

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF EMPLOYEES: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM TELECOM SECTOR IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

In the modern world, businesses operate in a very competitive and constantly changing environment. Therefore, organisations need to have highly skilled and dedicated personnel. Therefore, any company must address the demands that foster employee dedication. Organisational commitment refers to the psychological attachment that employees form with their organisation. Given the paucity of research on the organisational commitment of employees in the telecom sector, the present study focused on filling that gap. The study aimed to explore the levels of organisational commitment of telecom sector employees in Kerala. It also aimed to investigate the association of age and work experience with organisational commitment in the telecom sector. The study was conducted based on primary data collected from the employees working in Jio and BSNL using the structured questionnaire. The study found that employees have moderate levels of affective commitment and lower levels of normative and continuance commitment. Employees' overall organizational commitment is recorded at a moderate level. The study also noted significant differences in organisational commitment among employees in different age groups and employees with different years of work experience. Commitment increases as age increases and experience increases. The study has implications for recruiting employees and formulating practices for service excellence.

KEYWORDS: *Psychological Attachment, Paucity of Research, Telecom Sector, Organisational Commitment.*

Introduction

The telecommunication sector in the Indian economy is a crucial sector that plays a significant role in contributing to the GDP through employment and income generation. Currently, India has the position of the second-largest telecommunication market and ranks third in terms of the number of internet users in the world economy (Chaitra & Prasad, 2017). The Telecom Sector of India has seen significant transformation in terms of its growth, technological substance, and market structure in the past decade, thanks to regulatory reforms implemented by the Government of India. The sector has experienced significant changes.

After liberalisation, there was a significant shift from a government monopoly to a competitive economy, allowing various private actors to emerge and provide services to clients (Shah, 2008).

It is revealed that dimensions such as organisational commitment, growth and future opportunity, flexible working hours and recreational facilities, and safety and health wellness, which were initially considered important to employees, were found to be of little importance (Sen & Chatterjee, 2019). Prior to the formation of human capital theory, employees were mostly viewed as a financial

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burden. However, this perspective shifted when human capital theory emerged, asserting that individuals might also be regarded as valuable assets. Subsequently, it became evident that integrating human resources management with a company's business strategy was both possible and necessary. This was because dedicated individuals were proven to have a significant impact in an era of intensifying global competitiveness. The success of service delivery in a service setting is heavily reliant on the employees' orientation and dedication. Efficient management may promote employees' service orientation and organisational commitment, resulting in the creation of customer value through service excellence (Looy et al., 2003).

The present study aims to study the organisational commitment of telecom sector employees in Kerala from different aspects. The objectives of the present study are:

- To explore the level of organizational commitment in the telecom sector in Kerala.
- To analyse the relationship between employee age and organizational commitment in the telecom sector in Kerala.
- To examine the relationship between work experience and organizational commitment in the telecom sector in Kerala.

Review of Literature

Organisational commitment of employees is well documented in the literature. The three-component model of commitment, proposed by Meyer and Allen in 1997, is widely considered to be the prevailing framework in organisational commitment research. This paradigm suggests that employees perceive organisational commitment through three simultaneous mindsets: affective, normative, and continuous organisational commitment.

Affective Commitment is a type of commitment that arises from the emotional connections that an employee has with the organisation, mainly through positive work experiences. Normative commitment is a type of commitment that is founded on a sense of obligation towards the organisation. This commitment is often influenced by the norms of reciprocity. Continuance Commitment is a measure of an individual's commitment to an organisation, which is influenced by the perceived costs, both in terms of finances and social consequences, associated with quitting the organisation. Researchers have utilised this commitment model to forecast significant employee outcomes, such as turnover and citizenship behaviours, job performance, absenteeism, and tardiness (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

A study reported that employees who are emotionally committed to the organisation are more likely to stay with the organisation compared to those who have commitment based on social norms or perceived costs (Manetje, 2009). The study conducted by Shore and Wayne found that employees' commitment to their organisation is akin to a social transaction. When employees perceive that the organisation is providing assistance, they acquire a sense of obligation, which in turn leads to improved work behaviour. The researchers examined the correlation between emotional commitment and continuous commitment, which was found to have a negative association, with organisational citizenship behaviour. Perceived organisational support was used as the predictor of commitment (Shore & Wayne, 1993). During the investigation of the correlation between job participation, in-role performance, and organisational commitment researchers discovered that all three components of organisational commitment are positively correlated with job involvement (Islam et al., 2012). However, the relationship between job involvement and affective commitment is particularly strong. This suggests that employees who are highly involved in their jobs are also highly connected to the organisation. According to Agarwala, there is a positive correlation between an employee's level of experience and their level of attachment and commitment to the organisation. Employees who have accumulated more years of overall work experience are likely to be older in age. This may be due to having fewer job alternatives, which in turn leads to a stronger level of dedication to their current employer (Agarwala, 2003).

