

# Leadership of Supervisors and Work Motivation Predicting Organizational Commitment of Employees

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## Article Info

**Page Number:** 6864-6876

**Publication Issue:**

**Vol. 71 No. 4 (2022)**

## Article History

**Article Received:** 25 March 2022

**Revised:** 30 April 2022

**Accepted:** 15 June 2022

**Publication:** 19 August 2022

## Abstract

This research aimed to 1) study level of leadership of supervisors, work motivation, and organizational commitment of employees, 2) to study the relationship between leadership of supervisors and organizational commitment of employees, 3) to study the relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment of employees and 4) to predict organizational commitment of employees by using leadership of supervisors and work motivation. Population and sample in the study were employees of companies in retail business group who work in convenience stores in Thailand. The sample consisted of 199 persons. The research instrument was a questionnaire. Statistics used for data analysis were percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient, and stepwise multiple regression analysis. The study results indicated that 1) employees had a high level mean score of organizational commitment, work motivation and leadership of supervisors, 2) leadership of supervisors positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .675$  with the statistical significance level of .01, 3) work motivation positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .679$  with the statistical significance level of .01, 4) leadership of supervisors and work motivation could mutually predict organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01, accounting for 51.3%.

**Keywords:** Leadership of supervisors, work motivation, organizational commitment.

## Introduction

Human resources are the key to work success and have a direct influence on organizational success or failure. Therefore, for organizations committed to achieve the set goals, the management needs to learn about initial factors that create satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees to stay in a company. Organizational commitment of employees

affects continuity of operations and reduces a workforce shortage. Losing talented employees is considered losing valued costs.

Convenience store or minimart is developed from an old-fashioned retail store or grocery store in combination with a supermarket but with a smaller size. Importance is given to a location. Its area for selling goods is not large. Most convenience stores sell foods, drinks, and consumer products necessary for daily life. The target group of convenience store is customers who would like convenience nearby their homes or offices in case something is missing or something necessary. The location of convenience stores is important as they are most likely located in communities, gas stations, etc. The other thing is they are open 24 hours. Convenience stores are a type of modern retail business divided into 5 major types: 1. Department store. 2. Hypermarket/Cash and Carry. 3. Supermarket. 4. Convenience store, and 5. Specialty store.

According to the survey in 2021, convenience stores in Thailand still enjoyed its continuous growth. Though such business consists of many brands giving customers many choices and competition are very high, there are a lot of customers. It seems that now everyone has a convenience store as a part of their everyday life. Certainly, each brand of convenience stores has different strategies for doing business (Industry Team, 2021).

To ensure employees at branch will work collaboratively to drive the organization to achieve the set goals while they still have job satisfaction and do not resign, the company needs to improve organizational commitment in working together to be used as the core principle for human resource management since organizational commitment is related to resignation ( $r = -0.24$ ) (Cohen, 1993), job satisfaction ( $r = 0.49$ ), and job performance ( $r = 0.13$ ) (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

Employee turnover rate in 2020 was quite high (34.34%) and most of them that quitted the job were operations employees, giving a direct effect on customer services. Companies must always spend time on new employee training. What needs to be prepared is seeking methods to retain employees, especially talented and high potential employees (HR Operation Center, 2021).

The way organizations have supervisors with leadership and ability to build motivation in co-workers, employees are committed to the organizations. To improve organizational commitment, employees need to have emotion-focused organizational commitment. Organizations need to set personal employee goals and organizational goals to be in consistency, which will become motivation of employees, making employees have desire to work continuously for being a part of their organization (Pikulhom, 2012). Leadership affects job satisfaction and commitment to supervisors. Building commitment encourages employees to work with their organization, to be proud of what they are doing, and have organizational commitment (Suksomnuk, 2010).

Organizational commitment expresses how much employees are proud of their organization. Employees feel they are a part of their organization and try to work for achieving the organizational goals (Laohadech, 2002). To enable each employee to express their skills and abilities to their fullest capacity, organizations need to build confidence and motivation to

employees. Once organizations build these things to employees, employees' commitment to the organizations will be obviously increased for organizational stability and success (Pothison, 2015).

