

# Demographic Factors Affecting Organizational Commitment of Lecturers

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**Abstract:** Many studies have confirmed the organizational commitment is an important factor deciding the success or failure of the organization. However, how to commit employees with the organization is a challenge for many agencies and organizations. This study was conducted to determine the demographic factors that affect organizational commitment of university lecturers. The study was conducted at a university with a convenient sampling method so the results are not generalized to all university lecturers. The results showed that there were low correlation between years of work and continuance commitment; between gender and affective commitment; between highest degree earned with normative commitment. There was a moderate correlation between position hold and affective commitment. There was a low negative correlation between age and normative commitment. The correlation between other demographic variables with OC was negligible.

*Keywords:* Organizational commitment, demographic factor, faculty member.

## 1. Introduction

Organizational commitment (OC) of an employee is a topic that has received considerable attention by researchers and managers. One way to increase productivity in many organizations is to increase employee commitment. A better understanding of organizational commitment and factors associated with them helps managers guide employees' activities in a desired direction. The turnover rate can be reduced with a higher level of organizational commitment. Therefore, it is

important for an organization to study OC of employees. Since most of the works done dealing with organizational commitment provides an abundance of information regarding the area of business and industry but a very limited amount of information in the area of higher education. A growing need exists to understand the impact of organizational commitment upon higher education. Because educational institutions are different from commercial organizations, they have to develop a different management strategy. As stated by Wittenauer (1980) "With the ever increasing pressure on higher education for accountability, the advent of consumerism, legalism and the

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tight economic situation. it is necessary that higher education administration be aware of those factors which help recruit and retain faculty who are of the highest caliber relative to teaching, research and public service". Furthermore, because prior research in the literature suggests the possibility that demographic factors may differentially relate to the OC in different setting, so it is necessary to exploit the effect of demographic factors to OC of faculty member in higher educational institution.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research design

The main objective of this study was to understand demographic factors affecting organizational commitment of faculty members. Therefore, the research methodology used in the study was basically quantitative. Specifically, a descriptive-correlational survey research design was applied. The survey was conducted at the Nong Lam University, located in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The population of the study comprises of faculty members from all departments. Since only one organization was surveyed, the researcher's place of employment, generalizability from this convenience sample to employees outside of the target population is not recommended because of the lack of statistical random sampling in various organizations.

### 2.2. Method of gathering data

Data were collected by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two independent sections including socio-demographic profile questions and organizational commitment questions. Part I of

the questionnaire, organizational commitment questions, was adapted from the Three Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey which was developed by Meyer, Allen (1991) to measure respondents' commitment to their organization. There are three subscales which are affective, normative and continuance commitment. Part II, the socio-demographic profile questions, was developed by the researcher. Several Likert-type items was used to determine the level of OC. Indicators on the Likert-Type Scale range from 1 ( Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

### 2.3. Validity - three component model (TCM) employee commitment survey

Allen and Mayer (1996) evaluated the construct validity of the three commitment scale through a narrative review of research in which they have been used. The evidence for construct validity was provided by factor analysis: (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).

For the present study, twenty four items were selected to measure three dimensions of organizational commitment. There were fifteen items that have significant high loading scores, nine items were deleted from further analysis since they show low loading. Results are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Result of factor analysis for organizational commitment inventory

Items	Component		
	1	2	3
AC3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	.743		
AC2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.	.720		
AC1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	.696		
AC7. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	.693		
AC6. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. (R)	.573		
AC5. I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization. (R)	.340		
AC8. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. (R)	.499		
CC7. One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.		.743	
CC6. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.		.701	
CC8. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice -another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here.		.697	
CC3. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.		.654	
CC2. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.		.420	
NC2_I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization. (R)			.643
NC3_Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me. (R)			.613
NC8_I do not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' is sensible anymore. (R)			.457

