

Organizational Commitment & Career Satisfaction among Women Employees

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This is a study of the relationship between organizational commitment, employee empowerment and career satisfaction of female work force. Women employees working in India have been approached for investigation of variables in this study. The results of the analysis state that organizational commitment and career satisfaction have a positive relationship. Employee empowerment has a positive moderating impact on the relationship of organizational commitment with career satisfaction of female gender. The outcome of the study establishes the importance of empowering women employees in the organization for ensuring higher career satisfaction. The framework brings insights for managers and organizations to establish policies and practices which facilitate women empowerment. This would result in the long-term growth of the organization.

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Introduction

In the present business environment, diversity has been considered as one of the key success factors in the organization. It brings different perspectives and facilitates innovation in the organization. Innovation is considered as a source of competitive advantage. Globally, the number of women in the work place is increasing. The increasing percentage of women employees in the workplace is also because of the fact that career growth has taken a central role in the lives of many working women. This results in higher productivity at workplace. Organizations therefore are positively looking at the career advancement of women employees for increasing the competitiveness of the organization.

The career progression of women employees in India is gradually on the ascent, however, the percentages as compared to rest of the world are still very low. In recent times, the perception of women has been shifting towards their career growth and status

in the society. Still, their representation is less in the management of the organization. It has been an established and common fact that career progress of women in the organization is slower (Catalyst, 2014; Ceci and Williams, 2011). The overall percentage of women participation in the workforce has increased in all the sectors such as private, public and government including armed forces and police. But the percentage of women representation varies significantly at different levels in the organizations. Most of the time it is evident that the percentage of women employee's decreases as they climb up the corporate ladder. A vast percentage of them is at the entry level. This means that career progression is less for women employees. In a study on the female gender. Angeline et al (2017) stated that women are less represented in comparison to men in management positions. One reason could be low career satisfaction among women employees. Most of the time women withdraw from their career due to various barriers to career progression. Retaining women employees and ensuring high career satisfaction will have a significant outcome for the organization and is strategically important. For organizations it's of strategic importance to retain women employees and ensure high career satisfaction among them. This would ensure that part of the workforce should not remain dissatisfied resulting in low performance and women in

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workforce bring diversity, foster innovation and bring a higher level of group performance. Different factors may be reasons for the dissatisfaction and choosing to withdraw from a career. The purpose of the paper is to explore the relationship of career satisfaction with women empowerment and organizational commitment.

Many researchers have earlier studied the impact of organizational commitment on job satisfaction (Begley, Chaka & Joseph, 1993; AL-Hussami, 2008). However, the relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction has not been studied much. The research which has been done is gender neutral. Gender specific research has mainly been focused on the rights, conditions, and arrangements. Today, across the world, deliberations on women empowerment and implementation of women related policies are gaining momentum (Cornwall & Althea, 2015). Empowerment has also been studied as an important dimension of motivating employees for high performance. However, other than the study by Arogundade & Arogundade (2015) which examined the impact of psychological empowerment on career satisfaction, no other research has specifically studied the relationship between psychological empowerment and career satisfaction. Some of the studies in this area are not specific to gender. Therefore, it's important to study the relationship between psychological empowerment and career satisfaction. This paper discusses the literature and establishes a theoretical framework leading to analysis of the data

obtained from female employees working in India. The result establishes a relationship between organizational commitment, women empowerment and career satisfaction of women employees. The effect of empowerment on career satisfaction on female employees brings insights in policies and practices which may facilitate higher empowerment to promote the women employees in the workplace.

Career Satisfaction

Career has been an important area of research as it has high implication for practitioners and important for employees as well. It's evident that mostly everyone working in the organization strives in their work environment for career success. The career of an employee is built on many personality related behaviors and on organizational practices. Organizational learning, mentoring, innovation, decision making, networking, performance management and training all impact the career. In one primary research on career, Greenhaus et al (1990) is one of the widely referred work according to which career is a series of jobs held during an individual's lifetime. Career satisfaction has been defined in the literature as the success and achievements with positive outcomes which results from an individual's work experiences (Kramer et al, 1995). Some of the

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positive outcomes of career satisfaction are evident in health, well-being, and longevity of employees in the organization (Leung et al., 2011). The classical research (Greenhaus, et.al, 1990) states that career satisfaction is a subjective measure. According to them, the perception of employees about their overall career goals, income goals and career advancements results on subjective career satisfaction. It's one's internal assessment of his/her career and feeling of professional achievement (Hennequin, 2007). Employees with high career satisfaction are more engaged with the organization and contribute more to its growth. Such employees would be an asset to the organization.

