








“An assessment of demographic variables affecting employees’ organizational commitment in India’s thermal power sector”

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AN ASSESSMENT OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AFFECTING EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN INDIA'S THERMAL POWER SECTOR

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of three demographic variables (gender, age, and work experience) on the commitment levels of employees in the Indian thermal power sector. 379 responses were collected through convenience sampling from the executives of NTPC Ltd, a major power utility in India. The facets of organizational commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment) were assessed using a standard scale. The quantitative research was done using statistical instruments of one-way ANOVA and independent sample t-test.

The findings revealed a positive correlation between the three components of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Further, the results highlighted that age plays an essential role in organizational commitment levels; it is found that commitment increases with the age of employees ($F = 5.781, p < 0.01$). However, gender is not making any variation in organizational commitment ($F = -0.502, p < 0.01$). Therefore, male and female employees enjoy equal commitment levels toward their work. The study further indicated that work experience significantly influences organizational commitment ($F = 4.800, p < 0.01$), and it is found to be greater for more experienced employees.

Keywords

age, gender, work experience, organizational commitment, power sector

JEL Classification

C31, D21, L94, M10

INTRODUCTION

India has one of the most globally varied power sectors. As one of the most crucial infrastructure components, electricity is necessary for the country's welfare and economic growth. For a growing economy, there is a need for sufficient electrical infrastructure in place and uninterrupted power. The goal of India's electricity sector has been to provide everyone with affordable, sustainable power. India's need for power is growing significantly and is forecasted to continue in the years to come. Massive expansions of the installed generation capacity are required to meet the country's expanding need for power. By 2022, India had the fourth-highest installed renewable energy capacity, standing fourth in wind power and fifth in solar power. Among the G20 nations, only India is on track to achieve the objectives outlined in the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) projects that India's energy requirements will rise and reach 817 GW by 2030. Also, the CEA predicts that by 2029–2030, the share of renewable

energy generation will rise from 18% to 44%, while the share of thermal energy generation will fall from 78% to 52%. The government wants to install 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

As the entire sector is witnessing the see-changes, human resource practices have a vital role. As most power generating stations are remotely located with a lack of urban facilities, the power industry of India is facing a mammoth challenge to drive and develop the organizational commitment of its workforce. Organizational commitment is a significant problem in today's competitive society. This results from the fact that employees who are very committed to their company tend to identify with its fundamental principles and goals. Highly committed personnel are less likely to leave the firm since they want to continue working and advancing the company's objectives. A committed worker will be more driven to put in great time and effort to complete the required duties and be more enthusiastic about his work. That is why it is worth investigating how different demographic variables affect commitment levels of employees in the Indian thermal power sector.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of commitment as a cause and an effect of work-related attitudes is being explored by the literature on industrial psychology. Most research has focused on the organizational commitment construct, which measures employees' feelings about their employer (Meyer et al., 1993). An employee's organizational commitment is a psychological condition that ties a person to an organization depending on how closely they relate to its objectives (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). It is described as an individual's psychological link with the organization, an emotional attachment to the organization, internalization of its values and aims, and a behavioral motivation to put out an effort to support it (Solinger et al., 2008).

Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed an organizational commitment model with three components. According to the model, the affective component of organizational commitment relates to the employee's emotional investment and level of attachment to the business. It reveals how much a worker identifies with the business. Affective commitment is the desire to feel a part of the organization. Since personal and organizational ideals align, belonging to the organization is enjoyable. Affective commitment tends to predominate in the literature on organizational commitment because it is more likely to reflect early feelings and attitudes about the job and the organization (Esfahani et al., 2014).

The second element is the continuance component, which is a maintenance factor of knowing the costs

of quitting the organization. When employees leave, they give up personal benefits, including intimate work relationships, involvement in the community, professional skills, certifications specific to the company, and financial contributions to pension funds (Chen & Francesco, 2003; Bergman, 2006).

