

The Influence of Corporate Culture on Employee Commitment

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Abstract. In this paper, we study the influence of corporate culture on employee commitment. This study is based on a survey of 289 employees, managers, and company leaders in Hanoi and Vinh City, Vietnam. We used Cronbach's alpha and EFA for preliminary assessments, CFA for testing whether the actual data fit a hypothesized measurement model, and SEM for checking the theoretical model. The collected data have been analyzed with SPSS 23 and AMOS 23 to assess the suitability of the research model, to test the relationships, and to assess the reliability and validity of measurement scales for evaluating the influence of the corporate culture on all aspects of employee commitment: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. The results show that our model is in very good accordance with the data.

1 Introduction

To be efficient, a company, in addition to capital, employees, technology, and management skills, must also have a favorable corporate culture, a culture ensuring employee satisfaction and their desire to help the company succeed. Many studies show that corporate culture has a considerable influence on employee commitment, and thus, on the company's success. Therefore, it is in the best interest of each company to develop a favorable corporate culture.

2 Research Overview

Several studies analyzed how corporate culture affects employee commitment. Some of these studies are based on data from Vietnam, some on data from other countries.

2.1 International Research on the Employee Commitment

Many research papers study the relationship between employees and their workplace (Allen and Meyer 1990, p. 1; Hult 2005, p. 249; Lok and Crawford 2004,

p. 321; Meyer et al. 1993, p. 538; Mowday 1998, p. 387; Mowday et al. 1979, p. 224; Porter et al. 1974, p. 604; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 713). In particular, several papers show that such phenomena as taking on extra tasks, refusing to take on extra tasks, absences, etc., affect the employee's work performance (Allen and Meyer 1990, p. 1; Cohen 2007, p. 34; Hogg and Terry 2001, p. 110; Mathieu and Zajac 1990, p. 171; Porter et al. 1974, p. 604; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 713; Wasti 2003, p. 303; Yu and Egri 2005, p. 336).

In particular, Silverthorne (2004) studied employee commitment to work for the company. On the one hand, employees with such a commitment work more productively. Vice versa, Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 163) show that, based on the employee's behavior and attitude to work, one can predict his/her future commitment. Companies need employee commitment to minimize the personnel replacement and to avoid ineffectiveness of the existing employees (Mathieu and Zajac 1990, p. 171). For this purpose, individuals showing their commitment of staying may be respected and appreciated, and obtain a lot of benefits and incentives by their workplace (Mathieu and Zajac 1990, p. 171). The employee commitment benefits the society as a whole since it enhances the overall productivity and work performance (Mathieu and Zajac 1990, p. 171).

McKinnon et al. (2003, p. 28) showed that individuals are strongly affected by core values, respects, beliefs, and visions of their workplace. Like McKinnon et al. (2003, p. 28), Martin (2001, p. 263) has demonstrated that the employee commitment makes them willing to, if needed, carry out extra tasks which are not a part of their official job requirements. In general, it has been shown that the performance employees with high level of commitment usually exceed expectations (Martin 2001, p. 623). Similarly, Porter et al. (1974, p. 604; Brooks and Wallace 2006, p. 233) showed that employees with organizational commitment are more cheerful and more willing to volunteer to make contributions into the organizations. This is not a minor issue, having employees that are willing to take on extra tasks often provides an organization with a competitive edge, that makes it a winner in the marketplace competition; see Mathieu and Zajac (1990, p. 171).

Silverthorne (2004, pp. 592–593) and Ogaard et al. (2005, p. 25) show that the employee's suitability for the organization significantly affects their commitment. Nazir (2005, pp. 47–48) shares a similar view to Silverthorne (2004, pp. 592–593) that employee's satisfaction and organizational commitment largely result from the employee's suitability. Hult (2005, p. 250) has pointed out that if an employee is suitable for the working environment, her or his organizational commitment is high. To increase the employee commitment, it is therefore necessary to identify corporate cultures which are favorable for nurturing the employee commitment.

Becker (1960) was one of the first researchers to propose a theoretical framework for definitions of organizational commitment. In his opinion, employees exchange their loyalty and commitment for advantages and benefits such as good working conditions, efficient performance of familiar works in the organization. This theoretical framework is based on definitions of organizational

commitment as the extent to which an employee determines his or her worth in the organization.

