

Developing Employees' Organizational Commitment through Stress Management

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Abstract

Each firm wanted to increase their employees' commitment to them in order to achieve synergy and harmonization during the work. In long term these would help to improve the firm's overall performance and achieving their goals. Nowadays, everyone could easily and accurately look for a lot of informations. Essentially employee could easily compare and seek for another firm whenever they wanted. Without a strong commitment to the current firm, employees might easily move to another firm which was perceived more profitable for them. These actions not only halted the firm to achieve their goals but also would be costly. Stress was a common factor which led to intention to leave. Stress should be managed well to avoid negative consequence from employees. This study aimed to evaluate the role of job satisfaction and work-family conflict on employees' job stress and its impact on employees' organizational commitment. A number of 80 proportional samples from each division of PT Pelabuhan Indonesia I Medan participated in this study. The sample had to be a permanent employee, married, and had been working for at least 3 years with the firm. Data were collected using questionnaires. Data were analyzed by using path analysis with AMOS. The study showed that stress significantly mediated the negative effect of work-family conflict on their organizational commitment. Stress did not significantly mediate the job satisfaction. However job satisfaction directly affected their organizational commitment. Therefore, managing employees' job stress in addition with creating job satisfaction was the key to develop employees' organizational commitment.

Keywords: *Stress Management, Organizational Commitment, Work to Family Conflict, Job Satisfaction*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Organizational commitment has attracted many attentions over decade and has become a challenging topic on management field of study. Organizational commitment also considers as one of core attention in human resource management alongside flexibility and quality of work. Human resource management wants to produce an employee who is committed to their organization. Commitment closely relates to loyalty and intention to leave. A cost of hiring a new employee is always far greater than retaining the current employees (Dessler, 2011). A new trainee or employee needs a lot of training and adaptation to be able to work well within the organization. Yet this is another penny spent by the organization, including time consuming mechanism. Managing the current employees will be more effective than managing the new one.

As one form of loyalty, each individu may showe a different level of commitment within their work. They may be committed to their jobs, their profession, their division, their manager, their

boss, or their organization as whole (Nehmeh, 2010). An ideal situation on commitment is that the individu committed to the organization. An employee who has a high level of organizational commitment will be more focused on his or her job while prioritizing over the organizational well-being first. A good achievement in organization is also perceived as a good achievement on himself or herself.

Nowadays we live in a very dynamic environment. We face a diversity and changing every single little time. Some also suggest that we are in turbulence environment. This situation affects the perception of each employee toward his or her job insecurity. Job insecurity may affect a losing value to organizational commitment. How can employees be loyal to their organization while feeling insecure with their job? They may feel that they can be laid off any time. This leads to a diminishing level of organizational commitment from time to time. In contrast, we believe that organizational commitment is one of many objective on human resource management. For example, a defect mass-product on Samsung in recent time triggers a lot of job insecurities to their employees. Their loss is considered to be a very huge as their product defects on massive scale. As result, Samsung may cut their cost off by reducing their number of workers.

One other side of a dynamic, turbulence world, is a complex competition in marketplace. In order to retain their competitive advantage from the rivals many firms evaluate and implement a bigger and higher yearly goals from time to time. They want the firm to produce more, better product than what they can do last time. As result, employees have to be burdened by high workload which may trigger job stress. Job stress may disturb the organizational rhythm at work. This will affect the employees performance in short term and organizational performance in long term (Wong *et al.*, 2000; Dobreva-Martinova *et al.*, 2002). Employees tend to leave the organization which gives them an over limit workload as they stressed out of work.

PT Pelabuhan Indonesia (Pelindo) I Medan, as one of state-owned organization, also implements a new, higher target in comparison with last year. In common, the employees' workload has been increased to 1.5 times from their regular workload without an increase in job compensation. Our observation at the site indicated that the employees have a considered level of occupational stress. In addition, the newly implemented target has been adapted yet by their employees. As result, many of the employees have to work overtime in order to reach their goals. As side effect of working overtime, they have to cut down their time with their family. They will create an imbalance situation at work and at home. As result they may perceive a family to work conflict. In addition, a survey of employees job satisfaction shows that there are several points that they dissatisfy with their work. They argue with the payment, their workload, also their relationship with the co-workers. On the side of organizational commitment, there are only 60% of the workers who willingly come at work on time, then the rest 40% of them are hard to discipline themselves. They will not give their best for the organization. These chains of situation indicate that there is a problem in organizational commitment which may relate to job satisfaction, work-family conflict, and employees' job stress level. Thus, an empiric study is conducted.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Organizational Commitment

