

Manifest Needs of Achievement, Power and Affiliation and their Relationship with Organisational Commitment

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Abstract

Manifest needs are related to achievement, affiliation, autonomy, and dominance at the work place. Organizational Commitment (OC) is defined as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Both manifest needs and OC have been found to be extensively researched separately. However, studies examining the relationship between the two variables have not found to have been done. This study examined the relationship between the different factors of manifest needs and OC. The findings suggest that there is an inverse relationship between manifest needs and OC. As manifest needs increase, there is a considerable reduction in OC. This relationship has not been examined earlier. The findings of the study are likely to significantly add to the existing literature on OC.

Key Words: Manifest needs, achievement, power, affiliation, organisational Commitment.

1. Introduction

Research about the importance of “needs” has been undertaken as early as 1938 (Murray, 1938). He postulated motivation as the “function of power of various needs at any given time”. The focus of Murray was mostly on the “psychogenic needs” – needs that were required to perform a task and the interpersonal relationship that were established for the sake of performance. The interpersonal relationships were further sub-classified into dominance, affiliation and autonomy. While dominance was considered as “the need to influence or control others”, affiliation was “the need to form friendships and cooperative groups” and autonomy was considered as “the need to strive for independence and to resist coercion”. This study was later extended by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) wherein they stated that needs are determinants of attitudes and the job itself. This area of research got a fillip later when Steers and Braunstein (1976) developed the concept of “manifest needs” and the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (MNQ). It helps in measuring the needs related to achievement, affiliation, autonomy, and dominance at the work place. A number of studies emerged thereafter in this area and the concept of “Manifest needs” (Birecikli, Alpkan, Ertürk and Aksoy, 2016; Chou and Lopez-Rodriguez, 2013; Ivarsson and Ekehammar, 2001), and MNQ still maintains its “freshness”, as it is used even in recent studies (Arogundade and Olunubi, 2013).

Organizational commitment (OC) is considered as the “attitude regarding the organization, insofar as multiple components of organizational commitment, when combined, suffer from conceptual inconsistency and a lack of unequivocal empirical support” (Solinger, Van Olffen and Roe, 2008). There have been numerous studies about OC. It has been found that higher levels of OC could result in lower turnover rates, better performance, improved productivity and so on (Meyer et al., 2002; Riketta, 2002; Chen, Wang and Sun, 2012). It is also argued that OC helps in enhancing organisational effectiveness and helps organisations to gain the badly required competitive edge in the dynamic market (Chow and Holden, 1997; Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1985). The antecedents of OC also have been a topic of extensive research (Cohen, 1992; Meyer and Allen, 1997). The present study intends to find out the relationship between the various factors of manifest needs and OC. This study is undertaken as earlier studies are not found to have undertaken to find out the relationship between these two variables, that are of paramount importance in the organisational setup.

2. Review of Literature

Organizational commitment (OC) has been explored and examined by academicians and management experts for near to half a century. Even now the concept retains its importance, is a hot favourite and is extensively researched. While commitment is considered as “attachment, identification, or loyalty to the

entity of the commitment” (Morrow, 1983, 1993); OC is defined as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday et al., 1982). However, the most popular definition of OC is that it is “a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization” (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Now fostering OC is considered as a matter of prime concern for modern organizations (Singh and Gupta, 2015). This is an absolute necessity to retain and motivate talents in the present knowledge-driven economy (Neininger, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Kauffeld and Henschel, 2010). Due to its indispensability, a plethora of studies have been done with OC as a variable. Some important studies undertaken with OC as a variable include its relationship with absenteeism, turnover, and job performance (Bentein, Robert, Christian and Florence, 2005; Bolander and Jones, 2009; Grant, Dutton and Rosso, 2008; Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell and Allen, 2007), and certain other employee behaviours like punctuality, citizenship behavior, etc. (Bogler, 2005; Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky, 2002). OC is related negatively with turnover (Cohen, 1993) and positively with attendance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), pro-social behavior (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986), and motivation (Mowday et al., 1979).

