Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment: A Correlational Study in Bahrain

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine 1) the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment; 2) the impact of demographics key variables on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a private financial institution in the Kingdom of Bahrain. One hundred and fifty six participated in this study. Results revealed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, it revealed that age was the only demographic key variable that affects organizational commitment. Based on the results, implications and direction for further studies were made.

Keywords: Correlation; Job Satisfaction; Organizational Commitment; Age; Bahrain

Introduction

Job satisfaction as a significant determinant of organizational commitment has been well documented in numerous studies (Porter *et al*., 1974; Mottaz, 1987; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Vanderberg & Lance, 1992; Knoop, 1995; Young, Worchel & Woehr, 1998; Testa, 2001). Job Satisfaction and organizational commitment are two of the most prevalent work attitudes examined in the work and organizational literature. Hoppock (1935) defined job satisfaction as "a combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that causes a person to say: I' m satisfied with my job". Organizational commitment is an important topic in organizational behavior considering the large number of work that studied relationships between organizational commitment, attitudes and behaviors in the organization (Porter et al., 1974, 1976; Koch & Steers, 1978; Angle & Perry, 1981).

Job satisfaction is considered as a reason for organizational commitment (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Mueller, Boyer, Price, & Iverson, 1994; Williams & Hazer, 1986). The reverse is also applicable where organizational commitment is a cause to job satisfaction (Vandenberg & Lance, 1992). Finally, when an employee is satisfied with the job the employee becomes more committed to the organization and vice versa. In other words, job satisfaction can be measured and assessed by organizational commitment and vice versa (Porter et al., 1974; Mottaz, 1987; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Vanderberg & Lance, 1992; Knoop, 1995; Young, Worchel & Woehr, 1998; Testa, 2001).

Based on the review of the literature, there is a need for further investigation of this topic specifically in the private sector in Bahrain. Therefore, the purpose of this study on one hand is to examine the impact of certain demographics' key variables on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Where on the other hand, is to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Review of Related Literature

Job satisfaction definition, Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction, and Significance

According to George and Jones (2008), job satisfaction is "the collection of feelings and beliefs that people have about their current jobs. People's levels of job satisfaction can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction" Others have defined job satisfaction as "a positive feeling about a job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics" (Robbins & Judge, 2009, p. 83). Nelson and Quick (2009) defined it as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences".

Hamermesh (2001) viewed job satisfaction as the employee's mental classification of job into objective and subjective characteristics. However, Hirschfield (2000) stated, "Intrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, whereas extrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself". In the industrial psychology literature, job satisfaction is noted as the positive emotional level gained by the employee when the employee gets a job appraisal (Locke, 1976). While Hoppock (1935) who is one of the earliest researchers in job satisfaction defined it as "a combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that causes a person to say: I'm satisfied with my job".

In terms of factors affecting job satisfaction, according to Freeman (1978) and Hamermesh (1977), employees' personal and job characteristics determine job satisfaction. According to Sloane, Battu, and Seaman (1995), "highly educated employees are more likely to suffer from educational mismatch". Furthermore, the higher the level of education of employees is the lower their satisfaction (Clark, 1997). Although, having higher education raises the expectancy of having better job which leads to dissatisfaction and disappointment (Hagenaar, 1986; Ross & Reskin, 1992), Idson 1990 reports no significant effects of education level on overall job satisfaction.

Comm and Mathaisel (2000) found that "job satisfaction is influenced by the level of pay and performance, employee benefits, training, recruiting, learning curve inefficiencies, reduction in the client base, job design, life satisfaction, autonomy, growth satisfaction, satisfaction with co-workers, satisfaction with supervisors and customer satisfaction". Further, job satisfaction is a cognitive and affective appraisal of a job viewed as a construct conceptualized in terms of beliefs and feelings regarding one's job as discussed by (Fassina, Jones & Uggerslev, 2008).

In terms of the significance of job satisfaction on organizations and employees, more satisfied employees will add more value to the organization (Herzberg, 1957). Past studies in Europe and the USA proposed that job performance is positively influenced by employees' job satisfaction (Freeman, 1978). Finally, Job satisfaction creates a pleasant feeling that directs to a positive work attitude. A satisfied employee is more likely to be creative, flexible, innovative and loyal. Furthermore, Job satisfaction can be used as a broad assessment of "an employee's attitudes of overall acceptance, contentment, and enjoyment in their work" (Lee-Kelley et al., 2007).

