Casual Factor Model Affecting Organizational Commitment of Staff Members of Rajabhat Universities in Northeast of Thailand

Sanyasorn Swasthaisong[1] / Pawarin Sawasthaisong[2] / Nethichai Thanarat[3] / Pissadarn Saenchat[4]

[1, 4]Lecturer, Public Administration Program, Faculty of Management Science, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University

[2] Lecturer, Department of Finance, Faculty of Management Science, Loei Rajabhat University

[3] Legal officer (Chief of discipline and legal affairs), Division of Personnel and legal Administration, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University

Abstract

The purposes of this research were (1) to analyze the confirmatory factors of organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of staff members of northeastern Thailand's Rajabhat universities (NTRU staff) and then verify the structural equation model; (2) to estimate the sizes of the direct, indirect, and total effects of causal factors that affect the organizational commitment of the NTRU staff. The samples were 320 staff members selected by stratified random sampling from all the Rajabhat universities in the Northeast of Thailand. A questionnaire of five-Likert type rating scales (with IOC =0.80-1.00, discrimination power (r) = 0.616-1.132, validity co-efficient = 0.880-0.964) was used to collect the data. The results were as follows: 1)the analysis of confirmatory factors pertaining to organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of members of staff of Rajabhat universities in Northeast of Thailand revealed that the loadings of all the latent factors were statistically significant at the 0.05 level and that the proposed model was fitted with the empirical data, based on the pertinent indices (χ^2 = 224.0742, df = 82, χ^2/df = 2.740, RMSEA = 0.074, CFI = 0.972, TLI = 0.959, SRMR = 0.035); 2) the latent factor directly affecting organizational commitment was quality of work life; while the latent factors with total effects

included organizational culture, quality of work life, and leadership, respectively, also at the 0.05 statistical significance level. All the factors within the model could explain 44.90 percent of the variance of the latent variable of organizational commitment.

Keywords: organizational commitment, organizational culture, leadership, quality of work life

Introduction

More importantly, organizational commitment is unavoidably relevant to an organization's ability of retaining its employees, because a brain drain causes inestimable cost and expenditures. Low organizational commitment usually leads to several important consequences; these are: (Kejonnan, N., 2008).

1. Staff members with a low level of organizational commitment are more likely to be absent from work and quit their jobs than those with high organizational commitment; staff members with high commitment tend to change their jobs less often than the ones with low commitment; and the staff members with a tendency to be committed to the organization at the outset tend to be remain permanently with their organization.

2. Staff members of an organization with a low commitment level are usually unwilling to give a helping hand, and tend to be selfish and stay away from demanding workload.

3. Those with a low level of organizational commitment tend to live a negatively private life. Khejonnan (2008) found in his study that state employees who were dissatisfied with their private lives had a low level of organizational commitment. The research has found that there are several causal factors that relate to organizational commitment, and such factors include leadership, quality of work life, and organizational culture.

Increasing a level of organizational commitment on the part of staff members is therefore necessary, and in order to achieve that goal, several factors need to be taken into account. For example, a good quality of work life in the workplace results in a higher level of organizational

commitment of staff members who in turn requite their organization with dedication to their job which positively affects the firm's performance.

In terms of human resource management, retaining staff with an organization for as long as possible is an ideal goal. Any organization that loses out its highly qualified and skillful staff cannot perform satisfactorily. Though some organizations resort to employment cutting and outsourcing as a cost-cutting measure, retaining employees is still necessary, perhaps more important than it was in the past, because of the fact that the fewer staff an organization employs, the more important the staff with knowledge and skill become (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Previous studies also confirm the positive effects of leadership on various variables such as leadership of subordinates, job satisfaction, staff loyalty, decent behaviours within an organization, and job performance of subordinates or bosses. Other ordinal scale variables are also positively affected by leadership, and these include efficiency of group or organization, commitment to group or organization, organizational culture, and work spirit (Jongwisan, 2008).

From the foregoing review, the authors of the present investigation found it urgent and necessary to conduct a study to explore the factors that affect the organizational commitment of staff members of Rajabhat universities in northeastern Thailand (henceforth university staff members) one of the current critical issues that render Thailand's higher education institutes hapless. It was expected that the findings from this study would serve as a guideline for any agencies concerned to address this pressing problem. Ideally, the researchers hoped the findings would be conducive to the enhancement of organizational efficiency in terms of discernible displays of better quality of work life and a higher level of organizational commitment on the part of Rajabhat university staff members.

