THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES QUALITY

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ABSTRACT

Relationship between employee attitudes and services quality still unclear. Therefore, the aim of this study is to uncover the relationship between organizational commitment and service quality, by investigate under which mechanism that organizational commitment effect service quality. Data were collected by means of self-administered survey, total 247 faculty staff and 1235 of their student complete responses were obtained from Aden University. The results show that, organizational commitment effect service quality by social mechanism (social exchange). More specifically, organizational commitment effect service quality by social exchange mechanism. Important implications, limitation and future studies are discussed.

Field of Research: organizational commitment, service quality, Higher education service quality, social exchange, social mechanism.

1. Introduction

Service organizations dependent on human interaction to deliver services to the customer. Hence, delivering desirable level of service quality determined by interaction between employee and customer through service encounter. Throughout crucial service encounter, it is employee’s willingness to involve in discretionary effort that influences the level of quality of service delivered to the customer (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990; Malhtra & Mukherjee, 2004; Larivière, Bowen, Andreassen, Kunz, Sirianni, Voss, & Keyser, 2017) Which mean it will be more difficult for organization services to delivering the desirable level of service quality when their employees uncommitted or dissatisfied (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996) or unwilling to exert any additional effort or not have the required skills and knowledge to contribute to improve service quality. Furthermore delivering desirable level of service quality heavily depends on the way that employee deal with customer.

Higher education institutions is labour intensive (Küskü, 2003), activities of the higher education institutions more dependent in the human factors, huge amount of resource and activities performed by employees. Moreover, service quality improvement in higher education lies in the institution’s ability to provide an overall climate (Witt, 1991; Trivellas & Dargenidou, 2009). Hence, institutions can only successful dependent on their employee's attitudes and behaviours and perception. However, relationship between employee attitudes and services quality still unclear, previous studies don't
explained how organizational commitment effect service quality. However, previous studies in higher education service quality don't pay more attention to the impact of faculty attitude although they are critical factors in service quality, because faculty staff performed academic activates such as research and teaching. (Küskü, 2003). Therefore, higher education institutions can only success depend on the attitudes.

Higher education institutions in Yemen suffers from many complex an academic and an administrative problems (Muthanna, 2015), such as lack of organizational commitment among the employee in Yemeni universities (Saeed, Gelaidan & Ahmad, 2013) a weakness of academic and administrative staff performance as well as institutional performance as whole, (Muthanna & Karaman, 2011; Muthanna, 2015). It has been conform that, lack of employees commitment effects organizational performance (Meyer et al., 1989; Wright & Bonett, 2002; Sharma and Dhar, 2016; Woznyj, Heggestad, Kennerly, & Yap, 2019), all which weaken the service quality of higher education (TSCEP, 2014), this situation compatible with previous argument which conform that lack of organizational commitment leads to weakness of service quality (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Dhar, 2015). However, literature in the context of Yemen found lack of studies investigated the effect of organizational commitment on service quality in higher education sector. Therefore, the aim of this study is to uncover the relationship between organizational commitment and service quality, by investigate under which mechanism that organizational commitment effect higher education service quality.

**Literature Review**

Based on social exchange theory, Eisenberger, R. and Huntington (1986) argued that, when employee perceived their organization valued their effort, recognized their contributions, and investment in them, and take care about their wellbeing, hence, employee will feel obligated to reciprocate that to the organization through positive attitude and behaviour, and superior efforts to help their organization to achieve its objectives. However, when employees feel obligated to their organization, and want to benefit their organization, then they will perform good service quality to the customers.

Many researches in the literature of the term of services quality discussed the relationship between employee's organizational commitments on service quality, and provided evidence conform the significant impact of organizational commitment on service quality. Organizational commitment of customer contact employees is very important, because it will positively effects behaviour that related to work and practices desired of service encounter (Gonzalez and Garazo, 2006). In addition, organization elements such as affective organizational commitment of frontline employees who contact employees has significant and positive impact on both service delivery and service quality (Chu, Tseng & Tsai, 2014).

Furthermore, Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) found that three component of organizational commitment (continuance, affective and normative) have a significant influences on delivering service quality. In addition, Malhotra and Mukherjee (2003) found organizational commitment (continuance and affective) have positive and significant impact on service quality, and don’t found any significant impact of normative commitment on service quality, while Kansal (2012) found significant relationship between normative commitment and service quality, while Wong and Cheung (2014) found that affective commitment are more contributing to service quality. Besides that, Wong and Cheung (2014) noted that affective commitment of employee are critical factors for service quality. Moreover, Little and Dean (2006) found that employee’s organizational commitment has positive correlation to employee capability to deliver service quality. And they suggest that increasing employee’s organizational commitment is likely to contribute to value feeling of employees and as consequently delivering high level of service quality to the customer.