The third element is normative commitment, which refers to the employee's sense of duty to the organization to remain a part of it. According to Messner (2010), it is an employee's traditional sense of loyalty and duty, a sense of obligation to the organization. It is a normative motivating process fueled by the internalization of norms concerning organizational loyalty that incorporates "reciprocity for a reward" (Wiener, 1982; Bergman, 2006; Meyer et al., 2002). Before joining an organization, normative commitment is formed through family and cultural socialization processes (Bergman, 2006).

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), employees who have a stable affective connection to the organization continue to do so because they "want to"; employees with continuous commitment are committed as they "need to," and employees with strong normative component continue as they "ought to" do so. Further, the three categories of organizational commitment – affective, continuation, and normative – are different dimensions or variables. They contend that any employee can, to varying degrees, feel or experience any of them to stay dedicated to their company. However, most studies pertain to the affective aspect of organizational commitment.

Research also focused a lot of attention on human capital because it is crucial for growing or-

ganizations and raising productivity. The most vital resource for firms to manage is their human capital (Almekhlafi, 2022). In a case study of Iraq, Nori and Gupta (2021) highlighted the importance of industrial ecology for maximizing the value of an organization. In India, the business environment has seen significant changes throughout the last ten years. The pandemic has also added woo to it. Corporations need new talents to deal with the new atmosphere, which is full of uncertainties. IT infrastructure, technology, energy, and large-scale operations are becoming “entry criteria” rather than competitive instruments for the Indian power sector. Rana et al. (2021) found an interconnection between HR practices and corporate image building. These practices can be designed by knowing the impact of demography on the employees’ dedication toward their organization. The ability of a corporation to innovate, develop, and harness the enterprising spirit of its employees will provide it with a competitive edge. This spirit will be fulfilled if the supervisors experience psychological empowerment and are dedicated to organizations. In the Indian population, few research papers discovered that emotional, normative, and continual commitment predicted psychological empowerment (Bhatnagar, 2005).

Bano et al. (2015) found a substantial connection between organizational dedication, quality of life, and spiritual intelligence. The study also showed that the time spent working for the organization was linked to greater spiritual intelligence, which fosters connections at work and inspires loyalty to the company. Because power generation is a delicate and crucial service sector for a nation like India, organizational leaders need to possess a high level of innate motivational inspiration and sensitivity to the needs of each employee, which further leads to the increased employee commitment (Kumar et al., 2022).

Peng and Li (2021) found that employee loyalty can be improved, and knowledge and skill development can be promoted through organizational commitment. As a result, innovation performance is enhanced. According to Singh and Gupta (2015), job participation, affective and

normative organizational commitment, and team commitment showed favorable connections. The findings indicate shifts in younger generations’ emotional and normative organizational commitment, a drop in job involvement, and an increase in professional commitment. Organizations can consider this while creating their HR policies to raise employee engagement.

A few studies suggest that the employees’ age has a prominent association with the different dimensions of organizational commitment (Jena, 2015; Nifadkar & Dongre, 2014). Igbeneghu and Popoola (2010) also suggested that the employee’s age makes a difference in organizational commitment. Mowday et al. (1979) explain that the employment options available for older employees are quite a few, and they realize that staying in their present job may be more secure than leaving. Also, older workers are more devoted to their jobs than younger workers. According to Affum-Osei et al. (2015), young employees to change organizations for career growth opportunities. In contrast, Akinyemi (2014) added that younger employees were more committed.

The inferences drawn from the various research studies assessing the connection between gender and organizational commitment have been mixed. For instance, according to Doğar (2014), there is no variation in the commitment level of male and female employees. Yammarino and Dubinsky (1988), Kumasey et al. (2014), and Pala et al. (2008) concluded that male employees are more committed to the organization. Aven et al. (1993), Ahmad and Bakar (2003), and Riketta and van Dick (2005) advocated no significant impact of gender on organizational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) state that males are less devoted to their organization than women. Ashkan and Asmawi (2012) concluded that the normative feature of commitment level shows a significant variation between genders.