Studies Related to Job Satisfaction

According to the literature, the relationship between gender and job satisfaction is inconsistent. Some studies report that women are more satisfied. Souza-Poza (2003) found that women's satisfaction has declined substantially in the past decade, whereas men's job satisfaction has remained fairly constant. As cited in Jinnett and Alexander (1999), Coward, Hogan, Duncan, Horne, Hiker and Felsen, (1995) state that female employees demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction than male employees across most work. Many studies involving several different populations support this argument (Lambert et al., 2001; Loscocco, 1990; Ma & Macmillan, 1999). On the other hand, other studies found no significant difference between the genders (Bruning & Snyder, 1983; Quinn, Staines, & McCullough 1974; Mortimer, Finch, & Maruyama, 1988).

Studies have showed that task rewards and organizational rewards lead to job satisfaction. Task rewards refer to rewards that are in direct association with the job such as the usage of one's skills into challenging work, work variety and opportunities. Organizational rewards are the visible rewards that such as pay, promotion (O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1980). According to the literature, researches' findings are not consistent regarding the influence of age on job satisfaction. Some researchers have found that age have an influence on job satisfaction (Chambers, 1999; Cramer, 1993; Robbins, 2001; Staw, 1995; Tolbert & Moen, 1998). Older employees tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Belcastro & Koeske, 1996; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Cramer, 1993;

Jones Johnson & Johnson, 2000; Larwood, 1984; Loscocco, 1990; Saal & Knight, 1988). Older employees were more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction than younger employees. Older workers are more comfortable and tolerant of authority and may learn to lower their expectations for their jobs (Spector, 1997). Other studies found that age has a non-linear association (no impact) on job satisfaction (Sarker, Crossman, & Chinmeteepituck, 2003; Sharma & Jyoti, 2005, 2009; Tu, Plaisent, Bernard, & Maguiraga, 2005) or rather statistically age has an insignificant impact (Bos, Donders, Bouwman-Brouwer, & Van der Gulden, 2009; Bernal, Snyder, & McDaniel, 1998). Some studies concluded that as a chronological variable, age is not a predictor of job satisfaction (Bernal et al.).

Managers nowadays consider employees' job satisfaction more than before for the reason that more satisfied employees are more committed to the organization. Many studies have documented that job satisfaction is an important antecedent of organizational commitment (Porter et al., 1974; Mottaz, 1987; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Vanderberg & Lance, 1992; Knoop, 1995; Young, Worchel & Woehr, 1998; Testa, 2001). Affective organizational commitment was found to be most influential with respect to levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. This concurs with other studies of the behavioral outcomes of commitment (Yannis Markovits, Ann J Davis, & Rolf van Dick, 2007). McCaslin and Mwangi (1994), Manthe, (1976), Boltes et al., (1995), and Bertz and Judge, (1994) found that overall job satisfaction increased as the years of experience increased.

However, Bedeian, Farris, and Kacmar, (1992) and O'Reilly and Roberts, (1975) did not support the relationship between job satisfaction and years of experience. Howard and Frink (1996) found that job satisfaction was positively affected by managerial position. That is, managerial employees are more satisfied with their jobs than non-managerial. Clark (1996) also found that employees at the higher end of the occupational scale reported higher satisfaction with various aspects of their work, but were less satisfied with their pay. Whereas the results of Hagedorn (2000), Gigantesco et al (2003), and Buciuniene et al. (2003) show no difference between the levels of job satisfaction among different professional roles position do not impact job satisfaction.
Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment Definition and Factors Affecting Organizational Commitment

Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979, 1982) defined organizational commitment as the behavior that connects employees to the organization. Organizational commitment is how a loyal the employee feels to the organization (Mueller, Wallace, & Price, 1992; Price, 1997). Meyer and Allen (1991), Dunham et al. (1994) recognized organizational commitment as three kinds which are affective, continuous and normative. Affective commitment is the employees' feelings toward joining the organization, continuous commitment is employees' perceptions of costs if leaving the organization and normative commitment is employees' perceptions of their duties and promises toward the organization.

Organizational commitment may be viewed as the degree to which an individual adopts organizational values and goals and identifies with them in fulfilling their job responsibilities (Tanriverdi, 2008).According to the literature, there are many factors affect organizational commitment including individual and managerial. In terms of the individual factors, Benkhoff (1997) found that as the employee gets a higher position in the organization he/she tend to have more organizational commitment. It has been seen that the longer the employee works for the organization the more commitment the employee has (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Hellriegel et al., 1995; O'Reilly et al., 1991). However, other studies did not show the same results (Lok & Crawford, 1999; Brewer, 1996).

