

Evaluation of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale: A Cross-Cultural Application in Pakistan

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Abstract: Organizational Commitment comprises of three distinguishable components: Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. This study aims at evaluating Construct Validity (Convergent and Discriminant Validity) and Internal Reliability for Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale (1996) among the Banking Sector employees of Pakistan. This study is the first of its kind in a Pakistani setting. Eighteen items (6 for each of the three measures of Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment) were used in the questionnaire. Two hundred and fifteen (215) valid responses from Major cities of Pakistan were analyzed for this study. The study revealed that the three measures (Affective, Continuance and Normative) were distinguishable from each other, on the basis of Construct Validity and Internal Reliability Analysis. This validates that Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment measures can be applied in Pakistani culture also.

Keywords: *Organizational Commitment, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment*

1. Introduction

Commitment refers to an employee's willingness to work positively in an organization and his continuance to work for it (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1982). Organizational commitment is a core issue for the management of the organizations. Organizational commitment is directly related to the performance of employees and is therefore treated as an issue of great importance. (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellaty, Goffin & Jackson, 1989; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002; Siders, George & Dharwadkar, 2001; Jaramillo, Mulki & Marshall, 2005). Organizational commitment, as conceptualized by Allen and Meyer, has a three component structure; where affective, continuance and normative commitment form the three facets of organizational commitment.

A lot of work has been done on measuring Organizational commitment of employees in various parts of the world. However, it remains an issue not highlighted accordingly in Pakistan. Various studies have tried to get an insight into the commitment of Pakistani workforce, but there has not been a significant attempt to evaluate the basic scale through which organizational commitment is judged. Pakistani employees exhibit features that are important to be studied in the context of their commitment towards the organization they are working for. Long working hours, below-average remuneration, inefficient use of technology, autocratic culture, bribery and corruption are some of the challenging issues that a Pakistani organization has to face. Keeping in view, these problems, commitment seems to be an important factor to be studied in relation to an employee working in Pakistan. Normally, Pakistani researchers apply Meyer and Allen's organizational commitment scale to evaluate the commitment of the employees. As a preliminary check, the scale needs to be checked for consistency, validity and reliability before being applied for further research. The study attempts to fulfill this purpose.

The organizational commitment scale of Allen and Meyer has been applied worldwide and evaluated for validity and reliability. An attempt is made, through this study, to evaluate and validate Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale in the Pakistani culture. This study is the first of its kind in Pakistan. Through this study, Allen and Meyer's commitment scale (1996) has been checked for Construct Validity (Convergent and Discriminant Validity) and Internal Reliability among banking sector employees of Pakistan. The research questions for this study are:

- Are Allen and Meyer's Affective, Continuance and Normative commitment scales distinguishable (by checking Convergent and Discriminant validity) from each other when applied in Pakistani settings?

- Are Allen and Meyer's Affective, Continuance and Normative commitment scales internally reliable when applied in Pakistani settings?

2. Literature Review

Commitment is an individual's desire to remain focused and attached to his work. Organizational commitment is measured through three tools; affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1990; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994). Allen and Meyer (1991) argued that affective, continuance and normative components of commitment are separable; conceptually and empirically. Each of the three forms of commitment is equally important and useful. *Affective Commitment* refers to an employees' attachment with his organization and the organizational goals (O Reily & Chatman, 1986). Continuance Commitment refers to an employee's organizational commitment because of the work-relationships and other benefits; whereas *Normative Commitment* deals with the sense of obligation of an employee, based on his values and norms.

Literature contains various studies carried out in relation to the evaluation and validation of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale (1996). Few of these studies have focused on all the three components of commitment (Affective, Continuance and Normative), whereas others have studied only affective and continuance commitment. Some of the studies have even included only one type of commitment measure. The main focus of these studies has been to support the argument that the three measures of commitment (affective, continuance and normative) are distinguishable from each other. Magazine, Williams & Williams (1996) have studied organizational commitment using Allen and Meyer's (1991) affective and continuance commitment scales. Their study has observed the presence of another organizational commitment construct, the reverse coding method factor, apart from the prescribed ones.