Objectives

1. To analyze the confirmatory factors of organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of staff members of Rajabhat universities in the Northeast of Thailand, and to verify a structural equation model

2. To estimate the sizes of direct, indirect, and total effects of causal factors that affect the organizational commitment of the university staff members

The following conceptual framework serves as the guiding framework of the present investigation (See figure 1).
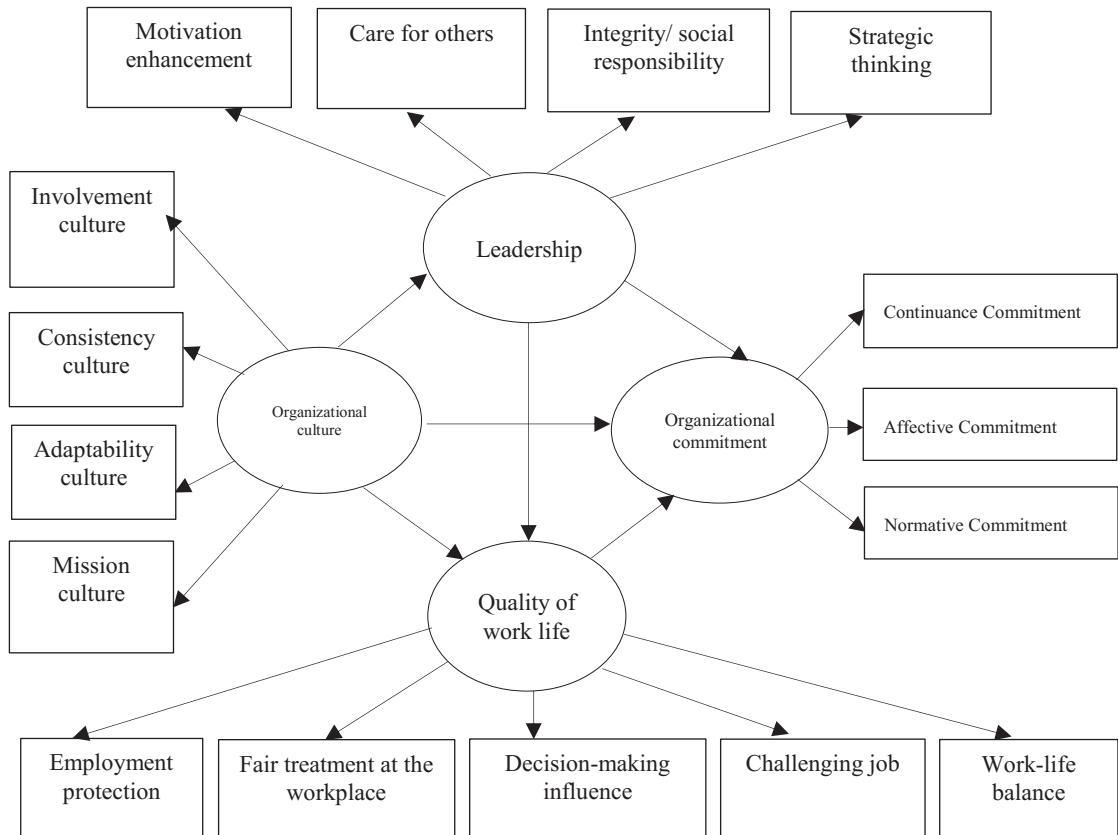

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the present investigation

Hypotheses

1. The confirmatory factor model of the causal factors affecting the organizational commitment of staff members of Rajabhat universities in northeastern Thailand is fitted with the empirical data.

2. Organizational culture, leadership, and quality of work life have direct, indirect, and total effects on the organizational commitment of the staff members of Rajabhat universities in northeastern Thailand at the significant level of .05.

Methodology

Population and Samples

The samples for this survey research were 320 staff members selected from the population of 8,436 staff members working in 11 Rajabhat universities across the northeast of Thailand (Personnel office, 2017). The samples were both academic staff and supporting staff, and were selected based on the proportion of the staff in those universities through a stratified sampling and random sampling method. The estimation of a sample size for a multivariate analysis requires a large sample size, for example each factor should consist of at least 20 samples in order to have the analysis meet the requirement (Lindaman, Merenda & Gold, 1980) In this study, 16 factors were analyzed, thus 320 samples were drawn to serve the purpose of the research.

Data collection tool

The tool for collecting the data in this research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire (in Thai, Conbrach's Alpha co-efficient =0.97) investigating the participants' ...was constructed by the researchers. The questionnaire contained ....close-ended items with statements about the factors in Likert-type (strongly agree=5, agree = 4, uncertain = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1).