It is quite evident that an employee may be emotionally attached to the organization as his years of work experience increase, making it difficult to leave (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Imran et al. (2013), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), De Gieter et al. (2011), and Nifadkar and Dongre (2014) claim that experience or tenure is posi-

tively correlated with the degree of commitment. Amangala (2013) suggested that tenure significantly influences the level of commitment, whereas Chaudhry and Saini (2014) found no significant effect of work experience on organizational commitment. Tandon et al. (2020) showed that the employees' organizational commitment increases with experience. Shanti and Srivastava (2012) advocated that as the employees' length of job increases, they get promoted and get benefits which create a positive attitude toward their organization leading to enhanced commitment.

2. AIM AND HYPOTHESES

The aim of this study is to explore the role of organizational commitment and its facets for employees' organizational commitment in the Indian thermal power sector. The paper evaluates four main hypotheses as elaborated below:

- H_{01} : *The three inherent variables of organizational commitment (affective, continuous, and normative) are not positively correlated.*
- H_{02} : *Gender does not affect organizational commitment in the Indian power sector.*
- H_{03} : *Age does not affect organizational commitment in the Indian power sector.*
- H_{04} : *Work experience does not affect organizational commitment in the Indian power sector.*

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework relating the demographic variables of employees with organizational commitment and its variables.

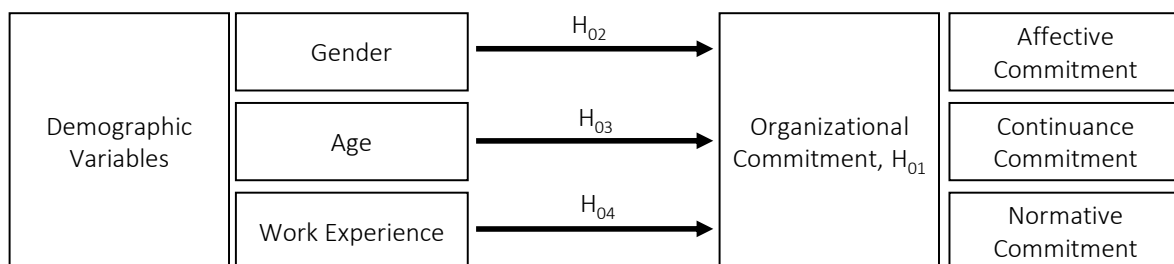


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

3. METHODS

This is a quantitative study. The convenience sampling method was used for administering the questionnaire and primary data collection through the cross-sectional survey. The target population was the executives working in managerial positions in India's major thermal power utility – NTPC Ltd. – involved in electricity generation based on the criteria of more than 1000 MW capacity. Such a sample was chosen because most of the human capital lies in this bracket of bigger power generation stations, and this represents the whole population. Table 1 depicts the demographic variables of the participants, namely gender, age, and experience.

Table 1. Demographics of the sample

Demographic variable	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	343	90.5
Female	36	9.5
Age		
Below 35 years	135	35.6
35-50 years	148	39.1
More than 50 years	96	25.3
Work experience		
0-10 years	134	35.4
10-20 years	144	38.0
20-30 years	101	26.6

Demographic information was collected using a self-developed questionnaire. The personnel were questioned about their age, gender, and length of employment. Moreover, eleven items from Allen and Meyer's (1990) organizational commitment scale were adopted. The questionnaire used a Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree (5 – Strongly agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Disagree, 1 – Strongly Disagree). The items were adopted based on expert opinions relevant to the Indian power industry.

Three items belong to affective commitment, five to continuous commitment, and three to normative commitment.

4. RESULTS

To test H_{01} , bivariate analysis was performed for correlations. All correlations are found significant under the $p < 0.01$ level. It has been noticed that all correlations are positive, so a higher score of one variable is associated with a higher value of other variables. As per Table 2, the whole correlation matrix is significant under the $p < 0.01$ level.

The internal consistency of the scale's items is tested for both the selected scale and its subscales. A trusted method for determining how well different variables are positively connected is to measure Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The inter-item correlations provide the foundation for Cronbach's alpha. The items' internal consistency will be high, and the Cronbach's coefficient will be close to 1.0 if they have a significant correlation (Nunnally, 1978).

IBM SPSS version 25 was used to analyze the data acquired to verify the dependability of the study's tools. Table 3 shows the results of the reliability test.

