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COMMITMENT AS AN INDICATOR OF THE ORGANIZATION'S HUMAN CAPITAL IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

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Purpose: This article attempts to identify the relationship between the level of work commitment and human capital in the area of social relations. Despite numerous studies devoted to this topic, relatively few studies are conducted to identify the interdependencies between these categories. In an era of organizational change, organizational commitment is gaining importance, as it can act as a mediating mechanism between human capital and the transformation processes taking place within an organization. The obtained results indicate that a high level of work commitment promotes the activation and development of employee competency resources. Work commitment, in turn, can be interpreted as a significant indicator of the organization's human capital quality, particularly in the dimension of social relations.
Objective: The aim of the study was to understand the links between work commitment and human capital in the area of social relations.
Design/Methodology/Approach: The research used an indirect survey method. Questions and responses were submitted in written form. The research was conducted using a translational method; the classic survey was digitized and transferred online. Research conducted by a company providing CAWI services.
Findings: The research findings confirm that employee commitment is a key component of an organization's human capital, particularly in the area of social relations. It is strongly linked to the process of accumulating professional and organizational experience. What was found in the course of the work? This will refer to analysis, discussion, or results.
Research limitations/implications: The main limitation is that the data were collected from respondents working in different size enterprises (from microenterprises to corporations) and with diverse business activities (e.g., manufacturing, services, trade). It introduces sample heterogeneity and may impact the findings generalization.
Practical implications include a recommendation for managers to focus on segments with similar organizational characteristics and, for further research, to increase the sample size. Furthermore, strengthening commitment can support the process of updating employee competencies and facilitate the implementation of organizational change.
Originality / Value: The obtained results constitute a significant contribution to the approach of human capital measurement particularly from the perspective of social research methods.

Keywords: Commitment, human capital, social relations, professional and organizational experience.
Category of the paper: research paper.

1. Introduction

Commitment links an organization's human capital [OHC] with the effectiveness and quality of its operations and the results it achieves (Shaima, 2023). Therefore, its intensity and scope are key OHC indicators. Commitment influences the extent to which employees use their competencies and resources (Armstrong, 2012), and from the other hand, it co-shapes and develops their professional and organizational experience. Commitment strength and quality are determined by both individual employee characteristics and organizational factors, including organizational culture, management style, participation in decision-making, and trust (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2009). These factors are deeply embedded in the social relationships context what stimulates employee commitment and its level.

The subject of this article is employee commitment based on social relations in the work environment. Although the literature contains analyses of social relations in the work environment as commitment determinants (Vonneilich, 2022), there is a lack of commitment research as a factor co-shaping professional-organizational experience in the area of social relations. The research presented in this article fullfills this gap.

2. Organization’s Human Capital

Human capital has received numerous definitions, so any systematic approach will always be incomplete, omitting. Definitions of human capital most often emphasize the qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills, and competencies of all employees, but it does not reflect the organizational reality. This resource must be embedded in social relationships that enable its effective using. Human capital is perceived contemporary as a synergy of knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and commitment of individuals and groups, which generate the organization value (Tasheva, Hillman, 2019). Employees develop competencies, such as problem-solving skills, creativity, innovation, and adaptability to new technologies, such as AI in hybrid work environments, through learning by experience. They build valuable professional and organizational experience, in OHC (Chukwudi et al., 2022; Bayraktar, 2024). Employee commitment which motivates continuous development is one of the main factors contributing the growth of this experience. An operational definition of human capital consisted of knowledge, competences, professional and organizational experience, and employee

commitment, was recognized in this research. It allows to consider its role in social relations in the research.

3. Employee Commitment as an Indicator of Organization Human Capital

Employee commitment is a complex phenomenon that distinguishes work involvement (e.g., commitment to job, position, or career) and organizational commitment, i.e., the employee's relationship with the organization (Meyer, Allen, 1991). W. Kahn (Kahn, 1990) noted that commitment occurs when an employee expresses his authentic attitude and is willing to devote his energy to achieve the organization's goals. Organizational commitment: promotes high quality and effectiveness (Tolentino, 2013; Ogala, 2020), influences productivity increasing and work results (Ogala, 2020; Shaima, 2023), acceptance of change (Yousef, 2017; Vveinhardt & Sedziuviene, 2022), innovation, creativity, and the learning (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009; Serna et al., 2018; Yang, 2024). Organizations can expectate the support of commited employees during a crisis (Saks, 2006). Commitment depends on both individual employee characteristics and organizational factors, such as culture, management style, fair treatment, development opportunities, communication, relationships, safety, appreciation and salaries (Kahn, 1990; Robinson et al., 2004). Therefore organizational commitment is a crucial OHC element which influences the organization functioning and success (Becker, 2008).

4. Social Relationships and Employee Commitment

Social relationships are determined as relatively durable, recurring, and regulated normatively connections between individuals or groups, based on mutual expectations, social roles, resource exchange, and shared meaning (Simmel, 2006). They are dynamic and processual in nature – they are constantly reproduced in everyday communication, decision-making, and cooperation practices (Bidart et al., 2020). Employee competencies become productive only in relationships that enable their activation, transfer, and complementarity (Vonneilich, 2022).