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.*

*Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.*

*a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.*

#### 2.4. Reliability

Allen and Mayer (1996) evaluated the reliability of the three commitment scale. The median reliability across 40 studies, representing more than 16,000 employees from a wide variety of organizations and occupations, were .85, .79, .73 for affective, continuance, and normative commitment respectively and with a few exceptions, all reliability estimates exceeds .70. Both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis validated the TCM and factors were stable over time (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Meyer et al. (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates and consequences of the Three-Component Model of OC, the finding suggested that the model might indeed be

applicable in other countries and cultures outside North America. However, care should be taken in attempting to apply the model and measures outside North America. In this research, the Cronbach's coefficient alphas for subsection organizational commitment were as follow: affective commitment ( $r=.779$ ), continuance commitment ( $r=.654$ ), normative commitment (.66), the adopted instrument was concluded to be reliable.

Since the purpose of this study was not to make individual predictions based on the organizational scale, but rather to investigate broad trends and relationship between certain variables, the instruments were considered to be psychometrically acceptable.

### 2.5. Statistical treatment

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS® Version 18.0 for Windows). There are eight items in part I of the questionnaire, the commitment scales, have been worded such that strong agreement actually reflects a lower level of commitment. These are referred to as “reverse-keyed” items (identified by “R” after the statement in the questionnaire). These items are included to encourage respondents to think about each statement carefully rather than mindlessly adapting a pattern of agreeing or disagreeing with the statements. All reverse-keyed statements were recoded using ‘Transform’ function as following: 1 = 7, 2 = 6, 3=5, 4=4. 5=3, 6=2, 7=1. This is done so that all the negatively worded statements’ score were reversed and transformed to reflect them in positive manner to enable correct relationship analysis can be carried out. For scoring purposes, scores on, and averages were computed based only on items relevant to the specific scale. Affective, normative and continuance commitment scores were obtained by averaging participants’ scores on each subscale of part II of the questionnaire. Scores on 15 items were averaged to yield a summary score reflecting total organizational commitment.

Data from the first part of the questionnaire has ordinal value and were assumed to be interval. For part II, the continuous variables age and years of work were grouped into 5-year age categories. The variables such as age, years of work, percentage of time devoting to job activities were treated as interval data. Highest earned degree, position (power status) were treated as ordinal data. Gender variable were coded as nominal data. If an item in the questionnaire was left blank by a respondent or

if a response was marked more than once, that answer was treated and coded as missing data (=9) and not included in the analysis.

## 3. Reviewed of related literature

### 3.1. Organizational commitment: definitions and its antecedents

Many definitions exist in the literature for organizational commitment. Organizational commitment refers to degree to which an employee identifies himself with the organizational goals and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. Organizational commitment does not have a generally acceptable definition among authors. However, according to Mathis and Jackson (2000) organizational commitment can be defined as “the degree to which employees believe in and accept organizational goals and desire to remain with the organization.”. Organizational commitment, as defined by Mowday, others (1979), is “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 226). They mentioned three characteristics of organizational commitment: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values (identification), a willingness to invest effort on behalf of the organization (involvement), and a strong intent or desire to remain with the organization (loyalty). These characteristics imply that the members of the organization wish to be active players in the organization, have an impact on what is going on in it, feel that they have high status within it, and are ready to contribute beyond what is expected of them (Bogler R. and Somech A., 2004).

O’Reilly and Chatman (1986) supported the notion that OC should be seen as

multidimensional construct. They defined organizational commitment as a psychological attachment to the organization predicted by three independent constructs, those of compliance, identification and internalization. Compliance is defined as involvement for the extrinsic rewards. Identification is involvement with the organization because of the desire for affiliation and is an important mechanism in the developing process of psychological attachment. Internalization is involvement based on the individual's acceptance of the organization's values. Absenting or resigning from the job versus job satisfaction is a predictor of organizational commitment. The concept has been very popular in the recent times. Organizational commitment depends upon job enrichment factor and degree to which the workers enjoy autonomy and freedom of action while performing.

The most popular multidimensional approach to OC is that of Meyer and his colleagues. Meyer and Allen (1991) stated that organizational commitment is "a psychological state that a) characterizes the employee's relationships with the organization, and b) has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization" (p. 67).

