IMPACTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to further clarify the relationships between organizational commitment and organizational culture. This study investigates the association between organizational culture and organizational commitment in a sample of Training and Education organization in a city of Iran. The results show that demographic variables including Education, Marriage, and Job experience don’t have significant impact on organizational commitment. The main result of this study is that supportive and innovative organizational culture are positively correlated with organizational commitment but the correlation between bureaucratic organizational culture and organizational commitment is low.

KEY WORDS: Organizational Culture, Organizational Commitment, Supportive Culture, Innovative Culture, Bureaucratic Culture

INTRODUCTION

Commitment has been a core variable of interest in management/organizational studies for quite some time with a plethora of studies seeking to explicate its causal antecedents (e.g. Bateman, & Strasser, 1984; Clugston, 2000; DeConinck, & Bachman ,1994; DeCotiis, & Summers, 1987; Dodd-Mc Cue, & Wright, 1996; Iverson, & Roy, 1994; Michaels, 1994; Mottaz, 1988; Russ, & McNeilly, 1995; Taormina, 1999; Williams, & Hazer, 1986). Among the possible antecedents of commitment, organizational culture has received relatively low levels of empirical investigation. For example, in a comprehensive meta-analysis and review of the antecedents and correlates of commitment, organizational culture was not mentioned (Mathieu, & Zajac, 1990). Such an omission is surprising given the emphasis placed on culture in recent organizational writings (e.g. Alvesson, & Berg 1992; Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2000; Brown, 1995; Cartwright, 1999; Parker, 2000; Sackman, 1992; Schneider, 1990; Trice, & Beyer, 1993). Studies of organizational culture in health-related organizations in particular are limited (exceptions include Enckell, 1998; Kratina, 1990; Mackensie, 1995; Scott et al, 2003a &2003c).

The field of education recently has been undergoing a period of rapid change and many schools have been compelled to alter their cultures in attempts to survive this change. Their professed goals were
to produce and promulgate knowledge, and their means of doing so were unchallenged by other groups in the culture (Castiglia, 2006). Gumport (2000) described educational institutions as social entities, geared toward the cultivation of citizens and the preservation of knowledge and, for decades, the culture of higher education reflected this quasi-public role.

Organizational culture, leadership and employees’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been extensively studied by many Western researchers. Comparative studies of organizational culture, leadership styles and employees’ job satisfaction and commitment, and performance have been well researched in the USA and European contexts so far.

The culture of an environment is comprised of the values of individuals within it (Holland, 1973), but generalizing about the personalities and value sets of the diverse members of a college community is difficult. Faculty members, despite their differences, also shared common personality traits. Lindholm (2003) found that most faculty members are most content in which they are free to work independently, remain private, and pursue their own intellectual interests. Faculty motivation was driven intrinsically by the beliefs in the shared values the faculty members held with the institution in which they worked (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995).

Also organizational culture has been an important theme in the business and management literature for some two decades. One reason for this is that organizational culture has consistently been seen as having the potential to affect a range of organizationally and individually desired outcomes. Ritchie (2000, p. 1) notes that, from the time of the earliest writers on organizational culture (including, for example, Deal and Kennedy, 1982, and Ouchi, 1981), “it has been suggested that organizational culture affects such outcomes as productivity, performance, commitment, self confidence, and ethical behavior”. Similarly, more recent writers have repeated the assumption that “organizational culture impacts significantly on an organization, its employees' behaviour and motivations and, ultimately, that organization's financial performance” (Holmes and Marsden, 1996, p. 26).

Organizational commitment has emerged as one of the most important variables in the study of management and organizational behavior. This is because of the growing evidence that there is a relationship between certain antecedent variables and commitment and between commitment and certain outcome variables. However, like most other such topics, this analysis of commitment has been largely restricted to U.S. samples.

Survey of most admired companies conducted by Fortune has indicated that the CEO respondents believed that corporate culture was their most important lever in enhancing this key capability (Anonymous, 1998). Given the importance of organizational culture and its affect on organizational outcomes, it is currently one of the hottest business topics in both academic research and the popular business press. Today’s business leaders are confronted with frequent unpredictable challenges, which require a high degree of flexibility on their part. Recent organizational crises have emphasized the need for leadership and personal commitment from organizational decision makers which, then, become more critical for organizational success (Earle, 1996).
In summary, there has been little attention given to the effects organizational culture on organizational commitment exceptionally in the higher education setting in the past. Hence, it was the intention of this study to address this issue. The relationship between these two variables and several other antecedents of commitment such as faculty members’ certain demographic variables was also investigated in this empirical study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture has been an important theme in the business and management literature for some two decades. One reason for this is that organizational culture has consistently been seen as having the potential to affect a range of organizationally and individually desired outcomes. Ritchie (2000, p. 1) notes that, from the time of the earliest writers on organizational culture (including, for example, Deal and Kennedy, 1982, and Ouchi, 1981), “it has been suggested that organizational culture affects such outcomes as productivity, performance, commitment, self confidence, and ethical behavior”.

