

Job demands, Job Resources and Affective Commitment

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Abstract- The objectives of this study were to identify the levels of affective commitment in a telecommunication organisation and to investigate the relationships between job demands, job resources and affective commitment. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The total available population of employees (N = 95) in the organisation participated in this study. The Job Demands-Resources Scale and the affective commitment Scale were used as measuring instruments. The results showed that the average affective commitment level of employees was above the Somaliland norm. Job resources, such as skill variety, task significance and task identity, were related to affective commitment of individuals. Job demands did not play a significant role in the affective commitment of employees.

Index Terms- Job demands, Job Resources, Affective Commitment and Telecommunication Companies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Telecommunication organisations face the challenge of becoming more competitive in local and international markets. The telecommunication industry has experienced a significant change in moving from traditional work organisation principles to team based work and multi-skill principles (Gurjeet & Rupali, 2014). Quality testing departments are replaced by total quality management systems. These factors have contributed to an overload of demands and an under-supply of response capabilities in telecommunication organisations, which might affect individuals' psychological experiences of their work, for example, their affective commitment (Nelson & Simmons 2003). Committed workers are enthusiastically involved in, and pleurably occupied by, the demands of the work at hand. Lack of affective commitment from work may result in employee turnover, absenteeism and poor performance (Gurjeet & Rupali, 2014).

Organisations have to unleash the human potential in organisations to improve the overall performance of employees. According to Romina *et al.*, (2016), employees seek fulfilment through self-expression at work. These authors believe that for employees to thrive, they should commit themselves cognitively, physically and emotionally in their organization. Hongwei *et al.*, (2015) points out that self and role exist in some dynamic, negotiable relationship in which a person both drives personal energies into role behaviours and displays the self within the role. It is therefore important to study affective commitment and the predictors thereof.

The three-component model of commitment developed by Allen & Meyer (1991) arguably dominates organizational commitment research (Gurjeet & Rupali, 2014). This model proposes that organizational commitment is experienced by the employee as three simultaneous mind-sets encompassing affective, normative, and continuance organizational commitment. Affective Commitment reflects commitment based on emotional ties the employee develops with the organization primarily via positive work experiences. Normative Commitment reflects commitment based on perceived obligation towards the organization, for example rooted in the norms of reciprocity. Continuance Commitment reflects commitment based on the perceived costs, both economic and social, of leaving the organization. This model of commitment has been used by researchers to predict important employee outcomes, including turnover and citizenship behaviors, job performance, absenteeism, and tardiness (Dole & Schoeder, 2001). Allen & Meyer (1991) provide a comprehensive overview of the theoretical lineage of this model.

The aims of this study were to investigate the affective commitment of employees in a telecommunication, as well as to investigate the relationship between job demands, job resources and affective commitment. The concept of affective commitment is relevant for organisations for various reasons. Firstly, affective commitment is related to job satisfaction, work engagement and low turnover intention (Romina *et al.*, 2016). Secondly, affective commitment is related to personal initiative and learning (Allen & Meyer, 1991). Research regarding the psychological foundations of affective commitment will enable researchers and practitioners to understand and predict why some employees psychologically identify with their jobs. According to Schnorpfeil, et al., (2004), lack of affective commitment is caused by job characteristics (including job demands and a lack of resources), such as excessive workload, physical work conditions, adverse co-worker behaviour, lack of social support, low pay, poor communication, poor training and boring jobs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Affective Commitment*

Allen & Meyer, (1991) identify three components of commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment is defined as individuals feeling closer to the organization emotionally and to have involvement with the organization and its goals. The employees who have strong affective commitment continue to work in the organization because they want to. When employees feel that the organization is responsible toward them such as offering salaries higher than industry average, they tend to reciprocate with positive attitudes toward the organization, including affective bonds and feelings of loyalty.

