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Nurturing affective and continuance organizational commitment by developing cognitive and affective attitudes toward work

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the impact of employees' attitudes toward their work on organizational commitment. To deepen the understanding of this relationship, a review of relevant literature was conducted. The research employed a descriptive assessment and correlational design, focusing on all employees of the Divine Word College of Laoag. Data were collected using research questionnaires and analyzed using inferential statistics, specifically the Weighted Mean and Pearson r correlation.

Findings revealed that employees exhibited high levels of both work attitude and organizational commitment. The Pearson r correlation indicated a significant overall correlation between work attitude and organizational commitment. However, when analyzed separately, only affective and continuance commitment were found to be associated with cognitive and affective attitudes toward work, whereas normative commitment showed no such association.

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Introduction

The rising competition among business organizations compels them to differentiate their products and services to attract customers, which ultimately requires creating a competitive workforce. Many believe that achieving this involves continuously upskilling employees with the latest knowledge, technology, and skills to enhance their innovative and creative capabilities (Lee et

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al., 2016; Idrees et al., 2022). However, winning the competition also necessitates positive work behavior from employees (Youssef & Luthans, 2007; Cascio, 2006).

People's behavior is often influenced by their attitudes. According to Ortmeyer (1949), attitudes significantly impact human behavior. Ajzen (1993), Myers (2013), Perloff (2013), and Liska (1974) identified three dimensions of attitude: cognitive, affective, and conative (behavioral). These components suggest that perceptions (cognitive) and feelings (affective) influence behavior (conative) toward a particular object. A positive attitude fosters positive behavior, while a negative attitude leads to negative behavior. Therefore, changing a person's mindset and feelings toward something is crucial for altering their behavior.

Attitude management is often neglected in organizational management. Leaders frequently overlook employees' attitudes, yet these can significantly impact performance (Cabrera & Estacio, 2022; Rahiman & Kodikal, 2017; Brayfield & Crockett, 1955). Enhancing employees' performance requires boosting their commitment to their work; without this, organizational objectives may suffer (Stackhouse et al., 2022). Therefore, employees' attitudes toward their work are a critical element that management must address to improve performance and commitment.

This study aims to investigate how employees' attitudes toward their work influence their organizational commitment. With no existing studies on this topic, this research seeks to fill that gap. The results will provide valuable insights for management regarding employees' attitudes and behavior in their duties.

The study is organized into several sections: introduction, literature review, research methodology, data presentation, results and discussion, and conclusion.

Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to deepen understanding of the subject matter by examining past research. Beyond providing new insights, it helps establish the theoretical framework for the study. A thorough review of existing literature enables the researcher to build a solid foundation on the topic and develop guiding theories for the investigation. Therefore, the literature review will be organized thematically based on the study's topic.

The concept of attitude and attitude toward work and its Effect on work performance

Defining attitude is key to understanding work attitudes. Merriam-Webster describes attitude as "a mental position concerning a fact or state" and "a feeling toward a fact or state," emphasizing a person's mental and emotional stance. The Cambridge Dictionary adds that attitude includes "a feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving caused by this,"

highlighting affective, cognitive, and conative elements which show how feelings and opinions drive behavior.

Attitude, a long-discussed concept in social psychology, was described by Allport (1935) as "the most distinctive and indispensable in contemporary American social psychology," defining it as a mental and neural readiness shaped by experience that influences responses to related objects and situations. Cherry (2021) notes that attitudes shape beliefs, emotions, and behaviors toward particular entities. Titchener (1910) described attitude as potentially subconscious but influential on behavior, while Koffka (1935) and Dewey (1922) highlighted its forceful and self-active nature. Thurstone (1929) defined attitude as an individual's inclinations and feelings about specific topics, driving behavior (Baysal & Tekarslan, 1996).

Ajzen (1993), Myers (2013), Perloff (2013), and Liska (1974) view attitudes as cognitive, affective, and conative responses. Thus, attitude toward work encompasses workers' feelings, emotions, beliefs, judgments, and opinions about their work and environment (Aries & Rizqi, 2013; Önal, 2015, as cited by Akcay et al., 2016). These attitudes impact behavior and work performance, as shown in studies by Abun et al. (2021) and Abdalkrim and Elhalim (2016). Positive work attitudes enhance performance and job satisfaction (Borst et al., 2020; Menon & Priyadarshini, 2018; Almeida et al., 2012).

Organizational commitment

The concept of commitment and organizational commitment varies among researchers. The Cambridge Dictionary defines commitment as "willingness to give your time and energy to a job, activity, or something you believe in." Dictionary.com describes it as "the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, or an engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action." Both definitions emphasize dedication of time and energy to a cause or activity.

Britannica Dictionary defines commitment as "a promise to do or give something or a promise to be loyal to someone or something." These definitions lack the psychological dimension found in scholarly definitions. Leonard (2009) describes commitment as "a state of mind that holds people and organizations in the line of behavior," highlighting the psychological contract with the institution. Ajayi and Muraina (2016) define it as "the extent to which an individual identifies with the object of the organization." Ceylan (2020) emphasizes responsibility and emotional attachment to the organization.