Since the nineteen seventies the word of organizational commitment has become an interesting and popular term to investigate. Many researches suggest that understanding organizational commitment as one key to achieve an effective human resource management. Organizational commitment plays a big role on organization as whole through the study of each individualistic behavior within the firm (Rocha *et al.*, 2008). In common, organizational commitment refers to a degree in which an employee identifies the organization, the goals, and his or her very hope to remain as the member of the given firm (Robbins and Judge, 2013). Organizational commitment refers to a measurement of the employees' willingness to remain at the organization in the near future.

Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested three components of organizational commitment in which until today ar still widely used as core measurement of employees' organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is categorized under three forms, firstly, affective commitment which is related to emotional bond between employees and the organization; secondly, continuance commitment which is related to the bond between employees and organization based on a continuance in their work-life and their worries on their job security; lastly, normative commitment which is related to returning the favor in which organization has given to the employees. There are several measurements on measuring employees' organizational commitment beside the three components model, such as three dimensional model and four dimensional model. On this research, we use the three components model as the other models do not measure the normative component in which is closely related to eastern culture. The summary of each measurement model can be seen on Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison between Organizational Commitment Models

Three Components Model (Meyer and Allen, 1991)	Three Dimensional Model (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986)	Four Dimensional Model (Quijano <i>et al.</i> , 2000)
Affective	Internalization Identification	Value-Related Affective
Continuance	Compliance	Exchange Need
Normative		

1.2.2 Employees' Job Stress Level

Job stress, which is also known as occupational stress, in general refers to a level of stress that is sourced from job-related activities. A job stress level is considered as physiological factor which will be emerged due to the given job-related activities for each employee. In this physiological context, one researcher may define job stress differently with other researchers. There are a lot of inconsistent definitions toward job stress level. We may find job stress as a stimulus while others define job stress as a result of pressure at work.

Mangkunegara (2007) stated a definition that job stress is related to a pressure feeling in which experienced by the employees during their work. In this context, stress is defined as a stimulus rather than a result. On the other hand, Robbins and Judge (2013) stated that job stress is considered as a result of the perceived feelings. A stressed out employees can be identified

through their physiological symptom, physical symptom, and behavior-related symptom at workplace.

A non-well-managed stress usually leads to a disability to normally and positively interact with their environment, either in working environment or outside them (Siagian, 2008). Stress is considered as unwanted psychological situation as the result of environmental pressure. Stress must be managed in order to stay positive at work. Anatan and Ellitan (2007) added that the source of stress can be formed within each individu. For example, their role conflict within themselves. Robbins and Judge (2013) also stated that stress can be sourced from within the individu themselves.

1.2.3 Job Satisfaction

Robbins and Judge (2013) considered job satisfaction as a positive feeling toward the job itself which is resulted from each individu's evaluation toward the environment and his or her job. A highly satisfied employee will have a positive feeling toward his or her job. In contract, an unsatisfied employee tends to hold a negative feeling toward his or her job. Job satisfaction can be measured through gap analysis, between actualization and expectation of their work. Satisfied is defined while expectation at least meets actualization. An employee can be identified as satisfied if what they gain from the work meets or exceeds their expectation. If their expectation is higher then what they gain from the work the employee will experience a dissatisfaction (Luthans, 2006; Robbins dan Judge, 2013).

1.2.4 Work-Family Conflict

A role conflict is reffered to a situation in which each individu plays a multiple roles, totally different roles exactly at the same time (Robbins dan Judge, 2013). Each married employees usually experience this kind of conflict. At least they play two different roles simultaneously. They have to work as employees while obligate as family member, even the backbone of their family. This role conflict is reffered to work-family conflict. The conflict exists while one role affects the additional workload to other roles (Greenhause dan Beutell, 1985; Amalia, 2010). An imbalanced time management and attention management toward any of the role may induce a guilty, pressure, and uncomfortable feelings to the employees. The conflict will be perceived if these negative feelings reach out the employees. They have to choose between a good role as good employees within the organization or as good parents, father or mother, to their children and spouse. If they play both roles simultaneously, it will trigger the conflict within themselves.