More specifically, (Chughtai and Zafar, 2006) found that organizational commitment of lecturers has significant and positive influence toward performance, it means that lecturers who has high level of organizational commitment, will show to have high level of job performance as well, and has negative influence on lecturer’s turnover intention (Chughtai and Zafar, 2006). In addition, organizational commitment of higher education employees have significant relationship to achieve high level of
quality (Thornhill et al, 1996). Therefore, current study assumes that, organizational commitment has positive effect on higher education service quality.

Therefore, the current study investigate the role of organizational commitment on higher education service quality in Yemen. Moreover, current study investigate how organizational commitment influence higher education service quality throughout social mechanisms. Therefore, this study comes to respond to scholar call to uncovering the relationship between organizational commitment and service quality, and to support Yemeni Government, Ministry of higher Education and Yemeni’s Universities efforts to enhance the higher education service quality by take the employee attitude seriously.

**Method**

This study aims to investigate the direct effect of organizational commitment on higher education service quality, therefore, the data of this study was collected through questionnaire. Two survey instruments were used to test the hypotheses: first instrument to measure organization commitment, and second to measure their student perceptions about service quality. The questionnaires distributed personally to the respondents. Each respondent received envelop contains one organization commitment survey for the faculty and other surveys for students. The questionnaire hand-distributed in the classes before or after lecture. During this process, 400 questionnaire were distributed to the faculty members, and 257 questionnaires was return response was rate 61.7%, and 247 were used. In addition, distributed 2100 questionnaires to the faculty customers (students), 1250 questionnaires were return response rate was 60%.

**Measures**

**Organizational commitment**

Organizational commitment measured using 8 items developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). These 8 items include questions related to two types of commitment known as affective (4 items), and continuance (4items). This measure has been used by previous research such as Wang (2015).

**Service quality**

the objective of current study was to measure the customer perception of service quality delivered directly from contact employees, thus, current study adopted 18 items from SERVQUAL which developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) by disregard tangible dimension to measure service quality in higher education, due to tangibles dimension didn't affect customer's perceptions of service quality (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Zumrah, Boyle &Fein, 2013; Alshaibani & Bakir, 2017). Therefore the dimensions of this study will be responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy and Cronbach’s Alpha for each dimensions from previous studies was between (α = .833-.968).

**Data Analysis**

**Data Preparation Prior to Analysis**

Data preparation prior to data analysis is very important for getting the data ready for analysis. Therefore, in this set of data which gathered to investigate the effect of organizational commitment on service quality. Scholars argued that, customer perception of service quality directly affected by service performance of front-line employees Liao, & Chuang, 2004; Liao, Toya, Lepak & Hong, 2009; Raub & Liao, 2012). In addition, evaluate customer perception about performance service quality should matching with the specific employee performance rather in global or group assessment (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). Therefore, as mentioned earlier in data collection process, we matching
customers’ perception of service quality with specific employees who provide the service to that customer (see data collection procedure). Therefore, Data preparation process starts with coding and entering the data into database in SPSS 25.0. Coding the data is done by used the survey code that given to each employee survey and customer survey that given in data collection process, that has been done to ensure matching each customer perception of service quality to specific provider. In addition, we enter a unique identification for each item by given unique short and easy understood abbreviation by the first one to three letters of words in the name of the construct.

Analysis descriptive statistics and reliability analysis have been done by used SPSS 25.0 to. Used descriptive statistics to disclose employees and customer’s profile. Hypotheses analysed by using AMOS 24 to test the effect of organizational commitment on service quality, and to test which group has more effect on service quality by using multi-group analysis tool which developed by

Results

Descriptive statistics of employees participated in this study showed 72.5% of employee were male, and 27.5 female. Majority of employee 81.4% were married. The age of participants were 47% under 40 years old, while 53% more than 40 years old. Regarding the qualification, majority of the respondents 43 % were PhD or equivalent, while 57 were bachelor and master's degree. Concerning the experience, 50% have been working with their respective university from 1-10 years, 50 % have been working more than 10 years in this university. However, descriptive statistics for the students profile is shown in table (2), total of students participated in this study was 1235, which 67% of student's respondents were male, and 33 were female.

