

Impact of Organizational Learning Culture on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of organizational learning culture on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Two streams of scholarly work have provided the theoretical foundations for this study. The first stream comes from the literature on learning organization. The second stream of the theoretical foundation comes from an extensive literature on attitude-intention-behavior relationships. In addition, this study was tested three alternative models. Alternative model 1 employed job satisfaction as the mediating commitments variable between learning culture and organizational commitment. Alternative model 2 used organizational commitment as the mediating variable between learning culture and job satisfaction. Finally, alternative model 3 specified a direct impact of learning culture on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and reciprocal linkages between these two variables. The results of this study support the hypothesized relations among an organization's learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The findings of this study are various congruent with a widely accepted hypothesis that job satisfaction serves as an appraisal function in evaluating various work environments and determining emotional responses such as organizational commitment. Organizational learning culture is one of the important factors that organizations cannot overlook. Therefore, the findings of this study provide a new direction for researchers seeking to explain the complex relations among these central organizational variables.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Korea, Learning Culture, Organizational Commitment, Structural Equation Modeling

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Although there is an increasing interest in understanding the concept of learning organization, little is known about the impact of organizational learning cultures on other important outcome variables, such as employees' perceived job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Furthermore, investigations of the causal relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment have yielded contradictory findings (Testa, 2001). While the majority of theoretical and empirical studies have suggested that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organizational commitment (Bagozzi, 1980; Brown & Peterson, 1994; Yoon & Thye, 2002), some scholars have maintained that job satisfaction is an outcome of organizational commitment (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Bhuian & Menguc, 2002). Few studies, however, have proposed reciprocal influences between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Wong, Wong, Hui, & Law, 2001).

Research Problem

Even though the causal relationship is still in question, it is clear that both organizational commitment and job satisfaction are important variables that have a strong impact on organizational outcomes, such as work performance, turnover intention, and absenteeism. Given the increasing attention to organizational learning culture, it is critical for the field of human resource development (HRD) to demonstrate any significant impact of organizational learning cultures on crucial outcome variables. This study was designed to fill this gap in the literature. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of organizational learning culture on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Theoretical Foundations

Two streams of scholarly work have provided the theoretical foundations for this study. The first stream comes from the literature on learning organization. Specifically, Watkins and Marsick's (1993, 1996, 2003) conceptualization has provided a theoretical framework and operational measures for learning organization. This framework includes seven dimensions of learning organization: (1) create continuous learning opportunities, (2)

promote inquiry and dialogue, (3) encourage collaboration and team learning, (4) create system to capture and share learning, (5) empower people toward a collective vision, (6) connect the organization to its environment, and (7) provide strategic leadership for learning. Furthermore, Watkins and Marsick (2003) developed a valid and reliable instrument, Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ), to diagnose the learning culture.

The second stream of the theoretical foundation comes from an extensive literature on attitude-intention-behavior relationships. Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) behavioral intention model suggests that one's behavior is influenced by his/her intention to perform that behavior that, in turn, is determined by attitude. In addition, attitude is a set of evaluative responses to the environment. Bagozzi (1992) elaborated on this model and applied it in the work environment. Bagozzi maintained that job satisfaction represents an appraisal of various facets of the work environment. The result of this appraisal can be positive or negative. If the appraisal is negative, a gap exists between what is desired and what is provided, and consequently this results in outcome-desire fulfillment. Subsequently, an emotional response occurs to seek to resolve the gap between what is desired and what is provided. On the other hand, if the appraisal is positive, the emotional response seeks to maintain, increase, or share the outcomes. According to Testa (2001), organizational commitment represents an emotional response to a positive appraisal of the work environment. Therefore, organizational commitment can be viewed as an outcome of job satisfaction. Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework and alternative models that depict the dynamic interrelationships among organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. It is hypothesized that organizational learning culture has a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, the researcher followed Testa's (2001) hypothesis that employees' organizational commitment is an emotional response to an overall evaluative judgment about their job (i.e., job satisfaction). In other words, the researcher hypothesized that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work environment (e.g., organizational learning culture) and organizational commitment. It is hypothesized that learning culture has positive impacts on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is anticipated that job satisfaction will have a positive influence on organizational commitment.

In addition to the hypothesized model, the researcher developed and tested three (3)

alternative models. Alternative model 1 employed job satisfaction as the mediating variable between learning culture and organizational commitment. Alternative model 2 used organizational commitment as the mediating variable between learning culture and job satisfaction. Finally, alternative model 3 specified a direct impact of learning culture on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and reciprocal linkages between these two variables.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the dynamic relationship among organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. More specifically, the following research questions guided the study:

1. Is the Korean version of the DLOQ a reliable and valid instrument?
2. Does organizational learning culture have a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction?
3. Does organizational learning culture have a positive impact on employees' organizational commitment?