Procedure

At the outset, the researcher issued letters asking for cooperation from chiefs of 11 Rajabhat universities for the purpose of administering the questionnaires among their academic and support staff members. After that, the researchers delivered the questionnaires to the targeted samples. The questionnaires were sent by surface mail to some remote and inconvenient universities. In all, the returned and collected questionnaires were 320 in total number.

Data analysis

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed using Mplus statistical package, following these steps:

1. Running the initial analysis of the overall data before performing the confirmatory factor analysis to ensure that the data were of sufficient relationships for running a factor analysis, taking into account suitable values generated from Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Measure of Sampling adequacy. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is a test of hypothesis on the ground that a matrix correlation is an identity matrix or not. The Matrix r must be at least 0.05 in order to be acceptable that the matrix correlation is not identity matrix, and thus is suitable for running a confirmatory factor analysis.

2. Running a single level confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify the construct validity of the latent variable measurement model.

3. Verifying the validity of the structural equation model of factors that affect the organizational commitment of the Rajabhat university staff members to estimate the effect size of the predicting factors.

Table 1 shows the criteria for verifying the index of congruence of the model.

Table 1

Criteria for verifying goodness of fit index of the model (Damrongvanit, 2012)

Goodness of fit index	Goodness of fit criteria
χ^2/df	Less than 2 or less than (for a very complicated model)
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	From 0.90 or 0.95 = excellent
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) or NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index)	From 0.90 or 0.95 = excellent
WRMR (Weighted Root Mean Square Residual)	Less than 0.90 = good, from 0.90 to 1.00 = good
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	Less than .05 = excellent 0.05-0.08 = good from 0.08-0.10 = moderate more than 0.10 = poor
SRAR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)	Less than 0.05 = good from 0.05-0.079 = moderate more than 0.08 = poor

Results

        4.1 The confirmatory factor analysis of organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of the Rajabhat university staff members showed that all the observed factors had statistically significant loadings at the .05 level. The first three observed variables with the highest effect size were social responsibility (Y3), strategic thinking (Y4), and consistent culture (X2), respectively. The last three observed variables with lowest effect size were decision-making influence (Y7), organizational precedence (Y12), and employee retention (Y10). Given the goodness of fit index of the model, it was found that the model was fitted with the

empirical data ($\chi 2$ = 224.742, df = 82, $\chi 2$/df = 2.740, RMSEA = 0.074, CFI = 0.972, TLI = 0.959, and SRMR = 0.035) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor loadings of the confirmatory factors of organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of the participants

Latent variables	Observed variables	Factor loadings(λ)	S.E.	Z-test	R^2
Organizational commitment (COM)	Continuance Commitment (Y10)	0.840	0.022	37.596*	0.706
	Affective Commitment (Y11)	0.827	0.024	32.290*	0.864
	Normative Commitment (Y12)	0.766	0.032	24.114*	0.710
Quality of work life (QWL)	Employment protection (Y5)	0.818	0.024	34.743*	0.669
	Fair treatment (Y6)	0.822	0.023	35.973*	0.676
	Decision-making influence (Y7)	0.973	0.024	33.144*	0.629
	Challenging job (Y8)	0.881	0.015	59.936*	0.776
	Work-life balance (Y9)	0.880	0.016	53.490*	0.774
Leadership (LEA)	Motivation enhancement (Y1)	0.916	0.011	84.928*	0.838
	Care for others(Y2)	0.898	0.012	72.607*	0.806
	Integrity and social responsibility(Y3)	0.936	0.009	106.784*	0.877
	Strategic thinking (Y4)	0.927	0.010	96.333*	0.860
Organizational culture (CUL)	Involvement culture (X1)	0.878	0.020	43.264*	0.771
	Consistency culture (X2)	0.918	0.017	53.214*	0.843
	Adaptability culture (X3)	0.930	0.023	40.878*	0.865
	Mission culture (X4)	0.830	0.021	38.865*	0.609

($\chi 2$ = 224.0742, df = 82, $\chi 2$/df = 2.740, RMSEA = 0.074, CFI = 0.972, TLI = 0.959, SRMR = 0.035)

* statistically significant at the .05 level

4.2 The analysis of the structural equation model for its direct, indirect, and total effects of causal factors that affect the organizational commitment of the staff members of Rajabhat universities in the northeast of Thailand revealed the following results as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Direct, indirect, and total effects of the causal factors affecting the organizational commitment of the staff members of Thailand's northeastern Rajabhat universities

Latent factors	Direct effect (DE)	Indirect effect (IE)	Total effect (TE)
Organizational culture (CUL)	0.199	0.463*	0.661*
leadership (LEA)	0.008	0.155*	0.162*
Quality of work life (QWL)	0.534*	-	0.534*

* statistically significant at the .05 level

Table 3 shows the following results:

1. Only one variable, that is quality of work life, was a latent factor that had a significantly direct effect (p<.05) on the organizational commitment of the university staff members, with the path co-efficient of 0.534.

