

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: MEDIATING EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL EMBEDDEDNESS

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the mediating effect of Organizational Embeddedness (OE) on the association between Organizational Identification (OI) and Organizational Commitment (OC) as well as Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Organizational Commitment (OC). Data was collected from 468 employees working in corporate sector in India. Structural equation modelling was applied to examine the mediating effect. Results confirm full mediation effect of OE for the relationship between OI and OC and a partial mediation effect for POS and OC. It provides for all the organizational members and leaders to understand the importance of creating identity for themselves and providing positive support to employees in order to embed them to organizations, thus instilling commitment in them.

Keywords: Organisational Identification, Perceived Organisational Support, Organisational Embeddedness, Organisational Commitment

INTRODUCTION

Attracting and keeping the valued employees, trained labour, maintaining staff turnover and managing a workforce is of paramount importance for organizations (Eversole *et al.*, 2012; Arora and Athreye, 2002). Turnover rate is recorded as 57.3% by “Bureau of Labour Statistics, India” in 2021. Employee turnover significantly affects social capital, human capital, and organisational performance (Holtom *et al.*, 2008). The financial distress caused due to employee turnover is well known to all (Griffeth and Hom, 2000). Retention cost of talented employees is a crucial aspect of organizations, as they have to offer both financial and non-financial incentives, to have the best available talent working for them (Groysberg *et al.*, 2004; Cappelli, 2000; Balakrishnan, 2014; O'Reilly *et al.*, 2000; Tanwar *et al.*, 2016; Danishet al., 2010; Al Mamunet *et al.*, 2017). Evolving from fundamentals of social exchange theory (Homans, 1958); it is reflected in the process that takes place between the employers and the employees, where both the parties cross check the risks and benefits associated with keeping relationship which determines whether the relationship will continue or terminate from both the ends.

This relationship becomes strong when organization supports the employees in various ways such as framing and implementing supportive organizational policies, which are clearly mentioned in organizational support theory which provides the central construct of perceived organizational support (POS) and its relationship with turnover (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). POS refers to “employees’ perceptions regarding the extent to which their organization thinks highly of their contributions and promotes their welfare” (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Arshadi (2011) projected that POS positively related to OC and negatively related to turnover intention. Islam *et al.*, (2013) identified positive relationship between POS and OC among employees.

Driving out as a corollary to social identity theory, which says that we have a natural inclination to belong to a group and be defined by the characteristics of that group (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Albert and Whetten (1985) defined “organizational identity as an enduring, distinctive, and central statement perceived by an organization’s members.” Mete *et al.* (2016) identified a positive correlation between OC and OI among IT employees working in Turkey. Meta-analytical findings reveal that OC, OI and organizational trust have incremental validity among each other Ng, (2015). A strong positive link between corporate identification and OC was highlighted by Podnar (2011).

Job embeddedness which focuses on understanding voluntary turnover (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2004), we derived the specific aspect of organization i.e. organizational embeddedness also known as on-the-job embeddedness. According to embeddedness theory, people are bound to an organisation by a collection or web of restraining forces that is formed when various relationships, investments, and praise are combined. These forces consist of fit, links, and sacrifice (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). Fit is labelled as a person's "perceived compatibility or comfort level" with a company. Links are “relations among individuals, institutions, and other individuals that might be official” (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2004). “The perceived psychological, emotional, or monetary

cost of quitting one's organisation is known as sacrifice” (Mitchell *et al.*, 200; Lee *et al.*, 2004). These factors reflect how people feel about their connections to the job's people and groups, how well they fit within it, and the sacrifices associated in quitting.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Organizational Embeddedness

According to Mitchell *et al.* (2001) theory organizational embeddedness (OE) sought to explain why individuals remained positioned as they are; either they enjoy their work or are unable to find alternative employment. As job embeddedness is a “valuable complement” to commitment therefore, OE is demonstrating a favourable impact on employee commitment (Holtom, 2016). Ghosh and Gurunathan (2014) revealed that HR practices based on instilling commitment results in embedding employees. Ampofo and Karatepe (2022) realized that turnover intentions and on-the-job embeddedness relate negatively among hotel employees. Workers who score highly on embeddedness are less likely to willingly leave their businesses (Zhang *et al.*, 2012; Holtom, B. C. and Darabi, T. 2018).