Organizations, as social systems, states space for an intense network of formal and informal relationships. Organizational relationships are not only hierarchical (superior-subordinate) ones but also cover horizontal relationships, networks of team collaboration, common practice communities and informal influence and support systems (Wenger, 1999).

Even high individual competencies remain untapped or become fragmented without high-quality relationships. This competency determines the level of trust, learning, and willingness to involve (Ferlander, Mäkinen, 2025). G. Simmel (2006) conceptualizes commitment not as a characteristic of an individual, but as a result of their participation in social relationships. In Edward Deci and Richard Ryan's (1985, 2000) Self-Determination Theory, social relationships constitute one of the motivation basics (Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). The relatedness fulfilling is a condition for autonomous commitment.

According to J. Coleman and P. Bourdieu, employees are more engaged in environments where relationships are constant, based on trust, predictable, ensured with support, and acceptance of mistakes as part of the learning process, and enable long-term benefits (Coleman, 1988; Yip et al., 2018). J. Coyle-Shapiro and N. Conway (2009) emphasized the importance of supervisors support which influenced the level of organizational commitment among team members. According to social exchange theory, employees reciprocate received support by loyalty increasing and effort willingness (Wnuk, 2019). Social relationships also influence commitment by strengthening organizational identification, building a sense of work, increasing a sense of agency and influence, reducing uncertainty and stress, and facilitating competency development (Imran et al., 2020; Łaguna et al., 2015).

Employee commitment is not an individual atribute or a simple motivation response, but it is a relational state settled in networks, norms, and expectations. Its level and sustainability depend on the relationship models that dominate the organization, how they are communicated, and whether they are consistent. Organizations that consciously manage relationships—not just tasks and outcomes—create the conditions for deep, lasting engagement.

5. Methodology

The research presented in this article is part of a OHC qualitative methods measurement project. It concerns two OHC indicators: work commitment and professional-organizational experience, as well as their interrelationships and various determinants. Empirical data were collected by a research company, Ogólnopolski Panel Badawczy Ariadna Sp. z o.o. from September and December 2022 with CAWI method.

The research problem in the project was: **The influence of social relationships in the work environment on work commitment as an indicator of OHC and its connections with professional and organizational experience.** Precise questions were formulateg to solve this problem:

1. To what extent do employees in Polish enterprises perceive their work commitment?
2. Do social relationships influence work commitment and how?
3. Do employees perceive any links between work commitment and professional and organizational experience?

The following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1 [H1]: Employee commitment in Polish enterprises is at an average level.

Hypothesis 2 [H2]: Relationships with superiors influence employee commitment more than relationships with other employees.

Hypothesis 3 [H3]: Elements of organizational culture, such as the system of values and behavioral standards, influence employee commitment.

Hypothesis 4 [H4]: The work commitment is related directly to the professional and organizational experience.

The research was done with a diagnostic survey method. An author questionnaire was used as a tool. The questionnaire consisted of 24 statements, 12 referred to work commitment (Z) and 12 to professional and organizational experience created by commitment (ZD). Taking into account these both OHC indicators, the statements concerned: social relationships with superiors and other employees, trust in superiors and other employees, participation in decision-making, elements of organizational culture – the system of values and behavioral standards, commitment to the company due to identification with it, loyalty, and employment preferences. There were used 7-point Likert Scale (1 - almost never to 7 - almost always) to answer the questions. To classify the level of work commitment and creating the professional and organizational experience with it, the following scale was used: 1.00-2.20 – very low; 2.21-3.40 – low; 3.41-4.60 – medium; 4.61-5.80 high; 5.81-7.00 – very high. Calculations were performed using the STATISTICA 13.3 program.

6. Results

The research presented in this article is the part of a larger project, only results relevant to the analyzed issue were presented. The study group consisted of 310 SME employees. Analyzing the respondent profile, women slightly predominated – 55%. In terms of age, 21% were between 35-39 years old and 50 years and older (20%), with 10-14 years of experience (21%). Taking into account organizational variables, the vast majority of respondents were employed under a permanent employment contract (93%), with white-collar workers predominating (77%). The vast majority of respondents worked in a culturally homogeneous Polish environment (67%), and most of them continued to work as before the pandemic (68%). The majority of respondents were employees of small and medium-sized

enterprises (33%), service businesses (37%), co-located businesses (56%), with Polish capital (75%).

The research is characterized by very high reliability, Cronbach's alpha = 0.97. The data do not form a normal distribution; the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test result is d = 0.06312 ($p < 0.2$). Furthermore, it is left-skewed, meaning that most respondents perceive their commitment and its impact on creating their professional and organizational experience at high level (M from 4.61 to 5.80). Results analysis indicates that employee opinions on the level of commitment are more diverse than those regarding professional and organizational experience created by engagement.

