Commitment In Education: Analyzing The Construct And Organizational Commitment Of College Teachers

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Abstract
This study investigates the applicability of the construct and empirically measures organizational commitment of teachers in the current higher educational context. A sample of 557 regular teachers participated in the survey. Utilizing EFA, the findings highlight that scale identifies 4 components and 17 items that fit current educational settings. Although overall commitment level remains moderate yet the individual dimensions of the commitment construct namely affective, continuance and normative demonstrate considerable variations. This study offers deeper insights for the college administration to get acquainted with the behavioral patterns of teachers that may remain undetected otherwise and serves as basis for subsequent efforts for an enriched workplace environment. This study calls for further exploration in this field and enables policymakers to comprehend underlying challenges and devise effective measures to reinforce teacher's organizational commitment.
Keywords: *Factor Analysis, Higher education, Organizational commitment, Punjab, Teachers*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of higher education, understanding and enhancing organizational commitment is essential for achieving sustained success. Committed teachers are the visionary forces that contribute and promote educational quality. Organizational commitment is the key strategy that equips contemporary organizations to improve performance, drive success and concurrently ensure the well- being of their employees **(Soomro et al., 2024)**. Consequently, the significance of organizational commitment should not be ignored in the education sector as it determines the long-term sustainability of institutions. With the emerging developments in the academic sector driven by hybrid teaching practices and varied learner expectations, only committed employees can drive exceptional work performance **(Hosen et al., 2024)**.

Generally, colleges allocate several administrative duties to teachers to prevent further hirings. The absence of adequate funding from the government has compelled colleges to encounter serious fiscal hurdles and downsize their staff. The acute concern regarding delayed salaries, heavy workload and teacher's being strained with non teaching duties prevails in the colleges of Punjab. **(Singh &Maini, 2021)** have also spotlighted these concerns among faculty in Punjab technical institutions causing turnover. All these complexities result in financial and mental health challenges and tend to worsen over time which further hinder teacher's commitment towards their core responsibilities, functioning of the colleges and gradually fade away the goodwill of the institution. Given this context, it will be worthwhile to explore the commitment of teachers that may uncover novel insights regarding their dedication towards their colleges despite the hardships they face. The majority of past studies in the field of educational commitment have centered either on schools or universities **(Bashir & Gani, 2020; Chanana, 2021)**. There is notable lack of research focusing specifically on the commitment of college teachers in the Punjab state of India, hence leaving this area mainly untapped across educational levels. Secondly, past researchers have skipped the verification of suitability of the organizational commitment construct and its items in their study. As claimed by **(Meyer & Allen, 1991)** the dimensions of organizational commitment display diverse patterns in collectivist and individualistic cultures. Thus, it becomes necessary to check if all the items of a measure are valid for future analysis in a particular study.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Organizational commitment can be understood as an individual's desire to continue to be a member of the organization and contribute to accomplish its objectives. It is the acceptance and belief of the goals of the organization and employees' association with the organization (**Zhao, 2023**). It also forms connections between employees and the organization. Within the framework of organizational commitment, several theories exist and some of these are identified as:

The Side Bet Theory

It is imperative to mention that the idea of organizational commitment was firstly introduced in 1960 by Becker. Becker's theory postulated that in an organization, employee commitment is a manifestation of that employee's side bets which consists of the time, effort and financial resources assured to the organization making it hard for them to depart without substantial cause (**Jaiswal et al., 2020**).

The Psychological Attachment Approach

The proponent of employees' psychological attachment towards their organizations was first put forward by Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian in the year 1974. Their perspective highlights the psychological investment that an employee has with respect to the organization and not tangible investments (**Jaiswal et al., 2020**). They also defined organizational commitment as being one dimensional consisting of three aspects which were: strong identification, involvement and loyalty. In order to operationalize this construct, the authors created the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which consists of 15 items but it was criticized for including items that measure intentions to leave, rather than measuring commitment directly.

Allen and Meyer 1990 (The Multidimensional Approach)

Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-dimensional model of organizational commitment which comprises three dimensions of commitment affective, continuance and normative have been a fundamental construct used by many organizational researchers. Affective commitment describes the desire and emotional attachment that employees feel toward their organization (**Meyer & Allen, 1991**) and usually correlates with exceptional organizational outcomes. Additionally, continuance commitment signifies in which the individuals assume within their organizations owing to the recognition of the possible losses that can be incurred when exiting the organization or the lack of alternative opportunities for employment (**Meyer & Allen, 1991**). Normative commitment is based on the viewpoint that remaining in an organization is the right thing to do and employees' sense of obligation (**Meyer & Allen, 1991**).