Organizational Identification and Organizational Embeddedness

Hall *et al.* (1970) describes OI as the progressive amalgamation and equivalence of individual and organisational beliefs and aims. Fuller *et al.* (2006) found that increased self-esteem coming with belongingness to an organisation, people choose to identify with those that are seen as being prestigious. Employees having high OI are psychologically entangled with their employers and have strong emotional ties to them Dukerich *et al.* (2002). High OI employees cooperate and communicate with co-workers, which encourage them to form "links" inside the company as well as creates person fit with the organisational norms, values, beliefs and practises besides their emotional commitment to the company (Riketta, 2005). Additionally, executives in India were found to have substantial correlation between OI and work embeddedness (Ghosh, 2015). MeiRun *et al.*

(2018) conclude that as OE becomes more essential, the idea of OI becomes more and more relevant. So, we frame the subsequent hypothesis;

Hypothesis 1: OI is positively connected to the OE.

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Embeddedness

Subordinates rely on their superiors for opportunities for advancement and professional progress (Loi *et al.*, 2014; Tahiry and Ekmekcioglu 2022). POS lets workers know that the company values them and is willing to recognise their accomplishments with benefits or promotions (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Chen *et al.*, 2009). Ferris *et al.* (2009) examines that POS serves as an originator of acceptability and belonging inside the organisation. The social and emotional requirements of employees, such as those for esteem, affirmation, emotional support, and respect, are met by POS (Armeli *et al.*, 1998). POS increases staff members' emotional ties to the company (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Workers with excessive POS feel positive about how the company views them, their working environment, and how well the company meets their requirements (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). The emotional bonds also influence employees to form stronger ties with organisation, better fit with the work environment, and feel more willing to make sacrifices (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Riggle *et al.*, 2009; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). With above revelations the hypothesis thus formed is;

Hypothesis 2: POS is positively associated to the OE.

Organizational Embeddedness and Organizational Commitment

A highly committed staff is one who holds a feeling of fit and belongingness to their organisations (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Meyer and Maltin 2010; Morrow 2011). Influence of various organisation related factors may cause people to become trapped in their jobs (Hung *et al.*, 2018). Organisations have acknowledged that losing talent is costly and counterproductive, so they work to prevent it by creating and maintaining a loyal workforce whose workers have strong relationships

with their business (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; McKnight *et al.*, 2009; Lumley 2010). OC compresses the emotive and cognitive factors that influence whether a person stays with or leaves a company (Allen and Meyer 1990). OE and OC have a negative association with employees' desire to leave their jobs (Crossley *et al.*, 2007; Burton *et al.*, 2010). It is also proven that the level of job embeddedness has a major impact on OC (Philipand Medina-Craven, 2022). Simulated outcomes disclose that commitment is predicted by on-the-job embeddedness (Aboughadareh *et al.*, 2017).

Hypothesis 3: OE is positively associated to the OC.

Organisational Embeddedness' Mediating Role

The proposed theoretical claim in this paper is that OE may serve as mediator in the connection between POS and OC as well as between OI and OC. Rendering to Mitchell *et al.* (2001) job embeddedness theory which serves as the foundation for these relationships. Gonzalez *et al.* (2018) stated that there is a complex network of organizational (on-the-job) and community (off-the-job) component that influence whether or not people choose to remain with their organization. Organizational embeddedness is a "beneficial complement" to commitment (Holtom, 2016). Job embeddedness had a significant impact on the participants' OC (Ferreira and Coetzee, 2013). OE negatively influences employees' intention to leave, and turnover Dechawatanapaisal (2017). As a result, the following theoretical framework is put forward:

Hypothesis 4: Organizational embeddedness acts as a mediator in the association between organisational identification and organisational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: The connection between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is mediated by organizational embeddedness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection

The respondents were from India's corporate sector, chosen at random. To establish the model, survey

was conducted by distributing the questionnaire by hand and circulated through mail and social media platforms. 700 questionnaires were circulated out of which 510 responses were received but 468 were useful, others were disqualified thus giving a frequency of 66.85%. The standard experience of the representative in their present organization was 4.5 years, 40.8% of the sample were females and 59.2% were males. The survey included a cover-letter mentioning about the purpose of research, confidentiality and anonymity of the respondent. The data collected is normal since the range of skewness and kurtosis is between -2 and +2.

Tools and Techniques

All the constructs were measured with the help of already available questionnaires on a 7-point Likert scale where, the scale ranged from 1, which represented strong disagreement, to 7, which represented strong agreement. Ten-item measure of OI was adapted from Mael and Ashforth's (1992). POS by Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) having 36 items such as,6 items of OE adapted from Clinton *et al.*, (2012) and 15 items of OC of Mowday *et al.* (1979).