Based on these reasons, retaining talented employees in organizations if possible is an important thing that enables businesses to be operated in an active and continuous manner. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying leadership of supervisors and work motivation that can predict organizational commitment of employees.

### **Objectives**

- (1) To study level of leadership of supervisors, work motivation, and organizational commitment of employees.
- (2) To study the relationship between leadership of supervisors and organizational commitment of employees.
- (3) To study the relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment of employees.
- (4) To predict organizational commitment of employees by using leadership of supervisors and work motivation.

### **Meaning of organizational commitment**

Permchai (2007) defined organizational commitment as the feeling of belonging to the same group (Partisan), the connection or bond employees have with their organizational goals and values including the way employees perform duties according to their roles to achieve organizational goals. Laohadech (2006) concluded that organizational commitment is how employees express themselves proudly in their organization. They feel and express their behaviors towards their organization as they accept organizational goals and values, they feel they are a part of their organization. They have faith in, bond with, and are willing to make a great effort to work for achieving organizational goals, they display loyalty to the organization and strongly desire to remain with the organization as a team member. Thongpaiboon (2000) defined organizational commitment as the feeling of being in the same group. It is pride, acceptance, and attachment to organizational goals and ideology, making employees willing to work for the progress and benefits of the organization and wish they are a team member of their organization forever. Buchanan (1974) gives the meaning of organizational commitment as the feeling of belonging to a societal group, employees' attachment to organizational goals and values, and the way employees perform duties according to their role for achieving organizational goals and values. The researcher concluded the meaning of organizational commitment mentioned above as good feeling or individual's psychological attachment to an organization expressed in the form of uniformity with the organization. They are proud to be a part of and willing to work with the organization including consciousness to remain with the organization for working and giving cooperation to make benefits to the organizations as they think it is suitable and they should do.

## Components of organizational commitment

Buchanan (1974) said that 3 components of organizational commitment are 1. Identification – it is expression to accept organizational goals and values that they go in the same direction as their way.

2. Involvement – employees perform duties according to their role to fullest capacity. 3. Loyalty – the connection or bond employees have with their organization. According to Allen & Meyer (1990), organizational commitment consists of 1. Continuance commitment means the reasons employees remain with an organization as they believe that it is not worth if they leave an organization, especially when they stay with the organization for such a long time. If they resign, they will lose what they have invested in the organization, such as benefits after retirement, friendship. 2. Affective commitment means employees' emotional attachment to an organization, such as the feeling of unity among the group of employees' individuals would like to work with. Employees who have a high level of organizational commitment shall agree with what the organization is doing and be willing to help, especially when the organization is implementing changes. Some employees may think whether their values are a part of the organization or not, if they think they are not, they will leave the organization. 3. Normative commitment is sense of obligation to stay. Employees feel that once they become a team member of an organization, they should be committed to the organization as they think it is the righteousness and appropriateness they should do, which finally becomes necessity.

## Meaning of leadership

Bertocci (2009) defines leadership as the combination of qualification or personality of a person that makes him able to inspire other people to achieve a common goal. Sharma and Jain (2013) give the meaning of leadership as the process that a person has an influence on other people to achieve the set goals, contributing to unity in an organization. Jex and Britt (2014) conclude the meaning of leadership as the process involving an influence on other people's behaviors. Leaders need to have various skills, such as analytical skills, motivational skills, interpersonal skills, and transformational leadership for organizational survival. Newstrom (2015) said that leadership is the process a person has an influence on and gives support to other people, in the form of an individual or a group of persons, to achieve a common goal. Jongwisani (2008) gives the meaning of leadership as the ability or process that a person has an influence on other persons or a group of persons, being able to encourage other persons to have greater trust, acceptance, effort, and ability to achieve a common goal. The researcher concluded the meaning of leadership from the meaning mentioned above as the attribute of an influential person through the process that a group of persons is assigned to direct and coordinate group activities to be correlated. That person is probably appointed or elected or is a person having an influence on other persons or a group of persons, who will make decision, solve problems within the group to lead other person or a group of persons to reach the set goals.

