



*Original Research Article*

# The effect of organizational commitment on job satisfaction in Uganda Colleges of Commerce

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The researcher was inspired to carry out the research because stakeholders often question why performance in Uganda Colleges of Commerce (UCCs) is low. The main aim of the research was to explain the relationship of competence, reward system, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and OCB in UCCs. The specific objective of this research was to explain the effects of organizational commitment of job satisfaction. The respondents of the study included lecturing staff and administrative staff. The structured questionnaires were used to gather information on the relationship between the variables under study. The library search was done through reading textbooks, dissertations, newspapers, policy instruments and internet and was used for compiling introduction of the study and literature review. The processed data was analyzed quantitatively through statistical package for social scientists (SPSS). The findings indicated that job satisfaction relates positively with organizational commitment in UCCs and the regression analysis indicated that job satisfaction and organizational commitment influence OCB by 53.5% in UCCs. The researcher recommended that UCCs should encourage and support its staff to improve on their competence, improve on its reward system and make all staff access the government payroll and strengthen its promotion practices to allow for regular promotion.

**Key words:** Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, Uganda, commerce.

## INTRODUCTION

Organizations need employees with competence that directly or indirectly affect job performance (Woodruffe, 1998). Reward system, (promotion, pay raises and other rewards), is equally important for most employees (Baron and Byrne, 1999). This leads to job satisfaction, which will be higher when individuals believe that rewards are fairly and impartially distributed than when they believe they are distributed unfairly. This enhances employees' willingness to maintain membership with the organization, that is, organizational commitment. Organ (1998) observed that when employees perceive that equity has been obtained in the distribution of resources, they are more likely to be

satisfied with their jobs and behave with a sense of citizenship.

The Government of Uganda established Uganda College of Commerce (UCC) Nakawa to offer Business-related courses. The increased demand for this kind of education led to the establishment of five (5) more Uganda Colleges of Commerce (UCCs) in 1982, whose curriculum was to be coordinated from UCC Nakawa, which later became National College of Business Studies (NCBS), (Apono, 2002). The general problems associated with coordination of tertiary education include: lack of systematic planning in institutions of higher education resulting in their

haphazard development, poor state of physical facilities, the deteriorating quality of higher education, and the need to streamline development and management of tertiary education. There is poor and unattractive terms and conditions of service for the teaching professional in the country since the colonial times (Education Policy Review Report, 1992).

NCBS merged with the Faculty of Commerce, Makerere University in 1997 to form Makerere University Business School (MUBS), which continued to coordinate UCCs. MUBS realized in February 2002 that over 60% of UCCs students failed their semester examinations and, so special examinations were set for them in August 2003. MUBS has restrained all UCCs Lecturers without degree qualifications and above from handling MUBS programs except Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) certificate courses until they upgrade to degree level. MUBS then came up with Staff Development Program for UCCs where each college has to send two (2) staff members, one for Undergraduate and one for Postgraduate course each year. Currently, only 50% of UCCs staff are appointed and about 20% promoted out of those who have been in the service for the last ten years. The study was undertaken to examine the effect of organizational commitment to job satisfaction in UCCs.

## Literature review

### Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to positive and negative feelings and attitudes which hold about our jobs (Baron and Byren, 1999). It is affected by organizational and personal factors. Organizational factors especially the reward system, are extremely important for employees (Baron and Byren, 1999); and "there is concrete evidence that satisfied employees make for satisfied customers" (Zeithami and Bitner, 2000).

Personal factors include the type of personality, position of the individual in the organizational hierarchy, length of service, the extent to which the jobs are congruent with individual's interests and the state of individual's general life satisfaction outside work. People are rarely neutral about the social world around them, as they tend to hold attitudes about them. In work organizations, employees hold two types of work related attitudes about the organization in which they work. Attitudes held by individuals about their jobs are generally referred to as job satisfaction (Baron and Byrne, 1999). In contrast to job attitude, an attitude towards one's company is also known as organizational commitment and refers to the extent to which an individual is identified with the organization and is unwilling to leave it. Job attitudes vary among individuals and job satisfaction therefore, refers to a dimension of reaction ranging from very positive (high job satisfaction) to very negative (low job satisfaction).

Job satisfaction is higher when the individuals believe that

rewards are distributed fairly and impartially than when they believe they are distributed unfairly (Micelli and Lane, 1991).

Job satisfaction is influenced by the extent to which individuals feel they are participating in decisions, which affect them. The greater their participation and by reference the greater the uncertainty surrounding events affecting them, the higher the reported job satisfaction.

### Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is the extent to which an individual identifies and is involved with his or her organization and /or is willing to leave it (Greenberg and Baron, 1997) as cited in Tumwesigye, (2003). It is an emotional attachment to the organization's values, goals as well as exerting efforts on behalf of the organization and the desire to remain with the organization (Allen et al., 1999). Any organization's success will be jeopardized if its employees fail to accept the firm's missions, goals and objectives (Unzicker et al., 2000) and to believe in what the company stands for as long term customer relationships build with long term committed work force (Boshoff and Hellen, 2000). Organizational commitment has three dimensions namely affective, normative and continuance (Hellen and Meyer, 1990); that are thought to contribute to a psychological state which characterizes an employee's relationship with the organization and its implications for their continued membership (Eby et al., 1999). As one spends more time in the organization, the costs associated with leaving the organization become greater. Hence employees must work hard to guarantee continuity of membership, thus affecting their performance (Suliman and Lles, 2000).

Organizational commitment is the strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization. Miner (1992) called this kind of commitment attitudinal commitment as the attendance to stay with the organization because of the perceived cost of leaving. Meyer and Allen (1999) distinguished two definitions of organizational commitment by using the terms affective and continuance commitment respectively. They described affective commitment as the commitment exhibited by members of the organization who stay in the organization because they want to. These have a strong belief and acceptance of the organizational goals, they value and want to maintain their membership in the organization and therefore exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Continuance commitment on the other hand, is the commitment exhibited by those employees who remain in the organization because they need to. They fear losses such as the financial benefits and security, and therefore stay to avoid incurring those losses. Such employees thus contribute only enough to enable their stay in the organization. O'Reilly and Chartman (1986) argued that commitment could best be defined as the basis of the

individual's psychological attachment to the organization. They therefore suggested three forms of commitment predicted on three separate basis of attachment namely: compliance, identification and internalization.

Compliance was defined as the instrumental undertaken for specific rewards. Identification was defined as attachment (commitment) based on the desire for affiliation with the organization and lastly internalization as the congruence between individual and organizational values (O'Reilly et al., 1990).

Meyer and Allen (1990, 1997) revised their earlier model of organizational commitment to include third variable known as normative commitment. Normative commitment was defined as employees' feelings of obligation to stay with the organization resulting from a process of internalization of normative pressures either prior to or following affiliation with the organization. Normative commitment is also based on the generally accepted rules of reciprocal obligation between organizations and their employees' social exchange theory (Macdonald and Makin, 2000). The Meyer and Allen (1990) model for organizational commitment with its continuance affective and normative forms of commitment are in congruence with the O'Reilly and Chartman (1986) model of compliance, identification and internalization forms or bases of attachment to the organization (commitment). Combining the two models, continuance commitment corresponds to compliance, affective commitment to identification and normative commitment of internalization as follows: Continuance commitment is based on reward while compliance is also instrumental for specific rewards. Affective commitment is based on strong beliefs and acceptance of organizational goals and the desire to maintain the membership in the organization while identification depends on the affiliation to the organization. Finally, normative commitment is based specifically on the internalization. Organizational commitment as an attitude applies as a whole, not just to the job, and is more stable because day to day events are unlikely to shift (Miner, 1992).

Factors that contribute to organizational commitment include competing commitments in non-work related activities, job satisfaction, turnover, group cohesion, trust and confidence in management (Miner, 1992). However, the culture of the people seems to make for stronger emotional ties to the company.

### **The effect of organizational commitment on job satisfaction**

Research indicates a strong and uniform relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Eby *et al*, 1999). Good management policies and practices in line with employees' expectations generate sufficient level of work effort, satisfaction with job and willingness to maintain membership with their jobs. Studies support the

conclusion that job satisfaction and organizational commitment do have a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, OCB "depends less on employees' mood than on their conscious perceptions about their jobs". (Bewley, 2000).

Employee satisfaction may be divided into 2 aspects. It is common to find out that on average employees are satisfied with their organization as a whole but partially dissatisfied with some aspects of responsibilities they hold in their jobs. Similarly, employees may be satisfied with some aspects of their jobs but dissatisfied with the organization as a whole. Generally, employees who are satisfied with the organization as whole exhibit higher levels of commitment than those satisfied with some aspects of the job.

Organizational commitment and job satisfaction respond to different predictors (Miner, 1992). Individual characteristics like age, sex, marital status and education levels are best predictors of job satisfaction. Organizational characteristics like size, location and duration are best predictors of organizational commitment. This does not imply that predictors of job satisfaction do not influence organizational commitment.

### **Research design**

The study is designed to cover all the five (5) Uganda colleges of commerce in the country. It includes UCC Aduku, UCC Pakwach, and UCC Soroti, UCC Tororo and UCC Kabale. The major areas to be treated in the research include issues concerned with job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data Collection**

Questionnaires and structured interviews were used to elicit primary data. Secondary data were got from library search, internet surfing and related research.