The antecedents leading to affective commitment are separated into 4 categories: personal characteristics, job characteristics, work experiences and structural characteristics (Allen, Meyer 1991). According to Long & Yan, (2014), age, gender, education level, individual values and desire to success and etc are personal characteristics. Gilbert and Ivancevich refers that management style, work stress, employee award system and the responsibility degree given to employees are job characteristics. As Long & Yan, 2014 mentions, the size of the organization, the formalization degree, the degree of control, working hours, wage system, the career opportunities reflect the structural properties of the organization (Long & Yan, 2014). Work experiences are the most effective one to create affective commitment. Because it fulfills employees' psychological needs to feel comfortable and competent within the organization. Organizational reliability, openness to new ideas, equity, role and purpose clarity meet the needs of employees' feeling comfortable in the work place. On the other hand a challenging job, difficulty of goals, feedbacks made by the management and participation in decision lead people to feel competent. According to Allen and Meyer's survey, that was implemented by a university and two manufacturing firms, the employees commit emotionally to the organizations if they feel competent and comfortable in their work place (Allen, Meyer 1991).

The common point of organizational commitment components is that the employees continue to remain in the organization whatever they feel positive or negative (Long & Yan, 2014). For instance, although the employees have weak affective and normative commitment, the lack of alternatives can lead them to have a strong affective commitment (Ceylan, Bayram, 2006). However the main important point here for the organization is the performance and efficiency of the employee. The attitudes and performance of employees in work place depends on what they perceive about the organization (Allen, Meyer 1991). For instance, when employees perceive that "their" organization acts as a "true organization", they form positive images about it. They feel proud to identify with such an organization, develop their self-esteem, form affective bonds with the organization, develop a sense of loyalty, and make efforts to perform better and to benefit the whole organization (Long & Yan, 2014). The researches show that the individuals, who bond to their organization emotionally, have higher work performance. The results of Jing and Xiao-hua's survey indicate that there is a positive relationship between affective commitment and work performance (Jing & Xiaohua, 2009). Also as the employee satisfaction increases, there will be increase in work performance.

B. *Job demands, Job Resources and Affective Commitment*

Limited information is available regarding the relationship between affective commitment and job demands. Jyoti & Rajib, (2016) define job demands as the degree to which the environment contains stimuli that preemptorily require attention and response. Jyoti & Rajib, (2016) refer to job demands as those physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and psychological effort and that are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs. Quantitative job demands refer to the amount of work required and the available timeframe, while qualitative workload involves employees' affective reactions to their jobs. Although job demands are not necessarily seen as negative, they may turn into job stressors when meeting those demands requires high effort and is therefore associated with high costs that elicit negative responses such as depression, anxiety or burnout. Work overload or high demands may also occur if an individual does not have the necessary skills, abilities and support to meet these demands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Jyoti & Rajib, (2016), job demands drain the employee's energy and, in an attempt to cope with the resulting exhaustion, the employee withdraws mentally. When the employee withdraws mentally, his/her affective commitment levels will decrease. Todd & Mari-Amanda, (2016) found that job demands lead to burnout, which in turn might impact on the affective commitment of employees. Job resources seem to increase affective commitment. According to Schaufeli & Bakker (2004), job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that either reduce job demands and the associated physiological costs or that are functional in achieving work goals or stimulating personal growth, learning and development. Job resources are not only necessary for dealing with job demands and getting things done, but are also important in their own right (Hobfoll, 2002). In the so-called motivational process (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004), job resources are linked, via affective commitment, to organisational outcomes. Job resources can play an intrinsic motivational role in fostering