2. Organizational culture (CUL, path co-efficient = 0.463) and leadership (LEA, path co-efficient = 0.155) were the two latent factors that had indirect effects (p<.05) on the organizational commitment of the university staff members.

3. Three variables organizational culture (CUL, path co-efficient = 0.661), quality of work life (QWL, path co-efficient = 0.534), and leadership (LEA, path co-efficient = 0.162) were the latent factors that had significantly total effects (p<.05) on the organizational commitment of the university staff members.

Overall, at the statistical level of 0.05, quality of work life was the latent variable that had direct effects on the organizational commitment of the NTRU staff members; leadership and organizational culture were the variables that had indirect effects on the commitment, and the total

effects were those of the three variables organizational culture, quality of work life, and leadership. All the factors in the proposed model could account for 48.60 per cent of the variance of the organizational commitment, as can be seen in Figure 2.
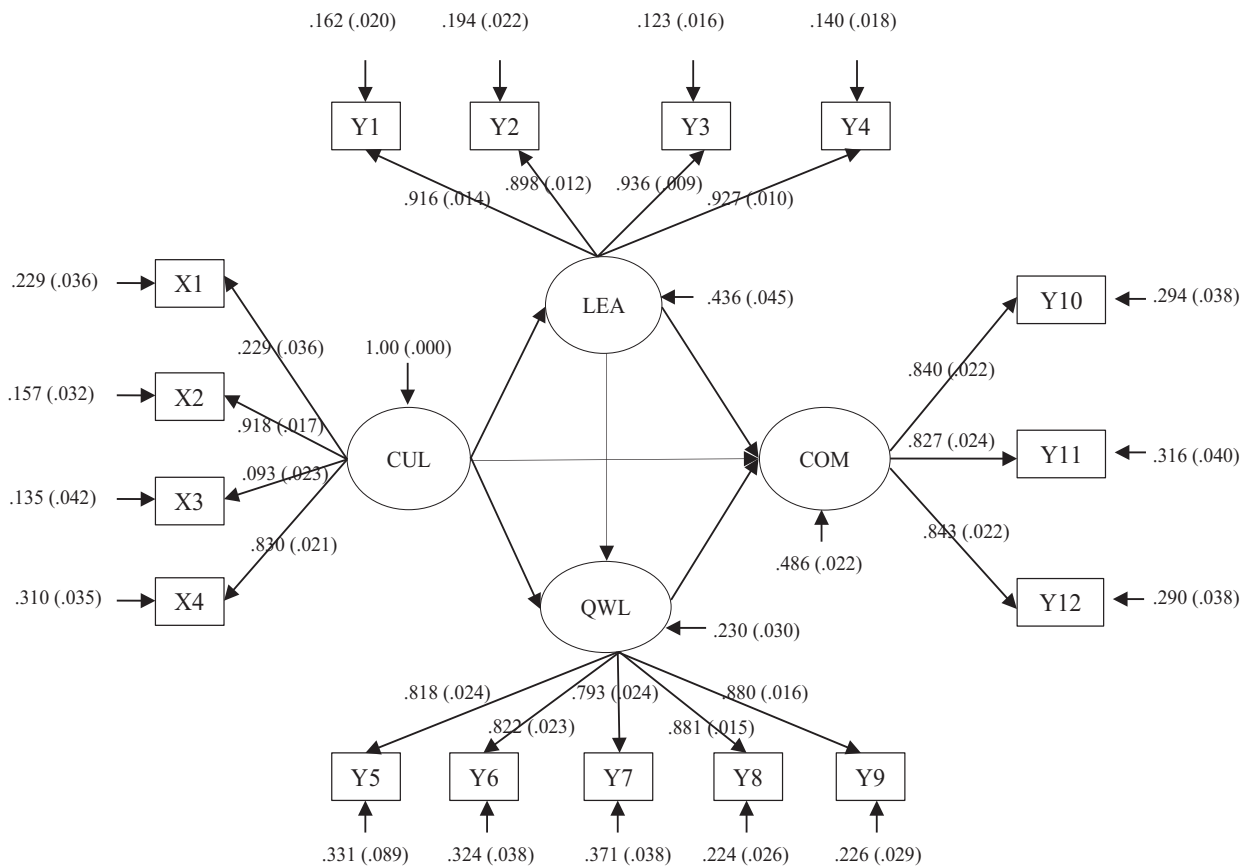

Figure 2: Causal factor model of organizational commitment of the NTRU staff members