Greenhause dan Beutell (1985) gave three forms of work-family conflict. Firstly, *time based conflict*, which is resulted from an inability to balance the time given for each role; secondly, *strain related conflict*, which is resulted from additional pressure from one role and brought out to another role; and lastly, *Behavior-based conflict* which is resulted when one role needs a sppecific feature to be filled and that feature is contrast with the other roles. On behaviour-based conflict, a given behaviour may be brought out while playing the other role which should not be done.

2. METHOD AND MATERIAL

2.1 Location and Time of the Research

The research was conducted at PT Pelabuhan Indonesia I Medan, one of state-owned firm which is located in Medan. The research was conducted in Mei until June 2016 which involved the employees of PT Pelindo.

2.2 Research Sample

This research was focused to evaluate the effect of work-family conflict which might be perceived by many married workers while connecting the conflict with their organizational commitment levels. Therefore, this research was focused on the given employees characteristics. Firstly, the employees should have been working with PT Pelindo I Medan for at least three years. Secondly, they should have been married. Both of the characteristics were mandatory in order to avoid bias and correctly measured their perception toward job satisfaction, work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational commitment. Thus, a number of 247 employees were met the criterions. The number of minimum sample used for this research was calculated through slovin formula with a level of 10% precision. The number of minimum sample for this research was 72 employees across division. As result we used 80 samples which were randomly proportionally taken as our sample.

2.3 Analysis Method

Data was collected by using self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was arranged based on literature review of each research variables. The questionnaires were distributed directly and guided with two-way communication between researchers and sample in order to avoid misperception between the research and sample. As result, this research achieved 100% return rate on the sample. We used 5-point Liker scale to measure our sample's perception which consisted on two polar, agreeance and disagreeance toward given statements. The data was evaluated through descriptive method to understand our sample current situation and inferential method to understand the relationship between research variables. We used central tendencies method to descriptively evaluate the data by using mean, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation. On inferential step, we used path analysis and were evaluated by using AMOS. The path model we use on this research is referred to the theoretical framework as follow.

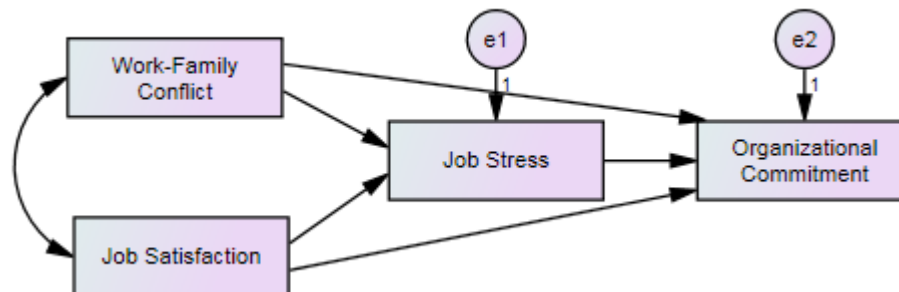


Figure 1: Theoretical Frameworks

Seven points of hypothesis are proposed for this research in order to evaluate the relationship between each variable. Job stress is proposed as mediating variable. Organizational

commitment acts as dependent variables while both work-family conflict and job satisfaction act as independent variables. The proposed hypothesis is stated as follow

- H₁ : Work-family conflict has a positive and significant effect on employees' job stress level.
- H₂ : Job satisfaction has a negative and significant effect on employees' job stress level.
- H₃ : Job stress level has a negative and significant effect on employees' organizational commitment.
- H₄ : Work-family conflict has a negative and significant effect on employees' organizational commitment.
- H₅ : Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employees' organizational commitment.
- H₆ : Job stress mediates the effect of work-family conflict on employees' organizational commitment.
- H₇ : Job stress mediates the effect of job satisfaction on employees' organizational commitment.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

3.1 Sample Characteristics

In order to understand the main characteristics for our sample, we analyzed the distribution of sample characteristics. We categorized the characteristic based on gender, age range, and last educational attainment. Our samples were mainly male on age range between 40 to 50 years old. They mostly finished their undergraduate program. Even though we understood that eastern culture segregated the main role between male and female which increased the role conflict, our main samples were male. Nowadays, even male employees might perceive role conflict as they had to balance their time at work and at home. The more time they spent with organization, the less time they got to their family. In addition, it was common that PT Pelindo I Medan, which is located in harbor city recruited male more than female as their employees. These characteristics would not simulate bias on role conflict.