Meyer and Allen (1991) define commitment as "a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization." This aligns with Porter et al. (1974) who describe organizational commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization." Idris and Manganaro (2017) define it as "the extent to which individuals psychologically identify with their work organization," mirroring Porter and Lawer (1965) who view it as the desire to make high efforts for the organization's benefit.

Greenberg and Baron (2008) similarly see it as the degree to which employees identify with and are committed to their organization.

In summary, organizational commitment involves a psychological contract between the individual and the organization. Rousseau (1995) describes it as individual beliefs about reciprocal obligations and benefits. MacNeil (1985) identifies two dimensions of this contract: relational (emotional exchange and loyalty) and transactional (economic exchange).

Studies by Fischer and Mansell (2009), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), Meyer et al. (2002), and Solinger et al. (2008) show a strong correlation between organizational commitment and occupational commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement. High organizational commitment reduces turnover, absenteeism, and promotes organizational citizenship behavior and well-being (Angle & Perry, 1981; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Solinger et al., 2008).

Dimensions of Organizational Commitment: Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment

Organizational commitment is a multidimensional concept according to scholars, comprising attitudinal, behavioral, and motivational dimensions. Morrow (1993) defined organizational commitment primarily through attitude and behavior, with attitude reflecting attachment, identification, and loyalty to the organization (Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990). Best (1994) emphasized commitment as demonstrated through task performance, while Reicher (1985) noted it within group contexts, highlighting a psychological bond (O'Reilly, 1989).

Scholars propose various dimensions of organizational commitment, often overlapping. Meyer and Allen (1997) identified affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment involves emotional attachment driven by shared values (Lowry, 1973), motivating higher effort (Johnson & Chang, 2006). Continuance commitment results from cost-benefit analysis, where staying is seen as more advantageous (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment stems from moral and legal obligations (Muhammad et al., 2021).

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) described commitment as compliance, identification, and internalization. Compliance and internalization align with continuance and affective commitment, respectively, while identification emphasizes emotional attachment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Balfour and Wechsler (1996) also discussed identification, affiliation, and exchange commitment, correlating with affective, affiliation, and continuance commitment.

Thus, this paper adopts Meyer and Allen's (1997) three dimensions— affective, continuance, and normative commitment—as a framework for studying organizational commitment.

Research Questions:

The study investigated the interplay of attitude toward work and organizational commitment. It seeks specifically the following questions:

1. What is the attitude of employees toward work in terms of:
 - 1.1. Cognitive attitude
 - 1.2. Affective attitude
2. What is the organizational commitment of employees along with:
 - 2.1. Affective commitment
 - 2.2. Continuance commitment
 - 2.3. Normative commitment
3. Is there a relationship between attitude toward work and organizational commitment?

Hypothesis

Human attitudes significantly shape their behaviors toward the objects of those attitudes. Positive attitudes typically lead to favorable behaviors, while negative attitudes tend to result in unfavorable behaviors. This study posits that employees' attitudes toward their work directly impact their organizational commitment.

Scope and Delimitation

The study focused exclusively on employees' cognitive and affective attitudes toward work, as well as their organizational commitment, including affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. The research population consists solely of employees within the institution.

Research Methodology

The study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a descriptive assessment and correlational research design. It is conducted at Divine Word College of Laoag, focusing on its employees. Data collection involves questionnaires, and analysis employs descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically weighted mean and Pearson correlation (r).

To gather data, the researcher obtained permission from the President to distribute questionnaires, which were collected through employees' representatives. The study underwent ethical review, with consideration given to the absence of sensitive human issues, resulting in a waiver of ethical review requirements.

The following ranges of values with their descriptive interpretation were used:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree/Very High
3.41-4.20	Agree/High
2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree/Moderate
1.81-2.60	Disagree/Low
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree/Very Low

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data are presented following the statement of problems of the study.

Problem 1. What is the attitude of employees toward work in terms of:

1.1. Cognitive attitude

1.2. Affective attitude

Table 1: Attitude toward work

Indicator	Mean	DI
Cognitive attitude		
I think I know my work.	4.06	High
I think that I have the knowledge to perform my work.	3.92	High
I think that I have enough experience to carry out my tasks.	3.87	High
I think that I am familiar with all the details of my work.	3.89	High
I think that I have the skills to carry out my work.	3.91	High
I think I can carry out my work without the help of others.	3.73	High
Composite Mean	3.90	High
Affective attitude		
I feel happy with my work.	3.87	High
I love the work I am doing.	3.81	High
My work gives me satisfaction.	3.84	High
I feel good because my work matches my skills.	3.88	High
My work is important to me.	3.93	High
My work gives me a sense of meaning	3.97	High
Composite Mean	3.88	High
Overall Mean	3.98	High

Source: Rosenberg and Hovland (1960), Abdalkrim and Elhalim (2016).

