



Indian Research Journal of Extension Education

ISSN: 0972-2181 (Print), 0976-1071 (e-Print)

NAAS Rating : 5.22

Journal homepage: seea.org.in



RESEARCH ARTICLE

https://doi.org/10.54986/irjee/2022/jul_sep/99-103

Job Involvement and Organizational Commitment of Women Agricultural Extension Personnel

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Received on April 18, 2022, Accepted on June 02, 2022 and Published Online on July 01, 2022

ABSTRACT

Job involvement and organizational commitment are the important factors affecting the job performance of employees in an organization. For achieving organizational effectiveness, both play a crucial role. In this study, an attempt has been made to analyze the level of job involvement and organizational commitment of women extension personnel in Kerala. For this, 180 women extension personnel from Kerala State Department of Agriculture and 30 VFPCCK women extension personnel were selected. Thus, a sample of 210 respondents was studied. Job involvement and organizational commitments were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale with scores 1 to 5, developed by Kanungo (1982) and Mowday et al., (1979) respectively. Results of this study indicates that job involvement and organizational commitment are related and mediate the organizational performance. The findings of the present study have implications for the extension organizations that are attempting to enhance organizational commitment through increased job involvement.

Key words: Job involvement; Organizational commitment; Extension personnel.

Job involvement and organizational commitment both are linked with identification and recognition of employee with his work and job experience (Chughtai, 2008). They are the important factors affecting the job performance of employees in an organization. For achieving organizational effectiveness, both play a crucial role. Researchers defined job involvement in different terms. Li and Long (1999) defined job involvement as the degree to which one shows emotional or mental identification with his job. It is the degree to which a person psychologically identifies with. Job involvement is related with the work motivation that a person has with a job (Bashaw and Grant, 1994; Hackett et al., 2001; McElroy et al., 1995; Blau, 1986; Blau and Boal, 1987). Job involvement has major impact on productivity and efficiency of employee and work has vital role in increasing job involvement of individual if it plays significant role in the life of employee (Probst and Tahira, 2000).

Sonnentag and Krueger (2006) reported that employees with significantly high job involvement considered and recognized by their job play an important role in their routine lives i.e. job is more important for their lives than anything else. Employee involvement clearly forecast employee outcomes, organizational performance and organization success (Bates, 2004; Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006). Soong, (2000) and Manojlovich et al., (2002) also claimed that job involvement is most important and essential component of work behaviour among the workforce.

Organizational commitment has been defined by the researchers as the level of involvement and identification with a given organization. In the context of this definition, organizational commitment embraces the following three elements. These are the acceptance of organizational goals and a strong belief in these goals, willingness to perform substantial efforts on behalf of the organization and having a definite desire

to maintain organizational membership (*Chen et al., 2002; Agarwal et al., 1999; Nijhof et al., 1998*). Organizational commitment has become an issue of great importance to be dealt with, as it helps to increase employee performance (*Shore & Martin, 1989; Meyer et al., 1989; Meyer et al., 1993; Meyer et al., 2002; Siders et al., 2001; Jaramillo et al., 2005*) and helps to minimize turning up late to work, absenteeism and leaving from the job.

The effectiveness of an extension organization largely depends on the competence of the work force, comprising of both male and female extension agents, which is related to their job involvement and commitment towards the organization. In order to ensure efficient and effective delivery of extension and advisory services and attract and retain the most qualified and experienced extension personnel, it is important for organizations to implement strategies that increase job involvement and organizational commitment of extension personnel. Earlier studies indicate that the role of job involvement and organizational commitment of extension personnel in particular has not been adequately addressed. More specifically, job involvement as a mediator on the influence of work values on organizational commitment in the agricultural system remains unclear, as most of the studies focused on other sectors that too in western cultural context. Hence, an attempt has been made in this study, to analyze the level of job involvement and organizational commitment of women extension personnel in Kerala.

METHODOLOGY

Expost-facto research design was followed for the study. The target population for this study consisted of women extension personnel who worked in Kerala State Department of Agriculture and Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPCCK). The respondents of the study were required to match the following inclusion criteria: (a) be a woman agricultural extension personnel; (b) be employed full-time, and have completed at least two years of service (to ensure that the respondents have at least some familiarities with their job and organization); and (c) be willing to participate as a respondent in the study. Subjects who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate in the study. A sample comprising of 180 women extension personnel from the Kerala State Department of Agriculture including both agricultural officers and agricultural assistants and 30 VFPCCK

women extension personnel were selected through multistage random sampling. The data were collected through administering questionnaire from respondents during office hours. Self-report measures were used to collect the data.

In the current study job involvement is operationally defined as the internalization of values about the work or the importance of the work according to the women extension personnel. To measure job involvement, a ten items Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ) designed by *Kanungo (1982)* was used. It helps to measure the psychological importance of one's job. Responses were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale (score ranging from one, strongly disagree to five, strongly agree). The 10 items were summed to provide a total involvement score, two of which are negatively phrased and hence reverse scored. High scores reflect a higher level of job involvement. In the present study, organizational commitment is operationally defined as the overall strength of women extension personnel's identification and involvement in an organization and was measured using a Likert-type scale developed by *Mowday et al., (1979)*. The women extension personnel were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with each item of the scale on a five-point continuum ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree with a score 1-5. This scale used 15 items with three-factor structures, six items of which are negatively phrased and reverse scored - the higher the score, the greater the extension personnel's commitment to the organization. The scales were pre-tested during pilot study and Cronbach's alpha found to be significant and the scales for measuring job involvement and organizational commitment were reliable.

