AN INVESTIGATION INTO LOYALTY OF EMPLOYEES TO THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN BRANCHES OF SEPAH BANK LOCATED IN CHAHARMAHAL AND BAKHTIARI PROVINCE

*Zohreh Aghababaei Dehaghani¹, Ali Shamsi² and Ali Ehsan Nikjoo²

¹Young Researcher's & Elite Club, Dehaghan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
²Department of Management, Dehaghan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT
The present paper aims at identifying the relation between organizational commitment (employee’s loyalty to the organization) and professional identity of employees working in branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. It is a descriptive correlation research. Library method has been used for preparing the theoretical framework. Statistical population of this research includes the employees of Sepah bank branches in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The population includes 350 people. The sample includes 183 people. 175 filled questionnaires were proper for being analyzed. The results of inferential analysis and testing research hypotheses indicated that there is a significant direct and average relation between organizational commitment (affective and continuance) and professional identity. It was also revealed that there is no significant relation between organizational commitment (normative) and professional identity of employees.

Keywords: Professional Identity, Organizational Commitment, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment, Sepah Bank

INTRODUCTION
In today’s advanced world, human resource is the most important reason for development and growth of organizations. When employees encounter stress due to organization’s problems and abnormalities, they lose their spirits. In our country, one of the most serious problems of organizations is that employees and managers do not have sufficient feelings of attachment and loyalty to the organization (Pfeffer and Veiga, 1999). Organizational loyalty leads to increase in career development and is of great importance. Dissatisfaction, delays, absences, and leaving the organization cause huge expenses for the organization. Loyalty is about issues including organizational commitment and its impact on increase in career identity (Randall and Cote, 1991).

According to Allen and Meyer (1991), organizational commitment was divided into three categories including affective commitment (emotional attachment and determining the identity of employees with organization’s values and goals), continuance commitment (losses caused by leaving the organization and therefore obligation to remain with the organization) and normative commitment (feeling obligation to remain with the organization) (Roepki, 2000). Commitment and motivation of employees are important issues in organizations of Iran. Each year a huge amount of money is spent for attracting, hiring and training human resources which are the most importance resources of the organization (Romzek, 1990). Lack of motivation and leaving the organization imposed huge expenses on the organization. Therefore, organizations should try to increase employee’s motivation and abilities and subsequently their commitment and performance (Sheldon, 1971). Organizational commitment is an approach. It is a mental state which reveals a type of inclination, need and obligation for remaining with an organization (Webster, 2007). The inclination means the individual wants to remain and work in the organization. The need means the person has to remain in the organization because of investments he has made. The obligation means that the individual feels obliged to remain in the organization because of the responsibilities he has (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Human resource is significant for organizational
development and success of economic institutions and has a key role in human resource management (Becker, 1992). Human resource has various components including career satisfaction, commitment, organizational attachment, competitiveness, attraction methods, and effectiveness in development processes of human resource (Rahnama and Mahmudzade, 2007).

Organizational Competitiveness

Evaluation of organizational commitment and loyalty and their impacts on competitive spirit is significant. Without knowing the results of this evaluation, preparing strategic plans regarding human resources will be impossible or inefficient (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2005). An important goal of an organization is to increase its competitiveness in the global level. To this end, organizations need managers who have organizational commitment and loyalty as well as competitive spirit (Khorshidi, 2010). Scientific explanation of the subject and conducting applied researches help us be aware of influential factors in organizational loyalty and be able to prepare plans that are in accordance with these factors (Dessler, 2012).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is a type of approach. It is a feeling of attachment to the organization. Organizational commitment is a mental state that reveals a type of inclination, need and obligation for remaining in the organization. In the present research, organizational commitment is a privilege that is achieved by AllenandMeyer’s questionnaire (1991).

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment is defined as emotional attachment for doing a job and the inclination for remaining in an organization. Employees with strong affective commitment remain in the organization because they like the organization. In the extant paper, affective commitment is a privilege achieved by index of affective commitment in AllenandMeyer’s questionnaire (1991).

Continuance Commitment

When employees invest in the organization, they do not easily leave the organization and feel that they have to remain doing their careers. Employees who have high continuance commitment remain in the organization because they do not have other job opportunities which have the same advantages. In fact, they have to remain in the organization. They consider the organization as a tool for fulfilling their financial needs. In this paper, continuance commitment is a privilege achieved by index of continuance commitment in AllenandMeyer’s questionnaire (1991).

Normative Commitment

In this aspect of commitment, people consider working in the organization as a duty and a responsibility. In the present paper, normative commitment is a privilege achieved by index of normative commitment in AllenandMeyer’s questionnaire (1991).