Allen & Meyer (1984) initially viewed organizational commitment as two-dimensional namely, affective and continuance. Allen & Meyer (1990, p 6) defined normative commitment as "the employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organization". Consequently, the concept of organizational commitment is described as a tri-dimensional concept, those are: *affective, continuance and normative*. They defined: "Affective Commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement with the organization.

Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so. Continuance Commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so. Finally, Normative Commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization." (Meyer & Allen (1991) p. 67)

In other word, employees with a strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they *want to*; those with strong continuance commitment remain because they *need to*; and those with strong normative commitment remain because they feel they *ought to* do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Common to all of the three types of commitment is the view that commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization, and commitment has implication for the decision to continue or discontinue membership in the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment remain with an organization because they want to, those with a strong continuance commitment remain because they have to, and those with a strong normative commitment remain because they feel they ought to (Meyer, Allen and Smith, 1993).

Meyer & Allen (1991) have used affective, continuance, and normative commitment to capture the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment. However, affective commitment is considered a more effective measurement of organizational commitment. Meyer & Allen (1997) explaining that employees with strong affective commitment would be

motivated to higher levels of performance and make more meaningful contributions than employees who expressed continuance or normative commitment.

Using the three major components, Irving and others (1997) investigated the relationship between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and the outcome measures of job satisfaction. Total participants for the study included 232 employees. Results revealed that job satisfaction was positively related to both affective and normative commitment. However, job satisfaction was negatively related to continuance commitment. All three types of commitment were negatively related to turnover intentions, with continuance commitment having the strongest negative relationship. Cohen & Kirchmeyer (1995) undertook a study titled "A multidimensional approach to the relations between organizational commitment and nonwork participation" to investigate the relationship between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and the non-work measure of resource enrichment. They found the positive relationships between resource enrichment and both affective and normative commitment. However, the relationship between continuance commitment and resource enrichment was negative. In effect, employees

who were staying with the organization because they wanted to or felt they ought to, indicated higher involvement and enjoyment with work activities. Whereas, employees who were staying with the organization because they felt they needed to indicated less involvement and dissatisfaction with work activities (Cohen & Kirchmeyer, 1995).

There are hundreds of studies have been conducted to identify factors involved in the development of organizational commitment. Studies conducted into the relationship between personal or demographic variables and organizational commitment revealed that there is a degree of relationship between personal or demographic variables like gender, age, marital status, and years of working experience or tenure, educational qualification, status, race and so on with organizational commitment. Baron and Greenberg (1990) proved that older employees are seem to have higher level of organizational commitment than other age groups. Meyer and Allen (1997) described that organizational commitment is associated with gender.

#### 4. Result and discussion

##### 4.1. Sample demographic characteristics. Age of respondents

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 30 years old	59	29.1	29.1
From 31 to 35	41	20.2	49.3
From 36 to 40	25	12.3	61.6
From 41 to 45	15	7.4	69.0
From 46 to 50	14	6.9	75.9
From 51 to 55	21	10.3	86.2
Above 56	28	13.8	100.0
Total	203	100.0	

Note: Mean=39.23, Median=36.0, Mode=29, Range=39, Standard deviation=11.36

#### 4.2. Gender of respondents

Respondents were asked to state their gender. The analysis of the demographic variables indicates that there are more male than female respondents. The gender distribution was 66% (n=134) male and 34% (n=69) female. Table 4.2 reports the gender of faculty members participated in the research.