Abdul Karim & Noor (2006) conducted a study to validate Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale (1996) in Malaysian Academic Library settings, but their study focused on two measures only: affective and continuance Commitment. They found that the two scales showed instrument validity and internal reliability. No empirical study has been conducted in Pakistan on validating and evaluating Allen and Meyer's Organizational commitment scales, so far. The main purpose of this study was to establish the validity and reliability of Allen and Meyer's Organizational commitment scale in Pakistani settings.

3. Research Methodology

Subjects: Banking sector of Pakistan is considered to have very long working hours, which affects the efficiency and the effectiveness of the banking sector employees. For this purpose, banking sector was considered for the analysis as it gave a true perception of majority of the Pakistani workforce. For the study, data was collected from various banks located across major cities of Pakistan through questionnaires. Questionnaire survey was used in order to help employees to think over their responses, fill them whenever they had time for it and that they have a sense of confidentiality in this regard. 230 out of total of 350 floated questionnaires came back (response rate was 66%).

Procedure: All the banking sector employees in Pakistan face similar workloads and problems. For this purpose, primary data was collected from various managerial and non-managerial banking sector employees through questionnaire survey. A total of 350 questionnaires were mailed (electronically and through mail) to respondents. The questionnaire included the eighteen (18) items of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment scale. The respondents were motivated to fill the questionnaire in a manner that could reflect their true perceptions. The total responses received were 230, out of which 15 questionnaires were rejected on various grounds. A total of 215 questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS 17.0.

Measures: Primary data was collected using questionnaire survey. The questionnaire comprised of two sections, the demographics of the respondents and the section regarding Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale. Organizational Commitment was measured through 18 items taken from Allen and Meyer's (1996) Organizational Commitment scale (6 items each for affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment were selected), in order to determine cross-cultural validity and reliability of the scale. The reliabilities of all the commitment scales were above .60. All the items are measured using five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagreed (1) to strongly agreed (5).

4. Findings and Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis: Exploratory factor analysis is performed on the 18 items of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale. Principal components analysis extraction method was used. The rationale for using exploratory factor analysis is to analyze the Convergent and Discriminant validity of the scale. Three factors are extracted and loaded into a Varimax Rotated criterion. Factor 1 explains 12.1% of the total variance, whereas factor 2 and factor 3 account for 12.9% and 17.5% of the total variance explained. Harman's single factor test is used for checking Common Method Variance in the data. Analyzing the factor matrix, the items did not load onto a single factor and none of the factors explained majority of the variance. Therefore, Common Method Variance is not an issue for the data under consideration. Table 1 represents the factor loadings for three commitment scales of Affective, Continuance and Normative scales items.

Table 1: Varimax Rotated Factor Matrix based on Correlations among the items of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Scales

| Questionnaire Items | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Affective Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization. | -.382 | .277 | .426 |
| 2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. | -.415 | .141 | .397 |
| 3. I do not feel like 'part of my family' at this organization. | .775 | .008 | .136 |
| 4. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. | .748 | .032 | .058 |
| 5. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. | -.223 | -.062 | .601 |
| 6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization. | .635 | .112 | -.208 |
| <i>Continuance Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 7. It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organization right now even if I wanted to. | -.045 | .326 | .231 |
| 8. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organization. | .038 | .456 | .540 |
| 9. Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire. | -.064 | .622 | .268 |
| 10. I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization. | -.167 | .653 | -.077 |
| 11. One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternative elsewhere. | -.077 | .749 | -.190 |
| 12. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice. | .234 | .609 | .246 |
| <i>Normative Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 13. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my organization. | .119 | .283 | -.007 |
| 14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave. | .086 | .057 | .405 |
| 15. I would feel guilty if I left this organization now. | .037 | .089 | .668 |
| 16. This organization deserves my loyalty. | -.021 | .092 | .640 |
| 17. I would not leave my organization right now because of my sense of obligation to it. | -.015 | -.138 | .747 |
| 18. I owe a great deal to this organization. | -.361 | .182 | .541 |

Table 2 shows the percentage of variance accounted by the three factors.