individual growth, learning and development, or through an extrinsic motivational role that helps individuals achieve working goals. Job resources are linked to positive organisational outcomes via affective commitment. The effect of high job demands may be reduced by job resources such as providing feedback, social support and supervisory coaching (Alisha et al., 2016). If high job demands are coupled with high job resources, this could lead to affective commitment. Alisha et al., (2016) also state that job demands could lead to health problems via burnout, and that job resources could lead to turnover intention via affective commitment. In order to improve human performance and mental effort, one must make use of a motivation-driven process that includes job resources. Job resources play an intrinsic motivational role because they may help employees to grow, learn and develop. Job resources may also play an instrumental role in achieving work goals. According to Todd & Mari-Amanda, (2016) and Alisha et al., (2016), job resources fulfil the basic human needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. In giving proper feedback, learning is fostered, increasing job competence, whereas decision latitude and social support satisfy the need for autonomy and the need to belong, respectively. Providing employees with optimal challenges, feedback and freedom in their work creates intrinsic motivation and increases their affective commitment (Todd & Mari-Amanda, 2016). Positive feedback seems to enhance affective commitment levels, whereas negative feedback diminishes it. Employees will be more attached to their organization if they regard their work as challenging and have the freedom to be independent in their work tasks. Wilmar, (2015) found that career development, identification with the organisation and a rewarding work environment also increase the affective commitment levels of employees. Employees will be more engaged in their work if the organisation provides them with opportunities to enhance their skills and abilities, and to manage their careers. When individuals identify with the organisation, they share in its success and are proud to deliver quality work. According to the self-determination theory of Todd & Mari-Amanda, (2016), work contexts that support psychological autonomy, competence and relatedness enhance wellbeing and increase intrinsic motivation (Wilmar, 2015). This intrinsic motivational potential is also supported by the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) of Alisha et al., (2016). According to the JCT, every job has a specific motivational role that depends on the presence of five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. The JCT further hypothesises that these core job characteristics are linked to positive results such as high-quality work performance, job satisfaction, and low absenteeism and turnover. According to the Effort-Recovery Model of Meijman & Mulder (1998), job resources may also play an extrinsic motivational role through work environments that offer many resources and foster the willingness to dedicate one's efforts and abilities to the work task. It is therefore likely that the work task will be completed successfully and that the work goal will be achieved. Support from colleagues and proper feedback from supervisors will thus increase the individual's likelihood of achieving work goals, and employees will thus be successful in their daily tasks. This will create an energy backflow to the individual. In either case, whether the satisfaction of basic human needs or the achieving of work-related outcomes, the results are positive and the chances for an individual to be engaged will increase. The tendency for employees to leave the organisation will also decrease if organisations provide their employees with valued job resources that enhance learning, growth and development (Wilmar, 2015). Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) found that work engagement is strongly predicted by job resources. It can therefore be expected that job resources have a positive relation to affective commitment. If the employee is provided with variety in his/her job, learning opportunities and autonomy, he/she will be more likely to attach in his/her work. This will make the employee's work more meaningful. In providing the employee with safety in terms of social support (in other words, good relationships with supervisor and colleagues), the employee will feel more secure and safe in his/her job. Ultimately, a positive, fulfilling relationship will exist between the employee and the employer, the employee will achieve work goals from which the employer can benefit, and the employer will provide the employee with valued resources in order to satisfy his/her basic work needs. The following hypotheses are therefore proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Low job demands lead to high levels of affective commitment levels among employees.

Hypothesis 2: High job resources in a manufacturing organisation lead to high levels of affective commitment among employees.

C. Research Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework refers to the theory that a researcher chooses to guide him/her in his/her research. Thus, a theoretical framework is the application of a theory, or a set of concepts drawn from one and the same theory, to offer an explanation of an event, or shed some light on a particular phenomenon or research problem. Figure 1 presents research theoretical framework, which explains the relationship between job demands, job resources and affective commitment.

