

Are Employee Motivation, Commitment and Job Involvement Inter-related: Evidence from Banking Sector of Pakistan

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Abstract

Well motivated and committed employees with high levels of job involvement are considered to be the most important asset for any organization which serves as key to quality and productivity improvements. The current research study attempts to find the association among three important job related behavior of employees i.e. motivation, commitment and job involvement. Present study was conducted in banking sector of Pakistan. 400 banking personnel were randomly selected and responses were sought out from them by means of questionnaire. Out of total 400 distributed questionnaires, 305 were received back and 285 were considered as valid and then analyzed using SPSS 16. A significant but somewhat weak positive relationship of motivation, commitment and job involvement was found with each other. Some important implications for future research are also derived from the study.

Keywords: Motivation, Commitment, Job Involvement, Banking Sector, Pakistan

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly changing corporate environment, organizations from all around the world want to use maximum potential of their human resources to stay ahead of the fierce competition and survive in the middle of the quest. Great organizations are built on the inherent value of their human resources as motivated and committed employees almost always allow an organization to grow faster than similar competitive organizations. Well motivated and committed workforce feels that organization value them and they are playing an essential role within their organization which significantly enhance both employees' as well as organizational performance (Shore, & Martin, 1989; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellaty, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989). Employee motivation and commitment is very important for an organization's success. Motivated and committed employees with high levels of job involvement are considered as an important asset to an organization and keeping the employee motivation, commitment and job involvement up is always rewarding to a business as motivated and committed employees are more productive and higher productivity usually results in higher profits (Denton, 1987).

In a service industry such as banking sector, employees who are highly motivated and committed to the organization provide excellent quality customer services and keeping the customer happy and satisfied is always positive for a business. The level of employee motivation, commitment and job involvement could be gauged by the volume of employees' turn over during a certain period of time. Employees with high job involvement are more focused towards their jobs (Hackett, Lapierre, & Hausdorf, 2001), likely to have less turnover and leaving intentions (Blau, 1986; Blau, & Boal, 1987; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993) and are more motivated to stay with the organization (Bashaw, & Grant, 1994; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). They grow in expertise and thus become even more valuable to their employer and the organization. Importance of motivation, commitment and job involvement in the workplace is obvious as well motivated and committed employees with high levels of job involvement affect both their own as well as organizational outcomes (Lawler, 1986). Employees with high levels of commitment and job involvement go on work in time and are usually more motivated to put extra efforts, on the other hand, employees having minor level of commitment and job involvement are least motivated and have more excuses such as illness or transportation problems etc. as compared to highly committed employees (Blau, 1986; Blau, & Boal, 1987).

Employee commitment is considered to be a very important factor since it ameliorates a friendly atmosphere within an organization, making the entire workforce enthusiastically work together in order to achieve individual employees' as well as organizational goals (Col, 2004). In such a way, it is truly right to speak about the commitment as an excellent uniting factor that enhances the work effectiveness of employees and, therefore, leads to positive and long lasting organizational outcomes not only through higher motivation and job involvement of employees (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellaty, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989) but also through creation of a positive and cooperative atmosphere within an organization and uniting of motivated and committed workforce in their work for the improvement of overall functioning of an organization. Considering the importance of human resources in the success of an organization, the current research study was conducted in banking sector of Pakistan and attempts to find the association among three important job related behavior of employees i.e. motivation, commitment and job involvement which are considered to be most important factors for enhancing employees' as well as organizational performance.

2. Literature Review

Employee Motivation is a widely practiced exercise today across all corporate sectors regardless of their size of being either big or small. Just like the psychological need for any individual to be appreciated over his efforts, the same idea of thought stems the need for rewards and recognition in order to increase the work drive of an employee and increase his efficiency and seriousness towards work. Today organizations from all around the world strive to motivate its employees in order to survive and compete in dynamic corporate environment successfully as motivation puts human resources into action, improves level of efficiency of employees, enables the organizations to attain sustainable competitive advantage over the rivals and ultimately leads to the achievement of organizational goals. The concept of motivation is derived from a Latin word "movere" which means "to move". Motivation is what moves the employees from dullness to interest. It is just like the steering of the vehicles that directs and shapes employees' activities. Motivation has been defined as the "Drive or energy that compels people to act with energy and persistence towards some goal" (Berman, Bowman, West, & Wart, 2010, p. 180). "Motivation is a goal-directed behavior which involves taking a course of action which leads to the attainment of a goal or a specific valued reward" (Armstrong, 2006, p. 252).