Most Organizational commitment (OC) studies have found to have used the conceptualization of Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997). OC is considered to be multidimensional in nature with three components— affective, continuance and normative commitments (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1991, 1997). While affective commitment is “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization”; continuance commitment occurs as a result of “an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization”. Normative commitment is the “feeling of obligation to continue employment”. Each dimension contributes to an employee’s relationship with the organization, has implications for their continued membership and may be affected by different antecedents or may have different consequences (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Substantial literature exists with respect to the various predictors/antecedents of OC. A host of antecedents of OC has been identified in the accumulated literature. It has also been empirically proved that, in addition to many others, a host of psycho-social aspects like personal characteristics, experience at the workplace, job characteristics, role status, relationship with peers and superiors, the behaviours of leaders, the ethical climate and conduct, organizational characteristics, organisational change, etc. influence OC (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fedor, Caldwell and Herold, 2006; Joo, Juan and Jeung, 2013; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Mayer and Schoorman, 1998; Steers, 1977; Trevino, Butterfield and McCabe, 1998). Having a band of committed employees helps organizations in various positive ways. This has motivated academicians and management experts to put in extra efforts to understand the various antecedents and consequences of OC (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002). Certain other factors are also found to increase OC. For

instance Fedor, et al. (2006) found that OC of employees is directly related to the management's commitment to remain competitive and improvement of the overall organizational performance.

Many academicians have examined if OC and professional commitment are the same. Opinions differ about this. For instance Mabey and Hooker (1994) is of the opinion that professional commitment is conceptually different from OC. Niederman, Sumner and Maertz (2007) and Rong and Grover (2009) found that professionals often advance their career by shifting organisations, concluding that both are different. However, contra views are also present (Bamber and Iyer, 2002). According to Bamber and Iyer (2002) personnel can simultaneously hold organizational and professional commitment. A significant finding by Vincent and Xu (2012) is that affective commitment helps in the reduction of intention to leave among professionals, even for professional advancement. Brunetto, Teo, Shacklock, and Wharton (2012); Keepnews et al., (2010) and Lyons (2005) found higher levels of affective commitment among older generation employees. They were found to have a variety of qualities like being self-reliant, fun-loving, and independent.

A few studies regarding manifest needs have presented inconclusive results. For instance, Arogundade and Olunubi (2013) Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) found that manifest needs would not predict job involvement. A series of studies by Locke (1982, 1991) identified that achievement needs are capable of promoting motivation and better performance. Ravlin and Meglino (1987) also found the same effect. Various studies have examined the aspect to achievement need (Klich and Feldman, 1992; Kukla, 1972; Ward, 1993). Employees having a high achievement needs were found to be potentially useful to the organization since they are capable of accepting competitive situations. Further, they are independent in nature and focus on excellence in their work (Ward, 1993). They involve themselves in work and take individual responsibility and exercise considerably higher levels of efforts and ability (Klich and Feldman, 1992; Kukla, 1972). Such individuals, due to their heightened level of desire for success involve in appropriate "achievement-oriented activities" (Bateman and Grant, 1993; Weick, 1983).

Arogundade and Olunubi (2013) opined that there are "other variable beyond manifest needs, that can make an individual become more or less involved in the job". Randall (1990); Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found that achievement needs are important elements that help in the twin objective of improving performance and at the same time lowering turnover. The relationship between organisational citizenship behaviour and manifest needs were examined by Chou and Lopez-Rodriguez (2013). They opined that manifest needs are not static in nature and it change over a period of time. Bircikli, et al (2016) empirically examined the moderating effect of relationship between need for independence, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Casciaro (1998) studied the need for achievement and affiliation towards networking.

They found that accuracy in the perception about network is connected to manifest needs.

A fair review of the literature thus shows the not many studies have examined the relationship between the various manifest needs and organizational commitment. The present work is a modest attempt towards this direction.

3. Materials and Methods

Data for the present study was collected using a survey instrument that consisted of three independent sections. The first section contained an appeal to fill up the questionnaire, assurance regarding the confidentiality of the data and the questions pertaining to demographics of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status, education, experience, etc. The second section contained the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (MNQ) and the third section was the Organizational Commitment (OC) questionnaire.

4. Manifest Needs

MNQ developed by Steers and Braunsteir (1976) was used to measure manifest needs. MNQ measures the needs in terms of three variables, viz., achievement, power, and affiliation. A number of studies have been conducted using MNQ as a tool, and is still used to measure manifest needs(Arogundade and Olunubi, 2013;Birecikli, Alpan, Ertürk and Aksoy, 2016; Chou and Lopez-Rodriguez, 2013; Ivarsson and Ekehammar, 2001). MNQ consists of 15 items, spread out in three variables, on a five point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Sample items include “I try very hard to improve on my past performance at work” and “I enjoy working with others more than working alone”.