Spurk & Abele (2009) in their research to measure subjective career success asked respondents questions with a focus on job satisfaction like "All in all, how satisfied are you with your job at the moment". Heflin (2005) in his work related subjective career success with sense of purpose and work-life balance. Therefore, subjective career success is about satisfaction for a longer period, whereas job satisfaction is limited to the present job of employees. The instrument developed by Greenhaus et al (1990) has been popularly used in the study of career satisfaction.

Organizational Commitment

The second variable of the study, organizational commitment, can be defined as "the strength of an individual's identification with an involvement in a particular organization" (Allen & Meyer,

1990). Mowday et al (1982) in their research have defined organizational commitment as “willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to keep up membership in the organization”. Allen & Meyer (1990) developed the three component model of organizational commitment which has been widely researched further by researchers in this area. In the three-component model organizational commitment has been classified as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. The difference among the three can be understood as in affective commitment employees want to work in the present organization. It is different from continuance commitment in which employees stay in the organization because of the need to stay and not because of wanting to stay. Employees with strong normative commitment remain with the organization because they feel they ought to do so. The affective commitment of employees results in strong correlation with outcomes desired by the organization. Employees with affective organization commitment would prefer to remain with the organization for long (Allen & Meyer, 1996). In some of the researches, the organizational commitment has been measured by only affective commitment (Lee & Bruvold, 2003).

Career Satisfaction & Organization Commitment

According to past research in the area of career satisfaction, many individual and organizational variables influence career satisfaction. Most of these

researches have different outcomes like that of Sikorska-Simmons (2005) who in their work found that women are less committed to their organization in comparison to men. On the contrary, according to Johnson and Chang (2006) women are more committed to the organization than men. The work on satisfaction has also different outcomes. Poon (2004) stated that women are less satisfied with their careers while few others (Greenhaus et al., 1990; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001) have found that women are more satisfied than men in the organization. Poon (2004) in his study on the relationship of organizational commitment and career satisfaction has found that organizational commitment positively affects career satisfaction while Mahatanankoon (2007) has found career satisfaction to positively affect organizational commitment. To study the relationship of organizational commitment & career satisfaction in the context of female gender working in organizations, following hypotheses have been formulated:

- H1. There will be a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction of women employees.

Women Empowerment

Empowerment has been a widely talked about and researched term in management literature. This term is important in the current times of globalization, participation, and autonomy. Empowerment has been explained as the involvement of employees in the decision-making

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ing process (Cole et al, 1993). Bown & Lawler (1995) found that in empowerment organization creates an environment where employees are invited to being part of decision making. Empowered employees are required to think strategically and be responsible for the quality of their task. There are multiple dimensions to employee empowerment like control of one's work, involvement, participation, teamwork, decision making and so on. Even job enrichment (Herzberg, 1968) which is connected with decision-making about one's work and related activities is also referred to as employee empowerment. According to Kanter (1977) the purpose of management is to ensure work effectiveness by creating conditions of transparency and sharing information. This also includes the environment of support and availability of resources to employees. With all this in the environment, employees would feel empowered. Kanter (1993) has studied and described structural empowerment. She conceptualizes power as the "ability to mobilize resources to get things done" (Kanter, 1993). She states that "characteristics of a situation can either constrain or encourage optimal job performance, regardless of personal tendencies or predispositions". Empowerment, therefore, also results from the ability to take a decision and the ability to ensure resources for the organization for the task. Spreitzer (1995) has explained empowerment as a psychological state of employees with

meaning, competence, self-determination and impact as four components of psychological empowerment.

