

ABSTRACT

The concept of employee commitment to organizations has received increased attention in the research literature by both executives and organizational analysts who seek ways to increase employee retention and performance. Committed employees contribute greatly to organizations because they perform and are driven toward achieving organizational goals. As a result, the need for a greater understanding of this organizational phenomenon increases daily, as employees' commitment is recognized as the key to "business success" within a national and global environment. Therefore, managers and organizations should consider the efforts that increased commitment might have on employees.

The purpose of this study was to find the relationship between employees' organizational commitment and their antecedent variables. Antecedent factors consisted of personal characteristics, work experiences, investment or side bets, employment alternatives and organizational commitment norm, which were considered as independent variables in this study. Three components of organizational commitment, namely, affective, continuance and normative commitment were treated as dependent variables.

This research was conducted by the survey method using self-administered questionnaires to collect the information related to antecedents and organizational commitment. The data were gathered from 327 employees of Sammitr Motor Group (Thailand) which included section managers, technicians, and employees. The results of the Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) and Independent Sample t-test showed no significant differences in personal characteristics factors and employees' affective commitment. However, continuance and normative commitment were predicted by employees' educational level. The findings of Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis revealed that work experiences and affective commitment had a positive but weak relationship. Similarly, there was a positive weak relationship between investments or side bets and continuance commitment. In contrast, employment alternatives did not have a significant relationship with continuance commitment.

Finally, organizational commitment norm had a positive moderate relationship with normative commitment.

As a result, some suggestions can be made by the researcher for managers in terms of fostering the development of organizational commitment among Thai employees. The findings suggest that organizations can be instrumental in the development of normative commitment of their employees through socialization following entry to the organization. Moreover, the organization that requires their employees to develop affective commitment to organization should provide a supportive work environment, which creates a mutually beneficial environment. Finally, organizations can develop employees' continuance commitment by offering opportunities and working conditions that are competitive with other prospective employers.

