

Analysis of job satisfaction, job security and employee engagement in relation with employee commitment: A case of Mohmand Jahed group of companies (MJC), Kabul

Muhammad Shahid Shams¹, Murtaza Masoud Niazi² and Haseebullah³

1. Assistant Professor, Kardan University, Kabul Afghanistan

2. Assistant Professor, Kardan University, Kabul Afghanistan

3. MBA Alumni, Kardan University and Finance Assistant, Hamid Karzai International Airport, Kabul Afghanistan

Abstract

Building upon social exchange theory, this study was designed to examine the impact of job security, job satisfaction, and employee engagement on the commitment level of employees working at Mohmand Jahed group of companies (MJC), a Kabul based logistics supply and services providing company. A self-administered survey instrument was used to collect data from the participants. Employees working at MJC (N=180) were the participants of the study. The study found that job security, job satisfaction, and employee engagement are the positive and significant predictors of employee commitment that explain 62% variation in the criterion variable (employee commitment). Although, results of the present study are in line with the previous research findings, nevertheless, the findings of the study cannot be generalized, since the data were collected from the participants of one of the Kabul based companies (i.e., MJC). A large sample size from different logistics supply and services providing companies can help in the more profound understanding of the phenomenon as well as drawing the real picture of an issue in Afghanistan.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, job security, employee engagement, employee commitment, Kabul.

1. Introduction

Over the last few decades', regardless of the practical nature, organizations have become more competitive than before. To compete more effectively and to ensure long-term outstanding performance, it is necessary for every organization to enhance the commitment level of their em-

ployees towards their work-roles as well as the organization. In case, if the organization has failed to achieve a desirable commitment level, this can result in losing some of the good employees, which ultimately can affect the competitive advantage since such losses can lower down morale and reduction in quality and productivity (Duxbury and Halinski,2014; Holtom and Burch,2016; Juhdi et al., 2013). Employee commitment is a creation of a real and psychological bond between employees and employers. Committed employees help their organization to achieve goals, being productive and ensure a sustained competitive advantage. However, the commitment level of employees varies from time to time. Thus, it has been a challenge for the managers these days to maintain the commitment level of their employees by looking into certain factors that can seek to enhance sustained employee's organizational commitment.

Therefore, the present study was designed to assess factors (such as employee engagement, job security, and job satisfaction) that affect the employee's organizational commitment in Mohammad Jahed group of companies (MJC). MJC is an Afghan-owned logistics supply and services providing the company that offers services to military and other organizations in Afghanistan with a wide range of product supply and logistics solutions. MJC is run by 100% Afghan nationals (both skilled workers and laborers). Currently, the management of the company is confronted with an intense issue of their employee commitment. The overall lower level of employee commitment is due to the low level of employee job satisfaction, lower job security and the lack of engagement practices by the management which further resulted in low productivity, low quality and an increasing turnover over a period. Although there are many factors can influence the commitment level of employees the current study will mainly focus on employee job satisfaction, job security, and employee engagement since these factors are found to be related with employee commitment. For instance, Bhatti and Qureshi (2007) reported a significant and positive relationship of job satisfaction and job security with employee commitment, while Schaufelli

and Salanova (2007) found that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment.

This study can have significance for both practitioners and academics. From the academic perspective, this study could enhance the academics' understanding of the influencing role of job security, job satisfaction and employee engagement on employee commitment in a less developed country (Afghanistan) other than a non-western context. The results of this study will authenticate and validate the theoretical phenomenon and concepts generated in the context of developed countries. Moreover, studies of this nature in the context of Afghanistan, are minimal.

From the managerial perspective, this study will enhance the understanding of the importance of employee commitment for the overall employees as well as organizational performance and the factors that affect employee commitment. The finding of this study will help the managers to devise policies and adopt practices that could result in achieving a higher level of their employees' commitment.