Due to the lack of normal distribution, the Mann-Whitney U Test and the Kruskal-Wallis Test were used. The results showed that gender ($Z = 1.3297$; $p = 0.18$), do not influence either the work commitment or the professional and organizational experience created with it ($Z = 0.7163$; $p = 0.09$). In turn, the Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed that age, total job experience, and education did not influence the work commitment.

The employees surveyed perceive their commitment to work as high (mean scores ranging from 4.70 to 5.10). A detailed analysis of the commitment level because of social relationships, showed that the most significant factors here are: responsibility for other colleagues (M = 5.10), maintaining and developing relationships with them (M = 5.07), trust in colleagues (M = 5.00) and participation in staff decisions (M = 4.99). Meanwhile, the following factors are slightly less importance: the company's value system (M = 4.70) and behavioural standards (M = 4.71), trust in superiors (M = 4.73), relationships with them (M = 4.73), and attachment to the organisation appeared as preference to remain in the current workplace (M = 4.74). Respondents also rate very highly the level of professional and organisational experience created by trust (mean scores ranging from 4.78 to 5.09). Analysis of ZD in terms of social relationships showed that the most important factors for the employees were: relationships with colleagues (M = 5.09), participation in staff decisions (M = 5.06), responsibility for other colleagues (M = 5.04) and trust in them (M = 4.99). Considering connections between work commitment and the professional and organisational experience created by that, it appeared high correlation between the work commitment and the extent to which it creates that experience; Spearman's ρ coefficient was generally above 0.80. The results of psychosocial variables obtained that younger employees (aged 25-29) are slightly less likely to perceive high levels of both Z and ZD simultaneously. Basing on the analysis of the correlation between Z and ZD, it was shown that because of business activity type the weakest correlation between Z and ZD is found among employees of manufacturing companies, while it is strongest in multi-sector companies.

7. Discussion

The analyses appeared that two of the five hypotheses were confirmed. H3 was confirmed: organisational culture, and particularly system of values and behavioural standards, is of significant importance. The results indicated that there was a strong relationship between the level of commitment and the perception of its role in creating professional and organisational experience, as confirmed by H4. The level of commitment among employees in Polish enterprises, as well as its impact on creating experience, is not high (concerning hypothesis H1). The results showed that relationships between employees were no more significant for commitment than relationships with supervisors (concerning hypothesis H2).

According to M. Sasin (2018), building employee commitment it is more than just a strategy — it is a management culture based on wise trust and faith in employees' positive intentions, as well as on the belief that people are intelligent, creative and have the potential to commit themselves to the company. Management through commitment influences the direction of creating and strengthening interpersonal and intergroup relationships which arise from shared goals and values, cooperation and shared responsibility (Juchnowicz, 2012).

J.A. Gruman and A.M. Saks (2011) state that orienting the management system towards promoting employee commitment can be an effective way of increasing work productivity.

A responsible approach to the issue of commitment requires an environment that is not only demanding but also conducive to maintaining a work-life balance (Alfes et al., 2010). A high level of commitment requires also from employees to identify with the organisation. It is possible to achieve if employment relationships are based on: stability, shared responsibility and participation of decision-making (Bartczak et al., 2018). As indicated in the "Commitment 2024" study conducted by Enpulse (2025), an commitment rate of 66% in Poland drives organizational effectiveness. More than half of the respondents can be classified as engaged employees. This represents an 8% increase year-on-year, thanks to emotional connections, which seems to be another direction for further exploration of this research topic.

8. Conclusions

The obtained results indicate that the level of involvement of employees of Polish enterprises in the use of professional competences is moderate, which is confirmed by the average sten score of 5.53. This indicates that employees are involved in the process of updating and using their competence resources to an average degree.

Analysis of the mean responses for selected items suggests that both positive and negative emotions play a role in shaping professional commitment. However, positive experiences (mean 4.63) seem to have a stronger impact compared to negative emotions (mean 3.93).

Relatively high mean values for statements related to self-discovery through work (mean 4.52) and the use of career counseling (mean 4.61) indicate the significant importance of developmental factors in building professional commitment. This may indicate that work is perceived not only as an obligation, but also as a space for personal development and reflection on one's professional identity.

The collected empirical data justify the need to continue research on the relationships between the level of work commitment and the use of competencies. Further analyses may contribute to deepening knowledge on the mechanisms supporting the development of human capital in Polish organizations.

The work engagement factor encompasses: dedication to work to perform assigned tasks to the best of one's ability, the emotional and personal aspects of work expressed through absorption and independent initiation of professional tasks. The sense of responsibility for work, in turn, encompasses responsibility for work results, maintaining order in the workplace, and good social relations with co-workers. The work engagement factor determines the level of activation of possessed knowledge and competencies in the implementation of professional tasks (the level of its "capitalization"), thus indicating the actual value of the KL quality indicator.

Extensive research on human capital was conducted by a team consisting of: J. Dziwulski, S. Skowron and K. Wojciechowska. J. Dziwulski was responsible for this part of the research.

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