3.2 Descriptive Statistics

As we wanted to understand the actual situation on our sample, we undergo descriptive statistics. Based on our data we summarized the descriptive statistics of each variable as follow.

Table 2: Descriptive Result (n=80)

Variable	Max	Min	Mean	StDev
Work-Family Conflict	5.00	3.67	4.35	0.33
Job Satisfaction	5.00	3.30	4.18	0.42
Job Stress Level	5.00	4.00	4.35	0.24
Organizational Commitment	5.00	3.22	4.40	0.41

Table 2 indicates that on average our research samples experience a high level of work-family conflict (mean = 4.35). The work-family conflict scores are between 3.67 to 5.00 and standard

deviation score of 0.33. This indicates that all of our samples experience the conflict. On the other side, our samples also state that they are satisfied with the current work. However, we find that the distribution ranges between 3.30 to 5.00 and standard deviation of 0.42. We can interpret that some of the employees are still unsatisfied with their work. As we evaluate their job stress level, our findings state that they experience a high level of stress with mean of 4.35. Lastly, their organizational commitment can be categorized as high level of organizational commitment. However, the huge gap and standard deviation may indicate that a number of workers are still hardly committed to the organization.

3.3 The Path Analysis

We evaluated the given model framework with path analysis. Employees' job stress level was suggested as mediating variable between work-family conflict and job satisfaction to stimulate employees' organizational commitment. The estimate result was summarized as follow.

Table 3: Estimate Result

Dependent Variable -->	Independent Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Work-Family Conflict -->	Job Stress Level	0.642	-	0.642
Job Satisfaction -->		-0.208	-	-0.208
Job Stress Level -->	Organizational Commitment	-0.251	-	-0.251
Work-Family Conflict -->		-0.249	-0.204 ^{1*}	-0.453
Job Satisfaction -->		0.355	0.052 ¹	0.407

*Significant at Level 0.05

¹Test for Significance Using Sobel Test

The estimate results can be written under two formulas. Firstly it will explain the antecedents of employees' job stress level. Secondly, it will explain the relationship of our independent variables to create organizational commitment. The formulas can be written as:

$$\text{Job Stress Level} = 0.642 \text{ Work-Family Conflict} - 0.208 \text{ Job Satisfaction} \quad (1)$$

and,

$$\text{Organizational Commitment} = 0.407 \text{ Job Satisfaction} - 0.410 \text{ Work-Family Conflict} - 0.251 \text{ Job Stress} \quad (2)$$

The first model (1) explains 62.5% variance of the actual level of job stress. Employees' job stress level is positively and significantly affected by work-family conflict ($\beta_1 = 0.407$, p-value = 0.000). Employees' job satisfaction can significantly reduce employees' job stress level ($\beta_2 = -0.208$, p-value = 0.02). Work-family conflict which is perceived by the employees dominantly affects the employees' job stress level.

The second model (2) explains 57% variance of actual level of formed employees' organizational commitment. The rest 43% is explained by other factors which are excluded from our model. Employees' job stress level directly affects organizational commitment with negative and significant effect ($\beta_3 = -0.251$, p-value 0.037). This significant direct effect is a prior sign that there should be an indirect effect from our independent variables to create organizational commitment. As we speak of work-family conflict, it will negatively affect organizational

commitment. Role conflict has a negative and significant effect directly on organizational commitment ($\beta_4 = 0.249$, p-value = 0.043). In addition, work-family conflict also has a negative significant effect which happens indirectly through job stress level ($\beta = -0.204$). Therefore, work-family conflict has a -0.453 coefficient of regression in total. Job satisfaction level has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment directly ($\beta_5 = 0.355$, p-value = 0.000). However, job stress level does not significantly mediate the effect ($\beta = 0.052$). In total, job satisfaction's effect is 0.407 to organizational commitment.

4. DISCUSSION

Our finding showed that employees would perceive a higher job stress level as they perceived work-family conflict more. This finding supported the previous study which was stated that role conflict or work-family conflict would affect employees' job stress level (Martuningrum, 2005; Anatan dan Ellitan, 2007; Singh *et al.*, 2007). Work-family conflict which is perceived by the employees highly correlates in form of time-based conflict and strain-related conflict. A high workload from the organization forces employees to work overtime. Overtime work sacrifices employees' time to be with their family. This will stimulate their conflict and stress level. In addition, an overmanaged workload exhausts the employees and forces them to take an early rest at home. Their time with the family is reduced even more. The employees cannot appreciate themselves well with the family and push the perceived conflict to the edge. As eastern way at work, they usually respect their time and family a lot. An inability to balance the worklife and family life invites a guilty feeling toward themselves. This will be brought upon a high stress level.