Schein (2004) defines organizational culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. Kotter and Heskett (1992) used the same definition of organizational culture, but eliminated the distinction between beliefs and values.

There is broad agreement, however, that organizational culture provides the ‘social glue’ that gives organizations coherence, identity, and direction. It is most frequently conceived of as a set of shared values and symbolic elements that provide a common meaning frame by which organizational members interpret and make sense of the organizational world they occupy and that this guides their thinking, feelings and behaviors (see Schein 1985).

Wallach (1983) has identified three separate organizational cultures he labels as bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive cultures. Bureaucratic culture is hierarchical and compartmentalized. There are clear lines of responsibility and authority. Innovativeness refers to a creative, results-oriented, challenging work environment. A supportive culture exhibits teamwork and a people-oriented, friendly, encouraging, trusting work environment. All three types of culture are considered in this study.

Deshpande and Webster (1989) defined it as "the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and thus provide them with norms for behavior in the organization", by dividing it into four types of organizational culture: clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market. Their definition of organizational culture was easily classified into types of organizations theoretically. It, however, was difficult to measure the types of organization practically. Since one organization may have two or more types of organizational culture.

Another approach of defining organizational culture is based on traits: involvement, consistency, mission, and adaptability, developed by Denison (2000). The first two types of
organizational culture reflect the internal integration and the two remaining show the external adaptation. Denison's (2000) organizational culture model has been used in research extensively. So this model is considered more comprehensive than the other previous models.

Gordon and Christensen (1993) divided organizational culture into 8 dimensions, which correspond to cultural values: Planning orientation, Innovation, Aggressiveness/action orientation, People orientation, Team orientation, Communication, Results orientation, Confrontation.

According to House et al., (2004), organizational culture is defined in 9 dimensions such as Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Institutional Collectivism, In Group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, And Humane Orientation. The study of House et al. has been used by some researchers recently.

Another approach in organizational culture assessment by nine dimensions: network structure, generalized roles, quality enhancement, collectivism, performance orientation, emphasis on feeling, environmental concerns, long-term employment, and long-term perception was developed by Swierczek, and Rodsuth (2002) for their research in Thailand.

In summary, the four organizational culture models developed by Gordon and Christensen, (1993); Swierczek and Rodsutti, (2002); House, et al., (2004); Sridhar, Gudmundson, and Freinauer, (2004) were seen clearly to demonstrate organizational culture dimensions.

COMMITMENT

Dating back to the 1960s, organizational commitment has been measured and conceptualized in various ways in the North American literature. One popular conceptualization of organizational commitment has been to view it as an affective attachment to the organization. Commitment has been described as “the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979, p. 226). The accepted standardized measure has become the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, or OCQ (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Other researchers, on the other hand, have viewed commitment as remaining with the organization due to recognition of costs associated with leaving. Mainly based on Becker's (1960) side-bet theory, this approach has presented commitment to be a less affective and a more calculative concept that is a function of the accumulated interests in the organization, such as pensions and seniority. Calculative commitment has been measured by a scale developed by Ritzer and Trice (1969), later modified by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972). However, the appropriateness of these measures has been questioned on both conceptual and empirical grounds (Meyer & Allen, 1984).

In 1984, Meyer and Allen proposed a bi-dimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment that drew on these early works, labeling the former view as affective and the latter as continuance commitment. In 1990, they added a third component, namely, normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Originally introduced by Weiner and Vardi (1980), normative commitment refers to feelings of obligations to stay with an organization because of the belief that it is the right thing to do.
Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that common to these approaches is the view that commitment is a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization, and (b) has implications for the decisions to continue or discontinue membership in the organization. As defined by these authors, the affective component of organizational commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organization. The continuance component refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization. The normative component refers to employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization. Evidence supporting the distinct nature of these three components has been presented by a number of authors (e.g. Dunham et al, 1994).