Structural equational modelling was applied by utilizing Smart PLS (3.3.2) as Dhir and Dutta (2020) suggest that both exploratory and confirmatory research can be performed using PLS-SEM. Moreover, since it is known that in social science research is based on limited sample, thus covariance-based SEM has certain requirements that can be difficult to fulfill (Evermann and Tate, 2010).

RESULTS

PLS-SEM approach was register to assess the reaction of organizational identification and perceived organizational support on organizational commitment using organizational embeddedness as mediator. The computation of a PLS-SEM involves two steps: measurement model assessment and structural model assessment.

The study conducted an evaluation of the validity and reliability of the measurement model (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out to evaluate the items' convergent validity, discriminant validity, reliability and internal consistency validity (Ringle *et al.*, 2020)

Measurement Model Assessment

Factors of all the constructs were confirmed by verifying the validity and reliability. The relation between the constructs and indicators was assessed. The reliability of the data was checked with Rho A, Cronbach's alpha, and CR. The values of all the measures exceeded the threshold limit of 0.70, as stated by Hair *et al.*, (2019) and Hair *et al.*, (2017). This suggests that the measures used in the study were reliable and valid as shown in Table 1. Reliability of indicators was evaluated using factor loading and all factor loading values were greater than 0.70. The convergent validity AVE scores ranged from .583 to .721 (Table 1) and were greater than the threshold value (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Discriminant validity was checked with Fornell and Larcker criterion (1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). Table 2 highlights the fulfilment of the criterion.

Table 1: Convergent Validity Assessment

	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Organizational Commitment (OC)	OC 1	.879	0.932	0.945	0.711
	OC 7	.861			
	OC 8	.875			
	OC 10	.707			
	OC 13	.821			
	OC 14	.866			
	OC 15	.878			
Organizational Embeddedness (OE)	OE 1	.694	0.854	0.896	0.633
	OE 2	.794			
	OE 3	.845			
	OE 4	.871			
	OE 6	.762			
Organizational Identification (OI)	OI 3	.914	0.894	0.926	0.721
	OI 4	.565			
	OI 5	.905			
	OI 7	.888			
	OI 9	.917			
Perceived Organizational Support (POS)	POS 4	.671	0.939	0.947	0.583
	POS 11	.875			
	POS 12	.847			
	POS 15	.928			
	POS 16	.918			
	POS 23	.904			
	POS 32	.920			
	POS 33	.683			
POS35	.660				

Source: Research data

Table 2: Discriminant Validity Assessment

Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
	OC	OE	OI	POS
OC	0.843			
OE	0.288	0.796		
OI	0.243	0.563	0.849	
POS	0.549	0.378	0.401	0.764

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)				
	OC	OE	OI	POS
OC				
OE	0.333			
OI	0.273	0.626		
POS	0.576	0.419	0.434	

Source: Research data

Analysis of the Structural Model

Table 3 displays the structural model and hypothesis testing. Bootstrapping technique was applied with 5000 resamples Hair *et al.*, (2017). The standardized beta coefficients, direct and indirect effects are shown in Table 3. Hypothesis testing results show that all the hypothesis were accepted.

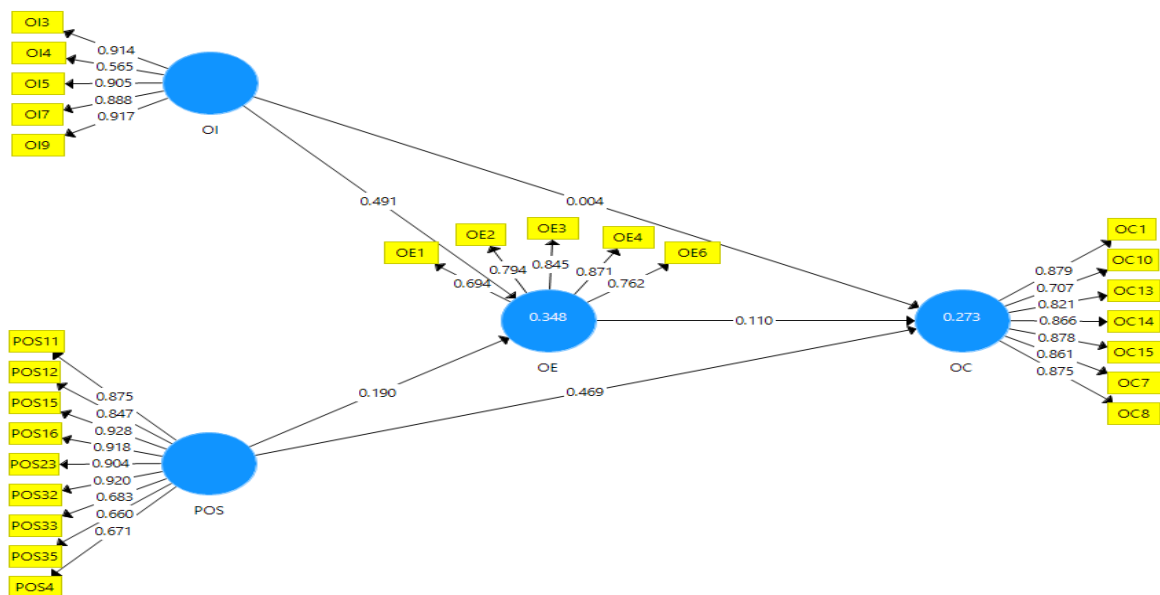
R² values are explained by the model and it explains 35% of the organisational embeddedness variance. As a result organisational identification and perceived organizational support were substantial predictors of organisational embeddedness. The model explains 27% of organizational commitment, as specified by the R² values (Figure 1).