The present study is divided into seven sections. Section 1 provides introduction; the review of the literature, underpinning theory and hypotheses development are discussed in section 2; part 3 describes the methodology; statistical analyses and results are presented in section 4; part 5 highlights the conclusion and discussions; while part 6 and 7 deliberate upon the recommendations and limitation and implications for future research respectively.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses of the study

2.1 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The social exchange theory was initially proposed by Blau (1964) and Homans (1961). SET is widely used by many scholars in the field of human resource management as it helps to understand the behavior of an employee at the workplace (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Memon et al.,

2016). Social exchanges create obligations (between employee and employer)-thereby resulting in generating the norms of reciprocity (Evans and Davis,2005; Sparrow and Liden,1997). Employee and employer relationship are based on social exchanges (Blau,1964; Snape and Redman,2010). Thus, when employers support their staff with economic and socioemotional resources (like employee engagement, job security and job satisfaction are considered in this study), employees invariably begin to feel obliged, hence causing them to repay the organization in the form of their performance (Cropanzano and Mitchell,2005; Saks, 2006) while staying committed to the organization. Therefore, SET provides the basis for understanding the behavior of employees at work as a consequent given that if the organization seeks to ensure their job security, job satisfaction, and engagement.

2.2 Employee commitment

Employee commitment refers to the loyalty and commitment of an employee towards the organization and the goals of the organization (Agyemang & Ofei, 2013). The level of commitment of employee has been reported as higher in the private sector relative to public sector organization (Bullock, Stritch, & Rainey, 2015). These findings are supported by another study of Goulet and Frank (2002). They argued that the increasing level of commitment in the private sector organizations is due to the availability of extrinsic rewards such as salary, fringe benefits, etc. In a highly competitive environment, the business leaders are of the opinion that the commitment level of their employees affects the business performance. Organizations with the higher level of employee commitment result in better employee longevity and customer satisfaction as well as higher level of job satisfaction (Kashefi et al., 2013; Nguyen, Mai, & Nguyen, 2014). Furthermore, employees with a higher commitment level share their experiences and pieces of knowledge which ultimately benefits the organization (Casimir, Lee, & Loon, 2012).

The literature on employee commitment has identified three components of employee commitment such as employee affective commitment,

continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990, 1996; Karrasch, 2003; Greenberg, 2005; Turner & Chelladurai, 2005). Affective Commitment refers to the psychological attachment of employee towards the organization. It is described as “*a positive affection toward the organization, reflected in a desire to see the organization succeed in its goals and a feeling of pride at being part of the organization*” (Cohen, 2003). Continuance Commitment signifies the costs related to leaving the organization. It is referred to as “*an individual’s awareness of the costs of leaving the organization*” (Meyer et al., 1993). While normative commitment represents the employee’s perceived obligation to stay with the organization as well as the ongoing participation of the employee in the organization (Wiener & Gechman, 1977; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993; Ayeni & Phopoola, 2007). In other words, when employees want to stay, when an employee needs to stay, and when employees feel s/he ought to stay in the organization are referred to as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment respectively (Meyer et al., 1993; Suma and Leshya, 2013). Also, employees with a higher level of affective commitment to their job, their career and work demonstrate higher levels of normative and continuance commitments (Cohen, 1996).

2.2.1 Job satisfaction and employee commitment

Job satisfaction, in general, can be referred to the level of contentment and the feelings of the employees towards an overall job or specific aspects of their job (Baseri, 2013; van Scheers & Botha, 2014; Weiner, 1980). Job satisfaction occurs when employees develop positive feelings not only towards the organization but its goals and core values as well (Çelik, 2008). Previous researches have documented the significant effect of job satisfaction on employee commitment (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012; Porter et al., 1974; Price, 1977; Spector, 1997). Relatedly, Ahmad et al., (2012) found a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and all the dimensions of employee organizational commitment (i.e., affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment). Considering

the significance of the phenomenon, the relationship between job satisfaction and employee commitment have been researched in many other professions (e.g., nursing, education, and banking, etc.). Most of the studies conducted in the nursing profession and other professions confirmed a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee commitment (Kirsch, 1990; Al-meer, 1995; Knoop, 1995; Mc Neese-Smith, 1996). Thus, based on the available literature, the first hypothesis of the study is as follows;

H1: Job satisfaction is positively related to employee commitment.