Empowerment & Organizational Commitment

In a study done on teachers by Bogler & Somech (2004), it has been found that teachers' perceptions of their level of empowerment are significantly related to their level of organizational commitment. High empowerment in employees would result in a greater sense of meaning from their work and this would lead to higher levels of organizational commitment (Kantar, 1993). Kanter theory has been widely used in research to understand the influence of employees' empowerment on different aspects of work and organization. Noorliza (2006) in her work has also established the relationship between commitment and employee empowerment along with other factors. Ongori and Shunda (2008) established a sense of belongingness as the positive outcome of employee empowerment. Another empirical investigation in the case of a revenue agency in Iran on the relationship of employees' empowerment and four components of organizational commitment has revealed positive and meaningful relationship among them (Bani, Yasoureini & Mesgarpour, 2014). In order to reinvestigate the Kanter's model (1993), Ouyang

Teachers' perceptions of their level of empowerment are significantly related to their level of organizational commitment.

et al. (2015) conducted a study on new graduate nurses. This study expanded Kanter's model by concluding that if the organizations do not have specific strategies to reduce disempowerment in the workplace, any attempt to prevent organizational attrition of new employees would not be successful. Lie and Nie (2014), in their recent study on teachers, reestablished the relationship of 'meaning', 'autonomy' and 'impact' dimensions of empowerment, teacher's perception of empowering behavior of their respective principals and their work-related outcomes. This research reveals the impact of employee empowerment on work-related outcomes including organizational commitment. The relationship between employee empowerment & organizational commitment was done by Sumi Jha (2011) in the IT industry. She stated that psychological empowerment has positive influences on affective and normative commitment. The hypothesis developed by the authors to establish the relationship of women empowerment with organizational commitment is stated as:

H2: There will be a positive and significant relationship between employee empowerment and organizational commitment of women employees.

Empowerment & Career Satisfaction

Some studies have been done to explore the relationship between empowerment and career satisfaction. Dust, Resick & Mawritz (2014) studied the relationship between employ-

ees' empowerment, transformational leadership, and employee task performance. This study concluded that empowerment of employee contributes to building a motivational mechanism and it mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee behavior related to the job. Bogler & Nir (2012) in their study on teachers found that empowerment mediates the relationship between organizational support perceived by teachers and their satisfaction. The study also revealed that status and respect are important dimensions of empowerment which predicts satisfaction. Research done in a Korean organization by Baek and Taejo (2013), examined how career satisfaction is influenced by transformational leadership and psychological empowerment. Their study states that career satisfaction would be high when employees perceive high meaning, competency, and self-determination. Arogundade & Arogundade's (2015) research on the psychological empowerment at workplace revealed that a psychological empowerment is directly related to an individual's success in their career. They also stated that psychological empowerment impacts career satisfaction. Organizations would have high productivity and employees would be more satisfied with their career, if the focus is on empowerment

Career satisfaction would be high when employees perceive high meaning, competency, and self-determination.

of employees. Based on the above, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H3: There will be a significant positive relationship between employee empowerment and career satisfaction of women employees.

H4: There will be a significant impact of empowerment as a moderating variable for organizational commitment-career satisfaction relationship.

Sample & Procedure

Women employees were approached for investigations of variables

in this study. Mainly women working in private organizations have been the respondents. Although 300 women employees working mainly in private organizations in India have been contacted, the authors received 246 questionnaires with a response rate of 82%. After an initial review of the questionnaire, 236 completed were taken further for analysis and investigations. The demographic profiles of the sample are shown in Table 1. All the participants were approached in person and privacy of their answers was assured. The data was assessed through descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression using SPSS 21.

Table 1 Descriptive of Demographic Factors (N=234)

Variables		Frequency	Variables		Frequency
Marital Status	Married	143	Experience	1-5	66
	Unmarried	91		6-10	112
Age	20-25	37		11-15	38
	26-30	69		16-20	12
	31-35	71		Above 20	6
	36-40	32			
	Above 40	25			

Measures

Organizational Commitment

An 18-item organizational commitment scale developed by Meyer et al., (1993) was used in the present study. The scale has three components viz., affective, normative, and continuance commitments. The responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale, 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Some of the items were reversely coded. Statements like 'I do not feel emotion-

ally attached to this organization' and 'I owe a great deal to my organization' were the part of the survey. Cronbach reliability of the scale was found to be .75.

Career Satisfaction

For measuring career satisfaction, a 5-items scale of career satisfaction developed by Greenhaus et al (1990) has been used. Sample statements like "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career" and "I am satisfied with the progress I have

made toward meeting my goals for advancement” were part of the survey. Cronbach alpha was found to be .71.