Method

A survey research method was used to investigate the relationships among organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. An employee survey self-administered by the employees was used to collect individual-level perception data. The use of an employee survey was deemed appropriate to address the proposed research questions.

Participants

Participants of this study were 669 employees from five subsidiaries of a Korean conglomerate company. A sample of 1,000 was selected proportionately and at random from five sub-companies of the one conglomerate company. The participants completed the questionnaire anonymously and voluntarily. Of the 1,000 surveys distributed, 669 (66.9%)

were completed and usable. The mean age of the participants was 30 years with an average of 4.5 years of service in the current organization. Most participants were male (78%) with college level education (71%). The majority of the participants were employees (57%), followed by a considerable portion of assistant managers (31%), and managers and senior managers (12%).

Measures

Organizational learning culture was assessed by a short version of the Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) (Watkins & Marsick, 2003; Yang, 2003). The seven dimensions in the DLOQ are measured by 43 items on a six-point Likert scale. Respondents are asked to determine the extent to which each of the questions reflects their organizations on the aspects of learning culture (1 = *almost never*; 6 = *almost always*). Although the DLOQ is a relatively new instrument, it has been validated in different contexts (Dymock, 2003; Hernandez, 2003; Lien, Yang, & Li, 2002; Sta. Maria, 2003; Watkins & Marsick, 2003; Yang, 2003). These studies suggest that the DLOQ has acceptable reliability estimates, and the seven-dimension structure fits the empirical data reasonably well. The researcher used an abbreviated form of the DLOQ that included 21 measurement items, three (3) for each of the seven dimensions (Yang, 2003). An overall reliability estimate (Cronbach's alpha) achieved .91.

The short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967), was used to measure job satisfaction. The MSQ is a 20-item instrument with two subscales: intrinsic satisfaction (14 items, alpha = .86) and extrinsic satisfaction (6 items, alpha = .81). An overall reliability estimate for the MSQ was .90. In order to assess the dynamic interactions among interested variables, both of the two subscales were used as indicators for the underlying construct of job satisfaction.

Organizational commitment was measured by a multi-faceted scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). The scale includes six (6) items for each of three dimensions of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. The scale used a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Acceptable reliability estimates were obtained for three dimensions (.78, .74, and .80, respectively) and the overall scale (.82).

Two Korean academics and one Korean practitioner were asked to review the instrument

to examine the clarity in meaning of the question statements, as well as general questions for refinement of the questionnaire. Based on their comments, the instrument was revised in all four parts.

The three instruments about organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and learning organization that were combined into one instrument for this study were originally developed in English. Thus, it was necessary to translate the instrument into Korean. In order to ensure that the Korean translation correctly reflected the meaning and nuances of the original instruments, back-translation was conducted in English. After the second round of translation, the back-translated version was similar to the original. The researcher contacted the first translator and provided the last version of the translation, particularly the items that were problematic. She agreed to the necessity of the change in the Korean translation, and was satisfied with the final product.

After the instrument was translated and cross-translated, three pilot tests were performed. Fifty employees were selected from the target population as a convenience sample, and they were asked to complete the instrument and comment on any problems that they had. After reviewing their comments, the researcher found that the respondents claimed that some items were a little unclear. The researcher found that those problems mainly came from the differences in word order between and Korean and English rather than in the selection of words.

After revising the instrument based on the results of the first-round pilot test, a further pilot test was undertaken. The researcher used a panel at the University of Minnesota for the second-round pilot test in order to make sure all items. The researcher distributed the instrument, along with explanations and definitions, to five Korean doctoral students at the University of Minnesota.

A third-round pilot test was performed with the revised instrument. Twenty employees were conveniently sampled from the target population. The researcher confirmed that all items were understood without problems. Only some parts of the instructions were restated according to the recommendations of a participant.

Data Analysis Strategy

The researcher used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to answer the research questions. SEM is a multivariate statistical procedure that allows researchers to test

theoretical models with latent variables and multiple indicators. All of the SEM analyses were conducted with LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, (1996a) and PRELIS 2 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996b). Following Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the researcher first evaluated the measurement models for the three constructs included in this study and then tested the hypothesized model based on the theoretical foundations.

The researcher utilized the SEM technique to examine the fit between the empirical data and the hypothesized model and several alternative models. A comparison of several a priori specified models on the grounds of both statistical indices and substantive meanings is highly recommended in testing the structural equation models (Jöreskog, 1993).