Table 2: Eigenvalues Percentage of Variance and Cumulative Percentages for Factors of the 18-Items Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

| Factor | Eigenvalues | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
|--------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1 | 2.18 | 12.12 | 42.57 |
| 2 | 2.33 | 12.92 | 30.45 |
| 3 | 3.16 | 17.53 | 17.53 |

Table 3 below shows only the highest factor loadings for the three factors. It can be seen from the table that three of the six items for affective commitment converged under factor 1 (items no. 3, 4 and 6), whereas items no. 1, 2 and 5 did not converge under factor 1. For continuance commitment, all items (except item no. 8) converged under factor 2. Similarly, for normative commitment, all items (except item no. 13) converged under factor 3. Hence, the items for continuance and normative commitment are found to be stable (with the exception of one item for each scale) and are quite distinguishable from each other. Affective commitment scale shows that three of the items did not converge or load onto factor 1.

Table 3: Summary of Items and Factor Loadings for Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Scales

| Questionnaire Items | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Affective Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization. | | | .426 |
| 2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. | | | .397 |
| 3. I do not feel like 'part of my family' at this organization. | .775 | | |
| 4. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. | .748 | | |
| 5. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. | | | .601 |
| 6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization. | .635 | | |
| <i>Continuance Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 7. It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organization right now even if I wanted to. | | .326 | |
| 8. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organization. | | | .540 |
| 9. Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire. | | .622 | |
| 10. I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization. | | .653 | |
| 11. One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternative elsewhere. | | .749 | |
| 12. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice. | | .609 | |
| <i>Normative Commitment Scale Items</i> | | | |
| 13. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my organization. | | .283 | |
| 14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave. | | | .405 |
| 15. I would feel guilty if I left this organization now. | | | .668 |
| 16. This organization deserves my loyalty. | | | .640 |
| 17. I would not leave my organization right now because of my sense of obligation to it. | | | .747 |
| 18. I owe a great deal to this organization. | | | .541 |

Formation of New Variables based on the above Table 3: Based on the above findings, we create three new variables and label them as *New Affective* (mean of items no. 3, 4 and 6), *New Continuance* (mean of items no. 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12) and *New Normative* (mean of items no. 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) Commitment Variables. Items no. 1, 2, 5, 8, and 13 are dropped, since they did not load onto proper factors.

Convergent and Discriminant Validity (Correlations): Correlation analysis is performed in order to strengthen the above results of convergence. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis is the method used for this analysis. Correlation analysis is performed for affective commitment items having proper loadings (items no. 3, 4, and 6) and the above newly created variables *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*. Table 4 shows the results of this correlation analysis.

Table 4: Inter-correlations between Properly-loaded Items for Affective Commitment (*New Affective*) with newly constructed scales *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*

| Affective Commitment Items | <i>New Affective</i> | <i>New Continuance</i> | <i>New Normative</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Item 3 | .80** | .02 | -.02 |
| Item 4 | .83** | -.02 | -.05 |
| Item 6 | .70** | -.02 | -.18 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 4 clearly indicates that the 3 items (found to have proper loadings – items no. 3, 4, and 6) for *New Affective* scale correlate significantly with the new variable *New Affective*, whereas no significant correlation is established between the three items and the other two newly formed scales (*New Continuance* and *New Normative*). This strengthens the argument that *New Affective* is completely distinguishable from *New Continuance* and *New Normative* scales. Therefore, *New Affective* has shown convergent and discriminant validity.

Again, the correlation analysis is performed for continuance commitment items having proper loadings (items no. 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12) and the newly created variables *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*. Table 5 shows the results of this correlation analysis.

Table 5: Inter-correlations between Properly-loaded Items for Continuance Commitment (*New Continuance*) with newly constructed scales *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*

| Continuance Commitment Items | <i>New Affective</i> | <i>New Continuance</i> | <i>New Normative</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Item 7 | -.02 | .73** | .19 |
| Item 9 | -.05 | .62** | .29 |
| Item 10 | -.04 | .54** | .03 |
| Item 11 | -.03 | .58** | -.03 |
| Item 12 | .13 | .58** | .23 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 5 indicates that the 5 items (found to have proper loadings – items no. 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12) for *New Continuance* scale correlate significantly with the new variable *New Continuance*, whereas significant correlation is not established between the five items and the other two newly formed scales (*New Affective* and *New Normative*). This strengthens the argument that *New Continuance* is completely distinguishable from *New Affective* and *New Normative* scales. Therefore, *New Continuance* has shown convergent and discriminant validity.