The Klein, Molloy and Brinsfield's Uni-Dimensional Model

This model originated in 2012 as a uni-dimensional model of organizational commitment which seeks to redefine the commitment to improve its construct. In their research, they characterize commitment as a willful bond by an employee representing dedication and responsibility measured by four questions but not a binding one. Secondly, they suggest commitment to be viewed as a single dimensional concept. Thirdly, this model signifies commitment to the organization and not bound to other specific targets (**Klein et al., 2012**).

Earlier studies have explored the antecedents that can lead to better organizational commitment. The influence of supportive workplace climate on organizational performance is reinforced by organizational commitment (**Woznyj et al., 2019**). In a study by (**Owan et.al, 2022**) the strategic placement of teachers, providing retraining programs and motivating boosts their organizational commitment. The findings from the research by (**Rousseau et al., 2024**) reveals that by acknowledging individual distinctions at the workplace among employees, contributes positively to the organizational commitment. Further, effective HR practices and job satisfaction, stimulates dedicated and satisfied employees (**Jawaad et al., 2019, Kassaw & Golga, 2019, Ramalho Luz et al., 2018**). In order to inculcate commitment among employees, a favorable workplace environment and fair compensation coupled with professional advancement opportunities need to be pursued (**Adamchik & Sedlak, 2024**). With the intent to successfully enhance workplace outcomes, organizational commitment and work engagement, organizations should prioritize the development of skills, qualities and competencies of its human resources (**Aboramadan et al., 2020**).

3. OBJECTIVES
    a) To assess the applicability of items of organizational commitment construct for faculty in the Punjab colleges.
    b) To investigate the organizational commitment levels of teachers within the colleges of Punjab.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design & Data collection procedure

The cross sectional research design and quantitative approach was adopted in this research. This method helped us to gather data at one point of time. Through multistage convenience sampling, we selected a total of 40 colleges and initially the sample comprises 600 regular employed faculty members working in Private-aided colleges in Punjab, India, ranging from Professors to Associate Professors and Assistant Professors. Finally, after scrutinizing 557 responses were found valid for inclusion in the study. We obtained permission from the respective college principals before reaching out to the faculty members and they were confident in the confidentiality of their responses. A self-administrative questionnaire developed by (**Allen & Meyer, 1990**) was used and responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from "1" as "strongly disagree" to "5" as "strongly agree").

4.2 Data Analysis Tools

The present study employed SPSS software as a primary tool to conduct demographic analysis, descriptive data analysis and to carry out Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). In the current study, EFA was applied to examine the appropriateness of questionnaire items and investigate how these construct items are grouped based on their intention to measure.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Demographic analysis

The demographic profile in the (**Table1**) depicts that the majority of the respondents were female (55.8%). The major section of the respondents (26.9%) was from the age group of 35-39 years. In the context of tenure at their respective colleges, a significant portion of faculty members (39.9%) had 5-9 years of teaching experience. Further, (71.6%) of faculty members were assistant professors. This table indicates that the majority of the faculty members are in the mid-stage of their careers.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondent

Variables	Frequency (s)	Percentage of total (%)	Variables	Frequency (s)	Percentage of total (%)
AGE			TENURE IN COLLEGE		
30-34	27	4.8	5-9 years	222	39.9
35-39	150	26.9	10-14 years	146	26.2
40-44	134	24.1	15-19 years	79	14.2
45-49	128	23.0	20-24 years	53	9.5
50-54	67	12.0	25-29 years	39	7.0
55-59	51	9.2	30-34 years	18	3.2
GENDER			DESIGNATION		
Male	246	44.2	Assistant Professor	399	71.6
Female	311	55.8	Associate Professor	152	27.3
			Professor	6	1.1

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: The descriptive statistics of the items

	Descriptive Statistics		
Items	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
OC1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this college	3.89	0.979
OC2	I really feel as if this college's problems are my own	3.84	0.956
OC3	I want to stay in the department that I do, whatever I have had other alternative opportunities	3.59	1.033
OC4	I do feel like 'part of the family' at my college	4.05	0.852
OC5	I do feel emotionally attached to this department	3.97	0.827
OC6	This college has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	3.98	0.850
OC7	I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my college	4.07	0.859
OC8	I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up	3.89	1.075
OC9	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my college now	3.60	1.048
OC10	I will lose high privileges to leave my college now	3.94	1.060
OC11	Right now, staying with my college it is a matter of necessity as much as desire	3.65	1.054
OC12	I think that I have very few options to consider leaving this college	3.58	1.142
OC13	One of the few serious consequences of leaving this college would be the scarcity of available alternatives	3.40	1.148
OC14	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this college is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice-another college may not match the overall benefits I have here	3.88	1.063
OC15	I do believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her college	3.05	0.979
OC16	Switching job from one college to another college does not seem ethical to me	2.16	1.101
OC17	One of the major reasons I continue to work in this college is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain	2.42	1.084
OC18	If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my college	2.88	1.056
OC19	I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one college	2.41	1.081
OC20	It is better for me to stay in this college for my career	3.46	0.936
OC21	I do think that working as a teacher in this college is a sensible choice	3.10	0.986

In addition to the item statements, mean and standard deviation values were calculated, as presented in **(Table 2).** The mean scores for individual items ranged from 2.16 to 4.07, while the standard deviation values varied between 0.827 and 1.148.