Measurement model

The result of the measurement model which constructed by organizational commitment (affective and continue), service quality (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy). Concerning model fit, the result shows an acceptable fit in which the \( \chi^2 \) statistic was 613.378, (DF=2.167, p <0.000), CFI=0.971, TLI =0.967, SRMR = 0.031, RMSEA =0.054, and PClose =0.13. These indices showed excellent model fit as shown in table (3) which is the output of model fit measure plugin tool which developed by (Gaskin, & Lim, 2016), researcher add TLI to this output as recommended by (Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2010; Kline, 2011).
Convergent Validity and Reliability

Results of reliability, convergent and divergent validity, and correlation summarized in the Table (1), which shown that, composite reliability (CR) was between 0.881 - 0.968, which were much higher than 0.70, and Average variance extracted (AVE) was above 0.50 as recommended by (Fornell, & Larcker, 1981; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013). Average Shared Variance (ASV) was bigger than Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), (Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2010; Malhotra, & Dash, 2015). Therefore, according to the table (1), the measurement model of this study achieved reliability, convergent and divergent validity by means of (Fornell, & Larcker, 1981; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013).

Table (1) reliability, convergent and divergent validity, and correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>MSV</th>
<th>MaxR(H)</th>
<th>Cont</th>
<th>Aff</th>
<th>Res</th>
<th>Ass</th>
<th>Emp</th>
<th>Rel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>0.824</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aff</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ass</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.965</td>
<td>0.301</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.971</td>
<td>0.302</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>0.613</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rel</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.332</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>0.617</td>
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</table>

After checking the reliability, the convergent validity and discriminant validity, the structural model was conducted to examine the effect of organizational commitment on higher education service quality. The hypothesized structural model showed consistency of the hypotheses with the data (χ2 statistic was 731.382, normed Chi-square = 2.505; CFI .962; LTI .956; RMSEA = .061). All these fit indices for the
organizational commitment and service quality model met the statistical recommended values which indicated a fitting structural hypothesized model.

Fig.2. The Hypothesized Model of the Study

Hypothesis test results
From the standardised regression estimation provided in the Table 2, for testing the direct effect of organizational commitment on service quality. Standardised path coefficients $\beta = .75$, $t = 6.350$, $p =.000$), hypotheses the effect of organizational commitment in service quality was supported, the result shown in table 2.

The hypotheses which investigate the effect of organizational commitment on service quality was supported, the effect explains 75% of the variance in organizational commitment. This empirical result confirms the previous theoretically that established the relationship between organizational commitment and service quality, organizational commitment of customer contact employees largely determine customer perceptions of service quality (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004), nevertheless, it will be more difficult to delivering the desirable level of service quality when the employees unwilling to exert any additional effort to improve service quality (Zeithaml et al, 1990). Therefore, employee commitment is very important to deliver the desirable level of service quality. However, this result is confirms previous research has shown that organizational commitment positively and significantly affect service quality (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Kansal, 2012; Little & Dean, 2006; Chu, Tseng & Tsai, 2014, Wong and Cheung, 2014).

Table (2) Standardised Regression Estimation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>t-value (C.R)</th>
<th>P Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment → ServQual</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.028</td>
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</table>
Discussion and conclusion

This study reveal that, when employee commitment to their organization due to organization initiative for recognize the employees effort, reword them and take care about their well-being, then the employees reciprocate that by organizational commitment and performed better service quality.

that means employees organizational commitment is very important to delivering service quality, without employees commitment the quality will be impaired, Which mean organizations services will face more difficulties to delivering the desirable level of service quality when their frontline employees uncommitted (Alrefaei, and Zumrah, 2019) or unwilling to exert any additional effort to benefit there organization (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990) because delivering the required level of service quality determined by employee and customer interaction through service encounter, during service encounter, management can not directe and control employees behaviour and actions, hence, it is discretionary behaviour of committed employee that will largely determine customer perceptions of service quality.

Therefore, the results of this study suggest that organizations have to focus on the right candidates who fit with the organization with the appropriate attitudinal and behavioural characteristics, and this is the starting point for produce and deliver higher levels of service quality (Redman, & Mathews, 1998). In ideation, Training can enable the employee to obtain new knowledge, skills and attitudes which is important to enhance ability of the employees to use various behaviour to apply their training outcomes to their job (Zumrah, 2014), and able to demonstrate quality of service to their customers (Zumrah, 2013). Moreover, organization have empowered their employee to participate in decision making, and recognize their effort by justice performance appraisal, and reward them, that can shape the employee attitude and behaviour, because the employee will reciprocate that practise by more commitment, consequently employees who are more commitment to their organization are more likely to provide higher service quality (Snipes, Oswald, LaTour, & Armenakis, 2005), because they exert extra effort to perform better service quality to benefit their organization.

Limitations and directions for future research

The uniqueness of this study is matching customer perceptions of service quality with the employee who performs this service in higher education, therefore, the sample chosen from only one industry, in individual level of analysis, therefore, we can't conform if the result of this study can be generalized across all industries, due to this case investigated only one kind of service that provided by faculty staff to one kind of their customers (student). However, future studies can replicate this study across service industries that offering a variety of services to variety of customers to provide validation.
References


Parasuraman, a, Zeithaml, V. a, & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERQUAL: A Multiple-Item scale for