Employee Empowerment

W. Kirk Roller’s instrument for measuring employee empowerment was used in the present study. The scale consisted of 15 items measuring dimensions

of autonomy, participation, and responsibility. The responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale, 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Statements like “I have the freedom to decide how to do my job” and “I am personally responsible for the work I do” were part of the survey. The instrument was found to have a high reliability and validity .81.

Fig. 1 Hypothesized Model

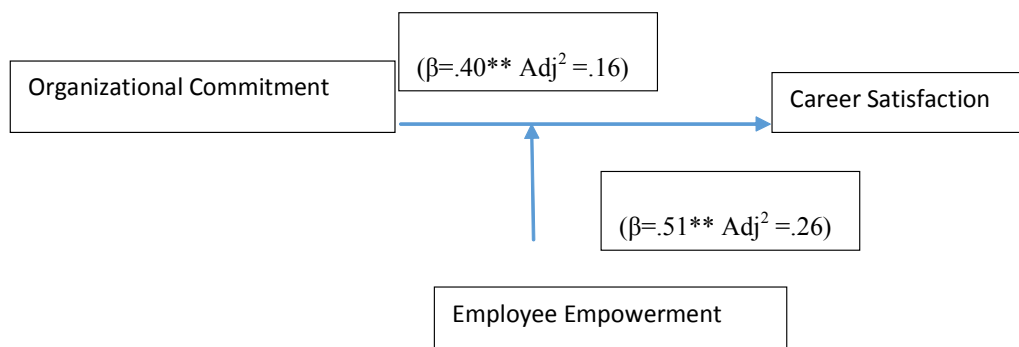


Table 2 Means, Standard Deviations, Inter-correlations reliability of the Variables (N=234)

S.No	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Organizational Commitment	53.94	7.98	<i>.75</i>		
2	Employee Empowerment	52.57	6.88	.39**	<i>.81</i>	
3	Career Satisfaction	17.89	3.11	.40**	.46**	<i>.71</i>

Note: ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; Reliability is explained diagonally in italics

It can be observed from Table 2 that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction (r=.40, ** p < 0.01) thus, stating first hypothesis that there would be a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction of women employees. A positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and employee em-

powerment (r=.39, ** p < 0.01) proved the second hypothesis of the study that there would be a positive and significant relationship between employee empowerment and organizational commitment of women

There would be a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction of women employees.

employees. The third hypothesis of the study that there would be a positive and significant relationship between employee empowerment and career satisfaction of women employees is also proven by the result ($r=.40$, $** p < 0.01$). In order to

prove the last and final hypothesis of the study that there will be a significant impact of empowerment as a moderating variable for organizational commitment-career satisfaction relationship, we conducted moderator regression analysis.

Table 3 Results of Moderated Regression Analysis: Predictor Variable-Career Satisfaction; Moderator Variable-Employee Empowerment; Criterion Variables-Career Satisfaction

Predictor and Moderator	Main Effect of Organizational Commitment (OC)		Main Effect of Employee Empowerment (EE)		Interaction Effect of OC*EE	
	Beta	Adj R ²	Beta	Adj R ²	Beta	Adj R ²
Criterion Variables Career Satisfaction	.40**	.16	.46**	.21	.51**	.26

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

There would be a significant impact of empowerment as a moderating variable for organizational commitment-career satisfaction relationship.

It can be observed from the results in Table 3 that after interaction of organizational commitment with employee empowerment, beta value increased from .40 to .51 and Adj R² increased from .16 to .26 thus, indicating positive moderation effect and proving the fourth hypothesis of the study that there would be a significant impact of empowerment as a moderating variable for organizational commitment-career satisfaction relationship.

