

## **Organizational Commitment in relation to Organizational Politics: A study on Government Employees**

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**Abstract:** *The root objective behind this study is to explore the relation between organizational commitment and organizational politics, of the government employees. This study also focuses on the gender difference taking these factors under consideration. This study is conducted on 200 male and female employees in total, of middle level belonging to urban domicile. A survey of government employees (aged 40-55) reveals that organizational commitment has no significant positive correlation with organizational politics in total. Additionally, this relation does not found to be correlated in case of both female and their male counterparts.*

**Keywords:** *Organizational Commitment, Organizational Politics, Government Employees.*

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### **I. Introduction**

These days government employees have become a value assets and supporters of communication between all stakeholders- citizens, politicians, grass-roots associations, business associations, lobbyists and finally within the governmental hierarchy. In simpler words government will in the future be challenged to become a hub where true knowledge workers would be doing more non-trivial works, in order to serve the citizens. The most valuable skill set in the future will not be necessarily knowledge, experience or training (although important attributes), but rather it will be the degree to which the new knowledge worker would look for and expect, and would prepare himself, to successfully take up the steps to handle the unexpected. A government employee is provided with many benefits however on the phase he also has to abide by the rules of the government even if they are against his will. He has to be dedicated and dutiful to his work. Some of them enjoy this commitment and some either neglect it or make it under pressure. It has been noticed that majority of the people take up the government job to avail the monetary benefits, relaxation and job security given by the government. Commitment towards job seems to be left far behind in winning the race of getting them.

Thus, there was a need to carry out a study in order to find out what are the present demands of these government organizations and government employees, in order to uplift the level of the government as well as employees especially if they are at the verge of getting corrupt and unreliable. Measures should be taken not only at the employee level but also at the senior level if needed along with the policies which demands modifications. One of the challenges facing modern organizations involves maintaining employee commitment in the current business environment. These organizations can achieve by developing a new “work contract”. In today’s workplace, employees face more ambiguity in their daily activities and decreased job security (Bergmann, Lester, De Meuse & Grahn, 2000). With no assurance of continued employment, workers have now raised their expectations in other areas. For instance, employees expect their employers to show their commitment in terms of good working conditions, provision of training and growth and the equilibrium between work and employee’s commitment outside the workplace.

As per Katz (1964) the traits which are needed by the employees for organizational effectiveness includes 1) entrance and stability in the organization 2) satisfying the role assigned 3) involve themselves in new and spontaneous activity that goes beyond role horizon. Choosing skilled workers is therefore difficult and more difficult but important than that is creating skilled workforce. Hence it is required by the authorities to know about commitment- what it is, how it works and which behaviours are shown by the employees that reflect their commitment. Some experts define commitment as both a willingness to persist in a course of action and reluctance to change plans, often owing to a sense of obligation to stay the course. People are simultaneously committed to multiple entities, such as economic, educational, familial, political and religious institutions (Abrahamson & Anderson, 1984; Cohan, 2003). They also commit themselves to specific individuals, including their spouses, children, parents and siblings, as well as to their employers, co-workers, supervisors and customers.

Commitment also has an emotional component: People usually experience and express positive feelings towards an entity or individual to whom they have made a commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Finally, commitment has a rational element: Most people consciously decide to make commitments, then they thoughtfully plan and carry out the actions required to fulfill them (Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004).

There are various components of organizational commitment. Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) discuss three major components of organizational commitment as:-

1. A strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals.
2. A willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization.
3. A definite desire to maintain organizational membership.

Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) say that the three types of commitment, normative, affective and continuance are a psychological state "that either characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization or has the implications to affect whether the employee will continue with the organization".

Buchanan, (1974), has found a positive relationship between an employee's age and time with the organization and his level of commitment. Demographic factors such as age, tenure, and education level have been associated with organizational commitment (Luthans, Mc Caul, & Dodd, 1985; Morrow, 1993; Dodd & Wright, 1996, Abdulla & Shaw, 1999; Chughtai & Zafar, 2006). However Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Salami (2008) found that demographic factors were not significant predictor of organizational commitment.

Politics is the science of good sense, applied to public affairs, and, as those are forever changing, what is wisdom today would be folly and perhaps, ruin tomorrow. It cannot have fixed principles, from which a wise man would never swerve, unless the inconstancy of men's view of interest and the capriciousness of the tempers could be fixed.