Variable	Cronbach's alpha
Job involvement	0.74
Organizational commitment	0.76

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data from this study was analysed using a range of statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and non-parametric tests. The means and standard deviations for the variables of job involvement and organizational commitment are shown below (Table 1). It is clear from the table that the job involvement and organizational commitment among women extension personnel from VFPCCK are more than that of women extension personnel from state department in terms of their mean value.

Further analysis was carried out to determine the level of job involvement and organizational commitment among women extension personnel (Table 2). It was found that VFPCCK women extension personnel were belonging to either medium or high category as per their level of involvement and commitment whereas around 29 per cent and 34 per cent of women extension personnel from state department were belonging to low category respective to their job involvement and organizational commitment.

Job involvement of women extension personnel from both State Department and VFPCCK were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale developed by *Kanungo (1982)*. Pre-testing of the questionnaire during pilot study indicated that the scale is reliable for the present study (Cronbach's alpha co-efficient=0.74). A non-parametric test, Wilcoxon Mann-Whitney U test was applied to understand the difference in job involvement among State Department and VFPCCK

women extension personnel. As the computed p-value is less than the significant level at one per cent ($p < 0.01$) with test statistics Mann-Whitney $U = 287.500$, it can be inferred that women extension personnel from State Agricultural Department and VFPCCK were significantly different from each other with respect to their level of job involvement (Table 3). Mean ranks obtained for two groups based on Mann-Whitney U test showed that level of job involvement among VFPCCK women extension personnel was more with a mean rank of 185.92, while for the State Department women extension personnel the mean rank obtained was 92.10.

Organizational commitment was measured using the five-point Likert-type scale and pre-testing of the questionnaire during pilot study indicated that the scale is reliable for the present study (Cronbach's alpha co-efficient=0.76). Wilcoxon Mann-Whitney U test, a non-parametric test was applied to compare the

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of variables

Category	N	Job involvement		Organizational commitment	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
State Department Women Extension Personnel	180	78.62	11.75	112.48	9.39
VFPCCK Women Extension Personnel	30	95.47	1.72	120.93	8.20

Table 2. Level of job involvement and organizational commitment

Category	Level	Job involvement		Organizational commitment	
		No.	%	No.	%
VFPCCK personnel	Low	-	-	-	-
	Medium	5	16.7	18	60.0
	High	25	83.3	12	40.0
	Total	30	100.0	30	100.0
State Department personnel	Low	52	28.9	61	33.9
	Medium	113	62.8	82	45.6
	High	15	8.3	37	20.6
	Total	180	100.0	180	100.0

Table 3. Comparison of job involvement of women extension personnel based on mean ranks of Wilcoxon Mann-Whitney U test

Category	N	Mean Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	P value
State Department Women Extension Personnel	180	92.10 ^a				
VFPCCK Women Extension Personnel	30	185.92 ^b	287.500	16577.500	-7.849	<0.01
Total	210					

Numerals superscripted with different characters indicate they are statistically different at 1 per cent level

Table 4. Comparison of organizational commitment of women extension personnel based on mean ranks of Wilcoxon Mann-Whitney U test (N=200)

Category	N	Mean Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	P value
State Department Women Extension Personnel	180	99.00 ^a				
VFPCCK Women Extension Personnel	30	144.48 ^b	1530.500	17820.500	-3.799	<0.01

Numerals superscripted with different characters indicate they are statistically different at 1 per cent level

Table 5. Correlation between job involvement and organizational commitment for the state department and VFPCCK women extension personnel

Category	N	Correlation co-efficient	P value
State Department Women Extension Personnel	180	0.982**	<0.01
VFPCCK Women Extension Personnel	30	0.862**	<0.01

**Correlation is significant at 1 per cent level

organizational commitment among women extension personnel from different organizations. The results showed that both the groups were significantly different at 1 percent level of significance in terms of their commitment towards organization. Mean ranks obtained for the State Department and VFPCCK women extension personnel were 99.00 and 144.48 respectively (Table 4). This showed that the VFPCCK women extension personnel had more commitment towards organization than the State Department women extension personnel.

In the present study, Spearman's rank order correlation was run to determine the relationship between job involvement and organizational commitment among women extension personnel in Kerala (Table 5). There was a strong, positive correlation between job involvement and organizational commitment, which was statistically significant for women extension personnel from State Department ($r_s(178)=0.982$, $p<0.01$) as well as VFPCCK ($r_s(28)=0.862$, $p<0.01$). This indicates that the null hypothesis is wrong and hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This is in line with the results of Tansky *et al.*, (1997) and Cohen (1999) who had also confirmed the relationship of job involvement and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is a different work attitude

from job involvement, however a number of studies have highlighted the connection between organizational commitment and job involvement (Morrow, 1983; Mowday *et al.*, 1982 & 1979). Individuals with higher levels of job involvement and organizational commitment are likely to exhibit less unexcused lateness and unexcused absence than individuals with lower levels of job involvement and organizational commitment (Blau, 1986; Blau & Boal, 1987).

CONCLUSION

The current study results add to the understanding of job involvement and organizational commitment among women extension personnel in Kerala. Moreover, this study indicates that job involvement and organizational commitment are related and mediate the organizational performance. The findings of the present study have implications for the extension organizations that are attempting to enhance organizational commitment through increased job involvement. Individuals with high levels of both job involvement and organizational commitments are the most motivated to go to work in time.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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