for measuring perception of justice in the organization by the employees, pilot interviews were conducted on the employees. The total numbers of employees were 20, out of which 12 were of private and 8 were from public.

On the basis of answers given to certain questions, items were formed. Finally, following no. of items was taken for administration:

Distributive Justice: 26

Procedural Justice: 19

Interactional Justice: 18

Organizational Commitment: It was measured using the scale developed by Cook & Wall (1980).

An example of the item:

I feel myself to be part of this organization.

Organization based Self-Esteem: It was measured with the scale developed by Pierce et.al, (1989). The short Hindi version of the original scale was used. The alpha co-efficient of the scale was found to be 0.91.

An example of the item:

In the organization, I am taken seriously.

Job Satisfaction: It was measured by using the five items taken from an 18-items index of global satisfaction developed by Brayfield & Rahe (1951) and tested by Agho, Mueller, and Price.

An example of the item:

Most of the time, I am very excited about my job.

Perceived Organizational Support:

It was measured with the scale developed by Eisenberger et.al, (1986). The short version of the original scale was used. The alpha co-efficient of the scale was found to be 0.90.

An example of the item:

Our organization really cares about my well-being.

Results

Table: 1 Regression Analysis for the Criterion Variable Organizational Commitment on Predictors viz. Employees' Perceived Violation of Norms of Justice, Organization Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support

	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	beta	t
Perception of Violation of Norms of Justice	0.76	0.78	186.52***	-0.76	-10.71***
Organization based Self-Esteem				0.51	8.62***
Perceived Organizational Support				0.53	5.14***
Job Satisfaction				0.63	4.75***

***p<0.001

Discussion

Justice is essential to our social as well as organizational functioning as is indicated by the fact that the concept of justice (as well as its violation) often dominates our daily experiences and discussions (e.g., Finkel, 2001; Folger, 1984). This research studies have been taken to do the Regression Analysis for the Criterion Variable Organizational Commitment on Predictors viz. Employees' Perceived Violation of Norms of Justice, Organizational Based Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support. Results (Table No.1) shows that employees' perceived violation of norms of justice, organizational based self-esteem, perceived organizational support, and job satisfaction, taken together significantly predicted the employees' organizational commitment behavior ($R^2=0.76$). The contribution of each predictors were also significant as the beta values were significant. Studies conducted in organizational context, have found that these organizations differ in terms of climate and norms (Roy, 1974; de, 1974; Prasad, 1979; Sinha, 1973); organizational activities and reinforcement patterns, control of economy, autonomy, layers of management, communication network, etc. These differences generated a complicated system of feelings, expectations, perceptions, attitudes and values in their employees which in turn influences variables like. Perceived violation of norms of justice significantly predict organizational commitment supported by research studies (McFarlin & Sweeny, 1992). The reason might be given as the reduction in the strength of employees' identification with the goal and principles of organization because of organizational failure in providing the fair environment to the employees. Also OBSE was significantly related with organizational commitment, supported by studies (Tang & Gilbert, 1994). Since OBSE is the evaluation of oneself in organizational context, which is high only in the condition when employees have positive perception towards the organization, that finally leads to high organizational commitment. Finding that perceived organizational support significantly predict organizational commitment is in line with the work of earlier scholar who found that perceived organizational support was related with organizational commitment (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). And also the finding that job satisfaction significantly predict organizational commitment, is in line with the work of scholar (Feinstein and Vondrasek, 2006; Mannheim et.al., 1997; Busch et.al., 1998).

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