

EFFECT OF SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF OPERATIONAL LEVEL EMPLOYEES

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Introduction

Leadership is an increasingly important issue in many organizations since they are in a constant struggle to build up the competitiveness of firms in a competitive global market. Supervisors are immediate leaders of the operational level employees and the front runners that develop competent and committed employees in a firm. Organizational commitment is a psychological state that reflects sense of shared values, identity, loyalty, support and pride of the employee regarding the organization. Committed employees are willing to engage in an 'extra role' at their working place and perform in full potential in achieving organizational goals. Research suggests that one of the important determinants of organizational commitment of operational employees is the leadership behaviour.

This study builds on theoretical argument that have dominated in the field of organizational behaviour for many years that, leadership behaviour directly yields competent and committed employees in a firm. A few scientific studies have been done in fields of health, education and bank, however, never in field of export oriented manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka. Hence study empirically investigated the impact of supervisor leadership behaviour on organizational commitment of operational level employees. Objective of this study was to assess the effect of supervisor leadership behavior on organizational commitment of operational level employees, while identifying decisive leadership behavior out of four leadership styles.

Methodology

Deductive approach was used in this study. Quantitative data were gathered using cross sectional survey strategy. Aqua Dynamics (Pvt) Ltd, Negombo was the research location. 220 operational level employees were randomly selected to evaluate the objectives of this study. Data were collected using, (a) individual semi structured interviews, (b) adaptations of House's Path Goal Model of Leadership with Perceived Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (PBLQ) and Meyer and Allen's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Analysis of data was done by using SPSS-21 statistical package.

As the main analysis tool, Pearson Correlation analysis was employed to assess the correlation among dependent and independent variables. Prior to analysis twelve hypotheses were constructed as follows;

- Hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 and H4) were related to relationship between affective commitment (AC) and four types of leadership behaviours directive, supportive, participative and achievement oriented respectively.

- Hypotheses (H5, H6, H7 and H8) were related to normative commitment (NC).
- Hypotheses (H9, H10, H11 and H12) were related to continuance commitment (CC) that state with four types of leadership behaviours

A reliability test was performed in order to assure the reliability of Perceived Leadership Behavior Questionnaire (PLBQ) and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Cronbach alpha value (α) for Leadership Behaviour and Organizational Commitment were 0.78 and 0.73 respectively.

Results and Discussion

Results of the analyzed data as depicted in the Table 1 display correlation coefficients between the independent and dependent variables. The results of the correlation matrix show that how the supervisor leadership behaviours (directive (DLB), achievement oriented (ALB), supportive (SLB) and participative (PLB) behaviour) and organizational commitment (affective (AC), normative (NC) and continuance (CC) commitment) of operational level employees were correlated to each other.

Table 1. Correlation matrix for organizational commitment and supervisor leadership behaviours

Variable	AC	NC	CC	DLB	SLB	PLB	ALB
1 AC	1						
2 NC	0.361**	1					
3 CC	0.282*	0.338**	1				
4 DLB	-0.056	0.158*	0.445**	1			
5 SLB	0.068	0.076	0.128	0.525**	1		
6 PLB	0.027	0.069	0.137	0.513**	0.689**	1	
7 ALB	-0.064	0.177*	0.255**	0.614**	0.406**	0.406**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Relationship of Affective Commitment and Leadership Behaviours: The results obtained from the analysis of correlation shown in the Table 1, a negative correlation was found between affective commitment and directive leadership behaviour ($r = -0.056$) and affective commitment and achievement oriented leadership behaviour ($r = -0.064$). Moreover, positive relationship was found between both affective commitment and supportive leadership behaviour ($r = 0.068$) and affective commitment and participative leadership behaviour ($r = 0.027$) and affective commitment doesn't have statistically significant relationship with leadership behaviours.

Eventually, hypotheses of H1, H2, H3 and H4 were not supported by the results but stated the negative correlation with directive leadership behaviour and achievement oriented leadership behaviour. On the other hand, results showed that positive correlation with supportive leadership behavior and participative leadership behaviour.

Relationship between Normative Commitment and Leadership Behaviours: According to the results in Table 1, normative commitment and directive leadership behavior had a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.158$, $P = 0.019$) and also strong positive correlation with achievement oriented leadership ($r = 0.177$, $P = 0.008$). On the other hand, Supportive leadership behaviour was positively correlated with normative commitment ($r = 0.076$, $P = 0.263$) and participative leadership behavior also shown positive relation to the normative commitment ($r = 0.069$, $P = 0.311$). Therefore, H5 and H8 hypotheses supported that there is a relationship between normative commitment and both

directive leadership behaviour and achievement oriented leadership behaviour where as H6 and h7 hypotheses were not supported.

Continuance Commitment and Leadership Behaviours: The third sets of hypotheses were derived to assess the relationship between continuance commitment and four types of leadership behaviours. According to the results revealed by the analysis, the directive leadership behaviour was strongly and positively correlated with the continuance commitment ($r = 0.445$, $p = 0.000$).

Moreover, results depict that achievement oriented leadership style was strongly and positively correlated with the continuance commitment ($r = 0.255$ $P = 0.000$). Similar scenario is behind this leadership as in directive leadership, since it is similar to directive leadership style. Supportive and participative leadership behaviours were not significantly correlated with continuance commitment ($r = 0.128$) ($r = 0.137$). According to above results, H9 and H12 were supported while H10 and H11 were not supported.

Both directive and achievement oriented leadership styles can be named as “task oriented leadership styles” and describes it as “activities that supervisor has to do in relation to the group. Thus, the leader defines the role he expects from each member to play, assigns tasks, plans ahead, establishes ways of getting things done, and pushes for production. This dimension emphasized over the attempts to achieve organization goals”.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In line with the findings of this investigation, it can be concluded that affective commitment doesn't have statistically significant relationship with any leadership behaviors. It has a negative correlation with both directive and achievement oriented leadership behaviours while positive correlation with both supportive and participative leadership behaviours.

Normative commitment shows a positive correlation with all types of leadership behaviours. It has a strong positive correlation with both directive and achievement oriented leadership behaviours. Further, it has a positive correlation with supportive and participative leadership behaviours.

All types of leadership behaviours were positively correlated with continuance commitment. The most striking result to emerge from the findings is that more significant type of the commitment type was the continuance component rather than the affective commitment which gives the conditionally different finding from the previous studies.

Hence, based on the research findings researchers would like to suggest to key decision makers in the management of the manufacturing industry to design extensive training programs in order to develop above leadership skills of supervisors and give proper guidance to adopt appropriate leadership styles according to the situation. Hence it can be concluded that situational leadership approach is better than the one leadership style.

References

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