Our finding also stated that the level of stress experienced by employees can be buffered with job satisfaction. Job satisfaction will reduce a perceived job stress level. This findings in align with Singh *et al.* (2007) which stated that employees' job satisfaction may reduce their stress level. A satisfied employee can relieve their workload as they feel pleasure or comfortable with the result of their jobs. The positive feelings toward their job eliminate their heavy workload. The positive feelings convert each of negative feelings which are the trigger of stress to perceive pleasantly in form of satisfaction. Therefore, if an employee feels that his or her work is appreciated well, they may forget about the heavy burden workload to produce the given performance.

We also found that job stress is a significant predictor for organizational commitment. Our finding showed that the more stressed one employee toward his or her job the lower the commitment toward the job, not to mention toward the organization. This finding in align with the previous research, Ziauddin (2010), also confirmed the findings on Khatibi *et al.*, (2009) which stated a negative correlation between job stress and organizational commitment. A burdened employees will not be attached to the organization. If the burden or workload creates a stress, physiologically they will avoid from the job, perform poorly, even resign from the given organization. We should consider that naturally, people seek for what is pleasant for them. A burden like stress will be most likely avoided, if it is not balanced with a generous compensation.

Employees' job satisfaction directly increases employees' organizational commitment. A satisfied employee will be more likely commit and stay for the organization longer. Satisfaction

is a psychological context which is perceived positively. As satisfaction leads to positive attitude and feelings toward organization, they will be more likely to stay in organization. A job which brings happiness to the employees can be a good choice to the employees to spend their time at work. A satisfied employees will not look for another job as the current job keeps them happy.

Work-family conflict which is experienced by the employees affects organizational commitment negatively. A perceived conflict generates workload and burden at work. If the job is not align with, or endangers the situation at home such as, reducing time for the family, the employee will likely reconsider to remain at the organization in the future. An imbalanced situation at work and home create conflict. Conflict tends to create an uncomfortable feeling toward the job which may reduce their commitment at work. Employees will start to look for another job which can help them to balance their work-life and family-life.

Our research also evaluated the mediating effect of job stress level which mediated the effect of job satisfaction and work-family conflict on organizational commitment. As result, job stress significantly mediated the effect from work-family conflict. However, there is not enough evidence to state that job stress mediates the effect from job satisfaction. Therefore, employees' job satisfaction can only directly affect employees' organizational commitment. The effect of work-family conflict will be enhanced through job stress level.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Key Findings

In order to improve employees' organizational commitment, all three independent variables played a significant role. Each variable should be treated correctly. First of all, we might improve organizational commitment as we increased employees' job satisfaction level. Secondly, we might improve organizational commitment as we reduced employees' perceived role conflict. Lastly, we should manage employees' job stress level. Reducing stress level might improve employees' organizational commitment. Managing employees' perceived role conflict had a biggest effect on employees' organizational commitment. In total, role conflict dominantly affected the commitment. Employees' job stress level could mediate the effect of perceived role conflict significantly. However the mediating effect was not significant while mediating job satisfaction.

5.2 Managerial Implication

Our findings suggested that each organization should manage their employees' stress level well. A stressed out employees was more likely quit their job. This should be avoided. It was important to build employees' satisfaction toward their job. It directly affected organizational commitment. The more satisfied they were, the higher their commitment would be. Special mention should be given into managing employees' work-family conflict. The perceived conflict played major role to create organizational commitment. It was important to each organization to help their employees in maintaining a balanced work-family life.

5.3 Limitation and Future Work

This research was focused on how to improve organizational commitment. On previous study we might find that organizational commitment was important to improve employees' performance, if not organizational performance as whole. Our research model had not discussed it yet. Therefore, we suggest the future research can develop or expand our research model to confirm our result with employees or organization's performance. In a nut shell, a high level of organizational commitment on our employees is significant to help organization if it cannot provide a better performance.

As we speak organizational commitment, we speak about its three components, affective, continuance, and normative. Allen and Meyer suggested that each component completes one to the others. We treated organizational commitment as one variable which neglected the three components. In order to understand a better organizationa commitment, we suggest to evaluate the relationship on second order level, on each component of organizational commitment.

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