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SATISFYING THE NEEDS AS A DETERMINANT OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Summary: Article presents the description of a correlation between satisfying needs and organizational commitment. As a basis for analysis of this relationship A. Maslow's theory was chosen, which allowed for carrying out dual-plane considerations. It enables to state hypotheses indicating determinants of the type of commitment dominant in the employee as well as the reasons for the development of commitment. The presented concept is an expression of a new approach to the issue in question and the presentation of a research method enabling the verification of stated hypotheses.

Keywords: organizational commitment, motivation, needs

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the article below is an attempt to answer the research question: what determines organizational commitment? The solution seems to be multidimensional. Interesting conclusions come from analysis of the issue from the perspective of human needs as seen by A. Maslow's theory. It enables to show two sides of occurring relation, and conclude them in the form of two hypotheses. The first one indicates that the type of organizational commitment is conditioned by the degree of satisfaction of basic needs. The second one presents the position saying that the development of organizational commitment is determined by organizational factors (management style, organizational culture, organizational structure and realization of personal function).

The article was drafted as a set of answers to the detailed research questions stated in headings. This procedure is intended to show the most important issues concerning the relationship between the ability to meet human needs in the organization and development of organizational commitment, as well as to illustrate the path of searching for the answer to the main question posed in the article.

2. IS THE ISSUE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT PRESENT IN FLEXIBLE ORGANIZATIONS?

The environment, in which modern organizations function, has a turbulent character (Leksykon zarządzania, 2004, p. 397). It means that people have to be continuously prepared for unexpected changes that may occur. Therefore, action need to be flexible, able to adapt quickly to new circumstances. Insecurity is further aggravated by flexible personnel policy of organizations. Organizations using the argument of environment turbulence, do not provide the stability of employment and work conditions. The sense of temporality does not allow building of lasting and long-term relationships. From the perspective of human functioning in organizations, this translates not only into the necessity of development of ability to adapt behaviour to the transformation of the work situation, but also mobility of the workplace. Hence, the doubt arises whether the issue of organizational commitment understood as a commitment to the organization is still a research problem? Literature studies and observation of reality leads to the conclusion that actually recorded lack of permanent and long-term

relationship between the employee and the employer does not obsolete the problem, because the situation described is not equivalent to lack of need to establish such relationships. This is not, however, equivalent to the lack of need for establishing a relationship between employer and employee. In these difficult conditions, there is still a need for engaging people in their work, so that the resulting efficiency allowed the firm to survive and develop (Drucker, 2001, p. 33-34). It is hard to imagine workplaces, which at the same time succeed in the market and have variable and uncommitted staff. Therefore, the importance of organizational commitment does not lose its value and still demands attention.

3. HOW DO HUMAN NEEDS DETERMINE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT?

One of the most popular and most useful theories about human needs is by A. Maslow. Systematization approved by the author very accurately describes the basic groups of needs, which direct the man throughout his life. However, it is hard to agree that the man seeks only to satisfy the needs from the level he managed to reach in the course of his development (Maslow, 1990, p. 72-86). Therefore, the majority of people in all areas of their lives should aim exclusively at self-realization. It is not so, however. Among others on the ground that in different spheres of their lives people are motivated by different needs. Work could be a place to seek security, particularly material one, whereas private life – self-realization, or vice versa (Weber, 1996, p. 100-101). Moreover, a desire, which was permanently blocked due to the occurrence of circumstances, which prevented its satisfaction, can become dominant. In the workplace these could be bad, arduous working conditions which contribute to psychophysical fatigue of workers.

Whereas the assumption about the individuality of the structure of needs (Znaniecki, 1991, p. 65) makes it possible to look at the issue of organizational commitment from two different perspectives. The recognition that people have different needs depending, among other things, on the situation in which they are, how much have they managed so far to meet their basic needs, sheds new light on many problems of motivating people to work. As to the organizational commitment, adoption of such a position enables illustration of the determinants of the employee's attachment to the organization by showing sources of development of the character of the commitment as well as indication of the areas relevant to the initiation of organizational commitment in workers.

4. WHAT DETERMINES THE TYPE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT?

N.J. Mayer and J.P. Allen created multidimensional concept of organizational commitment, distinguishing three reasons for the decision to stay in an organization (Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs, 2008, p. 63). These are the following: affective, continuance and normative reasons for keeping on employment. The sources of the type of commitment, present in an individual, have been seen so far in various factors, including internal ones (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, Mowday, 1992). One of them shows a relationship with personality traits listed in the Big Five model (Kumar, Bakhshi, 2010). Seeing the basis of the commitment's nature in the personal factors influencing the behaviour of individuals is justified because the type of commitment as observed in individuals is an expression of their attitude to work namely, permanent disposition to their relation with an employer (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, Mowday, 1992, p. 16).

