

Commitment Parallax: Paradoxical Theory

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Abstract

Universities are the mainsail in imparting knowledge and shaping future of a nation and of mankind. Apart from all tangible resources, it is the instructor, who ensures this alignment. Commitment of the teaching fraternity towards their institutions is extremely important for imparting quality knowledge and guiding the fresh brains to next level. This study investigates the difference in teachers' organizational commitment at government funded and private universities. Exploratory research design was adapted for the study with hypothetic deductive approach. Structured questionnaires were administered for conducting personal interview of 398 teaching staff across various universities in India. 'R' statistical tool was used to analyze data. The findings from the study were paradoxical to the theoretical establishment of the difference among organizational commitment of teachers employed in government and private universities. There was no sufficient evidence available to establish the causality of organizational commitment with performance. Future studies could be extended to investigate individual performance to establish causality with the organizational commitments considering difference in funding, staffing, and ambience provided by institutes of higher education.

Key words: *Universities; Organizational Commitment; Normative; Affective; Continuous; Teachers; Performance*

I. Introduction

University is an academic institution dedicated to higher studies and researches, where most of the researches and technical advancements are achieved apart from providing academic degrees and producing trained and skilled workforce for the world. Teaching staffs (professors, associate professor, and assistant professor) lie at the center of the periphery and they are the resource persons who determine the success of a university and thus they are the main asset. They impart knowledge and skills among scholars which leads to career decisions, developments and advancements. Intervening of teacher always results into a successful brain at all level of teaching. Teachers put their continuous and strenuous efforts to stimulate the learning and produce intelligent and outperforming brains. Teachers' work is more inclined towards personal and professional developments and they best influence their ability to manage positive and negative scenarios in their life and work (Day & Gu, 2007). For a quality teaching-

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learning process, universities need committed teachers who are more productive, dedicated, regular, work beyond responsibilities and attrition is less likely (Young, 1998).

A sustainable level of organizational commitment is necessary and in many countries teachers' organizational commitment find due attention and considerable efforts to push it (Schleicher, 2012). In this attempt, countries such as United States have imposed standardization and accountability which received mixed response from education fundamentalist and teachers (Stone-Johnson, 2014). When the goals and tasks are shifted due to change in norms, educational reforms, context and social evolution, a teacher needs to change accordingly. Parallel to change in context, teachers' organizational commitment is also challenged (Gu, 2014). Performance of academic institutions is found to be positively correlated with teaching quality (Zebal & Goodwin, 2012) which could be attributed to teachers as they are the resource person.

Indian higher education system includes government universities (central, state and deemed) governed by central or state governments and private universities supported by various bodies and societies. These institutions have varying degree of resources and administrative styles, though all universities in India are controlled by University Grant Commission (UGC) through UGC Act- 1956. Altogether, there are 874 universities in India (University Grant Commission, 2018) among which 311 or 35.6% contribution come from private universities. Though, same regulations and norms, the performance of these universities is different. However, their representation in national ranking (top 25) is merely 20%. Among top 25 universities in India, 20 are government owned other five, controlled by private entity (NIRF, 2018) and among top ten, nine are government universities. Given that performance is correlated with teaching (Zebal & Goodwin, 2012) and change with regulations (Day & Gu, 2007; Gu, 2014), this study aims to establish if there is any difference in organizational commitment level among privately owned and public administered university teachers. Researchers suggest that as the administration type changes, so does the organizational commitment (Meyer, Stanley, & Parfyonova, 2012; Brimeyer, Perrucci, & Wadsworth, 2010).

In this study, it has been tried to establish if there is any difference in organizational commitment between government and private universities teachers'. Using structured questionnaire and administrating to government and private university teachers (professors, associate professors, and assistant professors), the idea is to explore, whether the difference in performance can be attributed to difference in organizational commitment, apart from other perceived factors influencing performance.

II. Review of literature

Organizational commitment and Model

Organizational commitment could be illustrated as a sense of belonging and an adherence to their organization. The organizational commitment is defined as, "an individual's psychological bond to the organization, including a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organization", O'Reilly (1989, p 17). The definition could be extended to "a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals,