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) believe that commitment increases with age while Cohen 1993 and Beck and Wilson 2000 stated that position upgrade is more valid than age. Decottis and Summers (1987) study showed that organizational commitment is under the effect of employee's qualities such as leadership and communication.
In terms of the managerial factors, several studies have showed that employees' involvement in decision-making (Porter et al., 1974; Mowday et al., 1982; Beck & Wilson, 1997) and the amount of feedback received from managers regarding job performance and job role (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) affects the employees' organizational commitment.

Brewer (1993) suggested that large number of controlling officials in the organization frequently result in lower employee commitment, while less control and more support generates greater commitment and involvement among employees. Koopman (1991) studied the impact of leadership styles on employees and found that employees who liked their manager's style liked the organization more as well. Although there was no direct connection to commitment but this would later affect employees' levels of organizational commitment.

Finally, Nierhoff et al., (1990) found that the level of employees' commitment is related to top management's actions that create the organization's culture and style. In terms of the significance of oorganizational ccommitment, more committed employees are more responsible and loyal to the organization (Boles et al., 2007). Moreover, oorganizations that commit to the employees value and take care of them gain more committed workers (George & Jones, 1996). Eisenberger et al., (1990) discussed the same idea not only that employees are more committed but they are more careful for their duties, more involved in the organization, and more innovative.

Studies Related to Organizational Commitment

The influence of gender on organizational commitment remains unclear. Women as a group tend to be more committed to their employing organization than their male counterparts (Cramer, 1993; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). Loscocco (1990) found that women were more likely to report that they are proud to work for their organization and that they would accept almost any job offered to them in order to remain with their current employer. Several explanations have been offered to account for the greater commitment of female employees. Mowday et al. (1982) maintain that women generally have to overcome more barriers to attain their positions within the organization.

Numerous researchers have not found support for a relationship between gender and organizational commitment (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Organizational commitment is an important topic of organizational behavior considering the large number of works that found relationships between organizational commitment, attitudes, and behaviors in the organization (Porter et al., 1974, 1976; Koch & Steers, 1978; Angle & Perry, 1981). Furthermore, Bateman and Strasser (1984) discussed the reasons for studying organizational commitment are related to "(a) employee behaviors and performance effectiveness, (b) attitudinal, affective, and cognitive constructs such as job satisfaction, (c) characteristics of the employee's job and role, such as responsibility and (d) personal characteristics of the employee such as age, job tenure".

The literature generally indicated an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and an individual's level of education, however the results are not clear (Luthans et al., 1987; Mowday et al., 1982). The higher an employee's level of education is, the lower that individual's level of organizational commitment (Luthans et al., 1987; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). The negative relationship may result from the fact that highly qualified employees have higher expectations that the organization may be unable to fulfil. However, the level of education does not seem to be consistently related to an employee's level of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). More educated individuals may also be more committed to their profession.

However, Billingsley and Cross (1992) failed to find support for a relationship between education and commitment. Researchers view that a positive relationship exists between organizational commitment and level of experience (Larkey & Morrill; 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, et al., 1982). Cohen and Gattiker (1994) found that type of position was a significant predictor of organizational commitment where managers have higher levels of commitment and pay satisfaction than non-managers because their income was higher. Mowday et al. (1982) however, did not find any significant differences in the commitment levels across type of position. Managers nowadays consider employees' job satisfaction more than before for the reason that more satisfied employees are more committed to the organization.

Many studies have documented that job satisfaction is an important antecedent of organizational commitment (Porter et al., 1974; Mottaz, 1987; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Vanderberg & Lance, 1992; Knoop, 1995; Young, Worchel & Woehr, 1998; Testa, 2001). Affective organizational commitment was found to be more influential with respect to levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. This concurs with other studies of the behavioral outcomes of commitment (Yannis Markovits, Ann J Davis, & Rolf van Dick, 2007).

Methods

Operationalization and Measurements

Job satisfaction was measured by using the Index of Job Satisfaction (Brayfield AH, Rothe HF, 1951) that included 19 items. Organizational commitment was assessed by using the revised version of TCM Employee Commitment Survey (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993) which included 18 items that measure affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

A demographics sheet which included gender, age, years of experience, level of education, and type of position in addition to informational sheet which covered research ethical aspects were also given to subjects.The surveys used a four points scale which represented the degree of agreement or disagreement where (1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree).