A study conducted by Döckel et al. examined the impact of retention variables on organisational commitment. The study identified salary, job features (such as skill variety and job autonomy), supervisor support, and work/life policies as the most significant elements influencing the development of organisational commitment. To be more precise, practices such as remuneration, supervisor assistance, and work/life policies have an impact on affective commitment. On the other hand, job qualities influence continuation commitment, and salary affects the normative commitment of employees. The strategies implemented by management to prevent employees from leaving the organisation are referred to as retention considerations (Döckel et al., 2006).

In a study conducted by Jena, it was discovered that personal and demographic factors exert a substantial influence on employees' level of commitment to their organisation. Age, gender, work duration, and marital status exert a substantial influence on employees' emotional commitment. However, only married status has an impact on the continuation of commitment. The normative commitment of employees is determined by factors such as their age, marital status, and gender. The researchers noted a higher level of commitment among male employees compared to females, and a higher level of commitment among married workers compared to unmarried ones (Jena, 2015).

Given the paucity of research on organisational commitment in the telecom sector which is a growing segment of the economy, the present study aims to fill that gap.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted based on primary data collected using a cluster sampling method from 404 telecom employees (204 employees from BSNL and 200 from Jio) in Kerala by using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics along with results of independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA were reported in the study. The statistical analysis was performed using The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0).

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Label	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	284	70.30
	Female	120	29.70
Age	Up to 30	124	30.69
	31 – 40	108	26.73
	41 – 50	92	22.77
	51 & above	80	19.80
Work Experience	Up to 5 Years	116	28.71
	6 – 10	106	26.24
	11 - 15	97	24.01
	16 & above	85	21.04

Level of Organizational Commitment in the Telecom Sector

To examine workers' organizational commitment in the Telecom sector, the three categories of organizational commitment and overall commitment are categorized into three levels: high, medium, and lower level using the "median split method". The following table shows the division's criteria.

Table 2: Benchmark for Determining Levels of Organizational Commitment

	Levels of Organizational Commitment		
	Low	Moderate	High
Affective Commitment	Below 13	13 – 20	Above 20
Normative Commitment	Below 15	15 – 20	Above 20
Continuance Commitment	Below 16	16 – 20	Above 20
Organizational Commitment	Below 44	44 – 56	Above 56

The level of organizational commitment of employees in the Telecom sector is estimated and presented in the table based on these parameters.

Table 3: Organizational Commitment in the Telecom Sector

	Levels of Organizational Commitment			Level of Commitment
	Low	Moderate	High	
Affective Commitment	135 (33.41%)	138 (34.15%)	131 (32.42%)	Moderate
Normative Commitment	172 (42.57%)	137 (33.91%)	95 (23.51%)	Low
Continuance Commitment	216 (53.46%)	72 (17.82%)	116 (28.71%)	Low
Organizational Commitment	140 (34.65%)	142 (35.14%)	122 (30.19%)	Moderate

Table 3 reveals that employees in Kerala's Telecom sector have moderate levels of affective commitment (34.15%), lower levels of normative (42.57%) and continuance commitment (53.46%). Employee's overall organizational commitment is recorded at a moderate level (35.14%).

- **Company wise Organizational Commitment**

There are two stages to the comparison of the public (BSNL) and private (Jio) companies' organizational commitment. Initially, the median split method is used to assess the organizational commitment levels; consequently, an independent sample t-test is used to identify the commitment differences.

Table 4: Organizational Commitment Level of BSNL and Jio

	Name of the Company	Levels of Organizational Commitment			Level of Commitment
		Low	Moderate	High	
Affective Commitment	BSNL	71 (34.80%)	67 (32.84%)	66 (32.35%)	Low
	Jio	64 (32%)	71 (35.5%)	65 (32.5%)	Moderate
Normative Commitment	BSNL	99 (48.52%)	69 (33.82%)	36 (17.64%)	Low
	Jio	73 (36.5%)	68 (34%)	59 (29.5%)	Low
Continuance Commitment	BSNL	135 (66.17%)	29 (14.21%)	40 (19.60%)	Low
	Jio	81 (40.5%)	43 (21.5%)	76 (38%)	Low
Organizational Commitment	BSNL	95 (46.56%)	66 (32.35%)	43 (21.07%)	Low
	Jio	45 (22.5%)	76 (38%)	79 (39.5%)	High

After assessing both company's levels of commitment, it is found that Jio has a moderate level of affective commitment (35.5%), a low level of normative (36.5%), a continuance commitment (40.5%) and a high level of overall organizational commitment (39.5%). BSNL shows low in all types of commitments.