5.3 Factor Analysis Results

Table 3 - The KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.834
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6834.830
	Df	210
	Sig.	.000

 Source: Authors' own work

The Principal Component Analysis as the extraction method was used on these 21 items to assess the construct of organizational commitment. As shown in the results of **(Table 3),** Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy appeared as (.834), considered as excellent by **(Hoque et al., 2018)**. It can be regarded as satisfactory if it appears to be greater than 0.5**(Hair et al., 2014)** or far superior if > 0.6 **(Burton &Mazerolle, 2011)**. Additionally, Bartlett's test of Sphericity comes out to be statistically significant (0.000) as it meets the required significant value to be less than 0.05**(Hoque et al., 2018).**These two conditions have been met and thus it implies that the sample size selected in this study can be viewed as adequate and data can be perceived as acceptable to further conduct the factor analysis **(Hair et al., 2014; Hoque et al., 2018).**
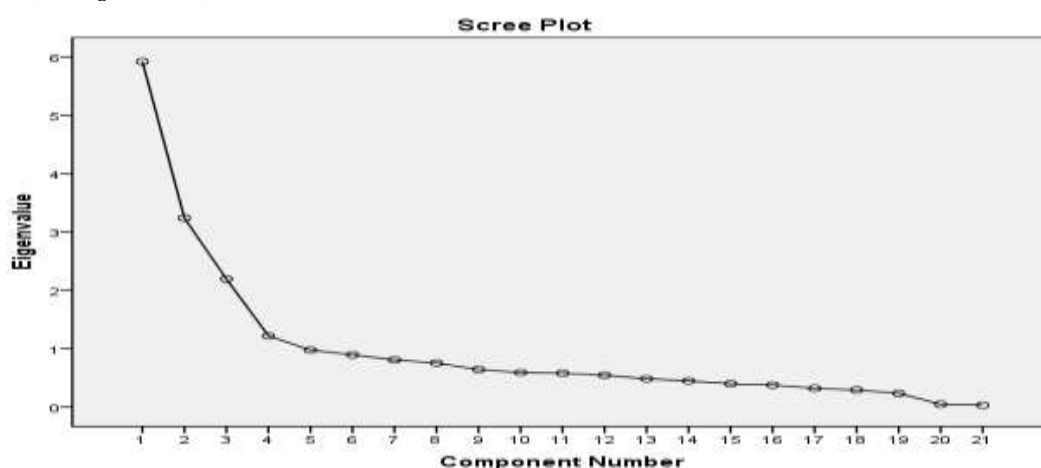

Figure 1- The scree plot for the OC construct

In factor analysis, a scree plot indicates the eigenvalues that each component holds. It aids in the retention of the optimal number of factors in a study. The number of factors which are greater than 1 should be retained as per the Kaiser criterion **(Hoque et al., 2018)**. The scree plot in the **(Figure 1)** demonstrates that four components were extracted from the EFA process and each component for the construct of organizational commitment further includes distinct items.

Table 4- Total Variance Explained

Components	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.727	17.749	17.749
2	3.322	15.820	33.569
3	2.806	13.362	46.930
4	2.718	12.945	59.875

 Source: Authors' own work

The results in the **(Table 4)** exhibit the total percentage of variance and the cumulative percentage of variance simultaneously. The total number of components extracted with the eigen value exceeding than 1 were four. The proportion of variance attributable to each of the factors was as follows: component one

had a percentage of 17.749%, component two had a percentage of 15.820%, component three had a percentage of 13.362% and component four had a percentage of 12.945%. In social sciences factor solutions explaining 60% of the total variance or even less is acceptable **(Hair et al., 2014)**. So, the total variance accounted for by the four factors reported in this study was 59.875%, therefore meets this criterion.

Table 5 – Reliability Analysis of OC construct

Component No.	Components	No. of items Loaded	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha)
Component 1	Affective	7	0.945
Component 2	Continuance	4	0.785
Component 3	Normative	4	0.876
Component 4	Loyalty	2	0.915

Source: Authors' own work

The **(Table 5)** exhibits 4 components. The first component had seven items, and in the second component, four items were retained; in the third component, again four items exist, and finally the fourth component included only two items. This study retained items that exhibited factor loadings of 0.5 or greater **(Hair et al., 1998).** In addition, using Cronbach alpha coefficients it met the reliability criteria of greater than 0.7 as proposed by **(Cortina, 1993)**.