2.2.2 Employee engagement and employee commitment

The concept of employee engagement has received considerable attention over the last two decades. As cited by many researchers (such as Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Kataria, Rastogi, & Garg, 2013) that Kahn (1990) was the one who gave the concept of employee engagement. Kahn (1990) defined engagement as “*the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work role.*”. While extending the definition of engagement, Schaufeli (2012) further described engagement as the physical, cognitive, emotional, and mental connection of employees with their work roles. Schaufeli (2012) identified three dimensions of employee engagement such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor represents the higher level of energy and the willing devotion of time to work performance (Kataria et al., 2013). The degree to which an individual is willingly involved in his or her job to derive the meaning, pride and or the challenge out of a job, is called dedication (Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, & Valcour, 2015). Absorption shows the number of complications experienced in disengaging from the job (Jeve, Oppenheimer, & Konje, 2015). In other words, these three dimensions of engagement can be translated as; physical (vigor), emotional (dedication), and cognitive (absorption) (Truss, Alfres, Delbridge, Shantz, & Soane, 2014).

Employee engagement has received a great deal of attention recently by the HR professionals and many researchers who claimed that em-

employee engagement has a positive and significant relationship with profit, productivity, employee retention as well customer satisfaction (Coffman & Gonzalez-Molina, 2002; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Furthermore, the success of the organizational and increased profit depends on employee engagement (Richman, 2006; Baumruk, 2004; Harter et al., 2002).

With regards to employee engagement and employee commitment, Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) illustrated that higher level of engagement results in increasing employee organizational commitment that further leads to enhanced job satisfaction, better performance, lower turnover, improved health and security, motivation and proactive learning behavior. Similarly, in a study conducted on 102 employees working in different organizations in Canada, employee commitment has been reported as one of the significant consequents of employee engagement beside job satisfaction, intention to quit and organization citizenship behavior (Saks, 2006). Similarly, several researchers found that employee engagement impacts employee organizational commitment (e.g., Maslach et al., 2001; Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006). Moreover, many studies showed that employee engagement and employee affective organizational commitment was significantly correlated (e.g., Richardsen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2006; Hakanen et al., 2006; Saks, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2001; Brown & Leigh, 1996). Thus, the available literature helps to develop our next study hypothesis as follows;

H2: Employee engagement is positively related to employee commitment.

2.2.3 Job security and employee commitment

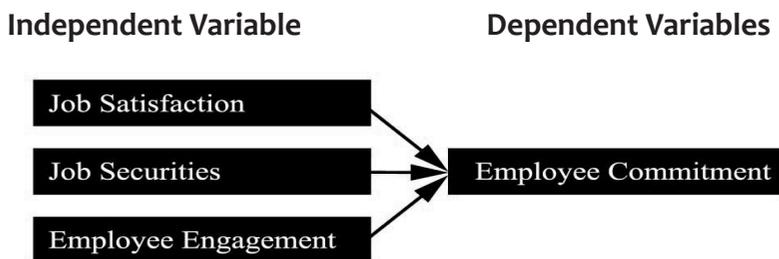
Job security is an essential construct as it affects work-related outcomes. Work-related outcomes such as employees' health (Kuhnert et al., 1989); physical and psychological well-being of employees both psychological and physical (Burke, 1991; Jacobson, 1987, 1991; Kuhnert and Palmer, 1991), employee turnover (Arnold and Feldman, 1982); retention of employees (Ashford et al., 1989; Bhuiyan and Islam, 1996; Iverson and Roy, 1994); job satisfaction (Ashford et al., 1989; Burke, 1991; Davy et al., 1991; Gavin and