Independent Sample T Test - Company-wise Comparison

To determine whether or not there is a significant difference in the commitment, an independent sample t-test is performed.

Table 5: Company-wise Comparison - Independent Sample T Test

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T Value	P Value	Result
Affective Commitment	BSNL	204	3.66	.673	-.632	.528	Insignificant Difference
	JIO	200	3.70	.532			
Normative Commitment	BSNL	204	3.79	.601	-2.738	.006	Significant Difference
	JIO	200	3.97	.653			
Continuance Commitment	BSNL	204	3.89	.594	-2.412	.016	Significant Difference
	JIO	200	4.04	.596			
Organizational Commitment	BSNL	204	3.77	.356	-4.407	.000	Significant Difference
	JIO	200	3.92	.332			

Table shows the result of the independent sample t-test which is used to understand if there is any significant difference in the level of organizational commitment among BSNL and Jio employees. It is found that there is a significant difference in the normative ($p=.006$), continuance ($p=.016$) and overall organizational commitment ($p=.000$) of employees. In the case of affective commitment ($p=0.528$), the null hypothesis is failed to reject.

The relationship between employee's age and organizational commitment.

Table 6: One Way ANOVA on Age and Organizational Commitment

Age of Employee	Frequency	Mean	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 30	124	3.72	9.185	.000	Significant Difference
31 – 40	108	3.85			
41 – 50	92	3.91			
51 & above	80	3.96			

To find out whether there is a significant difference in organizational commitment based on the age of employees. One-way ANOVA is conducted with organizational commitment as the dependent variable and the age of the employee as the independent variable. All the assumptions of one-way ANOVA were satisfied with normality and homogeneity in the data.

The result shows there is a significant difference in the age group and organizational commitment, ($P = 0.000$). A post hoc analysis is done to determine which groups are responsible for the variation. Since the two groups' variances are the same, Tukey HSD post hoc analysis is chosen for the intergroup comparison in order to identify the pairs responsible for the difference. The Tukey HSD post hoc test shows that there is a significant difference in the organizational commitment of employees aged above 30 when compared to employees aged below 30. The mean value reveals as age increases, organizational commitment also increases.

The relationship between work experience and organizational commitment

Table 7: One Way ANOVA on Work Experience and Organizational Commitment

Work Experience	Frequency	Mean	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 5 Years	116	3.80	7.663	.000	Significant Difference
6 - 10 Years	106	3.75			
11 - 15 Years	97	3.87			
16 Years & More	85	3.98			

To find out whether there is a significant difference in organizational commitment based on the work experience of employees; One-way ANOVA is conducted with the organizational commitment as the dependent variable and the work experience of employees as the independent variable. All the assumptions of One-way ANOVA were satisfied with normality and homogeneity in the data. The result shows there is a significant difference in the work experience and organizational commitment, ($P = 0.000$). A post hoc analysis is done to determine which groups are responsible for the variation. Since the two groups' variances are the same, Tukey HSD post hoc analysis is chosen for the intergroup comparison in order to identify the pairs responsible for the difference. The Tukey HSD post hoc test showed that there is a significant difference in the organizational commitment of employees having experience of Up to 5 years and 6 to 10 years when compared to employees having experience of 16 years & more. The mean value reveals that employees having 16 years & more experience with the organization, are the highest committed employee.

Implications and Conclusions

Organisational commitment refers to the psychological attachment that employees form with their organisation. The strength of an employee's attachment to the organisation is measured using this connection as a benchmark. The present study examined the organizational commitment of telecom sector employees in Kerala, and how it is associated with the age and work experience of employees. The study showed that employees in Kerala's Telecom sector have moderate levels of affective commitment (34.15%), lower levels of normative (42.57%) and continuance commitment (53.46%). Employee's overall organizational commitment is recorded at a moderate level (35.14%). The results could have been affected by the respondents' level of maturity in relation to their length of employment and job experience within the organisation.

Work experience refers to the total duration of time spent in a particular occupation or labour. In line with previous studies, the present study revealed that the length of time a person stays in a job is a strong indicator of how committed they are to the organisation (Salami, 2008). It is due to the fact that as an employee's tenure in the organisation and age increase, so does their sense of accountability for the outcomes that pertain to them. In an earlier study, civic virtue exhibited a statistically significant link with years of work experience among the elements of organisational citizenship behaviour (Kegans et al., 2012).

In consistent with the earlier literature, the demographic attribute of age has been discovered to have a strong relationship with organisational commitment (Salami, 2008). The study showed a positive correlation between age and organisational dedication, indicating that older employees exhibit higher levels of commitment compared to their younger counterparts. The study has concluded that that two factors, age and work experience have a significant role in determining the employees' commitment to the organisation in the telecom sector.

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