From Table 3 the three variables of organizational commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuous commitment) are positively correlated. Hence, null H_{01} is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

To test H_{02} , an independent sample t-test was performed. Table 4 reveals the effect of gender on the variables of organizational commitment, i.e., affective, continuance, and normative, and the overall organizational commitment.

From Table 4, concerning t-statistics, it is found that none of the three variables and overall organizational commitment had no impact on gender. No significant difference ($p < 0.01$) is found in either variable. Hence, null H_{02} is accepted.

To test H_{03} , a one-way ANOVA test is applied. Table 5 depicts the results of ANOVA analyzing

Table 2. Correlation matrix

		Correlations			
		AC_mean	CC_mean	NC_mean	OC_mean
AC_mean	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**	.219**	.315**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	379	379	379	379
CC_mean	Pearson Correlation	.430**	1	.388**	.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	379	379	379	379
NC_mean	Pearson Correlation	.219**	.388**	1	.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	379	379	379	379
OC_mean	Pearson Correlation	.315**	.321**	.336**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	379	379	379	379

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). AC – affective commitment; CC – continuance commitment; NC – normative commitment; OC – organizational commitment.

Table 3. Reliability statistics

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
AC scale	.875	.878	3
CC scale	.786	.811	5
NC scale	.721	.736	3
Overall OC scale	.752	.774	11

Note: AC – affective commitment; CC – continuance commitment; NC – normative commitment; OC – organizational commitment.

Table 4. Effect of gender on organizational commitment

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	T Statistics	Remarks
Affective Commitment	Male	343	3.9553	1.04073	-.840	Sig Diff not Found
	Female	36	4.1019	.99145		
Continuance Commitment	Male	343	3.5405	.68224	-.771	Sig Diff not Found
	Female	36	3.6278	.64170		
Normative Commitment	Male	343	3.1681	.71641	1.102	Sig Diff not Found
	Female	36	3.0278	.82568		
Organizational Commitment	Male	343	3.5521	.46959	-.502	Sig Diff not Found
	Female	36	3.5934	.47882		

the effect of the different age groups of employees on the facets of organizational commitment (affective, continuous, and normative commitment) and overall organizational commitment.

The results of one-way ANOVA show that employees' age significantly influences their organizational commitment. Therefore, null H_{03} is rejected, and an alternate is accepted. The mean score of organizational commitment factors (affective, continuance, and normative) are higher in the case of

employees older than 50 years than the employees in other age groups. This is followed by the higher mean for the employees in the age group of 35 to 50 years. Thus, it is concluded that organizational commitment increases with the age of employees.

To test H_{04} , a one-way ANOVA test is performed. Table 6 depicts the resultant group statistics of ANOVA for the effect of work experience on affective, continuance normative commitment, and overall organizational commitment, respectively.

Table 5. Effect of age on organizational commitment

Variable	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F-Stats	Remarks
Affective Commitment	Below 35 years	135	3.7654	1.04149	4.406**	Sig Diff Found
	35-50 years	148	4.0428	1.00511		
	More than 50 years	96	4.1424	1.03815		
Continuance Commitment	Below 35 years	135	3.4815	.67461	1.155	Sig Diff not Found
	35-50 years	148	3.5689	.71475		
	More than 50 years	96	3.6125	.62159		
Normative Commitment	Below 35 years	135	3.1037	.70236	1.415	Sig Diff not Found
	35-50 years	148	3.1329	.72400		
	More than 50 years	96	3.2604	.76350		
Organizational Commitment	Below 35 years	135	3.4559	.48220	5.781**	Sig Diff Found
	35-50 years	148	3.5792	.46249		
	More than 50 years	96	3.6610	.44015		

Table 6. Effect of work experience on organizational commitment

Variable	Years of Experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Stats	Remarks
Affective Commitment	0-10 years	134	3.8109	1.05761	2.699	Sig Diff not Found
	10-20 years	144	4.0162	.99675		
	More than 20 years	101	4.1122	1.04379		
Continuance Commitment	0-10 years	134	3.4925	.65564	.717	Sig Diff not Found
	10-20 years	144	3.5764	.72729		
	More than 20 years	101	3.5842	.63541		
Normative Commitment	0-10 years	134	3.0572	.71214	2.452	Sig Diff not Found
	10-20 years	144	3.1667	.70738		
	More than 20 years	101	3.2673	.76452		
Organizational Commitment	0-10 years	134	3.4607	.47221	4.800**	Sig Diff Found
	10-20 years	144	3.5846	.46673		
	More than 20 years	101	3.6418	.45397		

The results of the one-way ANOVA test do not support H_{04} as the employees' years of experience exhibit a significant difference in the overall organizational commitment. Therefore, the null H_{04} is rejected, and an alternate is accepted.