Results

Table 1 (next page) reports means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients among all dimensions that reflect the three constructs being studied. Correlations among the seven (7) dimensions of organizational learning culture were significant. These dimensions of learning culture were significantly correlated with two dimensions of job satisfaction and two dimensions of organizational commitment (affective and normative), but their correlations with the continuance dimension of organizational commitment were not significant. Similarly, the correlation between the two dimensions of job satisfaction was significant. The continuance dimension of organizational commitment had only one significant correlation with the normative dimension. Table 1 also shows the reliability estimates and reveals that the majority of the measures included in this study were reliable in the Korean context. However, two dimensions of learning culture, empowerment and system connection, had lower reliability estimates (.64 and .62).

Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted to evaluate the measurement properties of the scales used in this study. Several fit criteria were used to assess the measurement model, including chi-square, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (Bentler, 1990), and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). Two other residual types of fit indices were also be evaluated: Jöreskog and Sörbom's (1996a) Root Mean Squared

Table 1. Means (M), Standard Deviations, Correlation Matrix, and Reliability Estimates for the Dimensions of Organizational Learning Culture, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment

Dimensions	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. OLC 1 (Continuous Learning)	3.15	.77	(.70)											
2. OLC 2 (Inquiry and Dialogue)	3.11	.72	.55**	(.74)										
3. OLC 3 (Team Learning)	2.99	.76	.47**	.62**	(.77)									
4. OLC 4 (Create Systems)	3.23	.69	.46**	.45**	.48**	(.71)								
5. OLC 5 (Empower People)	3.12	.63	.45**	.59**	.55**	.51**	(.64)							
6. OLC 6 (Connect the Organization)	3.33	.65	.44**	.43**	.43**	.51**	.56**	(.62)						
7. OLC 7 (Strategic Leadership)	3.06	.69	.43**	.44**	.45**	.47**	.50**	.52**	(.77)					
8. JS 1 (Intrinsic)	3.16	.53	.51**	.58**	.57**	.49**	.58**	.49**	.49**	(.86)				
9. JS 2 (Extrinsic)	3.21	.62	.48**	.56**	.54**	.42**	.52**	.45**	.43**	.74**	(.81)			
10. OC 1 (Affective)	3.18	.64	.51**	.54**	.49**	.41**	.51**	.44**	.42**	.62**	.55**	(.78)		
11. OC 2 (Continuance)	3.40	.63	.03	-.02	.00	.01	.08*	.08*	.07	.04	-.05	.06	(.74)	
12. OC 3 (Normative)	2.81	.69	.41**	.47**	.49**	.37**	.47**	.34**	.38**	.62**	.50**	.66**	.13**	(.80)

Note. N = 669. OLC = Organizational Learning Culture; JS = Job Satisfaction; OC = Organizational Commitment. Reliability estimates (Cronbach's Alpha) is presented in the parenthesis in the diagonal.

