Religiosity and Organizational Commitment: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide a conceptual framework regarding religiosity and organisational commitment. A literature-based analysis was engaged by combining concepts from religiosity and organisational commitment. The syntheses of these two concepts lead to the development of the conceptual framework. The findings show that implementation of religious practices leads to organisational commitment. This paper will contribute to the conceptualisation of religiosity and organisational commitment, which help to improve the theory.

Keywords: Religiosity, Organizational commitment.

Introduction

Literature shows significant effects of religiosity on people's behaviour religion and spirituality influence the moral reasoning, attitudes and behaviour of the managers (Hutson, 2000; King, 2007). As a matter of fact, religion is based on faith, hence need not to be scientifically proven (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). In this connection, it is contended that spirituality at workplace also is originated from religion and that is why it

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is ill-defined and un-testable. Koenig, Larson, and Larson (2001) defined religiosity and spirituality:

> "Religion is an organized system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols designed (a) to facilitate closeness to the sacred or transcendent (God, higher power, or ultimate truth/reality), and (b) to foster an understanding of one's relation and responsibility to others in living together in a community. Spirituality is the personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning, and about the relationship to the sacred or transcendent, which may (or may not) lead to or arise from the development of religious rituals and the formation of community".

(Osman-Gani, Hashim, and Ismail (2010)) claimed that the religiosity from the Islamic perspective is measure. Miller (2002) empirically investigated religiosity and spirituality in the workplace. They state that all the participants believe in the power of God, however, half of the participants were of the view that they feel power while at work. Organisational researchers do not focus much on spiritual practices and values, however, it may be very much strong variables related to personal or team level usefulness in organisations (Heermann, 1997). Previously, studies have been conducted to study religiosity and spirituality in the organisations' context, especially the organisation commitment, however, they still pose limitations which offer opportunity for future research to reveal the influence of religiosity on the organisational commitment. This study aims to empirically investigate the effects of religiosity on organisational commitment" across the individuals of three religions; Islam, Christianity, Hindu. It is hypothesised that employees' religiosity has significant predictors of organisational commitment. Organisational commitment is crucial for most of the firms. The current research uses in-depth literature review to explore the relationship to develop a conceptual framework.

Literature review

Review of the literature gives a theoretical explanation of conceptual definitions.

Organizational commitment

Allen and Meyer (2000) presented that organisational commitment is a psychological phenomenon regarding the relationship of the employee with the organization and decreased the employee intention to leave the organisation.

Furthermore, Organisational commitment is one of the most focused variables inside organisational studies. This large attention will be perhaps due to the result involving organizational commitment in a wide range of attitudes and also behaviors together with organizational importance, including purpose to depart, punctuality, organizational citizenship behaviors, turnover, attitudes to organizational adjust and also effectiveness (Allen & Meyer, 1996, 2000; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

Meyer and Allen (1991) developed the model of organisational commitment. It elaborates three components of components: Affective (emotional tie between person and

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the organisation), Continuance (Perceived switching costs) and Normative (Obligatory feelings towards the organisation). All the three components, one way or the other increases the tendency of retention in the same organisation. However, the true nature of each component differs from the other. Employees holding Affective feelings retain because they want to retain. Employees having strong Continuance commitment continue with the same organisation because they feel they high switching cost involved with switching. Normatively committed employees consider continuation to serve because of the obligatory feelings they have towards their organisation.

Furthermore, each component of the model is developed independently, based on different processes involved and the antecedents of each component (Allen & Meyer, 1997, 2000; Meyer & Allen, 1991). An employee develops Affective commitment when he or she becomes involved in and recognises his or her values and identity in terms of Organisational values and identity. For instance, an employee will be effectively committed if he or she feels that the organisation is fair enough, respected and supportive in treating its employees. Continuance commitment is developed when an employee recognises that he or she will lose investments, in terms of time, career and personal development, in the organisation. He or she considers no other better alternatives. In Normative commitment, employees internalise the norms and values of the organisation in line with their own. Furthermore, the model has implications for practitioners. High commitment is increased the employee string feeling toward the organization and increased the intention to stay in the organization. Affective commitment relies on employee emotional attachment towards the organization, employees more motivated and makes the great contribution in the organization. In this way, present study model predicts that affective commitment will increase the rate of retention, increased presence on work, improved performance, and increased organisational citizenship behaviours. Moreover, continuance commitment is the strong bond between employees and organisation, this act may lead to undesirable work behaviour (Allen & Meyer, 2000). Finally, normative commitments result in more commitment towards the organisation and want to make positive contributions. Allen and Meyer (2000), observed that obligation does not carry the same level of enthusiasm and involvement relative to affection.

