



The Relationships between Career-related Human Resources Management Practices and Perceived Organizational Support on Affective Organizational Commitment: Evidences from Higher Educational Institutions of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Affective organizational commitment is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization. Perceived organizational support (POS) is the degree to which employees believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being and fulfills socioemotional needs. [An employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and desires to remain a part of the organization. Career-related Human Resource Management Practices and Perceived Organizational Support are factors that influence Affective Organizational Commitment. The objective of this study was to identify the level of influence of four career-related human resource management practices such as career development opportunities, supervisory support, internal promotion and pay satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support on affective organizational commitment in Administrative and Financial employees in 15 national universities, 8 postgraduate institutes and 9 other institutes in Sri Lanka. The primary categories of the sample were Administrative Officers and Financial Officers. A questionnaire survey was conducted to procure data. Pearson correlation analysis and the linear regression analysis were used to analyze the results. According to the results, there is a positive relationship between affective organizational commitment and the career related human resource management practices (career development opportunities, internal promotion, supervisory support and pay satisfaction) Further a positive relationship was also observed between perceived organizational support and the affective organizational commitment individually as well as in combination with the career related human resource management practices. Therefore, it is recommended to give a high priority to promote 'perceived organizational support', to make employees feel that they are supported by their institutions, encourage more support from the superiors, and promote the Internal Promotional schemes.

KEYWORDS: *Perceived Organizational Support, Affective Organizational Commitment, Career Development Opportunities, Internal Promotion, Supervisory Support*

1. INTRODUCTION

The globalization, complexity and the diversity of the labor market, advancement of information and communication technology, constantly changing customer demands etc. make today's organizations increasingly competitive. The organizations, while managing other factors, need to focus on having and retaining effective workforces, in order to face this competitiveness. According to Morrison (1996), the employee employer relationship is affected with how an organization manages its human resources and its human resource management practices. According to Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002), effective management of organizations human resources would be able to generate and increase knowledge, motivation, synergy, and commitment which create a sustained competitive advantage for the organizations.

In the context of universities, the move of the university from a service profile to a market profile has caused significant concern and dilemmas for academics and university policy makers. Universities are seen to be forced into the market place in ways that are reshaping them in their purposes and in the knowledge they create and disseminate" Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Accordingly, universities must be ready with the suitable strategies and tools to deal with the global changes that occur. The human resources who are engaged in policy making and administration have a key role in this regard. Employers commonly value employee dedication and loyalty. Employees who are emotionally committed to the organization show heightened performance, reduced absenteeism, and a less-likely likelihood of quitting their jobs (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Therefore, Employee Commitment is key aspect that the top management of Universities wishes to have and maintain in order to reach their visions. The role of the affective organization commitment of the employees of the Administrative category is significant for a study. By contrast, employees are generally more concerned with the

organization's commitment to them (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Perceived organizational Support and the Career related Human Resource Practices are significant in this regard.

The research objective of this study was to examine the degree of relationship of Career-related Human Resource Management Practices and Perceived Organizational Support with Affective Organizational Commitment in Administrative and Financing category in Sri Lankan Higher educational Institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Affective Organizational Commitment

According to Allen & Mayer (1990), affective commitment entails an acceptance and internalization of organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert effort on the organization's behalf, and an emotional attachment to one's organization. It is emotional attachment to and personal identification with a firm or organization (Boardman & Sundquist, 2009). Employees with affective commitment are inclined to work toward the benefit for the organization. As Becker et al., 1996 mentions affective commitment is attributed to factors intrinsic to employees and a strong personal desire to remain with one's organization. Allen & Meyer (1990) stated that affective commitment had a much stronger relationship with desirable outcomes such as attendance, performance, and organizational citizenship behavior. Boles *et al.*, (2007), showed that increased affective organizational commitment has been positively associated with valuable organizational outcomes, including job performance ratings, decreased intent to search for new jobs and reduced turnover.

2.2. Perceived Organizational Support

According to Boles *et al.*, (2007), perceived organizational support (POS) refers to the situation in which the organization is ready to

reward the efforts made on its behalf by the employees and its readiness to provide a sense of assurance to the employees that aid will be available when needed. In this way, perceived organizational support will create a felt obligation among individual employees to care about their organization's welfare and help the organization reach its objectives. Perceived organizational support results from the generalized beliefs of employees that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Rhoades et al. (2001) state that antecedents of perceived organizational support include employees' perceptions of the ability to make decisions, fulfill their needs, and availability of rewards.