These seven political tactics proposed by Sussman, Adams, Kuzmits, and Raho (2002) include:-

- (1) Attacking or blaming others,
- (2) Using information as a political tool,
- (3) Creating and maintaining a favourable image,
- (4) Developing a base of support,
- (5) Ingratiation,
- (6) Developing allies and forming power coalitions, and
- (7) Creating obligations and reciprocity

Organizational politics refers to behaviours "that occur on an informal basis within an organization and involve intentional acts of influence that are designed to protect or enhance individuals' professional careers when conflicting courses of action are possible" (Drory, 1993; Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1983). Politics is that "must" factor which handles the organizational procedure and influences all the related concepts of the business.

Organizational politics has been defined as "actions by individuals" which are directed toward the goal of furthering their own self-interests without regard for the well-being of others or their organization". Research suggests that perceptions of organizational politics consistently result in negative outcomes for individuals (Harris, Andrews, & Kacmar, 2007). According to Harris and Kacmar (2005), politics has been conceptualized as a stressor in the workplace because it leads to increased stress and/or strain reactions. Members of organization react physically and psychologically to perceptions of organizational politics, physical reactions including fatigue and somatic tension (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997), and psychological reactions include reduced commitment (Vigora, 2000) and reduced job satisfaction (Bozeman, Perrwere, & Hochwarter, 2001).

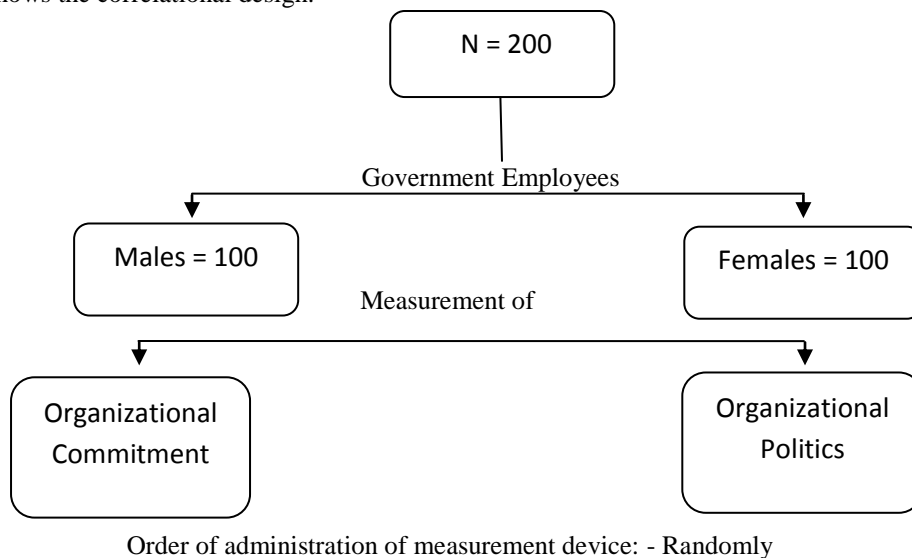
## **II. Rationale of the Study**

Today every youth is logging for getting into the government and motto behind that is clear, one avails many benefits without facing any dire consequences of not doing the job properly, like in private jobs. In the last few years it has been observed that the devotion of an employee towards organization is getting lesser day by day. Even the complaints regarding organizational politics which includes various organizational factors, have quadrupled in number. Organizational commitment and politics found to be correlated in some studies and not in others. Thus to make the condition of these government organizations better, study need to be conducted to solve the issues which employees and the organization as a whole are facing in giving their hundred percent to each other.

This study may help to find that is there any link between organizational commitment and organizational politics which as a result affects their efficiency, or both factors are independent of each other and problems related to each of them need to be dealt in different ways. On the basis of gender keeping these factors in mind it would be easy to find out existing problems from roots and solution would be given accordingly. The results can make these governing bodies more efficient and reliable.

***Purpose of the Study***

This study sought to determine the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational politics. Sample taken is government employees of middle level of urban domicile in the city of Jaipur, state Rajasthan in India. Fig. 1 shows the correlational design.



*Hypothesis*

1. There will be significant correlation between organizational commitment and organizational politics.
2. There will be significant difference between male and female employees in reference to organizational commitment and organizational politics.