According to DeCenzo and Robbins (1996), motivation is the willingness or desire to do something, conditioned by the activity or action's ability to satisfy some need. Robbins and Coulter (1996) described the motivation as the willingness of an employee to exert some effort or action in order to achieve the organizational goals, conditioned by the action's ability to satisfy employee's individual needs. Employees' motivation at work can take place in two ways. First, Intrinsic motivation-people who are intrinsically or internally motivated generally don't need external rewards such as pay or praise to do well in a job. They are self-motivated because they enjoy performing the actual tasks or enjoy the challenge of successfully completing the tasks. Second, Extrinsic motivation-People, who are externally motivated, generally don't enjoy the tasks but are motivated to perform well by some kind of reward, pay, promotion, praise or avoid any negative consequences. Intrinsic motivation is likely to have a strong and longer-term effect on employees because it is inherent in employees and not imposed from the management, is the best form of motivation (Armstrong, 2006; Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson, & Capwell, 1959; Ekerman, 2006).

The importance of employee motivation is obvious. In fact, it is one of the most important and essential factors for the achievement of employees' and ultimately organizational targets and goals (Berman, Bowman, West, & Wart, 2010). Motivation increases the job involvement and satisfaction of employees by making the work more meaningful and interesting as well as keeps the employees more productive and improves their subsequent job performance (Kamery, 2004; Nelson, 1996; Ekerman, 2006). Lord (2002) argued that productivity is a function of employee motivation. The motivators such as accomplishment, pay, job responsibility, promotions and recognitions enhance the job satisfaction of employees which creates confidence, loyalty, and commitment and improve productivity of the organization. Organizational researchers claim that delivering the quality customer services are crucial for the organizations to survive and compete in today's dynamic market driven system effectively and it is almost impossible without well motivated and skilled human resources as they hold fundamental importance in enhancing the productivity and performance of the organization (Islam, & Ismail, 2008). Employee motivation is in fact an essential component of business operations – high motivation coincides with job satisfaction, a sense of pride in one's work, a lifelong commitment to one's organization, and the desire to put the achievement of organizational goals ahead of personal goals, thereby enhancing an organization's performance and productivity (Linz, Good, & Huddleston, 2006).

The term "commitment" also holds great significance in almost every sphere of our lives. So how could corporate environment remain devoid of it? Employee commitment has been defined as the "Employee effort to achieve organizational objectives. It embraces both motivation (actions to make people work more effectively) and self-motivation or empowerment (getting people to motivate themselves)" (Holden, 1998, p. 11). "Employee commitment is the loyalty and support of workforce to the goals of organization" (Begin, 1997, p. 20). It is a psychological attachment felt by the employee for the organization (O'Reily, & Chatman, 1986). It is in fact an employee's orientation towards the organization in terms of his loyalty and involvement in the organization (Robbins, & Coutler, 1999). Greenberg and Baron (2000) described employee commitment as an extent to which an employee identifies and is involved with his organization or is unwilling to leave it. Three general themes of employee commitment exist in the workplace: Affective commitment – employees' emotional & psychological attachment and involvement in the organization; Continuance commitment – continuation of employment inspired by the costs and benefits associated with leaving the organization, and normative commitment – obligation to continue employment with the organization resulting from externally exerted pressure. Of the above three forms of commitment, affective commitment is considered most desirable for an organization, as employees with high levels of affective commitment are more likely to willingly contribute to the organizational performance and productivity, and even do more than it is expected from them (Meyer, & Allen, 1991; Dunham, Grube, & Castaneda, 1994).