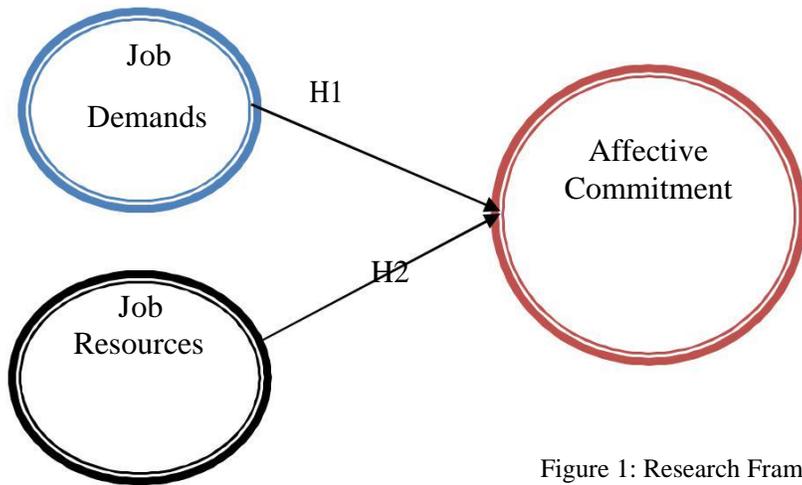


Figure 1: Research Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

Research design spells out how the research is carried out toward the accomplishment of research objectives and answering of questions. In other word, research design constitutes the outline for the collection, measurement and analysis data (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). Zikmund *et al.* (2012) defined research design as a master plan that outlines the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing data. Moreover, research design helps the researcher in the allocation of inadequate resources by posing vital choices in methodology (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). The main research design employed in the present research was survey. Survey is defined as a measurement process that utilises a measurement tool called a questionnaire, measurement instrument, or interview schedule (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). Surveys attempt to describe what is happening or to study the reasons for an exacting business activity (Zikmund *et al.*, 2012). The questionnaire is the most common information collection tool in business research (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). The questionnaire is the most extensively used information collection technique in a survey study (De Vaus, 2013). Questionnaire is an organized set of questions or measures used by respondents or interviewers to record answers data (Hair *et al.*, 2010).

B. Sample Size

According to Cooper and Schindler (2013), sampling is the process whereby some elements from the population are selected to represent the whole population. Sample size is the number of units that is required to get accurate findings (Fink, 2003). For the purpose of this paper, the sample size was 95.

C. Data Collection

According to Sekaran (2003), there are many methods that can be possibly used to collect data from respondents such as interviews and questionnaires. Interviews involve unstructured and structured approach. Interviews can differ from being highly unstructured to highly structured. Unstructured interviews are usually conducted by an extremely flexible approach. A questionnaire, on the other hand, is a pre-written set of questions that respondents are required to answer, which is generally within close defined alternatives (Sekaran, 2003). A questionnaire is an efficient data collection mechanism but only when the researcher is aware of what is required and the measures of the variables involved (Sekaran, 2003). In the present paper, questionnaires were used because the researcher was interested in getting specific responses on the issues at hand i.e., job demands and resources, and affective commitment via specific measurements.

D. Measures

Three measuring instruments were used in this study, namely the Affective Commitment Scale (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993), the Job Demands-Resources Scale (Rothmann, Strydom & Mostert 2006) and a demographic questionnaire.

IV. FINDINGS

The descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to conduct the analysis. For hypotheses testing, the Pearson correlation coefficients were used. The first part of the analysis focused on the descriptive analysis of the respondents. At the end of gathering data, the reliability of the scales was analyzed.

The descriptive analysis focused on the variables such as gender, age, marital status and job status as shown in Table I. Male responders represented 61% while female responders were 39%. Most of the respondents (45.9%) were aged between 35 and 39 years old, 8.2% of the respondents were between 25 and 29 years old, 10.8% of the respondents were between 30 and 34 years old, 18.9% of the respondents were above 50 years old and 16.2% of the respondents were between 40 and 49 years old. Majority of the respondents were having job permanent and were married in a percentage of 72% and 65.8% respectively. While employees; who have contract jobs represented 28% and single staff were 34.2% of the total respondents.

Table I: Demographic Information

Variable	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Male	61
Female	39
Age (in years)	
25-29	8.2
30-34	10.8
35-39	45.9
40-49	16.2
Above 50	18.9
Marital status	
Married	65.8
Single	34.2
Job status	
Permanent	72
Contract	28

An exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis was performed in the study to ascertain the reliability of the measures by using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient; .60 being the acceptable reliability coefficient level in terms of research standards as shown in Table I.

Table II: Reliability Statistics

Main Variable	Sub variables	Cronbach's alphas
JOB DEMANDS	Quantitative Demands (QD)	.844
	Physical Demands (PD)	.865
	Emotional Demands (ED)	.821
JOB RESOURCES	Skill Variety (SV)	.901
	Task Significance (TS)	.881
	Task Identity (TI)	.845
AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT	Affective Commitment	.899

As it can be seen in Table I, the measures of the study are reliable because all the variables have an acceptable reliability coefficient which ranged from .821 to .901.