Rhoades & Eisenberger, (2002) further describe that the ability of organizations to provide resources and treatment such as fairness of policies and procedures, supervisor support, organizational rewards, and job conditions were identified as important factors to boost employees' confidence in their organizations. Lew (2009) suggests that POS has not only a direct influence on organizational commitment, but also an indirect impact via felt obligation. He further argues that the influence of POS on turnover intention is only through the indirect effect via affective organizational commitment. Lew (2009) suggest that employees who perceive higher levels of POS developed stronger commitment to the organization and as a result, were less likely to leave their organization.

2.3. Career-related Human Resource management Practices

Four career-related HRMP variables were used for this study. Those are: 1) Career Development Opportunities 2) Internal promotion, 3) Supervisory Support, 4) Pay satisfaction. Moynihan *et al.* (2001), indicate that there is a positive relationship between HR practices and organizational commitment, between commitment and customer satisfaction ratings, and between HR practices and customer

satisfaction. Most importantly, it has been revealed that the effect of HR practices on customer satisfaction appears to be mediated by organizational commitment.

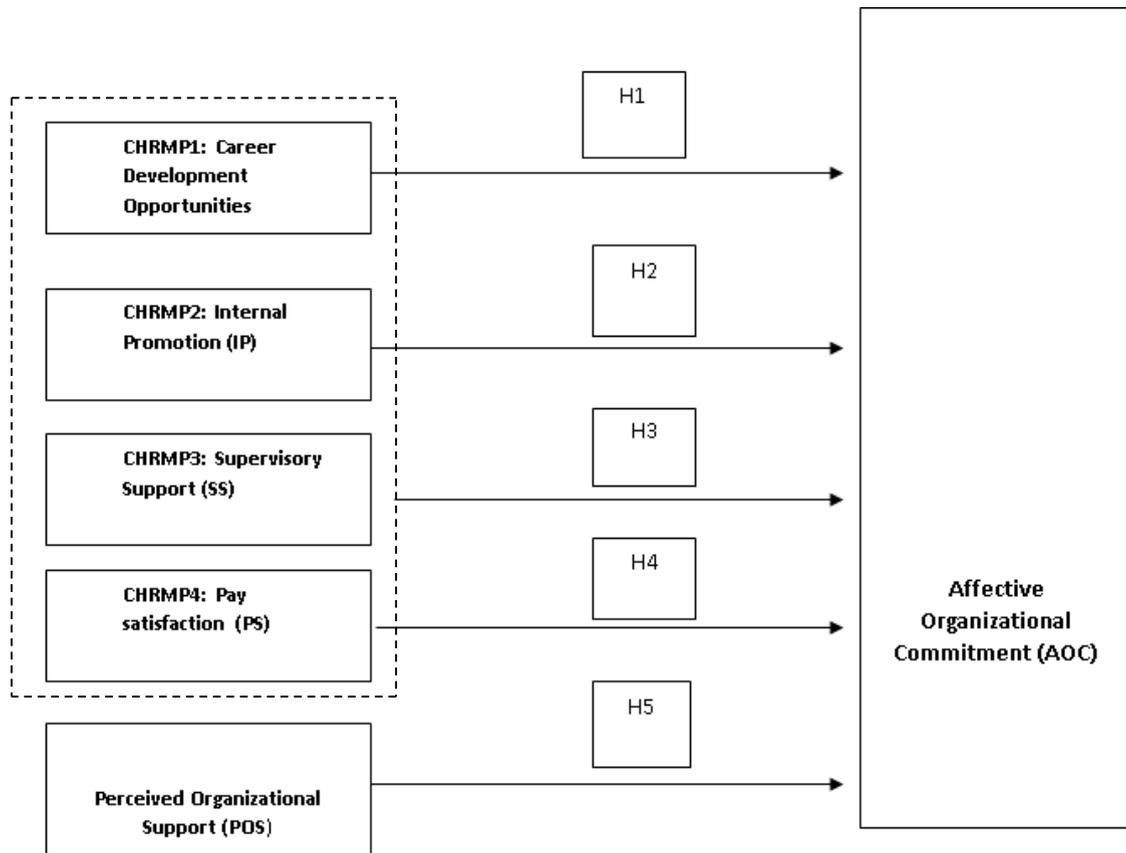
Tan, (2008) stated that the decision for employees to stay or leave might depend on whether the work is challenging, whether they gain support at work and personal growth. This requires employers to provide resources, tools, and the appropriate environment to ensure continued self-development.

Internal promotion connects and employees' career interest with the current employing organization, while through performance recognition the organization invites employees to stay and extend their organizational goals in the future. The perception of future advancement opportunities within the organization act as motivation for employees to perform up to expectations, and stay with the organization to demonstrate their skills and ability (Tan, 2008).

Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) describes that because supervisors act as agents of the organization, having responsibility for directing and evaluating subordinates' performance, employees view their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable orientation toward them as indicative of the organization's support. Tan (2008) state that supervisory support refers to positive evaluation and instruction of one's performance and job direction, career mentoring and expansion of one's career network. Supervisors administrate employees' work, providing direct and indirect feedback, and serve as the pivotal person in influencing rewards, appraisals, and career development in an organization.

Pay satisfaction is to measure how employees are appreciated via attractive monetary rewards. Tan (2008) indicates that there is a positive relationship between supervisory support and affective commitment, between Pay satisfaction and affective commitment.

3.1. Conceptual Framework



3.2. Hypotheses

- H1. Career Development Opportunities are positively correlated to Affective Organizational Commitment
- H2. Internal Promotion is positively correlated to Affective Organizational Commitment
- H3. Supervisory Support is positively correlated to Affective Organizational Commitment
- H4. Pay Satisfaction is positively correlated to Affective Organizational Commitment
- H5. Perceive Organizational Support is positively correlated to Affective Organizational Commitment

3.3. Data Collection

Based on the above, two categories of officers namely administrative officers and financial/audit officers were selected according to the Commission Circular No. 905, dated 29th

January 2009 issued by the University Grants Commission (the classification in the Circular was based on the nature of duties performed, responsibilities entrusted to different positions, and the specific entry requirements for those positions). The questionnaire was administered to administrative and financing officers of 15 national universities, 8 postgraduate institutes and 9 other institutes in Sri Lanka. The number of employees was 380 and a sample of size 127 was considered for this study. Both primary and secondary data were utilized in the study. Primary data was collected through a four-page self-administered questionnaire, including a separate cover letter to introduce to the participant about the nature of the study delivered to the Administrative and Financing Staff members of the sample. The letter and questionnaire were presented in English language. The method used was a mail survey.

The survey questionnaire contained two sections as part I and part II. The first section, Part I consisted of forty one questions which come under six variables: Affective Commitment, Perceived Organizational Support, Career Satisfaction, Supervisory Support, Pay Satisfaction and Internal Promotion. Questions of the first part of the questionnaire were designed to measure the employees' feelings at an individual level and these measures were assessed using five point Likert scale. The 5-point Likert scale used was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree (Neutral), 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree. Finally, Part II of the questionnaire is designed to collect demographic details about the respondents. Secondary data was collected from the policy documents, articles and through the internet.

3.4. Data Analysis

Correlation analysis & Regression analysis were used to identify the relationships between Career-related Human Resources Management Practices and Perceived Organizational Support on Affective Organizational Commitment. The reliability of the likert questions in the questionnaire was tested with Cronbach's alpha test before conducting correlation analysis. Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the statistical analysis. The results of the Cronbach's alpha test to find the goodness of data is shown below;

Table 1. The results of the Cronbach's alpha reliability test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Affective Organizational Commitment	.659	8
Perceived Organizational Support	.851	8
Career Satisfaction	.826	5
Supervisory Support	.919	9
Pay	.923	6
Internal Promotion	.702	5

According to the table, there were no reliabilities less than .60 and therefore no reliabilities were considered as poor. According to the ranking, the reliabilities of Affective Organizational Commitment, Career Related Human Resource Management, Perceived Organizational Support, Career Satisfaction, Supervisory Support and Pay can be considered as "good" as had a figure of more than 80. The reliabilities of Affective Organizational Commitment, Career Related Human Resource Management Practices and Internal Promotion can be considered as acceptable as those are in the .70 range.

3.5. Statistical Analysis of data

Pearson's product moment correlation analysis and the linear regression were used using SPSS Statistical Package to analyze the data.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1. Demographic factors and Affective Organizational Commitment

The relationship between Affective Commitment and demographic factors such as gender, educational level, marital status, length of service, experience in the current job, income level, is shown in the Tables 2 to 8.

Table 2. Gender and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Affective Commitment	Moderate	36	26	62
	High	31	28	59
Total		67	54	121

Table 3. Educational Qualifications and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

Affective Commitment	Educational Qualifications				Total
	A/L	Graduate	PG Dip	Masters	
Moderate	3	19	21	19	62

High	2	20	17	20	59
Total	5	39	38	39	121

Source: Sample Survey 2010

Table 4. Marital Status and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

Affective Commitment	Marital Status			Total
	Married	Unmarried	4	
Moderate	52	10	0	62
High	47	11	1	59
Total	99	21	1	121

Source: Sample Survey 2010

Table 5. Period of Service and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

Affective Commitment	Period of Service					Total
	Below 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	more than 20 years	
Moderate	11	16	13	8	14	62
High	15	13	6	9	16	59
Total	26	29	19	17	30	121

Source: Sample Survey 2010

Table 6. Experience to current job and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

Affective Commitment	Experience to current job					Total
	Below 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	more than 20 years	
Moderate	30	22	3	2	5	62
High	29	15	4	6	5	59
Total	59	37	7	8	10	121

Source: Sample Survey 2010

The majority of the respondents belonged to the category “moderate” in Affective Commitment (62 respondents out of 121) and no respondents belonged to the category “low” Commitment. The number of respondents belong to the category “high” commitment was 59 out of 121 respondents.