Legends:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree/Very High
3.41-4.20	Agree/High
2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree/Moderate
1.81-2.60	Disagree/Low
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree/Very Low

According to the table data, employees' overall attitude toward work received a mean rating of 3.99, interpreted as "agree/high." This indicates their cognitive and affective attitudes are both rated high, with separate mean ratings of 3.90 and 3.88 respectively. Regarding cognitive attitude, employees feel confident in their knowledge, skills, and ability to work independently. Abun et al. (2021) highlight the impact of cognitive attitude on employee self-efficacy. Similarly, employees report feeling satisfied and fulfilled in their work, emphasizing the importance of affective attitude as noted by Abun et al. (2021) in enhancing self-efficacy and performance.

Problem 2. What is the organizational commitment of employees along with:

2.1. Affective commitment

2.2. Continuance commitment

2.3. Normative commitment

Table 2: Organizational commitment

Indicator	Mean	DI
Affective commitment		
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	3.89	High
I feel as if this organization's problems are my own	3.75	High
I feel like 'part of my family at this organization	3.71	High
I feel 'emotionally attached to this organization	3.73	High
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	3.88	High
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization	3.67	High
Composite Mean	3.77	High
Continuance commitment		
It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organization right now even if I wanted to	3.74	High
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I left my organization	3.48	High
Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	3.64	High
I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	3.63	High
One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives elsewhere.	3.56	High
One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice	3.69	High
Composite Mean	3.62	High
Normative commitment		
I should remain with my organization.	3.64	High
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave.	3.50	High
I would feel guilty if I left this organization now	3.62	High
This organization deserves my loyalty	3.73	High
I would not leave my organization right now because of my sense of obligation to it	3.74	High
I owe a great deal to this organization.	3.84	High
Composite Mean	3.68	High
Overall Mean	3.69	High

Source: Meyer and Allen (1997).

Based on the table data, employees' overall organizational commitment received a mean rating of 3.69, indicating a "agree/high" level. This suggests their commitment is high but not extreme. When assessed individually, the dimensions received similar mean ratings: 3.77 for affective commitment, 3.62 for continuance commitment, and 3.69 for normative commitment.

Regarding affective commitment, employees express emotional attachment to the organization, feeling a sense of belonging and willingness to stay long-term, as noted by Ardiansyah and Afandi (2018) regarding its impact on performance and citizenship behavior. In terms of continuance commitment, employees indicate a preference to remain due to personal disruption and sacrifices associated with leaving, aligning with findings by Kasogela (2019) on its positive influence on job performance. Normative commitment reflects employees' belief in their obligation to stay, influenced by shared values and norms with the organization, as argued by Fullerton (2011) and Meyer & Allen (1991).

Problem 3. Is there a relationship between attitude toward work and organizational commitment?

Table 3: Relationship between attitude toward work and organizational commitment.

		Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment	Overall commitment
Cognitive attitude	Pearson Correlation	.416**	.351**	.041	.331**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.610	.000
Affective attitude	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.396**	.035	.312**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.658	.000
Overall attitude	Pearson Correlation	.393**	.400**	.041	.343**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.611	.000

**p<0.01

The table provides the correlation analysis between attitude toward work and organizational commitment.

There is a significant positive relationship between attitude toward work and organizational commitment ($r=0.343$, $p<.01$), indicating that individuals with more positive attitudes toward their work tend to show higher levels of commitment to their organization.

Specifically, the cognitive attitude toward work correlates positively with affective ($r=0.321$, $p<.01$) and continuance ($r=0.416$, $p<.01$) components of organizational commitment. Similarly, the affective attitude toward work shows significant positive correlations with affective ($r=0.396$, $p<.01$) and continuance ($r=0.351$, $p<.01$) components of organizational commitment.

However, the normative component of organizational commitment does not show significant relationships with either cognitive or affective attitudes toward work, nor with overall attitude (ranging from 0.041 to 0.035, $p>0.05$). This suggests that individuals' sense of obligation to

remain committed to their organization may not strongly depend on their cognitive or affective attitudes toward their work.

In summary, while cognitive and affective attitudes toward work are positively associated with affective and continuance components of organizational commitment, the normative component appears to operate somewhat independently. This underscores the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment and its relationship with attitudes toward work.

Discussion

The study highlights the importance of fostering positive cognitive and affective attitudes toward work to enhance organizational commitment, particularly affective and continuance commitment. Developing cognitive attitudes involves updating employees' knowledge and skills related to their work, fostering their belief in their capabilities. Similarly, fostering affective attitudes entails ensuring employees feel satisfied and fulfilled in their roles, finding meaning and happiness in their work.

Employees with positive attitudes toward their work are more likely to exhibit stronger organizational commitment, being willing to make personal sacrifices to remain with the organization. This loyalty and commitment lead employees to align with the organization's goals and values, exerting significant effort on its behalf (Mueller & Straatmann, 2014). Consequently, organizational commitment becomes crucial for organizational performance and competitiveness (Wood, 2015).

Therefore, it is recommended that management prioritize initiatives to develop and enhance employees' attitudes toward their work, aiming to improve organizational commitment and ultimately enhance organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study revealed a high level of employees' attitudes toward work and organizational commitment. It found significant correlations between attitude toward work and affective and continuance commitment, though not with normative commitment. Therefore, administrators should focus on cultivating positive cognitive and affective attitudes toward work among employees.

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