The study of “*Antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational commitment among Malaysia engineers*” by Muthuveloo and Rose (2005) demonstrates that organizational commitment has a considerable influence on the organization’s operation. In order to achieve organizational commitment of employees, it is therefore imperative for managers and leaders to build and improve good relationship between employees and the organization, and to motivate employee’s loyalty and dedication to the organization. The more appreciated an employees is, the longer he/she will stay.

In general, employee commitment is an important factor deciding the success of an organization (Chen 2004, p. 438). A committed employee is a valuable resource for the organization: such employees remain with their organization regardless of ups and downs of the organization, and this enhances the organization’s competitiveness (Allen and Meyer 1990, p. 1; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 713; Yu and Egri 2005, p. 336). According to Buchanan (1974, p. 339) and Mathieu and Zajac (1990, p. 171), organizations have various methods to retain their talented employees and obtain their commitment and loyalty. Rashid et al. (2003, p. 713) consider the employee commitment as an honorable reward for the organization.

Among a variety of different models of organizational commitment, we focused on two models: by Mowday et al. (1979) and by Allen and Meyer (1990). After a thorough analysis of these models, we selected the model of Allen and Meyer (1990) for our analysis.

The paper by Allen and Meyer (1990) recommends a three-component model of commitment, incorporating affective, normative, and continuance commitment (Fig. 1).

- Affective commitment is defined as the individual’s emotional attachment to – and involvement and identification with – the organization (Allen and Meyer 1990, p. 2; Lee et al. 2001, p. 597; Mowday 1998, p. 390; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714; Wasti 2003, p. 303). Buchanan (1974, p. 533) clarifies that affective commitment is the attachment to objectives and values of the organization and a clear understanding of the employees’s roles ion regards to these objectives and values. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 162) show that the employee active engagement and long-term work for an organization originated from the deep affinity with main objectives and values of the organization. In other words, when an employee have strong affective commitment, he or she tends to actively engage with the organization, and stay with it for a long time (Clugston et al. 2000, p. 7; Meyer et al. 1993, p. 539). According to Wasti (2003, p. 304), many empirical studies in commitment have shown there is a reliable evidence of the strong relation between emotional aspects and commitment – stronger than with other job aspects.
- Continuance commitment is a commitment related to the perceived or real cost of leaving (Greenberg and Baron 2003, p. 161; Lee et al. 2001, p. 597; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714; Wasti 2003, p. 303). In term of this commitment, the fewer job alternatives for an individual to work at other organizations,

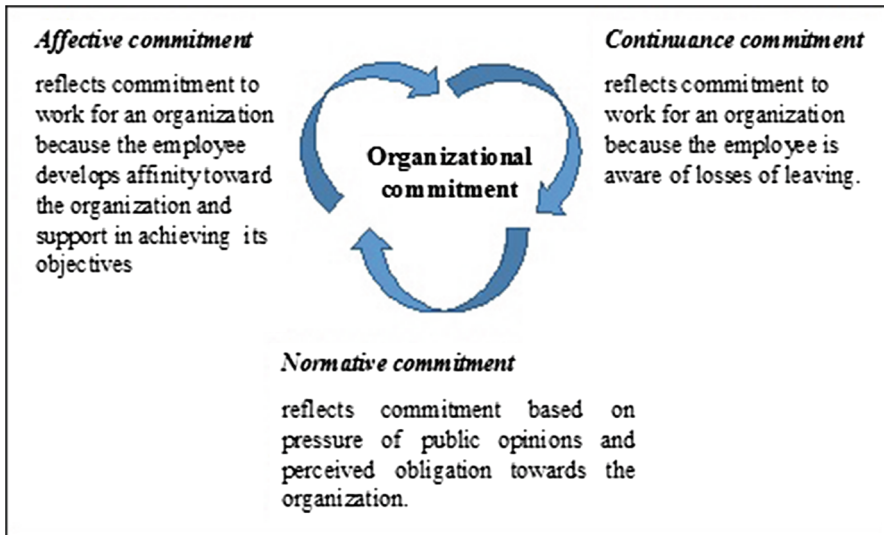


Fig. 1. The three-component model of commitment by Allen and Meyer (1990).

the stronger the continuance commitment to the organization (Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714).

Employees tend to develop continuance commitment when they perceive that the cost of leaving the organization is too high (Clugston et al. 2000, p. 7; Meyer et al. 1993, p. 539).