and wishes to maintain membership in the organization” Miller (2003, p 73). Organizational commitment has garnered considerable and continuous effort to identify the cause and its implications (Angle & Perry, 1981; DeCotiis & Summers, 1987) with an idea to create a workplace environment and invest resources in employee commitment rather on compliance (Brooke Jr & Price, 1989; Daley D. M., 1991; Daley D. , 1988). Collectively, organizational commitment is an attachment to organization, intention to remain in the organization and being ordinate to its values and goals (Porter, Steers, & Boulian, 1973; Robbins, 2003). Organizational commitment is affected by various factors such as job involvement and position as explained by *exchange theory* or *side bet Theory* (Alutto, Hrebiniak, & Alonso, 1973). Organizational commitment has been studied though many differentiating dimensions but the model proposed by Allen and Mayer (1990) is most widely accepted. Initially a two dimension phenomena was proposed, *affective commitment*, a positive feeling of being attached and involved with the organization and; *continuance commitment* as the sense of being attached by virtue of cost of leaving the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984). Further investigations led them to propose another dimension the *normative commitment*, the sense of obligations to remain with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and thus concept of organizational commitment is characterized by three dimensions, affective, continuance and normative dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The Three Component Model (TCM) of Meyer and Allen (1991) is inspired by many researchers inciting, it combines together the three components of organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). However, few studies criticize TCM citing its inconsistency with empirical findings (Solinger, Olffen, & Roe, 2008), concluding that TCM combines behavioral phenomena and predicts employee turnover rather than overall commitment and advocated attitude-behavior model (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Along the critiques, the TCM model has been very helpful and widely used in measuring and accessing organizational commitment thoroughly with an extension that emotional or affective commitment lie on core to organizational commitment (Mercurio, 2015).

Commitment and Management Styles

Through distributed organizational commitment measures, it has been noticed that employees from public and privately controlled organizations differ in their level of organizational commitment. Zeffane (1994), reports that managerial styles have significant bearing on employee organizational commitments and it is in line with other studies as well (Bourantas & Papalexandris, 1992). The role of public-private dimension in determining organizational commitment has been a matter of study over the years and studies have uncovered that ‘publicness’ and state of individual affiliation to their organizations has substantial effect (Balfour & Wechsler, 1990). They reported that degree of attachment to the organization is function of several dimensions which could be incoherent.

When non-profit organizations were included to study the organizational commitment, apart from public and for-profit organizations, it was found that for-profit workers were highly committed followed by non-profit organizations while public sector employees were found least committed for their organization (Goulet & Frank, 2002). Another study comparing the values and commitments among private, public and ‘parapublic’ sector reveals that, no significant difference exists in general values across the sectors. However, private sector employees’ exhibit greater organizational commitment compared to other two sectors (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2006). Employees in

public sector and private sector work in different environment and relationship and thus their attitude and behavior is also different towards the organization. Public sector employees are less extrinsically committed and overall organizational commitment is influenced by position rather than organization type (Buelens & Broeck, 2007). Also, it has been established that extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction is found significantly related with affective and normative organizational commitment and higher for public sector employees as compared to private sector (Markovits, Davis, Fay, & Dick, 2010).

Teachers' Organizational Commitment

Though, significant research has been conducted in this line, studies specific to educational institutes, particularly higher education and universities are limited. With reference to management type, it has been noticed that teacher's orientation and commitment change (Evans, 2010) and it calls for an understanding the change in organizational commitment and orientation over the time and changing contexts and norms (Stone-Johnson, 2014). Demographic factors like education, salary, working conditions and hierarchal position are main determinant of overall as well as extrinsic and intrinsic organizational commitments among the university teachers (Schroder, 2008; Khan, Shah, Sajjad ul Hassan, & Khan, 2013; Salim, Kamarudin, & Kadir, 2010). At instances it has been found that privately management school teachers are more committed than their government counterpart though receiving low salary, and also; privately school students perform better compared to government one (Joolideh & Yeshodhara, 2009; Tooley & Dixon, 2006). These findings call for a serious intuition to look for any difference in organizational commitment, among private and publicly managed university teachers.

Research Problem

Based on extensive literature review, the problem objective has been narrowed down to identify possible difference in organizational commitment levels among teachers belonging to private universities and universities managed by government. The idea is to explore the differences and open the way for further studies to attribute the performance and rankings based on difference in organizational commitment levels arising as a result of management type. Accordingly, the research hypothesis was framed to test that private and government universities' teachers exhibit same level of organizational commitment towards their organization against the assumption of non-equality.