The importance of employee commitment in the workplace has been recognized all around the world since a long time. The performance of an organization highly depends on the commitment of its employees; more the employees are committed, better the performance of the entire organization (Holden, 1998; Shore, & Martin, 1989; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellaty, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Siders, George, & Dharwadkar, 2001; Jaramillo, Mulki, & Marshall, 2005). In fact, employee commitment is the key factor that determines the success of an organization in today's modern business world since, in the situation of increasing competition and constant technological advancements an organization needs to have skilled, reliable and committed human resources to maintain its competitive position in the market (Feldman, & Moore, 1982). At the same time, effectiveness, quality and productivity of employees' work still remain the major contributing factors to the progress of the company and employee commitment is considered as key to quality and productivity improvements (Denton, 1987).

On the other hand, nowadays it is evident that financial stimuli solely can hardly inspire and motivate the employees to do their part of work more effectively and productively. In such a situation, the only factor which turns to be paramount importance is employees' commitment since it is due to the highly committed employees, organizations can produce positive results in terms of productivity and performance. Employee commitment has variously been found to be positively and significantly correlated to lots of positive organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction (Zanini, 2007; Bateman, & Strasser, 1984; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), Motivation (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Zanini, 2007), job involvement (Allen, & Meyer, 1996; Meyer, & Allen, 1997; Carmeli, 2005; Mathieu, & Zajac, 1990; Ketchand, & Strawser, 2001) and attendance (low rates of absenteeism)(Dalton, & Mesch, 1990; Ho, 1997) which resultantly enhance employees' and ultimately organizational performance and productivity (Zanini, 2007).

Top performing organizations strongly believe in the concept of employee commitment as committed employees display better job performances in terms of facilitating the customers, willingness to welcome new challenges, desire to stay with the organization for longer periods and make significant contributions in gaining sustainable competitive advantage for the organization in today's dynamic service industry (Schuler, & Jackson, 1999; Jackson, 2004; Janssen, 2004; Conger, & Kanungo, 1988; Bowen, & Lawler, 1995; Lashley, 1995, 1999; Quinn, & Spreitzer, 1997; Tschohl, 1997; Forrester, 2000). Also, employee commitment may be cost saving since committed employees are highly motivated that means that they don't need much financial rewards for their work, though it doesn't necessarily means that such top performing employees should not receive financial rewards and recognitions at all, but the expenses of the organization may decrease at this point (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Zanini, 2007).

Job involvement is also considered as an important employees' job related behavior and has been defined as an employee's psychological identification or commitment to the job (Kanungo, 1982). It is the degree to which one is psychologically engaged in, preoccupied with and concerned with one's current job (Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). The construct of job involvement is somewhat similar to employee commitment in that both the concepts are concerned with employees' identification with job related experiences. However such constructs differ in that job involvement is more closely related with identification with employees' immediate job related activities whereas employee commitment refers to employees' psychological attachment to their employers (Brown, 1996). It may be possible for example to be involved in a particular job but not be loyal and committed to their employers or vice versa (Blau & Boal, 1987).

Organizational researchers from all around the world consider the job involvement as an important factor which influence both employees' as well as organizational outcomes (Lawler, 1986). Employees with high levels of job involvement make the job a central part of their personal character and focus most of their attention on their jobs (Hackett, Lapierre, & Hausdorf, 2001). They are likely to exhibit less unexcused lateness and unexcused absences than employees with lower levels of job involvement (Blau, 1986; Blau, & Boal, 1987). Also job involvement is negatively related to intentions to quit and positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational climate perceptions (Mcelroy, Morrow, Crum, & Dooley, 1995; Mcelroy, Morrow, & Wardlow, 1999). It also promotes organizational citizenship behaviors as OCBs are more influenced by what employees think and feel about their jobs and that job involvement shows a positive attitude towards the job (Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002; Rotenberry, & Moberg, 2007).