- Normative commitment is the employee's perceived obligation to continue employment with their organization (Lee et al. 2001, p. 597; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714; Wasti 2003, p. 303). Employees who work for the organization for a long time usually show normative commitment (Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714). A possible explanation is that organizational socialization takes place in the same way as societal socialization: social norms put employees under the tremendous pressure towards working for the organization (Clugston et al. 2000, p. 5). Individuals continue their employment with the organization because they feel that they should; for example, because their organisational loyalty is respected at the organisation or in the society (Clugston et al. 2000, p. 5; Meyer et al. 1993, p. 539; Rashid et al. 2003, p. 714). Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 163) also show that employees remain in the organization because they are worried about their colleagues' disapproval if they decide to leave.

In general, according to Meyer and Allen (1990), organizational commitment is a psychological state of the employee toward the organization related to the decision to remain a member of the organization. An employee's organizational commitment demonstrates their responsibility for work, their loyalty, and their belief in organizational values (O'Reilly 1986).

In other words, organizational commitment is earnestness and trust in the organization, as “*Employee commitment is the extent to which an employee gives their earnestness and trust in the organization’s objectives and desires to stay with the organization*”.

2.2 Vietnamese Research on Employee Commitment

Vietnamese studies on employee commitment have mainly focused on benefits, incentives, and other favorable conditions for employees to actively engage in the organization. Here are some typical studies.

The study “*Assessment of human resource management of travel businesses in Ho Chi Minh City*” (Dung 1999) collected the data from 86 businesses and found four major influences on employee’s engagement to the organization including (1) assigned jobs, (2) training and promotion opportunities, (3) working conditions and environment and (4) income. Of these four, working conditions and environment is the most influential factor affecting the employee’s engagement, and the effect of training and promotion opportunities is the smallest.

The study “*Evaluation on employee’s organizational commitment based on job satisfaction in Vietnam*” (Dung and Abraham 2005) explored the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The study shows three components of organization commitment – pride, effort, and loyalty – are affected by the following five main factors: work, payment, colleagues, supervision, and promotion. This study was based on the survey of 396 full-time employees from Ho Chi Minh City. The results of this study mean that an employee works very hard and efficiently and takes pride in the organization when he/she likes his/her job and gets on well with colleagues and the boss. It should be mentioned that this study focuses mostly on the organizational commitment – whether the employee will stay or not, and does not specifically analyze factors influencing the employee’s degree of engagement with the organization.

The study “*Evaluation on employee’s job satisfaction at Long Shin Company Limited*” (Lam 2009) gives some recommendations to enhance employees’ job satisfaction by strengthening (1) senior-junior relationship, (2) sympathy for personal affairs, (3) payment and benefits, (4) working conditions and environment, (5) career development and prospects, (6) prospects of company development, and (7) efficiency of training. The author emphasized that the most important way to promote employees’ satisfaction is to improve the senior-junior relationship.

3 Research Methodology

In this paper, we have used expert opinions, document analysis, and, more generally, qualitative research methods to decide how to gauge the corresponding quantities. Once the scales for all these quantities have been selected, we can apply quantitative methods to study how all four aspects of the corporate culture – mission, adaptability, consistency and participation – influence three components of

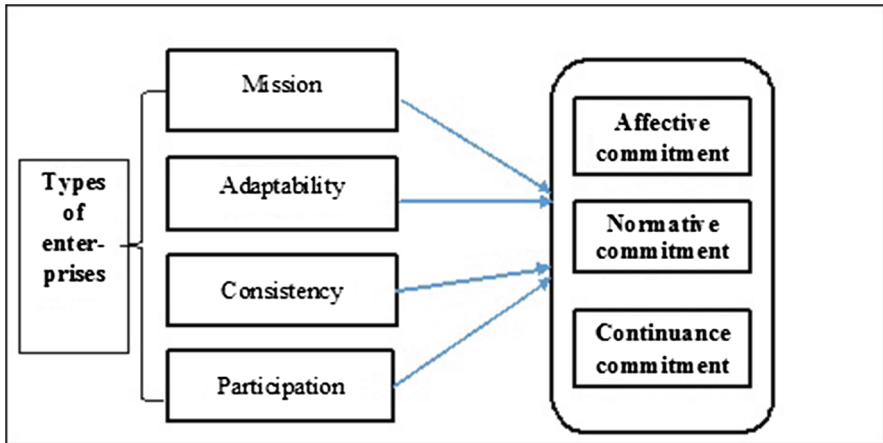


Fig. 2. The research model.

employee commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment; see Fig. 2.