It is observed that the employee's age or work experience do not significantly influence affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Further, work experience majorly affects affective commitment. Their normative and continuance commitments are also affected, respectively. The mean score of the overall organizational commitment is the highest, with the most experienced employees followed by lesser experienced employees.

5. DISCUSSION

This study sheds light on some vital organizational commitment areas in the Indian power sector. The power sector in India is witnessing a drastic change in its energy portfolio, mainly from fossil fuels to renewables. Due to the unprecedented challenges of energy transitions, one of this industry's most significant human resource challenges is cultivating employee commitment. Demographic variables like gender, age, and work experience play a significant role, while HR practitioners deal with commitment, engagement, and talent management. This investiga-

tion shows that gender is not making any discernible impact on organizational commitment and its facets. Earlier research by Meyer and Allen, (1997) suggested that as employee's work experience increases, his emotional attachment with the organization also increase. However, Chaudhry and Saini (2014) found no significant impact of work experience on organizational commitment. Present study highlights that other variables like age and work experience are vital to the commitment factor.

Most of the power stations in India are in remote areas and near coal mines and water resources. The employees posted in far-flung remote areas are constantly facing issues related to medical and education for their children and dependents. It is reflected from the current study that the maximum population of this sector is under the age bracket of fewer than 50 years and has cumulative work experience of fewer than 20 years. However, the study reveals that the population in this bracket is fostering fewer commitments. This study can be a milestone for HR practitioners in the Indian power industry to find ways to increase the commitment levels in the younger and middle-aged workforce. Also, it would be helpful if further studies search for ways motivating the lesser experienced workforce with advanced skill transfer and knowledge sharing to increase their commitments at par with their senior counterparts.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the impact of demographic factors on the commitment of employees working in the thermal power sector of India. Through the review of available literature, three different demographic variables (gender, age, and work experience) were identified for the study. The questionnaire was based on the three-component model scale of organizational commitment. The data were collected online from the employees of leading thermal power station in India.

The data were further processed and analyzed using the statistical software SPSS-23. Various statistical methods like correlation, reliability analysis, one-way ANOVA, and independent sample t-test were employed to test the four hypotheses. The findings revealed a positive correlation between the three components of organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative). The independent T-tests proved no impact of gender on the level of commitment ($F = -0.502$, $p < 0.01$). The ANOVA results depicted that employees' age significantly affects organizational commitment ($F = 5.781$, $p < 0.01$). The higher the age of employees, the higher their level of commitment. The work experience also significantly impacts the overall organizational commitment ($F = 4.800$, $p < 0.01$). The statistical results indicate that as employees' experience increases, the commitment level is also enhanced. The study concludes that older employees with significant work experience are more committed than their younger counterparts with lesser work experience. Moreover, the individual facets like affective, continuance, and normative commitments are also affected variedly.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Sheetal Rampal, Nitin Arora, Nishad Nawaz, Sandeep Kumar Gupta.

Data curation: Sheetal Rampal.

Formal analysis: Sheetal Rampal, Nishad Nawaz, Sandeep Kumar Gupta.

Investigation: Sheetal Rampal, Sandeep Kumar Gupta.

Methodology: Sheetal Rampal, Nitin Arora, Nishad Nawaz, Shikha Kapoor.

Project administration: Shikha Kapoor.

Resources: Nitin Arora, Nishad Nawaz, Shikha Kapoor.

Software: Sheetal Rampal.

Supervision: Nitin Arora, Nishad Nawaz, Sandeep Kumar Gupta, Shikha Kapoor.

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