5. Organisational Commitment (OC)

To measure OC the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), consisting of 15 items, developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter(1979) was used. This is a tool that has stood the test of time is used even now to measure OC. This tool was selected for the study as it is one scale that lays emphasis on attitudinal or affective commitments (Chen, et al, 2012; Mayer and Schoorman,1998). OCQ also consisted of 15 items. The questionnaire elicited responses on a seven point scale. Sample items include “I talk up this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for” and “I find that my values and the organisation’s values are very similar”.Data for the study was collected for samples who were gainfully employed in some profession. 100 questionnaires were mailed to employed persons of various organisations – both manufacturing and service. 62 respondents responded to the study. The respondents pertained to various demographics, which are presented in Table 1. From the table it can be seen that the sample selected for the study pertained to a variety of demographics.

Table 1: Demographic Particulars of the Sample

Demographics	Particulars	Frequency
Age (in years)	Less than 35	24
	36 – 45	13
	46 – 55	18
	Over 55	7
Gender	Male	52
	Female	10
Marital Status	Married	48
	Unmarried	14
Total monthly family Income (in Rs.)	Up to 30,000	30
	30,001 – 50,000	15
	50,001 and above	17

6. Analysis and Discussion

The descriptive statistics about the data collected for the study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D
Achievement	15	25	20.43	2.61
Power	11	23	17.63	2.98
Affiliation	14	24	19.60	2.90
Manifest needs	78	110	95.46	8.57
OC	50	90	69.78	11.69

N = 63

One of the objectives of the study was to find out the relationship between manifest needs and OC. Towards this correlations was done and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix between Occupational Needs and OC

	Achievement	Power	Affiliation	Manifest needs	OC
Achievement	1	.228	.358**	.659**	.117
Power		1	.353**	.433**	.112
Affiliation			1	.438**	.212
Manifest needs				1	.271*
OC					1

Note: N = 62** Significant at 0.01 level * Significant at 0.05 level

It can be seen from the table that while there existed significant correlation between achievement and affiliation (at 0.01 level), no significant relationship was found between achievement and power need. There was also significant relationship between the variables power and affiliation (at 0.01 level). The most important finding of the present study is that there is significant relationship (at 0.05 level) between manifest needs and OC. However, no

significant relationship was evident between the different variables (achievement, power and affiliation) of Manifest needs and OC.

An attempt was also made to find out the patterns of manifest needs. Towards this the sample was classified into those having various levels of manifest needs – High medium and low. To make this classification, the following equation was applied:

High group:: scores above Mean + ½ Standard deviation.

Low group:: scores below Mean – ½ Standard deviation.

Those samples having scores between the high and low group were classified as middle group. This is in line with a few other studies Salim, Sulphrey and Thilagar, (2017) and Sulphrey and Fiasal (2017). Based on the above classification, it was found that 24 samples belonged to the groups with high levels of manifest needs followed by 20 in the middle group, and the balance of 20 was in the low group. If it is to be considered that the high and middle group is having better score in manifest needs then 44 samples are found to be in this group. Based on the level of manifest needs an attempt was found to find the relationship with OC, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Data and Results based on Grouping of Manifest Needs

	Variables	Mean	SD	r
High group of manifest need	Manifest needs	103.92	3.27	.382
	OC	71.50	10.66	
Middle group of manifest need	Manifest needs	95.35	2.80	.472*
	OC	68.55	10.80	
Low group of manifest need	Manifest needs	84.90	4.20	.554*
	OC	68.95	13.99	

Note: * Significant at 0.05 level

The correlation analysis shows that there is significant positive correlation (at 0.05 level) between middle and low groups of Manifest needs and OC. However, no significant correlation was found between the high manifest needs group and OC. Thus it shows that as manifest needs increase, there is an inverse relationship with OC. This finding which establishes that OC and manifest needs are negatively correlated is worth mentioning. When manifest needs increase, there will be a decrease in OC, or alternatively lower the manifest needs higher the level of OC. Since earlier studies have not examined such a relationship, this adds a new dimension to the literature about OC. The findings though not directly connected, are to a certain extent related to the findings of Arogundade and Olunubi (2013) Rabinowitz and Hall (1977).

7. Conclusion

Manifest needs and OC are two constructs that have been extensively

researched separately. However, their interrelations have not been found to be examined. The present study has examined the relationship between manifest need and OC. The findings suggest that higher the manifest needs, lower the OC. This relationship has not been examined earlier. The findings of the study are likely to significantly add to the existing literature on OC. However, there is a definite need to generalise the findings as the present study is done on a moderate sample. A further cross sectional study with a larger sample will help in bringing out the complex relationship between the two variables. It would also be advisable to look into the causative factors of both the factors. It is expected that further works will look into this interesting area of research.

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