**III. Research Method**

The sample comprised of 200 employees of which 100 employees were males and 100 employees were females. Before conducting surveys permission was obtained from senior officials of the organization. To avoid potential bias like boredom, surveys, were conducted on different weekends. The questionnaires were distributed to the employees during their lunch time and asked them to complete the questionnaires. A pen worth about 20 was given to the participants as an incentive for participation.

*Measures*

The scale which was used to test the organizational commitment was developed by Dr. Upinder Dhar, Dr. Prashant Mishra and Dr. D.K Srivastava. The reliability coefficient, Spearman-brown split-half method for odd-even items was followed for the sample of 500 subjects. The figure is 0.6078. The inventory has 8 items. The unit of measurement is based on 5 response alternatives, out of which the subject need to choose one alternative. Each item or statement should be awarded as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positive items. In case of 6 and 8 the rated scores should be reversed i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 as they are negative items respectively. Organizational Politics Scale which was used to test the organizational politics was developed by Dr. Upinder Dhar and Dr. Santosh Dhar. The reliability of the scale was determined by the split-half method corrected for full length by applying Spearman-Brown prophecy formula on the data collected from the sample of 300 subjects. The reliability coefficient was found to be .97. The inventory has 47 items. The unit of measurement is based on 5 response Table alternatives .Each item which is checked as strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree should be awarded the score of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The collected data were further subjected to factor analysis and nine factors were identified.

**IV. Results**

The TABLE 1 shows a cross tabulation between organization commitment and organization politics. The results indicate that there is a no significant correlation between organizational commitment and organizational politics. Therefore the first hypothesis is proved to be deviated.

**Table 1**  
**Correlation between Organizational Commitment and Organizational Politics of the Total Sample**

Variables		Commitment 1	Commitment 2	Commitment T
Politics 1	Correlation	-.149*	-.091	-.160*
Politics 2	Correlation	-.042	-.210**	-.175*
Politics 3	Correlation	-.161*	-.039	-.131
Politics 4	Correlation	.007	-.099	-.066
Politics 5	Correlation	-.127	-.069	-.130
Politics 6	Correlation	.035	-.111	-.056
Politics 7	Correlation	-.083	-.137	-.150*
Politics 8	Correlation	.337**	.036	.191**
Politics 9	Correlation	-.111	.036	-.046
Politics T	Correlation	-.104	-.133	-.161*
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 1 suggests that there is a significant negative correlation at the 0.05 level of factor 1: Concern for the organization of organizational commitment with factor 1: Non-compliance-compliance of organizational politics and factor 3: Self-Centred Organization Centred. There is a significant negative correlation significant at the 0.01 level between factor 2: Identification with the organization, of organizational commitment and factor 2: Disloyalty-Loyalty of organization politics. There is significant negative correlation at 0.05 level between organizational commitment in total and factors 1: non compliance- compliance, factor 2: disloyalty-loyalty, factor 7: high power orientation & low power orientation and organization politics in total. There is significant positive correlation at 0.01 level between factor 8: Impractical-practical of organizational politics, with factor 1: concern for the organization and total of organizational commitment scale.

**Table 2**  
**Correlation between Organizational Commitment and Organizational Politics in Female Employees**

Variables		Commitment 1	Commitment 2	Commitment T
Politics 1	Correlation	-.198*	-.064	-.177
Politics 2	Correlation	.020	-.106	-.063
Politics 3	Correlation	-.243*	-.010	-.168
Politics 4	Correlation	-.023	-.054	-.054
Politics 5	Correlation	-.125	.007	-.078
Politics 6	Correlation	-.045	-.057	-.071
Politics 7	Correlation	-.139	-.093	-.158
Politics 8	Correlation	.187	-.102	.051
Politics 9	Correlation	-.183	.010	-.114
Politics T	Correlation	-.147	-.072	-.149
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 2 suggests that there is a significant negative correlation at the 0.05 level of Factor 1: concern for the organization, of organizational commitment with Factor 1: Non compliance-compliance; and Factor 3: self centred-organization centred, of organizational politics. Rest of the variables do not have any significant relationship with each other.