## Components of Leadership

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) stating that components of situational leadership consist of the number of commands, pieces of advice or work-related behaviors, the quantity of emotional

support, social support or interpersonal relationship, readiness of followers of a group of followers. 4 leadership styles are 1. Telling – the leader gives advice and looks after employees closely. It is suitable for followers who have a low level of readiness. 2. Selling – the leader gives some advice in which point employees lack skills. It is for employees who want to learn. The leader motivates, coaches, and rewards employees, building confidence and aptitude. 2 ways communication occur in this leadership style. 3. Participation – the leader gives employees an opportunity and does not guide employees' decision making. This is for employees who have the ability but lack confidence to work independently. The leader shall oversee and support. 4. Delegation – this is for employees with high confidence and competence. They know what needs to be done and they can do the work on their own. The leader still supervises performance from a distance.

### **Research relevant to the relationship between leadership and organizational commitment**

There are research studies relevant to the relationship between leadership and organizational commitment of employees; for example, a study conducted by Teesungnern (2017). It was found that leadership associated with organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01. A study conducted by Onsri (2016) found that leadership of school administrators associated with organizational commitment of schoolteachers with the statistical significance level of .01. In addition, there are studies conducted on the influence of leadership on organizational commitment by Mekprasart (2015) finding that supervisor's transformational leadership had a positive influence on organizational commitment. A study conducted by Siri wattanachayakorn (2015) found that transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership had an influence on organizational commitment of medical personnel. A study conducted by Yada (2015) found that transformational leadership and transactional leadership had an influence on psychological-focused organizational commitment of Generation X employees than that of Generation Y employees.

### **Meaning of work motivation**

Sangrungs (2007) mentioned motivation as the way people express their demands in doing something by means of various factors, such as arousal, expectancy, incentives, and punishment to push people to express behaviors with a direction to achieve the set goals. Pattani (2003) views that motivation is how people are encouraged by a stimulus and have energy to express their behaviors that lead to their purposes or factors being power and determinants of individual behaviors. Motivation shall arise from either internal or external stimuli or both at the same time. Namwat (2001) said that work motivation is the way employees in an organization are encouraged to have desirable work behaviors through the process that generates stimulating energy and makes them willing to use their ability and express behaviors to achieve organizational goals. The researcher concluded the meaning of work motivation from above as a state that occurs to individuals and stimulates them to express good behaviors to perform tasks assigned to be successful with willingness and responsibility to reach the set goals.

## **Components of work motivation**

Porter, Bigley and Steers (2003) described ERG theory of motivation (ERG) that individuals have different needs as they are different in education, family background, culture, tradition, and other aspects. Since Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was criticized in many points, in 1972, Clayton Alderfer from Yale University modified and developed Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to be Existence-Relatedness-Growth Theory (ERG Theory), known as Alderfer's modified need hierarchy theory). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was condensed into 3 categories as 1. Existence is physiological and safety needs, similar to Maslow's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> levels. 2. Relatedness is social and external esteem, i.e., Love and Belonging Needs and Esteem Needs according to Maslow's theory. 3. Growth is internal esteem and self-actualization.

## **Research relevant to the relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment**

Denpongpan (1996) found that overall hygiene factor work motivation associated with organizational commitment with the statistical significance level of .01. Praisangob (2003) found that overall motivation factor work motivation associated with organizational commitment with the statistical significance level of .01. Wangnuch (2007) found that work motivation positively related to organizational commitment of employees of tobacco factory with the statistical significance level of .05. Jangthinpa (2019) found that work motivation associated with employees' organizational commitment with the statistical significance level of .05. Supwirapakorn and Uaim (2008) found that work motivation variables were associated with organizational commitment of public health volunteers with the statistical significance level of .01.

## **Research methodology**

The population and sample in the research were 400 employees of convenience stores in Bang Yai district, Nonthaburi province. The size of sample was determined using Krejcie & Morgan table for sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 as cited in Akakul, 2000) and 199 sets were obtained.