#### 4.3. Education level of respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education they have achieved. More than half of respondents, Fifty-five percent (n=112), have master degree as their highest education level, 21.7% (n=44) held a doctorate degree, while 23.2% (n=47) held a bachelor's degree. The table 4 describes the education levels of the respondents:

Table 3: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	134	66.0
Female	69	34.0
Total	203	100.0

Table 4: Highest educational level

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Doctorate	44	21.7	21.7	21.7
Master's	112	55.2	55.2	76.8
Bachelor's	47	23.2	23.2	100.0
Total	203	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.4. Years of work

The questionnaire also inquired about the years of work of each faculty member. Forty seven respondents (23.2%) have been working in the faculty from 1 to 5 years; forty respondents (19.7%) from 6 to 10 years; Thirty six respondents (17.7%) from 11 to 15 years; thirty respondents (14.8%) over 30 years;

twenty respondents (9.9%) from 21 to 25 years; ninety respondents (9.4%) from 16 to 20 years; and eleven respondents (5.4%) from 26 to 30 years. The mean number of years working with the University was approximately fifteen (15) years. The range was 1 to 38 years, and a standard deviation of 10.89. Years of work of faculty members are presented in the table 5 below:

Table 5: Years of work

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
From 1 to 5 years	47	23.2	23.2
From 6 to 10 years	40	19.7	42.9
From 11 to 15 years	36	17.7	60.6
From 16 to 20 years	19	9.4	70.0
From 21 to 25 years	20	9.9	79.8
From 26 to 30 years	11	5.4	85.2
Over 30 years	30	14.8	100.0
Total	203	100.0	

Note: Mean=14.6, Median=12.0, Mode=1. Rang=37, Standard deviation=10.89

#### 4.5. Position held by respondents

Table 6: Position held by respondents

Position	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Rector/Vice rector	1	.5	.5
Dean/Vice dean and the like	35	17.2	17.7
Department head	28	13.8	31.5
Lecturer	139	68.5	100.0
Total	203	100.0	

Approximately 18% of the respondents hold the rank of vice dean or higher and nearly 14% is department heads. The majority (68.5%) of the respondents were lecturers.

#### 4.6. The correlation of demographic variables with the organizational commitment

Faculty members' affective, normative and continuance commitment scores were obtained by averaging participants' scores on each subscale. Particularly, level of affective commitment was calculated by summing

responses from 7 items: AC1, AC2, AC3, AC5, AC6, AC7, AC8 of part II of the questionnaire then dividing by 7. The level of normative commitment was calculated by summing responses from 3 items: NC2, NC3, NC8 of part II of the questionnaire then dividing by 3. The level of continuance commitment was calculated by summing responses from 5 items: CC2, CC3, CC6, CC7, CC8 of part II of the questionnaire then dividing by 5. And scores on 15 items were averaged to yield a summary score reflecting total organizational commitment.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix for organizational commitment and demographic variables

		Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Age	Pearson Correlation	.121	-.139*	.184**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.085	.047	.009
	N	203	203	203
Position held	Pearson Correlation	.354**	.038	.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.589	.215
	N	203	203	203
Educational level	Pearson Correlation	.024	.165*	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.735	.019	.173
	N	203	203	203
Years of works	Pearson Correlation	.125	-.110	.180**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	.117	.010
	N	203	203	203
Gender	Correlation Coefficient	-.142*	.008	-.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	.912	.157
	N	203	203	203

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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



Table 7 indicates that the relationship between the respondents' demographic characteristics and organizational commitment. There were low correlation between years of work and continuance commitment ( $r=.18$ ,  $p<0.01$ ); between gender and affective commitment ( $r=.142$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), this finding is not in line with the study of Ellemer, Gilder, and Heuvel (1998), they found that gender was not clearly related to three forms of commitment; between highest degree earned with normative commitment ( $r=.165$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); between age and continuance commitment ( $r=.184$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). There was a low negative correlation between age and normative commitment ( $r=-.139$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). There was a moderate correlation between position hold and affective commitment. The correlation between other demographic variables with OC was negligible (0.01-0.09).

## 5. Conclusion

The findings in this study partially contradict with other studies in the literature about the correlation between demographical characteristics with OC. Luthans, McCaul, & Dodd (1985) and Allen and Meyer (1993), they found the positive relationship between age and affective commitment. Age has been regarded as a positive predictor of OC because as the employees' age increase employment options generally decrease, making their job more attractive.

Organizational commitment of employees have always been important issues and should be taken into consideration for managers. However, there is no universal set of practice can be applied as every organization and its employees are unique and thus throughoutly study before implementing any practices is crucial.

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