This study uses the results of the survey of full-time employees, managers, and enterprise leaders in Hanoi and Vinh City. The questionnaire used for data collection consists of two parts: (1) Part A includes personal information and enterprise's information: gender, age, qualification, position in the company, the type, scale and main business line of the company. (2) Part B presents statements corresponding to mission, adaptability, consistency, and participation and to three components of commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. For each of these statements, a respondent selects one of the 5 possible Likert-scale-type answers ranging from (1) "Strongly disagree" to (5) "Strongly agree". Pronoun "I" is used in the questionnaires.

The statement are as follows:

Corporate culture

- Mission

M1: The information about decisions made by managers is mostly correct.

M2: Leaders and managers always "do what they say".

M3: The company's development strategies force other companies to change their strategies to compete in a sector.

M4: The company has a clear mission and my performance is mission-oriented and meaningful.

M5: Everyone knows what to do to achieve the sustainable success.

M6: The vision of the company motivates and promotes the employees.

- Adaptability

A1: Creation and innovation are encouraged in the company.

A2: The company is always willing to carry out new ideas and methods.

A3: New ideas are always supported for development.

A4: We could adjust decisions according to customers.

A5: Failures are valuable lessons.

A6: We respond well to competitors and to other changes in the business environment.

- Consistency

C1: It is easy for us to get unanimous resolution even when facing the most difficult problems.

C2: We have a clear agreement on how to work properly and which ways are wrong.

C3: Policies of the company are consistent and well-planned.

C4: Objectives of management at different levels are consistent.

C5: A person who ignores core values will face difficulties.

- Participation

P1: The company always encourages the cooperation between/among its departments.

P2: The ability of the staff regularly improves.

P3: Everyone believes that they have a positive impact in the organization.

P4: Tasks are assigned so that individuals see the connection between their work and the organization's objectives.

P5: People work as members in a team.

P6: Business plans are continuously made and everyone is involved in this process; emotional commitment.

Commitment

- Affective commitment

AC1: I would be very happy to build my career in my current organization.

AC2: I like discussing my organization with others.

AC3: I do not see that "I am a member" in my organization.

AC4: I do not feel engaged to my organization.

AC5: I do not like to mention my organization.

AC6: I am proud of my job and of my position in the organization.

- Continuance commitment

CC1: It is difficult for me to leave the organization right now, even if that's what I want.

CC2: I continue to work for my current organization because I have made a significant sacrifice here, and another organization may not be in line with my interests.

CC3: If I did not have many personal relations in this organization, I could consider working elsewhere.

CC4: Too many changes in my life will happen if I leave my organization now.

CC5: I'm not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without a substitute staff.

CC6: I believe that those who have been trained in my profession must be responsible for the profession.

- Normative commitment

NC1: I believe that frequent job changes are normal.

NC2: One of the main reasons why I continue to work for this organization is that I believe that my loyalty is important and I have a moral obligation to work here.

NC3: If I get an offer for a better job elsewhere, I feel that it is not nice to leave my organization immediately.

NC4: I do not believe that a person should always be loyal to his/her organization.

NC5: I do not feel any obligation to the leader when I leave the organization.

NC6: I really feel that the problems of the organization are also my problems.

4 Research Results

4.1 Statistics of Sample Description

We sent the survey to 1000 folks. Of these folks, 315 filled in the questionnaires. 26 of them provided insufficient information. As a result, 289 valid surveys were used as data for the research.

4.2 Testing of Scale

4.2.1 Testing Reliability of the Scale

For each of eight characteristics – five characteristics describing the corporate culture and three characteristics describing employee commitment – we asked several questions which are, in our opinion, reflecting this characteristic. Our expectation is that, since all these questions describe the same characteristic, the corresponding answers will be strongly correlated.

To check to what extent they are indeed strongly correlated, we used the Cronbach's Alpha technique. For this purpose, we estimate the correlation among all the variables (which describes the reliability of the corresponding multi-statement scale), as well as the correlation between the combined total score and each of the variables. Only variables which are strongly correlation with the total score are retained, while variables with low correlation should be deleted from the scale. In general, variables are accepted with the reliability coefficient at or over 0.6 and the correlation coefficient between variables and the total score over 0.3. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of variables are as follows.