The hypothesis tested is:

$$\mathbf{H_0:} \quad \mu_{Government} = \mu_{Private}$$

$$\mathbf{H_1:} \quad \mu_{Government} \neq \mu_{Private}$$

III. Methodology

Descriptive statistical techniques are used to explore the data collected through personal interview using structured questionnaires. Data has been captured from three public owned (government) and three private universities from the Lucknow city in India. Altogether, 198 responses have been obtained from private university

teachers and 200 from government universities. Using printed questionnaires, teachers working as assistant professor and above were interviewed. The questions have been prepared according to standardized scale proposed by Allen & Meyer (1990). Cronbach's alpha (α) is found to be .70 and thus data reliability has been assured. The records have been maintained and analyzed using R statistical package (R Core Team, 2018) by applying t-test of difference between two means as well as Wilcoxon Rank test. Though, the data has been captured over a five point likert scale, the accumulated score has many distinct values which could be approximated to normally distributed data. Questions numbered 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 21 and 24 were negative (See Annexure A) and thus their scores were reversed in order to align the scoring pattern and compute the aggregate scores. The reversing procedure is done using following method:

$$\text{Final score (Reversed)} = \text{Upper Limit} - \text{Actual Score} + \text{Lower Limit}$$

IV. Data Description

1. Initial summary of data with their central values (mean) favors the null hypothesis. Mean organizational commitment scores of all the three are nearly same with similar standard deviation see Table: 1).

Table 1: Summary of records (University Wise)

University	University Type	No. of Observations (N)	Mean Commitment	Standard Deviation
A	Private	103	77.49	8.88
B	Private	95	76.77	8.39
C	Government	100	78.07	7.77
D	Government	100	79.19	7.92

2. Exploring through data to ascertain its quality suggested two rows with missing values. These records were removed from further processing. It finally reduced our sample size to 396.

3. Summarizing the total organizational commitment score displays that mean organizational commitment score is 77.71, which is well close to 1st as well as 3rd quartile. Range is 73 and both minimum and maximum value is distant apart from 1st and 3rd quartile respectively, hinting towards outliers.

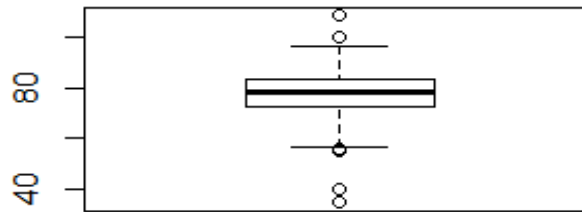
Table: 2 (Summary Statistics of Total Commitment)

Minimum	1st Quar.	Median	3rd Quar.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Maximum
35	72.75	78.00	83.00	77.71	9.52	108

4. Producing a box plot for visualizing distribution and outliers (if any) displays that seven data points were extending away from whiskers on either side. Undoubtedly they are outliers and removed from further analysis.

Figure 1: Box Plot of Commitment Score (Total)

Box Plot of Total Commitment Score



5. The total organizational commitment score was fed into a histogram to visualize the distribution (see Figure: 2). The histogram supports the idea that total organizational commitment score is normally distributed. Though a Shapiro Wilk test (see Table: 3) goes against the assumption, but with the reference to the graph, normally assumption can be approximated to be validated. Since sample size is sufficiently large ($N = 396$), central limit theorem permits the assumption of normality. Shapiro-Wilk test being sensitive for ties may be the reason for the anomaly.

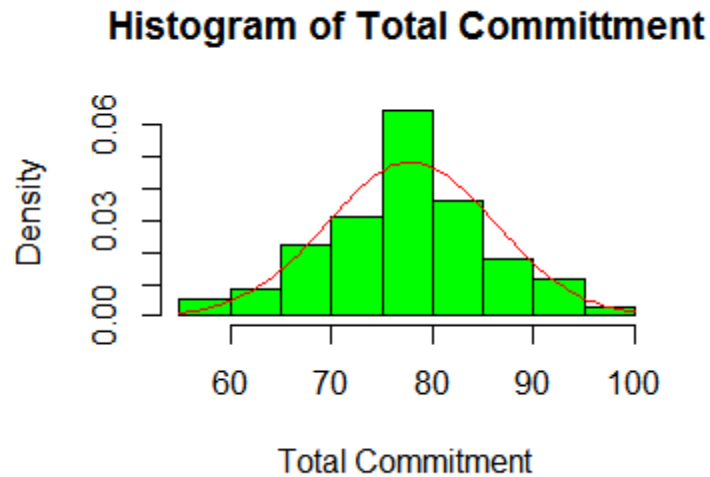


Table: 3 Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality

Shapiro-wilk normality test
data: CMNT_TOTAL
w = 0.98867, p-value = 0.004106

V. Analysis and Results

1. Assuming the normal distribution approximation, t test of difference between two means was performed after validating assumption of equal variance. Bartlett's K^2 was found to be 2.18 ($p = .54$, $df = 3$) (see Table: 4).