## **Research instrument development**

The instrument used for data collection in this study was online questionnaire created from relevant concepts, theories, documents, and research papers. The questionnaire was divided into 4 parts as follow: Part 1 - Questions about general information. Part 2 – Questions about leadership of supervisors. The questions were created according to the definition of Hersey and Blanchard (1988) that explained components of situational leadership consisting of number of commands, pieces of advice or work-related behaviors, the quantity of emotional support, social support or interpersonal relationship, readiness of followers of a group of followers. Part 3 – Questions about work motivation, created from the definition given by Porter, Bigley and Steers (2003) finding that ERG theory explains different needs in each individual since they are different in education, family background, culture, tradition, and other aspects. Maslow's

Hierarchy of Needs was condensed into 3 categories as 1. Existence. Relatedness, and 3. Growth. Part 4 – Questions about organizational commitment of employees. The questions were created according to the definition given by Buchanan (1974) that individuals perform their duties according to their roles to achieve organizational goals and values, consisting of identification, involvement, and loyalty. The questions in part 2 and part 3 allowed respondents to consider how much they are compliant with their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. The questions came in the form of rating scale questions ranging from absolutely true, true, somewhat true, slightly true, and untrue, Scores were given from 5,4,3,2 and 1, respectively.

The questionnaire was submitted to 3 experts in industrial psychology to examine accuracy of language used in questions and content validity. Questions having IOC equal to or greater than 0.5 were selected (Lambensa, 2016). The questionnaire was pretested (Try Out) and the data obtained were analyzed to find power of discrimination using item-total correlation. Question items with discrimination index greater than 0.20 were considered excellent (Kitpreedaborisuthi, 2008). Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used to measure reliability. The coefficients below 0.50 were considered poor reliability and the coefficients ranged from 0.50 to 0.65 were considered moderate reliability and the coefficients above 0.70 were considered high reliability (Lambensa, 2016).

**Table 1 Reliability and discrimination power of the questionnaire.**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Number (item)</b>	<b>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	12	.775 - .882	.965
<b>Work motivation</b>	11	.548 - .733	.900
<b>Organizational commitment</b>	5	.708 - .765	.891

The development of the questions about leadership, work motivation and organizational commitment showed discrimination power ranging from 0.775-0.882, 0.548- 0.733 and 0.708 – 0.765, respectively, and the reliability coefficients were 0.965, 0.900 and 0.891, respectively.

Computer software package was used for statistical analysis, Statistics in the analysis were percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and stepwise multiple regression analysis. The researcher coordinated with central convenience store employees. Central Convenience Store Office distributed the questionnaire online (Google Form) to the branches studied for giving to the sample. The researcher described in detail how to fill out the questionnaire to the staff. Description was also available in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent as a link to the staff representative. 199 copies of the questionnaire were collected. The most completely answered questionnaires according to Krejcie & Morgan table

of sample size determination (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 as cited in Theerayut Akakul, 2000). The obtained scores were analyzed using computer software package for statistical analysis.

## Research Results

### Data analysis results about personal information

Most of the employees were women (134 persons or 67.3%), aged 20-30 years (160 persons or 80.4%), bachelor's degree education level (100 persons or 50.3%), operations employees (63 persons or 31.7%).

### Leadership, work motivation, and organizational commitment of employees

The overall mean score of leadership of supervisors was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ), overall mean score of work motivation of employees were at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ), and overall organizational commitment of employees was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.09$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ).

**Table 2** *The relationship between leadership of supervisors and organizational commitment of employees*

Variables	Organizational commitment of employees	
	r	p
Leadership	.675**	.000

**Remark** \*\* statistical significance level of .01 (2-tailed).

Leadership of supervisors positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .675$ , with the statistical significance level of .01.

**Table 3** *The relationship between work motivation and organizational commitment of employees*

Variables	Organizational commitment of employees	
	r	p
Work motivation	.679**	.000

**Remark** \*\* statistical significance level of .01 (2-tailed).



Work motivation positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .679$ , with the statistical significance level of .01.