Scale of Mission: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.807, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Adaptability: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.896, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Participation: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.816, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Consistency: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.881, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all five observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Affective commitment: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.812, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Continuance commitment: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.832, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Scale of Normative commitment: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.878, and the correlation between each of the observed variables and the total variable is > 0.3 ; therefore, all six observed variables are retained in this scale.

Overall, all 41 observed variables are retained.

4.2.2 Results of Factor Analysis

How consistent are different aspects of corporate culture? different aspects of employee commitment? To answer these questions, we used the KMO and Bartlett's Test is applied with the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) index in the range from 0.5 to 1 to assess whether the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is indeed suitable in this case or not. The coefficient extraction method uses the Varimax rotation, and stops when extracting factors with the eigenvalue of 1. The scale is acceptable when the total variance of extracted factors is 50% or more. The results of applying this technique to the scales of the corporate culture and commitment are presented below.

Scale of the corporate culture: The KMO and Bartlett's Test in the analysis of 23 observed variables of the corporation culture with the high KMO index (0.845) and the significance level of 0 ($\text{sig} = 0.000$) demonstrates that the exploratory factor analysis is appropriate in this scale. With 23 variables introduced into the factor analysis, the results are extracted into four groups as shown in Table 1. The total variance is 59.58%. Thus, the factor analysis results of the corporate culture extract the number of groups as expected.

Scale of commitment: The KMO and Bartlett's Test in the analysis of 23 observed variables of the corporation culture with the high KMO index (0.833) and the significance level of 0 ($\text{sig} = 0.000$) demonstrates that the exploratory factor analysis is appropriate in this scale. With 18 variables introduced into the factor analysis, the results are extracted into three groups as shown in Table 2. The total variance is 56.64%. Thus, the factor analysis results of commitment extract the number of groups as expected.

Table 1. The exploratory factor analysis of the corporate culture.

No.	Group of factors	Variables
1	M- Mission	M1, M2, M3, M4, M5 and M6
2	A-Adaptability	A1,A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6
3	P - Participation	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 and P6
4	C-Consistency	C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.845
 Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: Sig. = 0.000
 Total variance is 59.58% >50%

Table 2. The exploratory factor analysis of the Commitment.

No.	Group of factors	Variables
1	AC - Affective commitment	AC1, AC2, AC3, AC4, AC5 and AC6
2	CC - Continuance commitment	CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC5 and CC6
3	NC - Normative commitment	NC1, NC2, NC3, NC4, NC5 and NC6

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.833
 Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: Sig. = 0.000
 Total variance is 56.64% > 50%

4.3 Testing of the Scale by the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

4.3.1 Testing of the Research Model

Testing of the formal theoretical model: The results of the SEM theoretical model (as illustrated on Fig. 2) are shown in Fig. 3. Here, Chi-square / df = 1.593, GFI = 0.838, TLI = 0.925, CFI = 0.931, and RMSEA = 0.050, which shows that the theoretical models are appropriate for our data.

The positive (+) and statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) estimated results of the weights in Table 3 demonstrate that: Mission (M), Adaptability (A), Consistency (C) and Participation (P) impact three components of organizational commitment including Affective commitment (AC), Continuance commitment (CC) and Normative commitment (NC). It means that “Each measurement is related to the scales as theoretically expected”. In other words, the scales of the concepts in the model meet the standards of the value related to the theory.

In addition, the results of standardized estimates in Fig. 3 and Table 3 show that:

- Mission (MS) has the most powerful impact (0.675) on the employee’s continuance commitment. In other words, the mission is the most important factor affecting the employee’s continuance commitment in Vietnamese enterprises.
- The second most powerful factor is consistency (0.661) that impacts employee’s normative commitment;
- The third is mission (0.628) influencing employee’s normative commitment;
- The fourth is adaptability (0.572) impacting employee’s continuance commitment;
- The fifth is adaptability (0.478) affecting employee’s affective commitment;