5.4 Measurement of Organizational Commitment

Table 6- Level of Organizational Commitment of Teachers

	Mean	Result
Affective Commitment	3.912	High
Continuance Commitment	3.705	High
Normative Commitment	2.782	Moderate
Overall Commitment	3.466	Moderate

Source: Authors' own work

(Table 6) presents the mean score for the study of organizational commitment. The criterion for level of organizational commitment was based on interval interpretation including three categories as low, moderate and high. From 1-2.33 = low level, 2.34-3.66 = moderate level and from 3.67-5 = high level. The mean score for affective commitment indicated 3.912, followed by continuance commitment at 3.705, while normative commitment had mean of 2.782. The overall commitment among respondents was also identified as of moderate range.

6. DISCUSSION

This research investigates the level of organizational commitment among teachers in private aided colleges and also looks into the item factor structure and its appropriateness in the current educational setting. Through exploratory factor analysis techniques, 4 components and 17 items that were found appropriate for the organizational commitment construct. This is consistent with the findings of **(Agegnehu et al., 2022)** that also validated Allen and Meyer's framework comprising 4 components and 14 items and highlighted that organizational commitment is a multi dimensional construct **(Agegnehu et al., 2022; van Rossenberg et al., 2022).** Furthermore, the current findings also depict a change in the respondents' perspective from previously formulated items of organizational commitment **(Hoque et al., 2018).**

The results revealed that teachers have a moderate level of organizational commitment. This shows that teachers may fulfill their duties but are not actively inclined towards its long term academic success because there are several other factors that weaken the overall commitment. This is particularly in line with the study of **Bashir and Gani (2020)** who also reported moderate levels of commitment among teachers. But in the contemporary competitive landscape, committed faculty can truly results in an increase in work performance **(Hosen et al., 2024)**.When it comes to the dimensional analysis, the higher levels of affective commitment shows that a good number of the teachers actually hold a strong desire towards the organization and incorporates its goals and values. Such involvement would definitely

translate into a workforce exhibiting more engagement and strengthening overall relationships. Whereas, the higher continuance commitment is a result of fear of benefit loss, lack of alternative jobs and is primarily based on necessity. The moderate level of normative commitment implies that the teachers are not ready to feel fully morally obligated to their college implying a threat of turnover as they will unlikely hesitate to opt for lucrative prospects that could trigger organizational turmoil. In particular, it points to the profound role of higher normative commitment as indicated by **(Freire & Azevedo, 2024)** that it would restrain employees from leaving the profession.

Implications

From a theoretical perspective, in this study variations in the dimensions of commitment have been identified. Further, this study deepens the understanding of how individual dimensions of commitment contribute exceptionally to work related outcomes within educational institutions. From a practical standpoint, the study emphasizes that when teachers are emotionally committed and attached to their institutions, it positively impacts overall success and student performance. However, a lower sense of obligation toward their colleges could lead to burnout, frustration and eventually attrition, as teachers may be less inclined to go beyond their assigned roles. To mitigate this, college authorities must focus on workload management and create a supportive work environment where teachers' efforts are recognized and rewarded. Offering autonomy, regular feedback sessions, and addressing concerns such as salary can help in enhancing their sense of belongingness. Furthermore, while high continuance commitment may indicate stability, it can also result in stagnation if teachers remain in their current roles due to a lack of alternatives. Educational institutions must balance the three commitment dimensions by involving faculty in decision-making, offering leadership opportunities, and linking compensation to performance. Through these actionable strategies colleges can promote higher organizational commitment and will ensure long-term success and alignment between institutional goals and faculty aspirations.

LIMITATIONS &FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The quantitative approach and cross-sectional research design has been the main limitation as they limit the generalizability of perceptions in relation to time. In addition, sector specific results and the use of only EFA has placed a limitation on the insights gained. Future researchers can conduct longitudinal studies and apply a mixed-methods research technique comprising both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Future research could explore alternative sectors by examining the new variables like job crafting, opportunities for advancement and digital competence in conjunction with commitment, so it would be possible to assess their impact on employee behaviors.

CONCLUSION

The current research focuses on the need for organizational commitment for college teachers. This study examines the responses of 557 college teachers of Punjab, India. The results provide evidence for non-structural integration of dimensions with four components and 17 items constituting the organizational commitment construct in this case. While teachers demonstrate moderate level of overall commitment and high affective commitment, concerns remain regarding the high levels of continuance commitment and the moderate nature of normative commitment. The findings of the current study underscore the relevance of cultivating strong levels of commitment if engagement and effectiveness of the faculty in higher education is to be improved. The present study employed a cross-sectional design and thus adopted a single approach, which creates validity concerns about the generalizability of the current findings. To mitigate such limitations, suggestions are made for future studies to use extensive research designs and different methods in the study of organizational commitment. Also, examining the dimensions of commitment in multiple contexts will not only increase the credibility of the results, but will also provide novel strategies to reinforce it.

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