Discussion

1. The results from confirmatory factor analysis of the organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of the NTRU staff members revealed the significant factor loadings of all the latent variables at the .05 level. The model was fitted with the

empirical data, taken into account the goodness fit index of the model. These results could be discussed as follows: (1) the conceptual framework the researchers initiated for this study was carefully designed and all the latent variables were carefully selected for the purpose of constructing the model, hence the model was fitted with the empirical data. (2) The data collection procedure was implemented by the researcher in the way that all informants were sufficiently informed of the questionnaire completion process that might led to their complete understanding, and more importantly, the big sample size employed in this study was in consistence with the basic assumption required for applying an advanced statistical analysis. (3) The data analysis and modification indices used in this study were appropriate data analysis methods (Kanjanvasi, 2007), thus a good fit model.

2. That a significant level of 0.05 was found for the direct, indirect, and total effects of the latent variables was in consistence with previous several research works. Paobunprung & Ratsaenpong (2016) found in their studies that quality or work life correlated with three aspects of organizational commitment work safety and health promotion (p-value = 0.001), social integration or co-operation (p-value = 0.000), and work-life balance (p-value = 0.000). Any problems associating with quality of work life surely affect the organizational engagement of employees. On the contrary their level of organizational engagement tends to be higher if they have a good quality of work life, and thus their more devotion and dedication to the fulfillment of jobs and the firm's production target. Sawasthaisong (2017) investigated ways to enhance operational transparency of the universities in Sakon Nakhon province and found that leadership was the most important factor that had direct effects on the operational transparency. Other factors including organizational culture, participatory administration, quality of work life, and job satisfaction also had direct effects on the operational transparency at the significant level of .05. All the five variables could account for 56.40 per cent of the transparency of operation.

The findings in this study were also consistent with Pichajumpon's (2013) work which reported that quality of work life of the staff of Government's Savings Bank, Area 3, significantly correlated with their happiness (r = 0.440, p-value = 0.000). In addition, the results in this study

confirmed what Steers (1977) posited that organizational commitment was different from feelings towards an organization. From Steer's stand point, organizational commitment is an individual's relationship with their organization seen in their devotion and dedication for the fulfillment of their jobs for the sake of the success and progress of their organization. Feelings towards an organization, however, are different from organizational engagement in terms of the sense of belonging, acknowledgement of the organization values, and retention in the organization. Likewise, the effects of motivation for work, job satisfaction, organizational structure, leadership, and organizational culture were reported as being correlated to the organizational commitment of the staff members of Suan Sunantha Rajabhat University (Phangniran, 2006). In this regard, Arnold & Feldman (1986) posit that the management of an organization must be very careful about the introduction of new technology to the organization and the organizational society. The management of an organization must take in account the needs of their staff, especially those who have to deal directly with the new technology. Well-thought planning and designing pertaining to new technology use are therefore very important because they, in one way or another, affect the quality of work life of the employees. Implementing a plan pertaining to the improvement of quality of work life of the staff in an organization must be in consistent with the changing roles and attitudes of the staff, and the management, therefore, has to make its business to establish mutual trust itself and its staff and lend its full support for the cooperation and teamwork of their staff.

Conclusion

1. This study reports the results of the confirmatory factor analysis of organizational commitment, quality of work life, leadership, and organizational culture of the staff members of Rajabhat universities in the north-east of Thailand. The factor loadings of all the latent factors were found to be at the significant level of 0.05, and the proposed structural equation model was found to be fitted with the empirical data.

2. It was found that quality of work life was the latent variable that directly affected the organizational engagement of the NTRU staff. Leadership and organizational culture were the latent factors that had indirect effects. The total effects were reported to be derived from organizational culture, quality of work life, and leadership, respectively. All the variables in the proposed model could account for 48.60 per cent of the variance of the latent variable of organizational commitment.

Recommendations

1. The management of each Rajabhat university in the northeast of Thailand should make it their business to bolster the organizational commitment of the staff members by prioritizing the improvement of quality of work life, organizational culture, and leadership respectively.

2. Future research should be carried out to investigate other relevant factors such politics within an organization, participatory administration, good attitudes towards an organization, motivations for achievement, perception of support from an organization, relationship between staff and management of and organization, and transparency in organizational operation. To this end, intertwining quantitative and qualitative research methods is suggested.

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Author

Assistant Professor Dr.Sanyasorn Swasthaisong

Public Administration Program, Faculty of Management Sciences

Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University 680 Nitayo Rd., Muang District,

Sakon Nakhon Province 47000

Fax: 042-970059 Tel.: 042-970028 E-mail: sanyasorn@hotmail.com