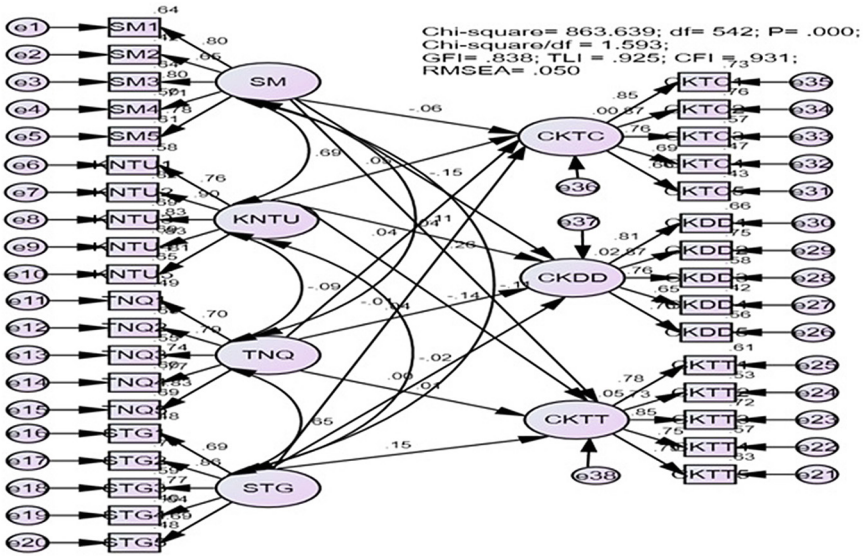


Fig. 3. Official SEM theoretical model results (standardized).

Table 3. Results of testing the causal relationship among the concepts of formal theoretical model (standardized).

Relationship	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Label
AC <- M	0.318	0.061	11.12	***	
NC <- M	0.628	0.050	7.39	***	
CC <- M	0.675	0.048	6.81	***	
AC <- A	0.478	0.057	9.19	***	
NC <- A	0.276	0.062	11.65	***	
CC <- A	0.572	0.053	8.07	***	
AC <- C	0.278	0.062	11.62	***	
AC <- P	0.133	0.053	1.962	0.050	
NC <- P	0.149	0.044	2.202	0.028	
CC <- P	0.454	0.058	9.47	***	
NC <- C	0.661	0.049	6.98	***	
CC <- C	0.165	0.059	2.105	0.035	

Of which Estimate: Average value estimate; SE: standard error; CR: Criticalratio; P: probability value; ***: $p < 0,001$.

- The sixth is participation (0.454) impacting the employee's affective commitment;
- The seventh is mission (0.318) affecting employee's affective commitment;
- The next is consistency (0.278) affecting employee's affective commitment;
- The ninth is adaptability (0.276) affecting the normative employee commitment;
- The tenth is consistency (0.165) effecting employee's continuance commitment;
- The eleventh is participation (0.149) affecting the normative employee commitment, and
- Finally, the least important factor is participation (0.133) affecting affective commitment.

4.3.2 Testing of Research Hypotheses

Our results show that all 12 research hypotheses: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, . . . , H12 described in Fig. 2 have been experimentally confirmed.

Specifically, Table 3 shows that all the weights are positive (+) and statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$), thus M (Mission), Adaptability (A), Consistency (C), and Participation (P) all positively and statistically significantly impact all aspects of commitment:

- mission is positively correlated with affective commitment;
- consistency is positively correlated with affective commitment;
- adaptability is positively correlated with affective commitment;
- participation is positively correlated with affective commitment;
- mission is positively correlated with normative commitment;
- consistency is positively correlated with normative commitment;
- adaptability is positively correlated with normative commitment;
- participation is positively correlated with normative commitment;
- mission is positively correlated with continuance commitment;
- consistency is positively correlated with continuance commitment;
- adaptability is positively correlated with continuance commitment;
- participation is positively correlated with continuance commitment.

5 Conclusion

It is known that the employee commitment benefits both the employee – by making him or her more satisfied – and the company – by making it more efficient and more productive. It is therefore important to maintain employee commitment. This commitment is known to be affected by the corporate culture. To maintain employee commitment, it is therefore desirable to study how different components of corporate culture affect different aspects of employee commitment. In this study, we analyze the relation between corporate culture and employee commitment in Vietnam based on the results of a survey of 289 employees, managers, and enterprise leaders from Hanoi and Vinh City. Our conclusion is that each

component of corporate culture has a statistically significant effect on all aspects of employee commitment.

Our conclusion is that to enhance the employee commitment to the organization, it is really necessary to develop all aspects of favorable corporate culture.

An improved corporate culture benefits employees, benefits corporations, and benefits the country as a whole – by increasing its economic productivity. It is therefore desirable that this improvement be a joint effort of the corporations' leaders and managers, corporations' employees, and the state as a whole.

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