Table 7. Income Level and the level of Affective organizational Commitment

Affective Commitment	Income Level				Total
	Rs.20000/- to 30000/-	Rs. 30000/-to 40000/-	Rs. 40000/- to 50000/-	Over Rs. 50000/-	
Moderate	22	25	8	7	62
High	23	18	9	9	59
Total	45	43	17	16	121

Source: Sample Survey 2010

Those with postgraduate qualifications showed a higher commitment compared with graduates. No significant difference was observed between the married and unmarried respondents. Higher commitment was shown by the employees having less than 10 years of work experience in the job compared with those having more.

4.2. The relationship between the Affective Organizational Commitment and Career Related HRM Practices and Perceived Organizational Support

The correlation between the Career Related HRM practices of the higher educational institutions (Career Development Opportunities, Internal Promotions, Supervisory Support and Pay Satisfaction) and Perceived Organizational Support on the Affective Organizational Commitment is shown in the Table 8.

Table 8. Summary of Correlation analysis

No	Independent variables	Affective Organizational Commitment (Dependent Variable)
01	Career Development Opportunities	.189(*)
02	Internal Promotions	.326(**)
03	Supervisory support	.459(**)
04	Pay satisfaction	.087
05	Perceive Organizational Support	.565(**)

Source: Survey data, 2010

According to the Table, all the Career Related HRM practices and Perceived Organizational Support showed a positive correlation with the Affective Organizational Commitment. However, among these internal promotions, supervisor support and perceived organizational support showed stronger correlations with Affective Organizational Commitment. These results suggest that the employees of the Administrative and financial category in higher educational institutions in Sri Lanka accept and internalized the goals and values of their institutions. It also suggests that these employees are willing to exert effort on the organization's behalf, and emotionally attached to their institutions. Further, it reveals that employees' affective organizational commitment is a reason to employees' remains in present institutions and their better contributions towards the organizational outcomes. The findings of Allen & Mayer (1990) and Boles *et al.* (2007) are also in agreement with the above findings. The significant correlation between Perceived Organizational Support with the Affective Organizational Commitment is an important factor as it reveals the emotional attachment of the employees with the organization and also that the organization values the contribution of the employees and cares about their wellbeing. This a very significant strength to an organization. These findings are endorsed by those of Eisenberger *et. al.* (1986).

4.3. Aggregate Impact of the Career related HRM practices on Affective Organizational Commitment

The multiple regression between the aggregate Career related HRM practices (Career Development Opportunities, Supervisory Support, Internal Promotion and pay satisfaction) to the Affective Organizational Commitment showed a significant relationship. However, the R Square value was 0.211 which indicated that only 21% of the variation is explained by the regression. This nature is somewhat typical in a behavioral research however this low figure

shows that there are limitations in the conceptual model and requirement of a further research.

4.4. Aggregate Impact of the Career related HRM practices and Perceived Organizational Support on Affective Organizational Commitment

The multiple regression between the aggregate Career related HRM practices and Perceived Organizational Support to the Affective Organizational Commitment showed a significant relationship. However, the R Square value was 0.319 which indicated that only 32% of the variation is explained by the regression.

5. CONCLUSION & FUTURE WORK

The results of the influence of demographic factors on the Affected Organizational Commitment showed that majority of the respondents belonged to the category "moderate" in Affective Commitment (62 respondents out of 121) and no respondents belonged to the category "low" Commitment. Those with postgraduate qualifications showed a higher commitment compared with graduates. No significant difference was observed between the married and unmarried respondents. Higher commitment was shown by the employees having less than 10 years of work experience in the job compared with those having more.

There is a positive relationship between Affective organizational commitment and the career-related human resource management practices. All four career-related Human Resource Management Practices are positively correlated with affective organizational commitment. Further, the research results indicate that there is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and the affective organizational commitment.

Accordingly, it is recommended to give a high priority to promote 'perceived organizational support', to make employees feel that they are

supported by their institutions, encourage more support from the superiors, and promote the Internal Promotional schemes. The management can utilize the emotional attachment and the loyalty of the employees for the betterment of the institutions' development as well as the employees' development.

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