Given the long history of the investigation of commitment it is not surprising that it has been conceptualized and measured differently and remains a contested construct. One of the issues centers on the conceptualization of commitment in terms of the attitudinal-behavioral dichotomy, but it is measures based on the affective approach which have most frequently been validated and used in previous research (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Price & Mueller, 1981; Steers 1977; Meyer & Allen, 1997). An influential conceptualization is that of Mowday and colleagues (e.g., Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979; Mowday, Porter & Steer, 1982). Organizational commitment is defined in terms of member’s identification and level of engagement with a particular organization. It reflects peoples’ attitudes towards the organizations goals and values, a desire to stay with the organization, and a willingness to expend effort on its behalf. The latter has behavioral implications, but the conceptualization focuses more on how people think about their relationship to the employing organization and the formation of attitudes based on that. Previous Studies Organizational culture can influence how people set personal and professional goals, perform tasks and administer resources to achieve them. Organizational culture affects the way in which people consciously and subconsciously think, make decisions and ultimately the way in which they perceive, feel and act (Hansen and Wernerfelt, 1989; Schein, 1990). Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Peters and Waterman (1982) have suggested that organizational culture can exert considerable influence in organizations particularly in areas such as performance and commitment.

Meyer and Allen (1997) still acknowledge, too, that commitment should be conceptualized as a psychological state concerned with how people feel about their organizational engagements. It has also been demonstrated that it is the affective characteristics which impact greatest on outcome variables such as absenteeism and turnover (Dunham et al., 1994; McFarlane-Shore & Wayne, 1993; Somers 1995). Thus, affective commitment remains the dominant measure in commitment studies (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall 1990). Mowday et al’s(1982)conceptualization of commitment as member’s identification, involvement and loyalty with respect to the organization is consistent with this attitudinal perspective

Many researchers have supported the importance of culture for organizational commitment. Brewer (1993) suggested that a bureaucratic working environment often results in negative employee commitment, whereas, a supportive working environment results in greater employee commitment and involvement.
Harris and Mossholder (1996) point out that organizational culture stands as the center from which all other factors of human resource management derive. It is believed to influence individuals’ attitudes concerning outcomes, such as commitment, motivation, morale, and satisfaction.

Odom, Boxx, and Dunn (1990), found that the bureaucratic nature of the work environment neither improves nor distracts from an employee's commitment and satisfaction.

Considerable research has been devoted to organizational commitment. For example, organizational commitment has been found to be inversely related to employee punctuality, attendance, and turnover (Mobley, 1982). In addition, organizational commitment has been found to be a more stable and enduring measure of employee attitude than other popular constructs such as job satisfaction (Mowday, Koberg, & McArthur, 1984). Yet, even with this extensive research attention, several inconsistent findings have not been resolved. For example, there have been mixed results on the relationship between organizational commitment and performance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Reichers, 1985). While some researchers have found a positive relationship (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987), others have found no relationship of significance (Angle & Perry, 1981). Some have even found a negative relationship between commitment and performance when individuals feel a significant extrinsic investment (time, pension, pay scale) in the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Others have argued (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) or demonstrated (Krackhardt & Porter, 1985) that commitment may be influenced by the statements or actions of relevant others.

This study constitutes such a broadening. Specifically, the study examines empirically the association between organizational cultural values and employee outcomes in a major diversified manufacturing company in Taiwan.

Our study also extends previous literature in two other ways. First, it examines the potential impact of organizational culture on intra-organizational information sharing, a behavioural outcome compared to the affective outcomes of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and propensity to remain with the organization.

The paper is organized as follows. The next section details the organizational culture model used in the study, specifically the Organizational Culture Profile of O'Reilly et al. (1991) which comprises several organizational cultural dimensions, and develops hypotheses linking the dimensions to the outcomes of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, propensity to remain, and information sharing. This section also develops hypotheses for the effect of person-organizational culture fit on the same outcomes and for the relative importance of person-organization fit compared to the organizational culture dimensions themselves. The method of data collection and variable measurement are then discussed, followed by presentation of the findings and the conclusions.

**HYPOTHESES**

The large body of existing research lends support to the following hypotheses of this research study:

H$_1$: Gender doesn't have any significant effect on commitment
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H₂: Education doesn't have any significant effect on commitment
H₃: Marriage doesn't have any significant effect on commitment
H₄: Job experience doesn't have any significant effect on commitment
H₅: Bureaucratic organizational culture is negatively correlated with organizational commitment
H₆: Innovative organizational culture is positively correlated with organizational commitment
H₇: Supportive organizational culture is positively correlated with organizational commitment

MEASURES

An integrated questionnaire combining instruments and demographic questions has been developed specifically for this study. This integrated questionnaire has been translated into Persian to accommodate the respondents who are citizens of Iran. It consists of three parts which are geared to the research questions.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Wallach’s (1983) organizational culture index has been used to determine the culture profile of the organization. Wallach (1983) classified organizational culture as bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive cultures. A five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from "does not describe my organization" valued as a "1" to "describes my organization most of the time" valued as a "5". The internal consistency reliabilities (Chronbach's alpha) for organizational culture in bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive cultures in this study are 0.86, 0.70, and 0.97 respectively.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

The OCI has been used by other researchers (Koberg and Chusmir, 1987). There are 24 items in this questionnaire and it has a Likert scale ranging from three (describe my organisation most of the time) to zero (does not describe my organization).