Discussion

Dynamics of the relationship and interplay of gender has been an important force to practitioners and researchers (Agrawal, 2015). The present study has

investigated the relationship between organizational commitment, employee empowerment and career satisfaction of women employees. The result of the analysis is in agreement with our hypotheses that organizational commitment and career satisfaction have a positive relationship. The study also states that employee empowerment has a positive relationship with the organizational commitment of female gender. This is in consensus with the work of Ongori and Shunda (2008), that employee empowerment builds organizational commitment of the employees. The study states that women empowerment in the organization would positively influence the relationship between organizational commitment & career satisfaction. The result of the study is in agreement with the work of Arogundade & Arogundade (2015) that psychological empowerment leads to an individual success within their career. Forstenlechner and Baruch (2013) stated that authority to take a decision is higher among male employees representing

nepotistic behavior in favor of male employees. Therefore, by empowering female employees, organizations would be able to bring equity in authority to take a decision. This would result in higher career satisfaction as established in this research. This is the pioneer study as the relationship between organizational commitment, employee empowerment and career satisfaction have not been studied earlier. The study is unique as this relationship has been established for women employees, making it more relevant in the present time. Percentage of married women in the sample was 61. Therefore for married women in the age group of 26 years and above, empowerment would significantly moderate the relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction. The general belief is that married women would need considerable work-life balance hence married women may value empowerment, participation and involvement more and would have a critical perspective on their career growth in the organization. Empowerment would also bring flexibility and decision making which also facilitate work-life balance. Also increase in beta value from .40 to .51 indicates that employee empowerment has a significant impact on the relationship between organizational commitment and career satisfaction. Therefore to ensure that women employees with high organizational commitment are satisfied with their career in the organization, policies and practices are needed in organizations to facilitate high empowerment among them. Else organization may find it difficult to retain and have high performing women employees

even when they have a commitment to the organization. In absence of women empowerment resulting in low career satisfaction, organizations and society would witness low career advancement for women employees as stated by Sayers (2012).

Managerial Implications

In real life, managers are facing a challenge in retaining female employees in the organization and increasing career satisfaction among them. Presence of women employees at all levels in the organization brings benefits of diversity and innovation. Ensuring career satisfaction among women employees is a challenge for organizations, which has been addressed in the paper. Low satisfaction with career may result in low productivity and attrition, especially among women employees. The paper brings insights for managers that high commitment among employees is not sufficient to be positive about performance and satisfaction among women employees. Involvement and participation which lead to empowerment of an individual make her more satisfied with work life and increases career satisfaction resulting in a long-term benefit for the organization.

Social Implications

The scenario of working women globally is that mostly they still are not at par when it comes to decision making and significant role in key positions. Specifically, in developing countries the percentage of women in workforce decreases as they move up the ladder. Reasons for

this scenario are organizational as well as social. Organizations have an important role in society by ensuring the growth of women within organizations resulting in an increase in motivation for women to be part of the workforce. This study states that women should be empowered which would not only help organizations by increasing satisfaction among them but also brings change in societal perspective of involvement and participation of women employees.

Limitations

In this study the sample mostly consisted of women employees working in private organization. A more generic study with employees from both public and private sector would bring the scenario of women empowerment in public institutions also. Further with the purpose of convenience and availability, sample mostly consists of female employees at the middle level. Further research can be undertaken with women employees in senior management positions. Researchers, therefore, can further explore dimensions of empowerment for women employees in specific which positively influence career satisfaction. Further, research in this area would bring the focus of the practitioners and organizations on factors and dimensions to increase empowerment and satisfaction of women employees.

Conclusion

It is a widespread belief that increasing diversity by the presence of women employees in the workforce increases the

performance of the organization. The purpose of the study is to establish the relationship among women empowerment, organizational commitment, and career satisfaction. This study is a pioneer in conducting research on the impact of organizational commitment and women empowerment on career satisfaction. The study indicates the positive moderating impact of employee empowerment on the career satisfaction among women employees with high organizational commitment. The positive belief of empowerment and involvement in the decision making results in higher career satisfaction among women employees enabling higher performance. Empowerment may be more important for female employees because of the higher need to balance between work and family life. With higher empowerment, women employees would have more resource and would be able to take the decision to use resources more conveniently. These decisions would impact both work and family life. This would result in higher career satisfaction. The study reveals the need for policies which increases participation of women employees in the decision making in the organization. Empowerment has always been important for increasing involvement of employees and motivating them for higher performance. However, for women employee's empowerment may be more important factor. This is because, when they can take

Empowerment may be more important for female employees because of the higher need to balance between work and family life.

decisions impacting themselves and the organization, women would be better able to balance demand at work and their own family life. The outcome of the study brings insight on the importance and focus needed for empowering women employees in the organization.

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