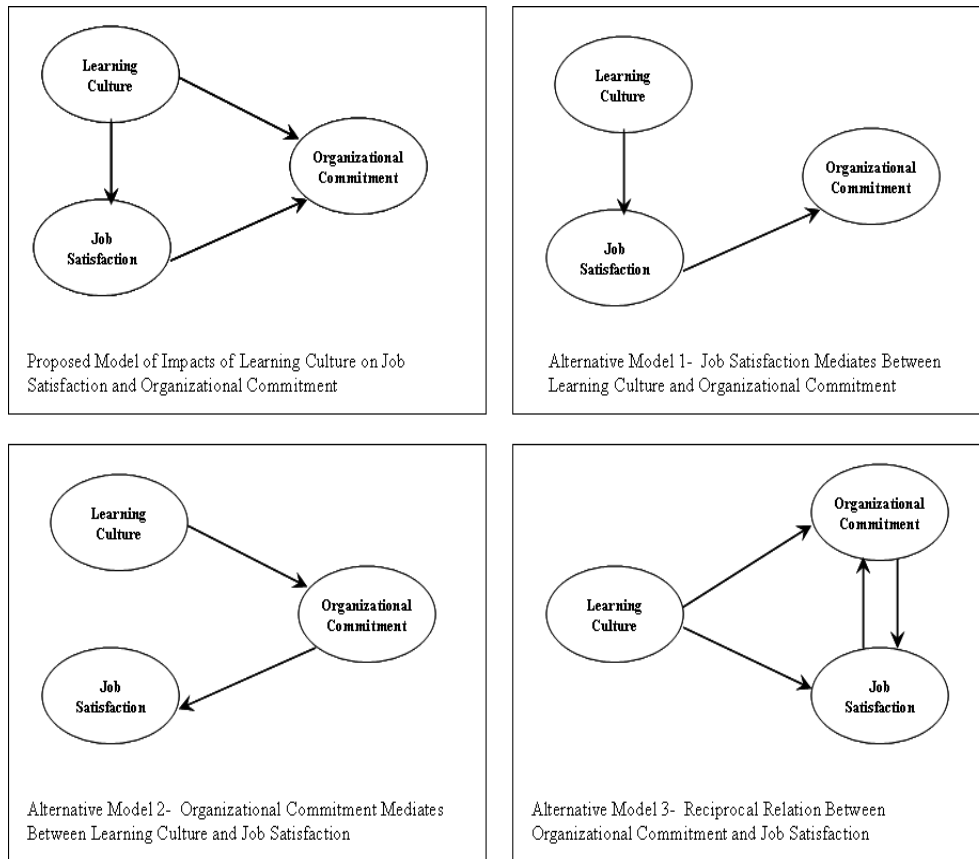


Figure 1. Hypothesized and alternative relationships among learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment

Residuals (RMR) and Steiger’s (1990) Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Table 2 (below, this page) reports fit indices for the three measurement models examined. The results indicate that the DLOQ, an instrument used to measure organizational learning culture, showed adequate fit between the measurement model and the data. In addition to reasonable fit indices, factor loadings ranging from .51 to .85 ($p < .01$) supported the measurement properties of the DLOQ. Therefore, it can be concluded that the seven-dimension factor structure of the DLOQ is applicable in Korean context.

Scales used to assess job satisfaction and organizational commitment demonstrated moderate fit with the data. Factor loadings ranged from .40 to .77 ($p < .01$) for the MSQ, and two dimensions of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic, were highly correlated (.91, $p < .01$) when measurement errors of the items were partialled out. Lastly, all 18

measurement items loaded significantly on the three dimensions of organizational commitment (ranging from .48 to .79, $p < .01$). Being operated as constructs in the measurement model, affective and normative dimensions of organizational commitment showed a strong correlation (.85, $p < .01$), but the continuance dimension had weak correlation with both the affective (.05, ns) and the normative dimensions (.13, $p < .01$). Therefore, the results indicated that continuance tended to be a weak indicator for the construct of organizational commitment. In order to retain the original meanings of the scale, it was decided to use all of the scale dimensions in analyses for structural models.

Table 2. Fit Indices for the Measurement models

Measurement Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	NNFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
Learning Culture (DLOQ)	848.88	168	5.05	.89	.87	.90	.05	.08
Job Satisfaction (MSQ)	1588.08	169	9.40	.81	.74	.77	.07	.11
Organizational Commitment	949.25	132	7.19	.86	.79	.82	.10	.09

Structural Model

Table 3 reports the fit measures of the hypothesized model and the three alternative models. It suggests that the proposed model fit the data very well, $\chi^2(51) = 154.84$, $p < .01$, GFI = .96, NNFI = .96, CFI = .97, RMR = .031, and RMSEA = .055. In addition to the positive fit criteria, significant standardized path coefficients among three investigated constructs supported the hypothesized relations. Figure 2 illustrates the estimates for the hypothesized structural model. The results indicate that organizational learning culture has positive impact on both organizational commitment (.38, $p < .01$) and job satisfaction (.84, $p < .01$). Job satisfaction was found to have a positive influence on organizational commitment (.50, $p < .01$). Except for the continuance dimension of organizational commitment, which showed weak loading on the designated construct (.08, $p < .05$), all of the measurements demonstrated significant loadings on the respective constructs at the level of .01. The results of the tested model suggest that the squared multiple correlations for job satisfaction and organizational commitment were .71 and .72, respectively. That is to say, the proposed structural model accounted for 71% of the variance in job satisfaction and 72% of the variance in organizational commitment.

The researcher also tested three alternative structural models in order for the comparison

of the proposed model. Results of the test are presented in Table 2. The results reveal that the proposed model fit the empirical data best, though three alternative models tend to have acceptable fit. For all of the selected fit indices, the proposed structural model demonstrated highest comparative fit indices and lowest residuals. Although the differences of the fit indices between the proposed model and the three alternative models were marginal, evaluation of the alternative models should be based on both statistical indices and substantial meanings (Bollen, 1989; Hoyle, 1995; Jöreskog, 1993). Results from the present study and the conceptual reasoning based on the theoretical foundations tend to support the proposed model.