The correlation data shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of study as shown in Table III. The table displays correlation coefficients between these variables. The correlation coefficients are a measure of the strength of the association between any two metric variables (Hair et al., 2003). The results of the Pearson correlation show that all of the dimensions of the independent variables and dependent variable were positively correlated to each other. The results of Table III demonstrated that there is negative significant Pearson correlation between job demands and affective commitment ($r=-.455$; $p=0.034$) and the correlation is significant if the $p=.05$ or less than that. The correlation shows that there is positive significant relationship between job resources and affective commitment ($r=.543$; $p=.021$). Hence the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table III: Pearson Correlations between Variables

Pearson Correlation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	Hypothesis Support
JD → AF	-.455*	Yes
JR → AF	.543*	Yes

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
 JD: Job Demands, JR: Job Resources and
 AF: Affective Commitment

In order to analyse the levels of job demands, job resources and affective commitment of the employees; an analysis of mean test was conducted as it was documented in Table IV. As it can be seen from Table IV, the affective commitment level among employees' in telecommunication sector in Somaliland as affective commitment of the employees' was rated to be "moderate" (mean = 3.55). Similarly, the level of the other variables such as job demands and job resources were also moderate of mean from 3.11 to 3.61.

Table IV: Mean values

Variables	Mean
Quantitative Demands (QD)	3.35
Physical Demands (PD)	3.51
Emotional Demands (ED)	3.11
Skill Variety (SV)	3.21
Task Significance (TS)	3.32
Task Identity (TI)	3.61
Affective Commitment	3.55

V. DISCUSSION

The aims of this study were to investigate the affective commitment of employees, as well as the relationship between job demands, job resources and affective commitment. The results showed that participants experience a level of affective commitment above the national norm. Affective commitment was best predicted by job resources while job demands showed a weak relationship with affective commitment. The results of this study confirmed that job resources, namely skill variety, task significance and task identity, are positively related to affective commitment, and that job demands (overload) are negatively related to affective commitment.

The results of this study further showed that job demands were not significantly related to the engagement of participants. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study is accepted. Job demands, such as high physical demands, quantitative workload and emotional workload, did not play a significant role in terms of the affective commitment of participants. It seems that employees will be more attached in their organization if the necessary job resources, such as organisational support and growth opportunities, are provided, regardless of the level of job demands. Hakanen, Bakker & Demerouti (2005) showed that if job demands increase with a lack of increase in job resources, it will have a negative effect on the affective commitment levels of employees.

Fifty-one per cent of the variance in affective commitment of participants in this study was predicted by organisational support and growth opportunities. These results also support the second hypothesis of this study, namely that job resources predict the affective commitment of employees. However, two job resources, namely skill variety and task significance, appear to play a significant role in terms of the affective commitment of employees. Growth opportunities in a job, such as variety, learning opportunities and autonomy,

play an intrinsic motivational role by fostering the employees' growth, learning and development. Task identity plays an extrinsic motivational role by being instrumental in achieving work goals (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004). An increase in job resources will increase the overall affective commitment level of employees. A work environment that offers resources will foster the willingness of the employee to dedicate his or her efforts and abilities to the work task.

In order for employees to experience high physical and mental energy and high levels of enthusiasm, pride and challenge in their work to attain work goals, the organisation must increase the level of job resources, growth opportunities, social support and advancement opportunities (Bakker & Schaufeli 2004; Hackman & Oldham 1980). When job resources are lacking, employees might find it difficult to cope with high job demands. This might result in turnover intentions, as employees will tend to defend themselves against the absence of resources. It is therefore important that the organisation provide employees with the necessary resources and a healthy work environment.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to analyse the relationship between job demands, job resources and affective commitment. The adopted measures of this study have shown remarkable level of reliability as shown in Table I. two hypotheses were developed; both of them were supported. Based on the findings of the study, the job resources have a significant relationship with affective commitment. In addition the proposed second hypothesis of job resources and affective commitment is also supported, which means there was a significant relationship between job resources and affective commitment. Finally, job demands, job resources and affective commitment have shown very significant relationship between them.

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