Table 3: Structural Model Assessment- Hypotheses Testing

Path	Beta	Standard Error	T- Value	P value	Decision
OI--> OE	0.491*	0.043	11.358	0.00	Accepted
POS--> OE	0.190*	0.031	6.12	0.00	Accepted
OE--> OC	0.110**	0.044	2.524	0.02	Accepted
OI--> OE--> OC	0.054**	0.022	2.431	0.015	Accepted
POS--> OE--> OC	0.021**	0.009	2.439	0.015	Accepted

Parameter is significant at *.01 & **.05

Source: Smart PLS software



Source: PLS software

Figure 1: Structural Model Evaluation

Examining the Mediating Effect Organisational Embeddedness

As suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008), we follow a three-step procedure to test the mediating role of OE for the association between POS and OC as well as OI and OC. The first step is to dectate the overall effect of POS and OI on OC. In light of the fact that it was unfavourable and significant, thus the indirect effects (Figure 1) i.e. via OE were assessed. Secondly, we find a significant indirect effect which confirms the mediating role of OE. Thirdly, we assess the residual effects in order to know whether the mediation is partial or complete. Following the approach of Baron and Kenny (1986) in this study, OI and OC are fully mediated by OE as there is no direct relationship between OI and OC. However, there is a partial mediation for POS and OC as the direct relationship and the indirect relationship both are significant (Table 3 & Figure 1).

The predictive relevance of the model was evaluated using the Stone-Geisser test (Q^2), (Geisser, 1974) for the present model Q^2 values OE& OC are 0.211and 0.189 respectively thus the model has good predictive relevance.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Results highlight that OC can be instilled among employees by providing them perceived support and making them feel identified with the organization which embeds them in organization. It is also highlighted that OI significantly effects OE but does not directly influences OC. However, in case of POS both direct and indirect effects exists for OC. OE completely mediates between OI and OC but partially mediates between POS and OC. Our findings that OI effects OE are supported by previous findings (Dukerich *et al.*, 2002; Riketta, 2005; Ghosh, 2015; MeiRun *et al.*, 2018). Secondly, the results that POS effects OE is also supported (Ferris *et al.*, 2009; Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986; Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Riggle *et al.*, 2009; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). Thirdly, the findings of the present study that OE effects OC is also well established in the past researches (Allen and Meyer 1990; Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Crossley *et al.*, 2007;

McKnight *et al.*, 2009; Burton *et al.*, 2010; Lumley 2010; Meyer and Maltin 2010; Morrow 2011; Hung *et al.*, 2018). The findings that OE serves as a mediator also conforms (Ferreira and Coetzee, 2013; Holtom, 2016; Gonzalez *et al.*, 2018). Thus, with our research findings it is believed that when employees feel high level of identification with organization's vision, goals and objectives they are likely to find themselves more linked and adapted with the organization thus having more commitment towards it. Similarly, when they perceive positive support from organization which warmly attaches them to it, thus making them committed to it.

IMPLICATIONS

Commitment from employees can lead to synergistic effect thus providing competitive advantage to the organization. It implies for managers and board of directors to frame organizational policies which interweave the individual as well as organizational goals thus providing positive support from organizations. From the roots of social identity, organizations need to understand that organizational members and leaders must be clear about what and why of their existence in order to create their own identity which is core, characteristic and lasting for all, thus making it possible for all within an organization to identify with it proudly. Thus, the present research can serve as a broad guideline for future policymakers and research works.

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