The reasons for the development of a specific type of commitment could be found through the analysis of needs, which the man wants to satisfy in the workplace. It could be explained by the assumption that a certain category of needs is dominant in an employee (Weber 1996,

p. 53-55). By observing behaviour of people in organizations, we can notice purposeful efforts to meet the priority expectation, which may be professional or intellectual development, or job and pay security. Following this logic, conclusions can be drawn to prove the thesis on the existence of the relationship between the commitment type and the level of satisfaction of basic needs of the individual.

The lowest-placed in A. Maslow's the structure of needs are physiological and safety needs. Aspects of life that form the basis of their satisfaction (low-impact living and working conditions, stabilization of existence, including employment, predictability of events) relate to matters which are subject to calculation and profit and loss assessment, resulting from the duration of employment and the possibility of maintaining life free from fears about basic living conditions. Taken into account are not only financial considerations but also the social ones, such as the problem of acclimatization in the new group. Therefore, the motivation for continuance of employment is characteristic for insecure people calculating costs of changing jobs. (Smith, 1999, p 28-29). The arguments discouraging make this difficult decision *gain* advantage in this reckoning.

Calculative commitment may also have a "second face", belonging to the people with unmet security need, who in their organizational behaviour are not guided by satisfying their affiliation and self-actualization needs. Behind these characteristics hides an employee who coldly assesses possibilities to multiply his own capital in the organization. Simulated results become the basis for a decision of staying or leaving the company.

Normative commitment to the workplace is based on the conviction of the need to redress the people who care about the quality of life in the workplace. This is an attitude formed during the period of individual development, when the need to redress other people was shaped in an independent way, or it was rooted in socialization process (Yao, Wang, 2008, p. 248). People who base their sense of functioning in the organization on building interpersonal relations and showing mutual respect feel obliged to specific behaviour towards social groups to which they belong. Based on these assumptions we can conclude that people guided in their activities by social needs show normative commitment.

Table 1: Relationship between the type of organizational commitment and human needs

Type of commitment **Type of needs**	***Continuance commitment***	***Normative commitment***	***Affective commitment***
physiological needs	assessment of working conditions	-	-
emotional security needs	estimating the psychological comfort	-	-
material security needs	calculation of material benefits resulting from employment	-	-
affiliation needs	-	reciprocation of acceptance	-
recognition needs	-	gratitude for the recognition received	-
self-actualization needs	-	-	joy of working with passion

Source: own study

Self-actualization is a state in which the man intuitively and emotionally expresses himself through undertaken activities. Calculation, as well as the need to reciprocate in this case is

overshadowed by a strong inner conviction of choosing the place and type of work most suitable for realization of own passions. Therefore, in terms of emotional attachment we can speak about a relationship between the development of that kind of commitment and experienced by the individual sense of mission, which is a source of positive emotions, arising as a result of performed tasks (Maslow, Stephens, Heil, 1998, p. 7-8).

The synthetic conclusion of the above description is Table 1. It shows determinants of the type of organizational commitment as assessed from the perspective of the employee's aspirations. The suggested model systematizes the relations between the issues discussed.

5. WHY DO EMPLOYEES DECIDE TO LEAVE THE JOB?

In the process of development of organizational commitment its nature seems to have secondary significance for the decision of staying in the organization. However, of special interest are the elements of the work situation directly affecting the employee, enabling or blocking the realization of the individual expectations of employees (Smith, 1999, p. 30). This perspective of studying organizational commitment is of great significance because the workplace is a source of fulfillment of the full range of needs, the structure of which is individual to each person and results in particular from experience gained, the existing level of satisfying the specific need, and intellectual abilities (Znaniecki, 1991, p. 68; Szewczuk, 1975, p. 310). If employees have a possibility to participate in the organization on terms enabling them proper functioning, then they will stay in the organization. If, however, they are faced with barriers, which make that the quality of their working life is low as they feel frustrated due to toxic relationships with people, lack of recognition for their work from their employers, or highly aggravating working conditions. As a result, their commitment also decreases and there appear notions encouraging the change of employer (Maslow, Stephens, Heil, 1998, p. 20-42).