This kind of reasoning leads to a simple nevertheless strong controversy: to succeed in better effectiveness, businesses must produce affective and normative provides with their personnel, and discourage continuation commitment. Human-friendly organisational values improve workers' self-esteem, personal growth and career prospects. As a result, employees put entire self and complete dedications to the organisation and take their work as a mission that makes them more effectively and normatively attached to their organisations (Gavin & Mason, 2004). Fairly treated employees feel respect and recognise as valuable and intellectual beings and hence the asset of the organisations (Chan & Mauborgne, 1998). This recognition results in lower stress levels and exhaustion, in return expressing greater job satisfaction(Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Karasek & Theorell, 1992). They also feel a sense of psychological and emotional safety (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). Moreover, they develop a sense of duty and reciprocate more cooperative and supportive actions, greater loyalty and high level of productivity, thus performing better in their jobs and contribute

more to organisational performance (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Rhodes, 2003).

A greater value alignment between person and organisation fit result in higher satisfaction and stronger affective and normative commitment (Sims & Kroeck, 1994). When individual growth and personal goals are consistent with the organisational goals, worker identification with the organisation is strengthened. On the other hand, when there is an inconsistency between personal and organisational values, employees experience negative emotions, reduced level of connection, disparity and more separation from the work environment.

Religiosity

Man possess a soul, spirit and body; the three combine to make a man a social human being, and these influence the behaviour of the human beings both in personal settings as well as in workplace. Khanifar, Jandaghi, and Shojaie (2010) found that "previously it was expected from the people to leave their spiritual values or existence before they enter the workplace. However, isolating work life from spiritual one reduces the level of morale in employees. Similarly, Roundy (2009) stated that religion is no more considered as a dress that can be removed before entering into the workplace environment.

Undeniable influence of religion on the human behaviour is emphasised by Sanoubar and Moghadam (2013) in their study also. In confirmation to them, Allameh, Amiri, and Asadi (2011) stated that behaviours of the people are, in fact, the products of the beliefs, expectations, values and other mental perceptions. Ueda (2011) found that sometimes, employees do interpret and practice their job roles in line with their religious orientations and beliefs they have. Fernando and Jackson (2006) also conducted their study in the religiosity context. They found the effects of major religions on the organisation and coordination of human conducts. They deduced that the religious values may be relevant to modern organisations and their managing practices. Rust and Gabriels (2011) are of the opinion that human being is a triune being; thus companies must encourage people to bring their "whole being" to work. Gyekye and Haybatollahi also confirmed the effects of religion on social behaviour.

Religion regulates the behaviour of human beings through religious norms and values (Roundy, 2009) similarly, Olowookere (2014) also confirmed that religions like Christianity, Islam and Judaism have celestial rules for their followers to which they stay intact. Salem and Agil (2012) stated that "Islam provides principles which constitute both the law and ethics connected with work, and that Muslims are required to work and conduct business in accordance with these principles". Thus, employees showing religious values, believe that God is their final reward giver for whatever they do in their organisations. Empirical evidence hypothesised that the understanding of work roles and Organization Commitment is unique to individual role based on their religious beliefs (Neale & Griffin, 2006).

In this connection, religiosity may be thought as a collection of behaviours and practices based on institutionalised beliefs and confidence that serve to give meaning to

human life. Park and Smith (2000), defined religiosity as a set of behaviours that depicts the worth of a person's faith or religion. Henning et al. (2015) that religiosity was found in Roget's Thesaurus identical to terms like spirituality, religiousness, faith, belief, devotion and piousness or holiness. Religiosity is also conceptualised as a construct based on two dimensions; extrinsic religiosity and intrinsic religiosity (Allport & Ross, 1967). They stated that religiosity in individuals is either extrinsic or intrinsic and are thus show motivation in their ultimate behaviours. Individuals with extrinsic religiosity feel encouraged to get involved in religious activities, simply because of what is offered by the religion they adopt. This category of people maintains linger part of the religious groups just to get the endorsement, promote their well-being and improve their social standing. In contrast, intrinsically religious individuals believe in their religious values in a true sense, internalise these values and use the doctrine as their guide in their lives. These people do really engage in religious activities mainly to express personal conviction. Based on the above discussion, following research questions have been posed to be answered.