### **Organizational commitment**

These were measured using the attitude statements of a five point likert type ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) of Allen and Meyer (1994) measure.

### **Job satisfaction**

These were measured using the attitude statements of a 5-point likert type ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) of Munene 2000 local measure.

### **Data presentation and interpretation of results**

This section comprises a presentation of results and their

**Table 1:** Job title of different categories of respondents

Job Title		Sample		
		Lecturing Staff	Administrative Staff	Total
Assistant Lecturer	Count	42	2	44
	Row%	(95.5)	(4.5)	(100.0)
	Column%	(48.8)	(9.1)	(40.7)
	Total %	(38.9)	(1.9)	(40.7)
Lecturer	Count	35	3	38
	Row%	(92.1)	(7.9)	(100.0)
	Column%	(40.7)	(13.6)	(35.2)
	Total%	(32.4)	(2.8)	(35.2)
Senior Lecturer	Count	7	2	9
	Row%	(77.8)	(22.2)	(100.0)
	Column%	(8.1)	(9.1)	(8.3)
	Total%	(6.5)	(1.9)	(8.3)
Principal lecturer	Count		3	3
	Row%		(100.0)	(100.0)
	Column%		(13.6)	(13.6)
	Total%		(2.8)	(2.8)
Senior Principal Lecturer	Count	2	12	14
	Row%	(14.3)	(85.7)	(100.0)
	Column%	(2.3)	(54.5)	(13.0)
	Total%	(1.9)	(11.1)	(13.0)
Total	Count	86	22	108
	Row%	(79.6)	(20.4)	(100.0)
	Column%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
	Total%	(79.6)	(20.4)	(100.0)

$X^2=59.038$      $df=4$      $p=0.000$

interpretation. The presentation and interpretation in this chapter show the results as tested according to the objectives of the study. Cross tabulations, Pearson correlation, Multiple Regression Analysis and ANOVA tests were used.

**Sample characteristics**

The results that follow show sample characteristics. Cross tabulation table were used to reflect the sample characteristics. Variables considered include job title, length of service, educational level, gender and promotional status, period of promotion, payroll status, salary scale and age of respondents. The cross tabulations that follow show the background characteristics of the respondents that were involved in the study.

The chi-square test (Table 1) reveals that there is a significant difference between lecturing and administrative staff in UCCs ( $X^2=59.038$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) in their job titles. Majority (38.9%) of the lecturing staff were assistant lecturers, 32.4% were lecturers and no principal lecturer, while 11.1%of the administrative staff are at the level of senior principal lecturers with only 1.1% at the level of assistant lecturers. This means that there were more junior grade employees than senior grade employees in UCCs.

From Table 2, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the different categories of respondents

( $X^2=0.249$ ,  $df=1$ , $p=0.618$ ).In their payroll status, the majority of both lecturing and administrative staff are on payroll.

From Table 3, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the different categories of respondents ( $X^2=4.632$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=0.327$ ). In their salary scale; more than half of both the administrative and lecturing staff are within the salary scale U1-U4.The findings indicate that the majority of respondents are in the salary scale U4(39.4%) followed by U5 (29.8%). These are the scales paid to lectures and assistant lecturers respectively. However, majority of both lecturing and administrative staff receive salary scale within U1-U4 (54.3%).

In Table 4, the two indices identified from the measure of commitment are affective commitment and continuance commitment. In this scale, affective commitment has the higher eigen value of (5.277) accounting for 32. 98% of the variance in commitment. Continuance commitment has a lower eigen value of (1.749) accounting for 10.93% of the variance in commitment. Overall, the indices make up 58.9% of the variance in commitment

**Pearson correlation matrix**

This test was used to show the relationship between the following variables basing on the objectives of the study. Competence, reward system, job satisfaction,

**Table 2.** Payroll status of different categories of respondents

		Sample		
Whether on Government payroll		Lecturing staff	Administrative staff	Total
Yes	Count	65	14	79
	Row%	(82.3)	(17.7)	(100.0)
	Column%	(69.1)	(63.6)	(68.1)
	Total%	(56.0)	(12.1)	(68.1)
No	Count	29	8	37
	Row%	(78.4)	(21.6)	(100.0)
	Column%	(30.9)	(36.4)	(31.9)
	Total	(25.0)	(6.9)	(31.9)
Total	Count	94	22	116
	Row%	(81.0)	(19.0)	(100.0)
	Column%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
	Total%	(81.0)	(19.0)	(100.0)
X <sup>2</sup> =0.249	df=1	p=0.618		