Figure 1: Research model

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Research Article

Career Identity

A continuous process through which the employees of the organization display that they are interested in the job, the organization and its success and prosperity (Meyar et al., 1993). In the present paper, career identity is a privilege achieved by index of continuance commitment in Paterson’s questionnaire (1990).

The extant research studies impacts of various factors of organizational commitment on career identity of employees who work for branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. Considering the impact of organizational commitment and its factors on career identity, the model of the research is proposed as follows.

The research investigates the impacts of organizational commitment (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment) on career identity of the employees.

Employees of this province consider progression and being sent to neighbor provinces – particularly Isfahan- as more important than their commitment to the organization. It seems that rate of loyalty is low between employees of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. This fact is also true about banks in general. Though bank employees have average job satisfaction rate and receive suitable facilities from the bank, their replacement rate is considerable. Most of the employees who shifted from branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province claimed that the environmental conditions are improper and the environment lacks happiness. Some of them are hired hopping that they will be shifted to their desirable branches in future. Another problem of Sepah bank in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province is lack of advanced facilities of electronic banking. If the work environment is in accordance with the employees, the employees will have proper career identity. It seems that Sepah bank employees lack organizational commitment; and this fact leads to lack of job identity of the employees.

It seems that by studying the level of organizational commitment of employees in branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, we can come up with a model for improvement of job performance of employees. Being aware of the level of employee’s commitment can help us propose and execute a proper model for future investments for the sake of development of technology and making employees familiar with the latest modern banking achievements. Therefore, evaluation of organizational commitment of employees and its impact on career identity has been studied in employees of the branches of Sepah bank which are located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province.

Literature Review

In this term, the most important research was done by Allen and Meyer (1991). Their model consisted of three factors: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Studies done by Mowday et al., (2000) categorized prerequisites of organizational commitment into four groups: personal features, job-related features, structural features and experiences. Mowday et al., (2000) believed that employees with higher organizational loyalty may have better performance compared to people who have lower loyalty (Mowday, 2000; Mowday et al., 1979).

Imami (2010) conducted a research under the title of “Personality-job fit and its relation with organizational commitment of employees of National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company”. Using random sampling, this research was done on 78 employees. The results of testing research hypotheses revealed that the employees who had a personality-job fit experienced more organizational commitment. Also, the results indicated that only 40% of the employees of this organization were personality-job fit. In this regard, the organization is in a weak condition (Imamai, 2008).

Ansari et al., (2010) conducted a research under the title of “Organizational commitment from the perspective of theorists and leading role of human resource management in its improvement”. The in the research, the writers studied factors of organizational commitment and the variables which are influential in it through perspective of various scholars and analyzes its relation to human resource management and proposed solutions for improving organizational commitment (Ansari et al., 2010).

Baqeri and Tavalai (2010) carried out a research under the title of “An investigation into the impact of organizational commitment on the performance of organizations”. The extant paper studied the concept of organizational commitment and its prerequisites in the perspective of various scholars.
**Research Article**

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Methodology**

It is a descriptive-survey research and is also considered as a field method research. The statistical population was all the employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The population included 350 people. Random sampling was used in this research. Sample size was determined using Chocran formula as follows.

\[
\frac{Z^2 \cdot p(1-p)}{d^2} \left[ \frac{1}{N} \right] = \frac{1}{350} \left[ \frac{1.96^2 \cdot 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2} - 1 \right] = 183
\]

Where:

- **Z**: standard normal distribution
- **d**: estimated error
- **N**: population size
- **p**: the proportion of the population
- **n**: sample size

Therefore, 183 questionnaires were distributed among the employees. The researcher did his best to gather and analyze data. To this end, the researcher answered all the questions asked by the participants. 175 questionnaires were proper for being analyzed. So, the return rate of the questionnaires was 96%.

The research was done in branches of Sepah bank of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province and aimed at studying the loyalty of employees of the organization and its impact on career identity and proposing solutions for improvement of the existing conditions, in spring and summer of 2013. Allen and Meyer’s questionnaire (including affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment) and Paterson’s job commitment questionnaire were used in this research for studying the impact of organizational commitment and its factors on career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari branch.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of the participants based on gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>80/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 reveals that among the respondents 80/6% is male and 19/4% is female.