Axelrod, 1977; Lim, 1996; and Vinokur-Kaplan et al., 1994); and employee organizational commitment (Abegglen, 1958; Ashford et al., 1989; Bhuian and Islam, 1996; Iverson, 1996; Morris et al., 1993). A large amount of literature reveals a clear link between job security and employee organizational commitment. For instance, Abegglen (1958) documented that Japanese workers exhibit higher commitment since their job is secured (e.g., lifetime employment). Similarly, Iverson (1996) and Morris et al., (1993) maintained that increasing level of job security leads to higher employee organizational commitment. Working on the same lines, Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) established that job insecurity was found to have an inverse impact on employee organizational commitment and perceived performance. Relatedly, Ashford et al., (1989) investigated the effect of job insecurity on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance. They concluded that job insecurity results in lower level of employee commitment and satisfaction while it has no impact on job performance.

Based on the above literature, this study, thus, proposes the following hypothesis;

H3: Job security is positively related to employee commitment.

Fig.1: Proposed conceptual model



Source: Author’s Compilation

3. Research method

3.1 Sample and data collection

A total of 200 employees working in different capacities like technical and managerial positions at Mohmand Jahed group of companies (MJC),

Kabul, were the participants of this study. Data were collected through an adopted survey instrument. Researchers paid three personal visits to the main compound of MJC located in Kabul for the sake of data collection since some of the employees were on leave. They were contacted in the subsequent visits. Researchers met all the participants based on their availability at the office. Before questionnaires distribution, formal permission from the top management was secured. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the research and the way to fill out the questionnaires. The anonymity of their responses was assured. Out of 200 questionnaires, 180 questionnaires were properly filled and usable for the analysis purpose. The rest were discarded. The overall response rate was 90%. No pilot study was conducted because individually the survey instruments were proved to be reliable, valid, and are capable of testing the constructs appropriately (Weiss et al., 1967; Oldham et al., 1986; Mowda et al., 1979; & Schaufeli, et al., 2006).

3.2 Measures

The survey instrument included the following scales;

3.2.1 Job satisfaction

5-Items for the job satisfaction was adopted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss et al, (1967). A five-point Likert scale was employed ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

3.2.3 Job security

Job security was measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Five 5 items were adopted from the scale developed by Oldham, Kulik, Stepina, and Ambrose (1986).

3.2.3 Employee Engagement

A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1(strong disagree) to 5(strongly agree) was used to measure employee engagement. Five items were adopted from the scale developed by Schaufeli et al, (2006).

3.2.4 Employee commitment

A 5- statement scale adapted to measure employee commitment. Mowday et al. developed the instrument in 1979. For each of the statement, five anchors were ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

4. Statistical analyses

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS: Version 20.0) was used to analyze the data. The Pearson correlation, F-statistic, and regression analysis were used to test and corroborate the study hypotheses.

4.1 The model

The econometric model (regression model) for the present study is as follows;

$$EC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (J.Sat.) + \beta_2 (J.Sec.) + \beta_3 (EE)$$

Where:

EC = Employee commitment

J.Sat. = Job satisfaction

J.Sec. = Job security

EE = Employee engagement

4.2 Reliability Statistics

Since the survey instrument was adopted, therefore, its reliability was checked. The following table shows the results of the reliability analysis.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha		
Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Employee Commitment	0.759	05
Job security	0.743	05
Job satisfaction	0.810	05
Employee engagement	0.763	05

Note: Inter-item consistency

Source: Data output from SPSS

Result: The above table shows the inter-item consistency of items used to measure study's dependent variable (employee commitment) and

independent variables (job security, job satisfaction, and employee engagement) in the survey instrument. The above table shows that the Cronbach's Alpha for employee Commitment, job security, job satisfaction, and employee engagement are 0.759, 0.743, 0.810 and 0.763 respectively. Since all these values are above the threshold value of 0.70 as recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). Therefore, the measures are said to be reliable.