**Table 3.** Salary scale of different categories of respondents

		Sample		
Salary scale		Lecturing staff	Administrative staff	Total
U1-U2	Count	3	3	6
	Row%	(50.0)	(50.0)	(100.0)
	Column%	(4.0)	(15.8)	(6.4)
	Total%	(3.2)	(3.2)	(6.4)
U3	Count	7	1	8
	Row%	(87.5)	(12.5)	(100.0)
	Column%	(9.3)	(5.3)	(8.5)
	Total	(7.4)	(1.1)	(8.5)
U4	Count	30	7	37
	Row%	(81.0)	(18.9)	(100.0)
	Column%	(40.0)	(36.8)	(39.4)
	Total%	(31.9)	(7.4)	(39.4)
U5	Count	24	4	28
	Row%	(85.7)	(14.3)	(100.0)
	Column%	(32.0)	(21.1)	(29.8)
	Total%	(25.5)	(4.3)	(29.8)
U6-U8	Count	11	4	15
	Row%	(73.3)	(14.3)	(100.0)
	Column%	(14.7)	(21.1)	(16.0)
	Total%	(11.7)	(4.3)	(16.0)
Total	Count	75	19	94
	Row%	(79.8)	(20.2)	(100.0)
	Column%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
	Total%	(79.8)	(20.2)	(100.0)
X <sup>2</sup> =4.632	df=4	p=0.327		

organizational commitment and OCB.

Table 5 indicates that there is a significant relationship between rewards and commitment ( $r=0.606$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) job satisfaction with commitment ( $r=0.535$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

There is also significant relationship between OCB with reward ( $r=0.421$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), OCB with job satisfaction ( $r=0.251$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and OCB with commitment ( $r=0.652$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

**DISCUSSION**

**The effect of organizational commitment on job satisfaction**

The Pearson correlation matrix indicates a positive and significant relationship between organizational

**Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix for Commitment**

		Pay reward	Unidentified factor
1.	I feel like “part of the family of my organization”	0.843	
2.	I do feel as if this organization’s problems are my own	0.826	
3.	I really feel as if this organization’s problem are my own	0.824	
4.	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	0.810	
5.	This organization has great deal of meaning for me	0.736	
6.	I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.630	
7.	Even if this organization was down financially, I will be reluctant to change to another		0.717
8.	It would be too costly for me to leave this organization now		0.690
9.	I feel that there are few options to consider leaving the organization		0.672
10.	It would be very hard for me to leave this organization even if I wanted to		0.669
11.	Jumping from one organization to another does not seem ethical to me		0.616
Eigen value		4.455	1.99
% Variance		40.502	18.089
Cumulative %		40.502	58.580

**Table 5.** Pearson correlation matrix

	Competence	Rewards	Job satisfaction	Commitment	OCB
Competence	<b>1.00</b>				
Rewards	0.012	1.00			
Job Satisfaction	0.068	1.00	1.00		
Commitment	0.029	0.0606**	0.535**	1.00	
OCB	0.036	0.421**	0.251**	0.652**	1.00

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).  
 \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

commitment and job satisfaction in Uganda Colleges of Commerce. This agrees with Allen et al, (1999) assertion that if employees are rewarded, it will lead to employees (job) satisfaction, which has a positive effect on employees (organizational) commitment.

This is also confirmed by the research by Freeman and Rush (1999). In the study addressing job satisfaction and organizational commitment, Freeman and Rush found a strong and uniform relationship between the two variables. They noted that good management policies and practices in line with employees’ expectations generate sufficient level of work effort, satisfaction with job and willingness to maintain membership with the organization.

Results also reveal that the most significant predictor of organizational citizenship behavior in UCCs is organizational commitment. Affective and continuance commitment are the ones identified in UCCs. Therefore, UCCs should invest in attaining organizational commitment from staff.

This agrees with Porter et al, (1999) that organizational commitment is the relative strength of individuals identification and involvement in a particular organization. Therefore, employees’ commitment will let them make extra efforts to identify and involve themselves in the activities of the organization even if unrewarded (OCB).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Competence of both administrative and lecturing staff should be urgently addressed. It is ironical that some staff in UCCs have diplomas yet they train students to acquire diplomas. Colleges should come up with staff development programmes to encourage and support further training besides that offered by MUBS.

Reward system should be improved by making all staff access the government payroll. This would reduce relying on the meager colleges collections and regular government grants. UCCs should streamline its promotional practices so that staff could be promoted across the ladder regularly according to government standing orders, as this will adjust salary scales accordingly. Organizational citizenship behavior should be inculcated in UCCs by encouraging team spirit so that members could be willing to go beyond what they are expected to do. A culture should be developed to make staff realize that mistakes /omissions by few people affect the survival of the entire organization. This will make staff to see assignments of their colleagues as theirs; and would come in to help when needs arise.

**Conclusion**

The study was intended to find the effect of organizational

commitment on job satisfaction of academic and administrative staff of Uganda Colleges of Commerce. There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction in Uganda Colleges of Commerce. The study agrees with earlier studies on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

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