Fostering the job involvement is an essential organizational objective because lots of organizational researchers claim it to primary source of organizational effectiveness (Pfeffer, 1994), employee commitment (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellaty, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Mathieu, & Zajac, 1990; Ketchand, & Strawser, 2001) and motivation (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). These links stem from the well known notion that being involved in one's work enhances motivational processes which in turn influence one's job performance and other relevant organizational outcomes like absenteeism and turnover (Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002). It has been found by lots of researchers across various time periods that job involvement keeps the employees motivated (Bashaw, & Grant, 1994; Hackett, Lapierre, & Hausdorf, 2001; Mcelroy, Morrow, Crum, & Dooley, 1995; Blau, 1986; Blau, & Boal, 1987) and satisfied with their jobs (Gerpott, 1990; Mathieu, & Farr, 1991; Paterson, & O'Driscoll, 1990; Shore, Newton, & Thornton, 1990) and boost the employees to put more efforts into their work and therefore tend to display higher levels of job performance (Cron, 1984; Dubinsky, & Hartley, 1986; Brown, & Leigh, 1996). Basically job involvement is really of a paramount importance since, as it has been already documented above, it significantly contributes to the motivational sphere of human resources. This means that high job involvement brings in additional commitment and motivation to work and subsequently enhances employees' and ultimately organizational performance.

3. Research Methodology

Survey methodology was used to collect the data from the respondents. Questionnaire for the survey was composed of three scales one each for employee motivation, commitment and job involvement. The scale of employee motivation was based on the previous research on the phenomenon of the employee motivation (Armstrong, 2006; DeCenzo, & Robbins, 1996; Robbins, & Coulter, 1996; Berman, Bowman, West, & Wart, 2010; Kamery, 2004; Nelson, 1996). The scale had six items. The other two scales i.e. employee commitment and job involvement were composed of 15 and 23 items respectively and were adopted from past studies (Mowday and Steers, 1979; Uygur and Kilic, 2009).

All the scales were measured using five point likert scale. Demographics of gender, age, work experience of the respondent and about the type and nature of the bank respondent is working in, were also included in the questionnaire. Seven banks out of a total forty two banks were randomly selected through lottery method and a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents i.e. banking personnel. 305 questionnaires were returned back out of which 285 were deemed complete and appropriate for the study implying a valid response rate of 71%. Data was analyzed using SPSS 16 and simple descriptive i.e. mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis was done to analyze the data.

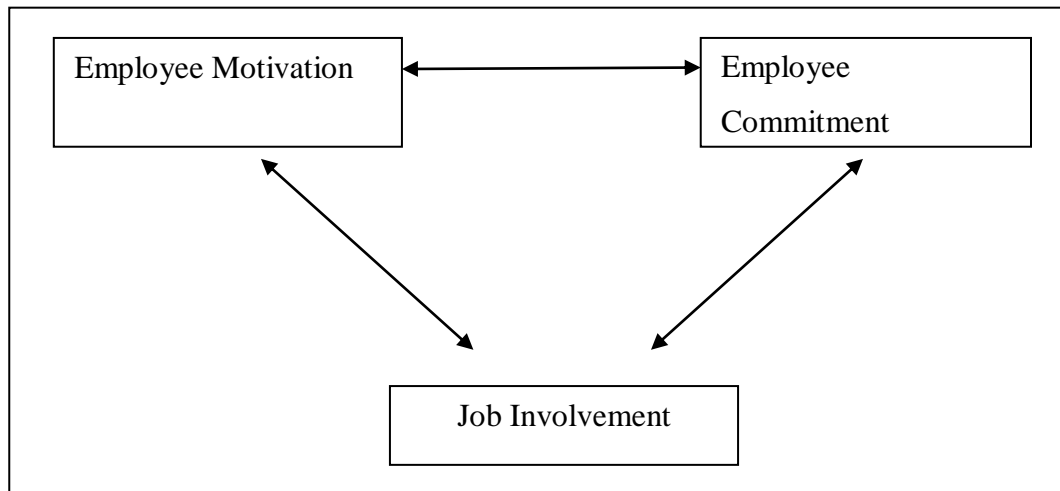


Figure 3.1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

H1: There is a positive correlation between employee motivation and employee commitment.

H2: There is a positive correlation between employee motivation and Job Involvement.

H3: There is a positive correlation between employee commitment and Job Involvement.

4. Analysis and Interpretations

Table 4.1 below provides the demographical distribution of the respondents with regard to various categories.