4.2.1 Tests of Assumptions

The collected data were tested for normality as well as multicollinearity which are identified as the primary concern in the research (Casson & Farmer, 2014). Normality assumption requires that the set of data, for which the test of significance is applied, to be normally distributed (Siddiqi, 2014). To assess the normality, Shapiro-Wilk test was applied with the following recommended hypotheses;

Ho: The sample belongs to a normal distribution

H1: The sample does not belong to a normal distribution

Table 2: Tests of Normality

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ES	.169	180	.200*	.897	180	.828
JS	.128	180	.200*	.910	180	.827
EE	.266	180	.200*	.889	180	.882
EC	.114	180	.200*	.965	180	.838

Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance

Source: Data output from SPSS

Results in Table 2 show that the data were generally distributed since values for all the study variables such as ES= .828, JS= .827, EE= .882, EC= .838 is higher than the threshold value of 0.05- thereby indicating that the sample belongs to a normal distribution. The multicollinearity as assessed as a next step. The purpose of determining multicollinearity in the data is to examine if the correlation exists between two or more than two independent variables. The presence of multicollinearity effects the multiple

variables negatively in the regression analysis (Disatnik & Sivan, 2016). Multicollinearity was checked whether it exists in the data or not. The variance inflated values (VIF) for all the predictors namely J.sec., EE, and J.sat. are 1.173, 1.157, and 1.038 respectively. Since these VIF values are lesser than 2 (the threshold value), that means there is no issue of multicollinearity present in the data.

Descriptive statistics in the form of mean analysis was applied. Mean score was grouped into in four levels for measurement as shown in table 3, Mean score with 4 & above was considered as very high level, the mean score between 3.51 - 3.99 was categorized as high, while mean score of 3-3.5 and less than three were classified as moderate and low respectively.

Table 3: Mean values measurement and categorization

Mean score	Classification
Less than 3	Low
3.0- 3.50	Moderate
3.51-3.99	High
4 and above	Very high

Source: Mean values categorization by authors

Table 4: Pearson’s Moment Correlation N= 180

Variables	Mean	J.Sat	J.Sec	EE	EC
J.Sat.	3.406	1			
J.Sec.	3.412	.759**	1		
EE	3.780	.350	.362**	1	
EC	3.166	.052*	.176*	.132**	1

Source: Data output from SPSS

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); N= 180

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); N= 180

Table 4 illustrates that the mean values, on a five-point Likert scale, of job security, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and employee commitment are 3.406, 3.412, 3.780, and 3.166 respectively. Comparing the mean values with the different categories of mean values given in table 3, job security, job satisfaction, and employee commitment fall under the

moderate category, while the mean value of employee engagement falls under the high-level category. In conclusion, the commitment level of the employee at MJC comes in the moderate class.

Pearson's moment correlation test was applied to see the significance of the relationship between variables. Table 4 depicts that all three independent variables (i.e. J.sat., j.sec., and employee engagement) are significantly and positively correlated with employee commitment with ($r = .052, p < .05$), ($r = .176, p < .05$), and ($r = .132, p < .01$) respectively. The strength of the relationship between job security and employee commitment is higher (i.e., 17.6%) in comparison with job satisfaction and employee engagement with values of 13.2 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively.

To examine the significance of the proposed research model and its predictive ability, the regression test was applied. It is evident from the R-square value given in table 5 that all three independent variables (i.e., J. Sat, J. Sect., & EE) explain 62 per cent variation in the criterion variable (i.e., employee commitment). Since, the value of R-square is above 50 per cent, which shows that it is a good fit. Furthermore, Table 5 reports a high f-value confirming that the proposed regression model has a high predictive ability and it is statistically significant as it is evident from the sig. Value of .000 which is lesser than $p\text{-value} < 0.05$.