Consequently, the results revealed that the proposed structural model of organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment showed the best fit among alternatives related to these constructs. The results also suggest that the proposed model explained almost equal variances for organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Table 3. Fit Indices for the Proposed and Alternative Structural Models

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	NNFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
Proposed Model	154.84	51	3.04	.96	.96	.97	.031	.055
Alternative Model 1	174.88	52	3.36	.96	.96	.97	.035	.059
Alternative Model 2	190.52	52	3.66	.95	.95	.96	.035	.063
Alternative Model 3	154.84	50	3.10	.96	.96	.97	.031	.056

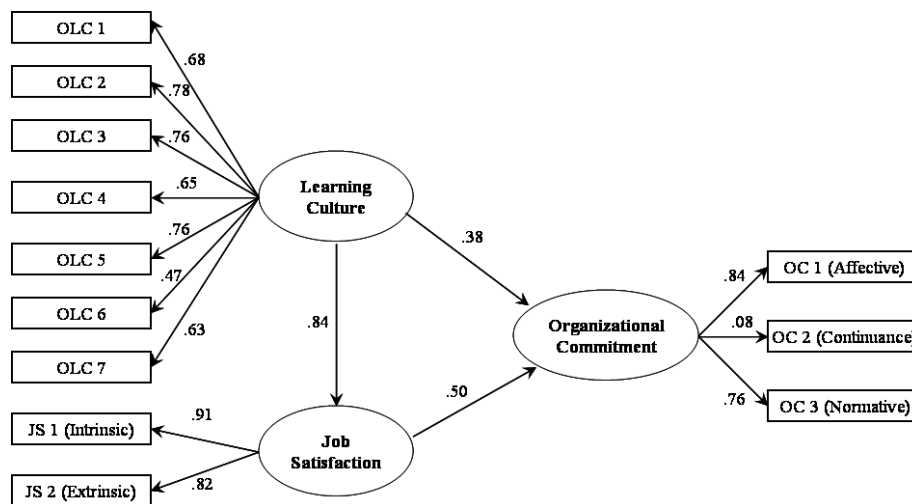


Figure 2. Structural model of organizational learning culture, job satisfaction,

and organizational commitment with path coefficients.

Discussions and Implications

Using a group of Korean employees as a study sample, the researcher assessed three measurement models related to three constructs central to human resource development—organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The results demonstrated adequate internal consistency and construct validity for a Korean instrument translated from English. The study thus supports these constructs as applicable to the Korean context. The researcher further evaluated one proposed and three alternative structural models specifying the relationships among organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The proposed model demonstrated best fit with the data. This model specifies direct positive impact of organizational learning culture on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment and hypothesized a positive influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. The results suggest that the proposed model accounted for over 70% of the variances in employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Therefore, this study suggests that organizational learning culture is a valid construct, and it plays a key role in understanding job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Though the differences between the proposed model and the three alternative models tend to be marginal, the results of this study support the hypothesized relations among an organization's learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. While the majority of empirical evidence suggests that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organizational commitment (Bagozzi, 1980; Batrol, 1979; Brown & Peterson, 1994; Testa, 2001), few studies have suggested the opposite influence direction (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Bhuian & Menguc, 2002). The findings of this study are congruent with a widely accepted hypothesis that job satisfaction serves as an appraisal function in evaluating various work environments and determining emotional responses such as organizational commitment. Organizational learning culture is one of the important environmental factors that organizations cannot overlook. By introducing learning culture as a major determinant factor, this study clarifies the interrelationship between job satisfaction and organization commitment and demonstrates successful explanation for these two key organizational variables. Therefore, the findings of this study provide a new direction for researchers seeking to explain the

complex relations among these central organizational variables.

Although previous studies have examined the impact of organizational learning culture on different outcome variables, such as knowledge and financial performances (Egan, Yang, & Bartlett, 2003; Ellinger, Ellinger, Yang, & Howton, 2002), this is the first study investigating its impacts on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As a result, this study links these two key constructs to an HRD concept, organizational learning culture. This study suggests that HRD as a field of study has valuable contributions for organizational studies. It also suggests that HRD practitioners should capitalize on its strength to foster individual, team, and organizational learning. Building a strong learning culture has significant impact on organizational outcomes.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of data collection in this study, it is not appropriate to draw causal inferences. The researcher have demonstrated that organizational learning culture has a positive impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The high correlations among these constructs may be attributed to common method variance. In order fully to address this methodological issue, future research should employ more sophisticated data collection methods, such as a longitudinal approach to provide sufficient evidence of the impact of organizational learning culture.

Similarly, the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment should be carefully examined in future studies. This study suggests the direct effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment on the basis of theoretical framework and empirical evidence from structural models. Although such findings echo the majority of the studies in the literature, it is probably premature to conclude that one variable is definitely an antecedent to the other. A better way to clarify the causal sequence is to conduct longitudinal research.

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