**Table 2: Frequency distribution of the participants based on marital status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>94/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates that 94/9% is married and 5/1% is single.
Table 3: Frequency distribution of respondents based on education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Percentile rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma or lower degrees</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6/3</td>
<td>6/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17/7</td>
<td>24/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>65/7</td>
<td>89/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that 65/7% of the participants have BA degree and 6/3% have high school diploma or lower degrees.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents based on age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Percentile rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30 years</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15/4</td>
<td>15/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>64/0</td>
<td>79/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 40 years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20/6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 indicates that the highest percent (64%) belongs to people aged 31 to 40 and the lowest percent (15/4%) belongs to people aged 20-30.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of respondents based on professional experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Percentile rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 years or less</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20/0</td>
<td>20/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26/9</td>
<td>46/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>37/1</td>
<td>84/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16/0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that the highest percent (37/1%) belongs to people with 11-15 years of professional experience and the lowest percent (16%) belongs to have more than 15 years of professional experience.

Testing Research Hypotheses

In this section, testing the research hypotheses underwent data analysis and statistical inference. We tried to come up with responses for the research questions. Pearson correlation test and significance level are used in order to test main and secondary hypotheses. Two independent samples T-test and variance analysis were used afterwards.

Main Hypothesis: There is a significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity.

\( H_0 \): There is no significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity.

\( H_1 \): There is a significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity.

Table 6: Correlation test for studying the relation between organizational commitment and career identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test criteria</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Organizational commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation coefficient</td>
<td>Career identity</td>
<td>0/387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0/000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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According to Table 6, Pearson correlation is determined as 0\(^2\)387; the significance level is 0\(^2\)000 and \(p\leq5\%\). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, there is a significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The sign and the amount of Pearson correlation coefficient indicate a direct and average relation. As the organizational commitment increases, the career identity of employees moderately increases.

**First Secondary Hypothesis:** There is a significant relation between affective commitment and career identity.

\(H_0: \) There is no significant relation between affective commitment and career identity.

\(H_1: \) There is a significant relation between affective commitment and career identity.

### Table 7: Correlation test for studying the relation between affective commitment and career identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test criteria</th>
<th>Career identity</th>
<th>Affective commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation coefficient</td>
<td>0/386</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0(^2)000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 6, Pearson correlation is determined as 0\(^2\)386; the significance level is 0\(^2\)000 and \(p\leq5\%\). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, there is a significant relation between affective commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The sign and the amount of Pearson correlation coefficient indicate a direct and average relation. As the affective commitment increases, the career identity of employees moderately increases.

**Second Secondary Hypothesis:** There is a significant relation between continuance commitment and career identity.

\(H_0: \) There is no significant relation between continuance commitment and career identity.

\(H_1: \) There is a significant relation between continuance commitment and career identity.

### Table 8: Correlation test for studying the relation between continuance commitment and career identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test criteria</th>
<th>Career identity</th>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation coefficient</td>
<td>0/350</td>
<td>Continuance commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0(^2)000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 6, Pearson correlation is determined as 0\(^2\)350; the significance level is 0\(^2\)000 and \(p\leq5\%\). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, there is a significant relation between continuance commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The sign and the amount of Pearson correlation coefficient indicate a direct and average relation. As the continuance commitment increases, the career identity of employees moderately increases.

**Third Secondary Hypothesis:** There is a significant relation between normative commitment and career identity.

\(H_0: \) There is no significant relation between normative commitment and career identity.

\(H_1: \) There is a significant relation between normative commitment and career identity.
Table 9: Correlation test for studying the relation between normative commitment and career identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test criteria</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Normative commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation coefficient</td>
<td>Career identity</td>
<td>0/129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td></td>
<td>0/088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 6, Pearson correlation is determined as 0/129; the significance level is 0/088 and p≤5%. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected and the alternative hypothesis is not confirmed. In other words, there is no significant relation between normative commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province.

**Conclusion**

The results of the tests revealed that there is a significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. As the organizational commitment increases, career identity of employees moderately increases. Also, there is a significant relation between affective commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. As affective commitment increases, career identity of the employees moderately increases as well. Moreover, there is a significant relation between continuance commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. As continuance commitment increases, career identity of the employees moderately increases as well. However, there was no significant relation between normative commitment and career identity of employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province.

**Suggestions**

1- Managers of organizations including Sepah bank should consider processes regarding improvement of organizational commitment and execute these processes and improve employee’s career identity through them.
2- Since the obtained results indicate that career identity and organizational commitment are in higher than average level among employees of branches of Sepah bank located in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. Therefore, the authorities of Sepah bank should maintain and improve this condition.
3- There is a positive and significant relation between organizational commitment and career identity; therefore, career identity can be increased through improvement of organizational commitment.

**REFERENCES**