RQ. Does religiosity influence the organisational commitment?

Proposed framework

Based on past literature review, this research focuses on the conceptual framework of organisational commitment in terms of different types of commitments and the religiosity factor. Figure 1 shows the dimensions of religiosity and the types of commitment one can have in the organization.
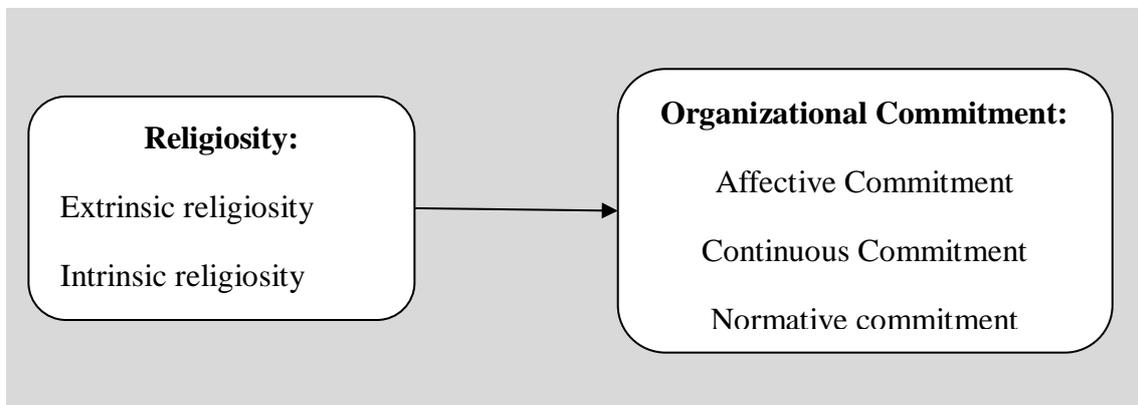

Figure 1 Relationship Between religiosity and organisational commitment

H₁: There is a significant and positive relationship between extrinsic religiosity and affective commitment.

H₂: There is a significant and positive relationship between extrinsic religiosity and continuous commitment.

H₃: There is a significant and positive relationship between extrinsic religiosity and normative commitment.

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H_4: There is a significant and positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity (spirituality) and affective commitment.

H_5: There is a significant and positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity (spirituality) and continuous commitment.

H_6: There is a significant and positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity (spirituality) and normative commitment.

Conclusion

Organisational commitment is an essential key for organisational competition, earnings as well as tactical within the swiftly adjusting international current market. To develop these kinds of remarkably common conduct, scholars are finding their antecedents to feature organisational, employee/personal as well as do the job factors. Religiosity, as well as Spirituality, is important factors which have been related to organisational commitment.

The emotional state of employees has been implicated in their work attitudes, behaviours and performance. Employees who have an emotional attachment to their organisations have been found to behave in ways consistent with organisational goals and strategies. Affective commitment was found to be the most significant predictor of employees' emotional attachment to their organisation rather than some form constraints in their choice to leave the organisation. This is obvious in continuance and normative commitments. For example, the fear of the unknown, the cost of living the organisation and benefits that accrue to long serving employees often force some employees to remain in the organisation, resulting in continuance commitment to such an organisation. Similarly, pressure from others to stay in an organisation and reciprocating actions on the part of the employee for organisation's investment in his/her career development may also force such employees to remain in the organisation, leading to a normative commitment to such an organisation. Both normative and continuance commitments emanate from employees' obligations and needs, these are marked by forced compliance to organisational rules, procedures and processes and at most results in average performance.

It can therefore be inferred that intrinsically religious employees will more likely to develop affective commitment to their organization because religion for them is a lifestyle and remain with their organization as a result of their beliefs and confidence, while extrinsically religious employees will more likely to develop continuance and normative commitments to their organizations because religion is a means to an end for them and so they remain with their organizations because of what they have to get.

There are several implications intended for management that try and develop alterations within staff behaviours inside the organisation. It is recommended that though best practices must give you a construction by simply formalising religious based and spiritual techniques, some programs should be organised to further improve

organisational values and commitment. Future research needs to measure the proposed framework.

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