Table 4.1: Demographics (Categorical)

Demographics	Category	No. of respondent in category	Percentage
Type of bank	Public	24	8.4
	Private	261	91.6
	Total	285	100
Nature of Bank	Conventional	267	93.7
	Islamic	18	6.3
	Total	285	100
Level of job	Manager Grade	159	55.8
	Non manager grade	126	44.2
	Total	285	100
Gender	Male	240	84.2
	Female	45	15.8
	Total	285	100
Qualification	Graduation	105	36.8
	Masters	159	55.8
	Others	21	7.4
	Total	285	100

The respondents were distributed according to type of bank, nature of bank, their respective level of job, gender and their qualification. As provided by table out of a total 285 sample 261 respondents belonged to the private banks while remaining 24 were from public banks, the reason for the lower ratio of respondents from public bank is that only one bank i.e. National Bank of Pakistan is public in the recent era. The ratio of respondents was also higher from conventional banks i.e. 93.7% and much lower from Islamic banks i.e. 6.3%. Thus, this study has a limitation with regard to number of respondents from Islamic banks included in this study and would not be generalize able to this category of banks. Further, we have 159 (55.8%) respondents from manager grade, while other 126 (44.2%) were from non manager grade for level of job. Gender distribution indicates a lower number of female respondents i.e. 45 (15.8) that could be due to the less number of employments of females in the banking sector of Pakistan. For qualification 55.8% of the respondents were master degree holders, 36.8% were graduate degree holders, while remaining 7.4% did some diploma/ course like ACCA etc. Moreover, the respondents were aged between 21 years of age to 56 years having experience ranging from 1 year to 25 years of experience with the banking sector.

Table 4.2: Summary statistics of variables used in the study

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employee Motivation	3.78	.566
Employee Commitment	3.54	.520
Job Involvement	3.51	.501

Table 4.2 provides the mean and standard deviation of the variables used in the study. The mean score for employee motivation, employee commitment and job involvement is 3.78, 3.54 and 3.51 respectively out of a highest possible score of 5. The mean value for all the variables is above the average score of 3 and standard deviation is also less than 1 indicating that on the average the employees of banking sector in the Pakistan are well motivated, committed and are involved in their jobs.

Table 4.3: Correlations

		Employee Motivation	Employee Commitment
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.189**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
Job Involvement	Pearson Correlation	.172**	.293**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000

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

Table 4.3 above provides the correlation analysis of the variables used in this study. All variables used in this study i.e. employee motivation, employee commitment and job involvement are positively correlated with each other and these relationships are significant at 1% level of significance. The relationships on the other hand, seem weak as indicated by the low values of the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient between employee commitment and employee motivation is .189, between employee motivation and job involvement is .172 and between job involvement and employee commitment is .293 depicting comparatively strong relationship between job involvement and employee commitment among other all associations established in this study.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Employees are the real assets of the organizations. Building a committed and motivated workforce is considered as the main objective and a key to success in the competitive environment of today. This goal if achieved could serve as a competitive edge of the organization and has a potential to enhance the profitability of the organization. The employee involvement in the job also has productive implications. All these job related behaviors seem to be interrelated. Present study found a positive and significant relationship between employee motivation, employee commitment and job involvement. The relationship although is weak but significant for all variables. These findings indicate that if HR manager device some strategy to improve one of these employee job related behaviors, the other behaviors would automatically improve. This also implies that factors affecting one of these behaviors would also have an impact on the other job related behaviors as well. This is the simple policy implication of this study. This research is also important in the academic context.

The lack of evidence with regard to management and organizational theory and practices in Pakistan requires the probing and reinvestigation of all the lacking dimensions of the theory regarding management and organizational behavior. This research also highlights the importance of one job behavior in a context of its impact on the other behaviors. Policy makers should take care to devise the strategies with regard to impact of these strategies on the other behaviors and thus optimal strategies could be identified which would optimally enhance all the job related behavior. We call for more research in this area to understand the interrelated impact of other job related behaviors with each other to uncover the body of knowledge and new dimensions of behavioral research.

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