The Research Questions

The attempt of this research was to examine the following questions

1. Do the demographics key variables have an impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment?
2. Is there a relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment

Research Approach, Context, and Subjects

The study was conducted in a private bank during the months of July and August of 2011. The bank is an international global bank headquartered in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, and its network spreads over 22 countries worldwide in the region of the Gulf, Asia, and North America. According to the HR manager of the bank surveyed, the bank employs 334 employees. The entire population of employees in all departments were given the survey. Whereas 160 employees refused participating and 18 employees submitted incomplete surveys. The final population surveyed was 156 employees.

Instrumentation and Scales Reliabilities and Validity

Two instruments were used in this study including the Index of Job Satisfaction (IJS) and the TCM Employee Commitment Survey (TCM). The reliability coefficient for the IJS is 0.77 which was corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula to 0.87. The validity of the individual items is partial, although not crucial, evidence for the validity of the scale. This is an appeal to "face" validity. Additional evidence of a like nature is furnished by the method of constructing the scale. A more rigorous requirement for validation is to use an outside criterion. An attempt was made to provide such a criterion. In the current study, the reliability of the Index of Job Satisfaction Survey reported 0.912.

Perhaps the most systematic attempt to develop an index of job satisfaction was the one made by Hoppock in the early 1930's. The scale evidently has been assumed to have "face" validity. The product-moment correlation between scores on the Hoppock blank 1935 and on the Brayfield-Rothe blank 1951 was 0.92. Although the two blanks were developed by different methods and contain items which over-lap only slightly they give results which are highly correlated. A comparison was made between the means of the Personnel and Non-Personnel groups on the Hoppock blank. The mean for the Personnel group was 22.2 with an S.D. of 2.6; the mean for the Non-Personnel group was 19.2 with an S.D. of 4.0.

The difference between the means is significant at the 1% level; the variances do not differ significantly. Regarding the TCM, several studies have examined its reliability. For example, Allen and Meyer (1990) reported 0.87 for affective, 0.75 for continuance, and 0.79 for normative. Dunham, Grube, and Castaneda (1994) found that alpha range to be between 0.74 and 0.87 for affective, 0.73 to 0.81 for continuance, and 0.67 to 0.78 for normative. Finally, Cohen, 1996 discovered alphas of 0.79 for affective, 0.69 for continuance, and 0.65 for normative. In the current study, the reliability of the TCM Employee Commitment Survey reported 0.884.

The evidence for validity was provided by factor analytic: (a) relations among the commitment measures and related measures; (b) the factor structure of the continuance commitment; and (c) the stability of the factor structures across time. The patterns of correlation between the commitment measures and other variables also indicated that the validity was established. The measurement was adopted by over 40 employee samples, representing more than 16,000 employees from a wide variety of organizations and occupations (Allen & Meyer, 1996).

Data Collection Procedure, Analysis, and Ethical Consideration

The surveys were given to the Human Resources manager to give to all employees to complete and all responses were submitted anonymously back to the manager and the only fully answered surveys were taken into consideration discarding those which have some missing data. The data gathered from the surveys were computed using SPSS for interpretation. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the subjects' demographics while inferential statistics (t-test, ANOVA, and correlation) were used to answer both research questions. For all inferential statistics test, alpha was set at .05.

Finally, the research was conducted in an ethical manner by doing the following: the subjects were not exposed; their anonymity was secured throughout this study; they were fully informed of the associated procedures and risks, as well as they were given their full consent to participate; and they were not forced into participating.

Results

Demographics of Subjects

Out of 156 subjects, 57.1% were males versus 42.9% were females. Subjects' age ranged from 21 and 62 with a mean of 35.3 and a standard deviation of 10.25. However, when sorting the ages into categories, results revealed that 41.7% of the subjects age ranged from 21 and 30, 30.8% ranged from 31 and 40, 17.3% ranged from 41 and 50, and 10.3% exceeded 50. In terms of years of experience, out of 155 subjects, 25.8% of them, their years of experience ranged from 1 and 5, 27% ranged from 6 and 10, 19.3% ranged from 11 and 15, 12.9% ranged from 16 and 20, and 14.8% exceeded 20.