Correlation analysis is also performed for normative commitment items having proper loadings (items no. 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) and the newly created variables *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*. Table 6 shows the results of this correlation analysis.

Table 6: Inter-correlations between Properly-loaded Items for Normative Commitment (*New Normative*) with newly constructed scales *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*

| Normative Commitment Items | <i>New Affective</i> | <i>New Continuance</i> | <i>New Normative</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Item 14 | .01 | .15 | .53** |
| Item 15 | -.04 | .17 | .73** |
| Item 16 | -.06 | .19 | .67** |
| Item 17 | -.06 | .06 | .74** |
| Item 18 | -.22 | .23 | .63** |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 6 indicates that the 5 items (found to have proper loadings – items no. 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) for *New Normative* scale correlate significantly with the new variable *New Normative*, whereas significant correlation is not established between the five items and the other two newly formed scales (*New Affective* and *New Continuance*). This strengthens the argument that *New Normative* is completely distinguishable from *New Affective* and *New Continuance* scales. Therefore, *New Normative* has also shown convergent and discriminant validity.

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha): Along with the convergent and discriminant validity, internal reliability is also checked for the newly constructed scales *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*. Table 7 shows the results of reliability analysis for the three newly created variables.

Table 7: Reliability Analysis of *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*

| New Scales | Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>New Affective</i> | .67 |
| <i>New Continuance</i> | .53 |
| <i>New Normative</i> | .67 |

Table 7 indicates Cronbach's alpha coefficient values of .67, .53 and .67 for the three scales *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative*. These values are relatively low, but are in the acceptable range. So, the three newly created variables show internal reliability.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients (when Items deleted from each scale): An analysis is also done by finding Cronbach's alpha for the three newly created scales by deleting items from each of the three scales, in order to see if the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient increases or not.

Table 8 shows that on dropping item no. 6, the Cronbach's alpha would increase from .67 to .71. But the increase in the value is not high enough to consider deletion of the item.

Table 8: Reliability Analysis of *New Affective* Scale if Items Deleted

| Items | Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted |
|--------------|--|
| 3 | .52 |
| 4 | .45 |
| 6 | .71 |

Table 9 shows that on dropping item no. 7, the Cronbach's alpha would increase from .53 to .64. So, item no. 7 may be considered for deletion in order to increase the reliability of the scale.

Table 9: Reliability Analysis of *New Continuance* Scale if Items Deleted

| Items | Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted |
|--------------|--|
| 7 | .64 |
| 9 | .42 |
| 10 | .47 |
| 11 | .45 |
| 12 | .44 |

Table 10 shows that on dropping item no. 14, the Cronbach's alpha would increase from .67 to .70. But the increase in the value is not high enough to consider deletion of the item.

Table 10: Reliability Analysis of *New Normative* Scale if Items Deleted

| Items | Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted |
|--------------|--|
| 14 | .70 |
| 15 | .59 |
| 16 | .61 |
| 17 | .57 |
| 18 | .63 |

5. Conclusion

This study is aimed at the evaluation of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment scale in Pakistani settings among banking sector employees. The three measures for commitment are affective, continuance and normative commitment. The three measures show convergent and discriminant validity except for items no. 1, 2, and 5 for affective commitment; item no. 8 for continuance commitment and item no. 13 for normative commitment. 4 out of 18 items do not load on to their appropriate scales. By dropping these 4 items, new variables naming *New Affective*, *New Continuance* and *New Normative* are formed. The new variables are found to be stable. Convergence and discriminant validity is supplemented by internal reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three new scales are found to be in the acceptable range, which shows that the scales exhibited internal reliability along with instrument validity.

From the findings of this study, it can be said that Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale can be applied in Pakistani settings also. Hence, Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale can be confidently applied to test the commitment of employees in Pakistan. However, this remains to be seen that the scale also provides reliable and valid results when applied to sectors other than the banking sector of Pakistan. Future research should be conducted on the validity and reliability of this scale in other sectors of Pakistan also.

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