Besides, the Durban-Watson test was applied to see if there exists the issue of autocorrelation among the variables. Since the Durban-Watson test value of 1.674 is lesser than the threshold value of 2, which indicates that there is no such issue of autocorrelation among the study variables.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Standard Error of the estimate	Durbin -Watson test
1	.788a	.620	.614	.46513	1.674

Source: Data output from SPSS

a. Predictors: (Constant), ES, EE, JS

b. Dependent Variable: EC

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	62.236	3	20.745	95.891	.000b
	Residual	38.076	176	.216		
	Total	100.312	179			

a. Dependent Variable: EC

b. Predictors: (Constant), ES, EE, JS

Source: Data output from SPSS

Table 7: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.947	.338	2.804	.006			
J.Sec.	.755	.050	.757	15.042	.000	.852	1.173
EE	.176	.086	.102	2.050	.042	.864	1.157
J.Sat	-.247	.059	-.199	-4.212	.000	.964	1.038

a. Dependent Variable: EC

Source: Data output from SPSS

Table 7 provides values for our proposed regression line as follows;

$$EC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (J.Sec) + \beta_2 (EE) + \beta_3 (J.Sat.)$$

$$EC = .947 + .755(J.Sec) + .176(EE) - .247 (J.Sat)$$

The values in the above regression line can be interpreted as a 1-time change in JS, EE, and ES will bring about .755, .176, and -.247 times changes in EC respectively. To test our study hypotheses, values give in table 7 provide a clear picture. All predictors such as job security, employee engagement and job satisfaction have p-values lesser than .05(p-value <.05, as well as t-values for all the predictors, are higher than the threshold value of +1.96 and -1.96two-tail test) (i.e., 15.042, 2.050, -4,212 respectively), therefore, it can be concluded that all the stated alternates hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) are substantiated.

5. Conclusion and discussions

The present study was designed to address the employee commitment issue at one of the leading logistics supply and services providing Kabul based organization, i.e., Mohmand Jahed Group of companies (MJC). Based on the sample, this study has found that job security, employee

engagement and job satisfaction are significant predictors of employee commitment. Results of the statistical analysis substantiate all three study hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) of the present study. Moreover, results obtained in this study concerning the connection between job security and employee commitment are similar to the previous studies (e.g., Iverson (1996) and Morris et al., 1993; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996; and Ashford et al., 1989). Similarly, results about the significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee commitment are in line with past studies (for instance, (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012; Porter et al., 1974; Price, 1977; Spector, 1997; and Mohamed et al., 2012). In addition, the result concerning the linkages between employee engagement and employee commitment are also similar to previous findings (i.e. Richardsen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2006; Hakanen et al., 2006; Saks, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2001; Brown and Leigh, 1996).

Thus, the presents study, based on findings, concludes that predicting variables (job satisfaction, job security, and employee engagement) included in this study show both significant and influencing role on employee commitment at the logistics supply and services organization (MJC) in Kabul.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

a) For achieving an engaged workforce

- The management should allow employees to participate in the decision-making process (like goal setting). This will push them to ensure their engagement with their work.
- The company should provide an opportunity to motivate employees to go beyond their job description, use creativity in the performance of their work roles.
- The organization should support employees regarding resources to accomplish their tasks in the best way possible.

b) Enhancing job security

- Results indicate that job security impacts employee commitment. Thus the HR department should revise the terms of the contract.
- The HR department should propose and implement a retirement and pension plan for the employees.

c) For job satisfaction

- The organization should provide opportunities for employees concerning promotion, career growth, and development, which will result in higher job satisfaction.
- The HR department should develop a transparent appraisal system, giving orientation to employees about the system and making sure that the employee receives constructive feedback on their performance. A good performer should be distinguished from the bad performers.
- The management should make sure that the justice (both procedural and transactional) prevails in the organization at all levels.
- Provision of the appropriate compensation packages based on some set criteria like merit-based instead of reference based.

7. Limitation and Implications for future research

There are some limitations to this study. First, the sample size was not sufficiently large (i.e., 180 employees), since the focus of this study was about employees working at MJC only. Future studies might include other similar organizations in Kabul and even in other provinces to examine the impact of job security, job satisfaction and employee engagement on employee commitment. This will help in the generalization of the results. Second, data were collected at one point in time (cross-sectional). For better generalizability, future research should collect data more than one point of time (longitudinal study). Third, the study has considered only three predictors such as job security, job satisfaction, and employee engagement. Future studies might include other predictors of employee commitment such as perceived organizational support, job characteristics, employee empowerment, employee participation in decision making, leadership style, etc.

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