Table 2: Model of barriers to satisfying needs of employees in the organization (Part 1)

Type of need	*Managerial barriers*	*Barrier feature*	*Cultural barriers*	*Barrier feature*
physiological needs	focus on the tasks	the requirement for high performance	high degree of tolerance of uncertainty	causing maximum psychophysical overload in employees
security needs - emotional	democratic/ unintrusive managerial style	imposing on employees the responsibility for decisions	high degree of tolerance of uncertainty	pressure to undertake difficult tasks
				frequent changes of work regulations
- material	authocratic managerial style	excessive work control	low degree of tolerance of uncertainty	deepening fear of change
affiliation needs	focus on tasks	lack of emotional relationship with subordinates	individualism	lack of interpersonal bonds in a team
recognition needs	negative motivating	underestimation of subordinates' work	large detachment of authority	not showing appreciation for work
selfactualization needs	authocratic managerial style	imposing decisions, solutions and methods of work	collectivism	lack of opportunities for individual action

Source: own study

Table 3: Model of barriers to satisfying employees needs in the organization (Part 2)

Type of need	*Structural barriers*	*Barrier feature*	*Personal function barrier*	*Barrier feature*
physiological needs	narrow specialization	monotony of work	physical working conditions	psychophysical overload in employees
			work time	exhaustion of employees
security needs - emotional	low formalization	lack of established work regulations	employment planning	unexpected job change
			trainings and development of employees	the need to make changes to the way of working, requirement to assess
- material	low formalization	lack of employment stability	employment planning	unexpected dismissal
			remuneration systems	lack of clearly defined employee benefits
				failure to comply with payment of wages
affiliation needs	wide scope of management	team disintegration	selection of staff	lack of staff adaptation
recognition needs	high formalization (of communication)	reduction of the informal expression of recognition	evaluation of employees	underestimated performance assessment
selfactualization needs	high standardization	lack of opportunities for work improvement	building career paths	limitation of the professional career development
			trainings and development of employees	lack of training offer

Source: own study

Indication of factors responsible for barrier to the development of organizational commitment is possible thanks to the construction of the model of barriers to satisfying employees needs in the organization (Bieńkowska, 2011, p. 94). This is the original concept of searching for factors determining the ability to satisfy individual expectations of employees towards their work place. Also, it can be applied to the study of detailed determinants of commitment. Its structure is based on the matrix, in which the lines describe human needs, and the columns – the conditions of organizational functioning. For each of the specified needs the type of adverse condition was indicated. As a result, at the intersection of a type of need and a specific barrier-creating factor, a particular type of barrier was written down. This resulted in 32 potential barriers to meeting the needs of employees in the organization (Table 1 and 2). They reflect the circumstances that prevent the development of organizational commitment and provide guidance, what kind of situations should be subjected to empirical verification in order to understand the factors that determine the commitment to the organization.

6. HOW TO STUDY ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HUMAN NEEDS?

The specified dimensions of commitment require their own operational definitions, necessary to develop research method. Verification of the first hypothesis – the type of organizational commitment is determined by the level of basic needs satisfaction – can be based on the assumption, that the type of commitment can be recognized on the basis of simultaneous occurrence of two symptoms: indicating a specific factor as expected in the work place, and its high value in the employee's hierarchy of importance. With regard to the verification of the second hypothesis, stating that the development of organizational commitment is determined by organizational factors – the approved definition contains another two aspects, namely: estimating a certain condition as a factor initiating commitment, and reporting the need of its occurrence.

The use of a model of barriers to satisfy the needs of employees in the organization makes possible to specify a set of circumstances that should be subject to examination of factors that determine the commitment in workers. It is the basis for the formulation of sentences indicating expectations of employees.

Finding out the reasons for commitment to the organization is possible by means of a verbal scale survey in which respondents can express the degree of compliance of statements reflecting aspects of the working situation with their individual feelings. The statements included in the survey allow us to read what kind of conditions: managerial style, organizational culture, organizational structure, realization of personal function contribute to the development of organizational commitment. Whereas, the diagnosis of the nature of the commitment is based on an assessment, in accordance with an accepted concept, of the dominant need of the employee.

7. CONCLUSION

The study of organizational commitment from the perspective of human needs is an expression of the new approach, serving to acquire information about the foundations of relationship between staff and the organization. The knowledge of the reasons for occurrence of the commitment makes it possible to create working situation beneficial from the point of view of the employees. While the knowledge about the type of organizational commitment enables to build the background, which explains people's behaviour in the organization. *Moreover* conducting research according to the method suggested above enables verification of dependencies between diagnostic part of the questionnaire and socio-demographic data, and hence it allows acquiring information about the foundations of the observed discrepancies between generations X and Y, or between men and women.

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