The dependent or outcome variable of interest in this study was the organizational commitment of the employees. The widely recognized 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) was used to assess this dependent/outcome variable. The coefficient alpha reliability for this measure in the study was 0.81.

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

The demographic questions for this study consist of gender, education, marriage and job experience. To facilitate the data analysis of Demographic questions in the organization, this study divided the employees into different levels in each question.

SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

Surveys were distributed to Training and Education Organization (related to Training and Education Ministry) in Damghan (A city of Semnan Province in Iran) with a total of 123 employees.
Questionnaires from 77 respondents were found to be valid. The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1.

### Table 1- Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>58.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than diploma</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc/BA</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 years</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 3 and 6 years</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 6 and 10 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 10 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>58.44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS**

Significant demographic findings include the following: (1) 41.56% and 58.44% of respondents were single and married respectively, (2) 32.47% and 37.66% of respondents have worked for Training and education Organization from 3 to 6 years and 6 to 10 years respectively, (3) male and female respondents numbered 41.56% and 58.44% respectively, and (4) the bachelor was the highest educational degree received for 55.84% of respondents.

**HYPOTHESES TESTING**

The first four hypotheses show the effect of demographic variables on employees organizational commitment. Table 2 shows that P<0.05 (P= 0.025). It indicates there is significant difference between male and female organizational commitment level. Then the hypothesis 1 has been rejected.
Table 2- Impact of Gender on Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>285.562</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>285.562</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>4,087.11</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54.495</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,372.68</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3- Impact of Education on Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>88.285</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29.428</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>4,284.39</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>58.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,372.68</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4- Impact of Marriage on Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>108.657</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>108.657</td>
<td>1.911</td>
<td>0.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>4,264.02</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>56.854</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,372.68</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to P values (p>0.05) in table 3, 4, and 5, it concludes that education, marriage and job experience don't have any significant effect on commitment in this organization. These results shows hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were accepted.

Table 5- Impact of Job Experience on Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>12.534</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.178</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>4,360.14</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>59.728</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,372.68</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 shows the correlations amongst the main variables of this study. The strongest correlation can be seen between Commitment and Supportive culture ($r=0.73$). Totally correlation results indicate: (1) significant positive correlation between commitment and supportive and innovative culture, (2) nearly significant correlation between supportive and innovative culture, and (3) no significant correlation between Bureaucratic culture and commitment, Innovative culture, and Supportive culture.

**Table 6- correlation between main variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>56.935</td>
<td>7.585</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucratic culture</td>
<td>19.169</td>
<td>3.282</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative culture</td>
<td>19.039</td>
<td>3.131</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive culture</td>
<td>18.961</td>
<td>2.583</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

According to the result of table 6, hypothesis 5 has been rejected but hypotheses 6 and 7 have been accepted.

**DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

This study has investigated the effect of organizational culture on organizational commitment in Training and Education Organization in Damghan. In helping to understand the nature of organizational culture and its relationship to organizationally and individually desired outcomes, our results have several important implications for practice and research. The results provide quite compelling support for the importance organizational culture in affecting outcomes. Tow of the three dimensions in the organizational culture set including Supportive and Innovative culture had uniformly strong association with commitment.

These findings are important in advancing the research literature in that they contribute empirical evidence of association between organizational culture and outcomes to a literature typifies by assumptions and claims about such association, but few empirical studies.

Generally demographic variables do not have significant impact on organizational commitment except gender. Result shows males have greater commitment in comparison with females. High correlation between Supportive and Innovative culture with Commitment reveals that making a suitable environment in which the employee can show their abilities, talents and have the right to take a role in decision making could increase their Commitment to the organization. On the other hand, a Bureaucratic
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culture with environment hierarchical and compartmentalized environment could have negative impact on the employee commitment. This study confirms that organizational culture is important organizational antecedent of commitment.

organizational commitment and is shown to be most clearly associated with important organizational outcomes. Furthermore, organizational variables, rather than employee characteristics, are the antecedents that better predict affective commitment, and it is the ‘employee-focused’ organizational factors have been shown to have the greatest impact. However, in this research there has been a neglect of the potential impact of organizational cultures on commitment, something this research seeks to rectify.

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