Table 4: Bartlett Test for Equality of Variance

<pre>bartlett.test(CMNT_TOTAL~ University)</pre>
Bartlett test of homogeneity of variances
data: CMNT_TOTAL by University
Bartlett's K-squared = 2.1832, df = 3, p-value = 0.5353

2. Result of t-test under the assumption of equal variance found that $t = -1.77$ ($p = 0.08$, $df = 382$). Under these findings, the null hypothesis could not be rejected in the favor of alternative hypothesis. Also, mean organizational commitment score for private universities was found to be 77.15 against 78.62. These values are quite similar and support the findings of the t-test. Further, 95% confidence interval for the difference between the organizational commitment means for the two population was found to cross zero (95% CI -3.122333, 0.167590). This again strengthens the findings of no difference between the organizational commitment means.

Table: 5 Results of t-test

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welch Two Sample t-test  
data: CMNT_TOTAL by Type  
t = -1.7659, df = 382.23, p-value = 0.07822  
alternative hypothesis: true difference in means is not equal to 0  
95 percent confidence interval:  
-3.122333      0.167590  
sample estimates:  
mean in group 1 mean in group 2  
77.14508      78.62245
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3. Since normality assumption was not 100 percent validated, Wilcoxon rank test was performed, the non-parametric counterpart of t-test. This again supports the earlier findings. The test statistics (W) was found 17696 ($p = 0.2714$). Thus, we could not reject the assumption of equal mean organizational commitment across the universities.

Table 5: Result of Wilcox Rank Sum Test

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wilcoxon rank sum test with continuity correction  
data: CMNT_TOTAL by Type  
W = 17696, p-value = 0.2714  
alternative hypothesis: true location shift is not equal to 0
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4. The findings in step 3 raised another question, if the organizational commitment types though differ but compensate the total organizational commitment. An analysis of variance was performed to see if the individual organizational commitment scores differ. The ANOVA result ($F = 58.068$, $p\text{-value} < 2.2e-16$) suggest difference in mean organizational commitment scores.

5. Two-way ANOVA suggests that there is difference in mean scores for affective commitment. However, continuous and normative commitments do not differ significantly across university types. An independent two sample t-test for affective commitment confirms this finding ($t = -2.1712$, $df = 374.13$, $p\text{-value} = 0.03054$). However the difference is subtle with 95% CI for the difference reported to be -1.92407468 , -0.09527606 .

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
AFF_CMNT	Between Groups	99.135	1	99.135	4.727	.030
	Within Groups	8116.942	387	20.974		
	Total	8216.077	388			
CON_CMNT	Between Groups	.519	1	.519	.022	.881
	Within Groups	8927.209	387	23.068		
	Total	8927.728	388			
NOR_CMNT	Between Groups	28.434	1	28.434	2.286	.131
	Within Groups	4813.582	387	12.438		
	Total	4842.015	388			

VI. Findings and Conclusion

The findings went against our perception of differing organizational commitments of teachers with different management types. The t-test under the approximation of normality assumption could not reject the null hypothesis ($t = -1.77$, $p = 0.08$, $df = 382$) in the favour of alternative one (difference in mean). Wilcoxon rank sum test, the non-parametric counterpart of t-test ($W = 17696$, $p = 0.2714$) gives strong evidence in favour of null hypothesis that is there is no difference in the mean commitment score across government and private universities. Further, individual commitment types (Affective, Continuous and Normative) were compared across universities. It was found that mean commitment scores for continuous and normative commitment do not differ significantly across government and private universities. But, affective commitment has a disparity though very small. 95% CI for difference in mean was found to -1.92407468 , -0.09527606 which is small and do not cross zero and thus a subtle difference.

VII. Discussion and Future studies

Teachers' organizational commitment towards their universities was perceived to differ between government and private universities. The parallax persisting in the system perceives organizational commitment as a variable which defines performance. The genesis of the idea was based on the performance ranking of the universities. As reported, among top universities, privately controlled universities were found low in ranking. It was presumed that teachers' organizational commitment might be a factor affecting the performance of the universities. However, among all, data prevails and it disproved the idea of different level of organizational commitment among government and private universities. The findings led to reverse the idea and proved that organizational commitment (overall) could not be attributed to the overall performance of the universities. Further, there are some evidences that affective commitment is higher at government universities as compare to its private counterpart. But the difference is subtle.

This study had concluded with a paradoxical finding, which demonstrates lack of significant difference in the organizational commitment level among private and government university teachers. The correlation between the organizational commitment and performance is a debatable subject, in the context of varied management styles. The causal inference in the phenomena needs to be further explored and research should focus in investigating the 'personal commitment' of individuals working in the organization.

The problem of difference in performance remains, and thus a new research gap is identified. Future research might include investigating academic and research performance to establish causality with the organizational commitments. In addition, difference in funding, staffing, ambience and learning environment might be examined to correlate with the performance.

Considering the cost and time constraints, the sampling units chosen for this study was based on convenience and it was insufficient to be generalized at broader. A comprehensive study is required to get more confidence in this finding and ensure the generalizability.

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