**Table 4** *Stepwise multiple regression analysis for making an equation of work motivation and sensory leadership to predict organizational commitment of employees.*

Predictor variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	AdjR <sup>2</sup>	SE <sub>est</sub>	F	p
Work motivation	.679	.461	.459	.385	168.805**	.000
Work motivation and leadership of supervisors	.717	.513	.508	.367	20.933**	.000

**Remark \*\*** statistical significance level of .01 (2-tailed).

According to the study, it was found that variables having power to predict organizational commitment of employees by 51.3% were work motivation and leadership of supervisors.

**Table 5** *Stepwise multiple regression analysis for seeking an equation model of organizational commitment of employees*

Variables	b	S.E.b	$\beta$	t	p
1. (Constant value)	0.771	0.181		4.268**	0
Work motivation	0.737	0.057	0.659	12.993**	0
2. (Constant value)	0.709	0.173		4.106**	0
Work motivation	0.422	0.087	0.389	4.830**	0
Leadership of supervisors	0.337	0.074	0.369	4.575**	0

**Remark \*\*** statistical significance level of .01 (2-tailed).

According to the analysis, it was found that stepwise multiple regression analysis results could be written an equation in the form of raw scores as follow: organizational commitment of employees  $0.709 + 0.422$  (work motivation)  $+ 0.337$  (leadership of supervisors). When the raw scores were transformed to standard scores ( Z- Score) , an equation of organizational commitment of employees could be written as organizational commitment of employees =  $0.389$  (work motivation)  $+ 0.369$  (leadership of supervisors).

## Conclusion

The overall mean score of organizational commitment of employees, work motivation, and leadership of supervisors was at a high level. Leadership of supervisors positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .675$ , with the statistical significance level of .01, work motivation positively related to organizational commitment of employees,  $r = .679$ , with the statistical significance level of .01, and leadership of supervisors and work motivation mutually predicted organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01 accounting for 51.3%.

## Discussion

The study results found that 2 variables, namely, leadership of supervisors and work motivation mutually predicted organizational commitment of employees with statistical significance as they could predict by 51.3%. It was also found that leadership of supervisors positively related to organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01. When employees perceive supervisors have increased leadership, organizational commitment of employees will be increased. The study results are consistent with the concept of Kampirarak (1999) who found that team-based structure positively related to organizational commitment of subordinates. Metinee (1999) found that leadership of head nurses associated with organizational commitment of nurses on duty. The researcher viewed that situational leaders who work closely with team members or subordinates will give advice, support, opportunities to team members to express their opinions, making employees feel to perform their duties to their fullest capacity in driving their organization, including working in harmony. Employees are committed to work and would like to stay with the organization continuously rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere. Therefore, leadership of supervisors positively related to organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01. In other words, when employees have increased work motivation, organizational commitment of employees shall increase accordingly. The study results are consistent with the study conducted by Denpongpan (1996) finding that overall hygiene factor work motivation associated with organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of 0.01. Praisangob (2003) found that overall work motivation associated with organizational commitment of employees with the statistical significance level of .01. The researcher viewed that motivation from supervisors shall stimulate employees to have good relationship with work and co-workers, demands to develop their own capacity. They search for knowledge

continuously until they are skillful, making them feel progressive at work and proud when they are admired when being able to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, work motivation positively related to organizational commitment of employees.

### Suggestion

Since leadership of supervisors can predict organizational commitment of employees, activities should be promoted and supported to increase leadership level of supervisors. Activities can be organized to allow supervisors to communicate more with employees to build cooperation, know how to make decision, know how to solve problems occurring in a work unit or organization. As work motivation can predict organizational commitment of employees, activities should be promoted and supported to increase work motivation level by persuading employees and responding to employees' demands according to Alderfer's ERG Theory.

For future research, the researcher recommends creating a supervisory leadership training program for supervisor-level employees and a motivation training program for employees of all levels. Meanwhile, organizational commitment of employees should be measured based on an experimental study before and after attending the training programs to consider whether or not organizational commitment of employees is increased.

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