**Table 3**  
**Correlation between Organizational Commitment and Organizational Politics in Male Employees**

Variables		Commitment 1	Commitment 2	Commitment T
Politics 1	Correlation	-.143	-.024	-.105
Politics 2	Correlation	-.170	-.218*	-.247*
Politics 3	Correlation	-.116	.039	-.048
Politics 4	Correlation	.017	-.101	-.055
Politics 5	Correlation	-.163	-.093	-.164
Politics 6	Correlation	-.094	-.100	-.006
Politics 7	Correlation	-.034	-.178	-.136
Politics 8	Correlation	.455**	.105	.352**
Politics 9	Correlation	-.056	.129	.048
Politics T	Correlation	-.114	-.098	-.134
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 3 suggests that there is a significant negative correlation at the 0.05 level of Factor 2: disloyalty-loyalty, of organizational politics with Factor 2: identification with the organization, of organizational commitment and organizational commitment in total. There is a strong significant positive correlation at the 0.01 level of Factor 8: impractical-practical, of organizational politics with Factor 1: concern for the organization, of organizational commitment and organizational commitment in total.

## V. Discussion and Conclusion

In lay man's language being committed means being devoted to the work field or to the task what-so-ever it is and to the rules and regulations provided by the specific group, person or organization. Results obtained give the figures (-.161) which show significant negative relation between organizational commitment and organizational politics in total thus proving the hypothesis. In support to the obtained results there are also some studies which suggest that there is significant relation between organizational commitment and organizational politics. Wilson (1995) investigated the effects of power and politics on organizational commitment. Pearson's Product moment correlations and stepwise regression analysis were used in the research. Politics and power were discovered to have a significant effect on the organizational commitment of executives. The work by Parker et al. (1995) suggests several important contributing actions related to employees' perception of organizational politics. Employee perceptions of the organization as political were associated with lower levels of overall satisfaction; believing that the organization does not value high work standards, challenging work, and integrity; evaluations of senior management as ineffective; perceiving that the organization does not support innovation; and, believing that employees are not loyal to the organization.

Hochwarter, Perrewé, Ferris, and Guericco, (1999) conceptualized organizational commitment, and tested it as a moderator of the relationship between perceived politics and the outcomes of intent to turnover and job tension using Moderate Multiple Regression Analysis which found that positive relationship between organizational politics and job tension decreased as organizational commitment increased and the positive relationship between organizational politics and intent to turnover decreased as organizational commitment increased. Vigoda-Gadot (2000) aimed to promote understanding of employee's reactions to organizational politics. The relationship between perception of organizational politics, job attitudes, and several other work outcomes was examined among 303 public sector employees in Israel. Perception of organizational politics was found to have had a negative relationship with job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), a positive relationship with intention to leave the organization (exit), and a stronger positive relationship with negligent behaviour (neglect).

Considering factor 1, 2, 3 and organizational politics in total, significant difference can be seen between male and female government employees. The t value for factor 1: Non-compliance-Compliance is 2.25 and for Factor3: Self centred- organization centred is 2.31 which are significant at 0.05 level of significance showing

significant differences between males and females. Factor 2: Disloyalty-loyalty and total score of organizational politics also show differences among males and females, at .01 level of significance.

Ferris and Kacmar (1992) conducted two separate studies to determine antecedents of organizational politics perceptions. In the first study, they found that feedback, job autonomy, skill variety, and opportunity for promotion correlated with perceptions of organizational politics. Additionally, they found that age, sex or supervisory status did not correlate positively with perceptions of politics. Thus both males and females have shown significant difference in case of commitment, strong difference in case of politics specially if it is in the area of non-compliance-compliance, disloyalty-loyalty and self centred-organization centred and organizational politics in total.

Overall it can be said that politics at the moderate level is acceptable which should be healthy and positive.

## **VI. Limitations**

There are certain limitations of the study which can be taken for further research. Circumstances which compel a person to be involved in organizational politics have not been taken into consideration to get more accurate results. Employees of government organization were included in the present study; no comparison of public and private organization's employees has been made, which restricted the main difference between them. An attempt has made to examine the organizational commitment of an employee. Few other reasons which lead to commitment like money, promotional prospects, working environment, type of work could have been included because it also affects organizational commitment of employee.

## **VII. Applications of the Study**

Government sector is an important sector which handles country's major issues. While dealing with organizational and employee related issues this research may help in finding out actual situation and can give proper solution to it. In addition, organizational climate can be made favourable to get the proper outcome from the employee by removing dirty organizational politics.

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