Regarding the level of education, 23% of the subjects had high school or less, 58.95 had a bachelor, 17.3% had a master, and .6% had a doctorate. Finally, with reference to position, 1.9% of the subjects were managers, 5.1% were deputy managers, 27.6% were assistant managers, 22.4% were officers, 14.1% were senior clerks, and 28.8% were clerks.

The Results of the First Research Question

According to Table 1, the impact of the demographics key variables—gender, age, years of experience, level of education, type of position—on job satisfaction and organizational commitment was found not to be statistically significant except for age. In this study, the difference in means between age groups was found to be statistically significant (F=3.397; sig=.019) regarding organizational commitment.

The Results of the Second Research Question

According to Table 2, the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment was found to be statistically significant and positive (r=.669; sig=.000).

Discussion and Implications

As shown in Table 1, the only demographics key variable that was found to impact organizational commitment was age. This finding was early on supported by the work of Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Batemen and Strasser (1984). According to Table 3, this study shows that the most committed individuals were above the age of 50 where the least committed ones were the youngest whose age ranged between 21 and 30. The reason why older people might be more committed to their organizations is the fact that older individual might be less enthusiastic than younger ones to look for new jobs and move to new locations.

Additionally, they—the older ones—might have more financial obligations and commitments in their lives than the younger ones which in return they commit more. As an implication of this finding, organizations ought to retain older employees for as long as possible as they tend to become more committed than the younger ones. This retention can be achieved by investing in their human capital by all means within the organizations capacities.

According to Table 2, the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment was found to be statistically significant and positive. This means as the level of job satisfaction increase so does the level of commitment and vice versa. This finding was supported early on in the work of Lincoln and Kalleberg (1990), Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982), Mueller, Boyer, Price, and Iverson (1994), Williams and Hazer (1986), Vandenberg and Lance (1992), Bhatti and Qureshi (2007), Porter et al. (1974), Mottaz (1987), Williams and Anderson (1991), Knoop (1995), Young, Worchel, and Woehr (1998), Testa (2001), and Yannis Markovits, Ann J Davis, and Rolf van Dick (2007).

The magnitude of this positive relationship was approximately 44.7% meaning that 44.7% of the variance in the level of organizational commitment is explained by the existence of job satisfaction within the employees and vice versa where 55.3% of the variance was due to other factors. As an implication of these findings, organizations ought to ensure that employees obtain high level of job satisfaction and constantly work on improving it. This is crucial as it is a mean by which organizational commitment can be achieved.

Job satisfaction can be achieved by implementing different techniques including empowerment, monetary and non-monetary based techniques, recognition, and many others. Although achieving high level of satisfaction might be a challenging task for organizations to obtain, however, they should strive to overcome this challenging task as much as possible.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations for Further Study

According to the findings of this study, age as a demographic variable was found to have an impact on organizational commitment. Furthermore, a positive relationship was found to exist between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As for the limitations of this study, the generalizability of this study finding 1) may be limited to only this private bank and not be applicable to all private banks in the Kingdom of Bahrain; 2) may not be applicable to government based banks in the Kingdom of Bahrain; and, 3) may not be applicable to the rest of the Gulf region.

Finally, to improve the findings validity of this study, 1) other studies should be conducted in other similar private banks in the Kingdom of Bahrain; 2) other studies should be conducted in government based financial institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain; and, 3) using different instruments to measure both constructs—job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Table 1: Impact of Demographics on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Demographic Variable	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Commitment
Gender	t=.510; sig=.61 EVA* t=.510; sig=.61 EVNA**	t=-.907; sig=.36 EVA t=-.883; sig=.37 EVNA
Age	F=2.053; sig=.109***	F=3.397; sig=.019
Years of Experience	F=.957; sig=.446	F=.719; sig=.610
Level of Education	F=.965; sig=.411	F=1.893; sig=.133
Type of Position	F=1.421; sig=.220	F=1.980; sig=.085

*EVA: Equal variance assumed **EVNA: Equal variance not assumed ***F: F-test (ANOVA)

Table 2: Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

		Job Satisfaction	Organizational Commitment
Job Satisfaction	Person Correlation (r)	1	.669**
	r-squared		.447 (44.7%)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N		156

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Age

Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
21 – 30	65	47.31	8.101
31 – 40	48	50.42	8.233
41 – 50	27	48.37	8.010
>50	16	53.81	7.414
Total	156	49.12	8.243

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