

# The Research on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in Agency Workers

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**ABSTRACT:** This research discusses the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment in agency workers, according to the questionnaire survey for 220 agency workers. The results indicates as follows: The degree of both job satisfaction and organizational commitment is in medium level; Job satisfaction shows a significantly positive correlation with emotional commitment, normative commitment and ideal commitment , while such correlation is not so significant in economic commitment and chance commitment; Moreover, job satisfaction plays a positive role in predicting emotional commitment, normative commitment and ideal commitment.

**KEYWORD:** Agency workers; Job satisfaction; Organizational commitment

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Labor dispatch is a way of flexible employment, which has been applied by an increasing number of employers. In this mode of employment, agency workers are dually managed by labor dispatch agency and employer. Labor dispatch agency, as agency workers' legal employer, undertakes the responsibilities of payoff, training, etc. Employer, as agency workers' practical employer, is responsible for their on-site guidance and management. Since the work for agency workers is usually temporary and short-term in most cases, agency workers tend to face a number of problems in their work, such as high strength work, low income level, insufficient growth opportunity, intensive mental pressure and low job stability. The presence of these practical problems would certainly have influence on work attitude of agency workers.

Job Satisfaction (JS) and Organizational Commitment (OC) are two interrelated variables of work attitude, which have been highly emphasized by academic field and industry. Many scholars devoted to study the relationship between them, but have not yet to find a clear answer. Many researches indicate that JS has notable positive correlation with OC (Mowday et al, 1982; [5] Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; [6] Tett & Meyer, 1993; [9] etc.). However, up to now, no agreement has reached on the question whether they influences each other (JS influences OC or OC influences JS), or not. Majority of scholars agree that JS is the antecedent variable of

OC (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; [3] Mueller, 1994; [7] Wallace, 1995; [11] etc.). And a few scholars hold the opinion that OC is the antecedent variable of JS , such as Bateman & Strasser, 1984; [1] Vandenberg & Lance, 1992. [10]

JS is a kind of attitude or view of the whole work or each level of work. OC refers to the degree that individuals identify and participate in an organization. In other words, JS represents workers' feeling and emotional response to the work, and OC indicates workers' feeling and emotional response to the organization. For agency workers, what is the current situation of JS and OC? What is the relationship between the two factors? Is it efficient for employer to improve OC or the relationship between organization and workers through enhancing agency workers' JS? All of these are crucial problems that scholars and employers have to face and solve.

## 2 METHOD

### 2.1 Sample

Total 250 questionnaires were conducted among 12 employers in Beijing, Tianjin, Jinan, Dalian who make use of labor dispatch, including 4 foreign enterprises and joint ventures, 6 Chinese shareholding enterprises, a school and a hospital. 220 valid questionnaires were collected and sample return rate was 88%. Among the samples, there are 74 males and 146 females, aging from 23~43, with

the average age of 29.1 years old; Seniority ranges from 3 months to 22 years; 69 respondents are unmarried while 151 are married; For their education, 38 respondents are below the education level of technical school or high school, 74 graduated from junior college, 84 hold bachelor degree and 26 hold master degree; 102 respondents work in foreign enterprises and joint ventures, 82 work in other enterprises, and 36 are from government departments and institutions.

## 2.2 Measures

The research uses JS scale and OC scale as measurement instruments, combined together as “the questionnaire of work attitude for agency workers”, including three parts: instruction, scale, personal background information. The scale contains 28 items, including 3 JS items, 25 OC items. According to the degree of conformity, the item has divided into strongly disagree, disagree, uncertainty, agree and strongly agree. The scores would be measured by Likert 5 scaling method, ranging from one point to five points.

JS scale chooses three items from the whole JS scale of Brayfield & Rothe (1951): “I am quite satisfied with present job”; “I think my job was quite boring”; “I find the real pleasure in the work”. [8] Among the three items, the second one is opposite, scored reversely. The score of JS is the average of the sum of three items. The higher the score, the more JS expressed. In this research, the scale's coefficient of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.67. In order to explore convergent validity of JS scale, principal component analysis was conducted. The result shows that only one principal component is engendered from three items, which indicates JS scale has a good convergent validity.

OC scale applied Chinese Employees' OC Questionnaire (COCQ) which was compiled by Chinese scholar Ling WenQuan et al. (2000), including five dimensions - Emotional Commitment (EC), Normative Commitment (NC), Ideal Commitment (IC), Economic Commitment (ECC) and Chance Commitment (CC), and 25 items. [4] The score of OC is the accumulative aggregation of 25 items. The higher the score, the greater OC agency workers had. In this research, the scale's coefficient of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.82. The internal consistency of a coefficient in five subscales ranges from 0.61-0.79, which indicates that the degree of the internal consistency between general scale and five subscales is relatively high, and the internal structure is well.

Personal background information survey includes gender, age, education, marriage, position, employer types and others, aiming to understand interviewees' basic information.

## 2.3 Methods of Data Processing

Data collected was analyzed with SPSS19.0 software in this research, data processing mainly conducted correlation analysis and regression analysis.

## 3 Results

### 3.1 Descriptive statistics of JS and OC

After analyzing the collected JS scale, we find that the average score of agency workers' JS is 3.23, which suggests agency workers' JS was in the medium level. Based on the score of JS scale, 5 levels of satisfaction are divided, ranking from low to high, and the distribution of population in JS at different levels for agency workers are concluded. The results show that almost 70% of the agency workers are not so satisfied with their work. JS in level 3 (unsure) has the highest percentage (42.3%); The proportion of level 4 (satisfied) is 26.8%; Level 2 follows (not satisfied), accounting for 25.5%; Next one is level 5 (very satisfied), 4.9%; And only 0.5% of agency workers are at level 1 (very unsatisfied).

After analyzing the collected OC scale, the mean of agency workers' OC is 3.28, which indicates their OC is in the medium level. According to 5 subscales, the scores of EC, NC, IC, ECC and CC are 3.52, 3.75, 3.41, 2.87 and 2.86, respectively. The score of NC is the highest, 3.75. And the lowest score is CC, 2.86, showing a low stage of commitment. Namely, agency workers thought they could get a better employment opportunity or employer, causing low cost when they leave the organization. In order to further understand distribution of population in OC at different levels for agency workers, the levels of OC are especially divided into four grades - low, relatively low, medium and high. The statistical analysis shows that level 3 (medium) has the highest percentage (59.1%); Proportion of level 2 (relatively low) is 34.1%; Then level 4 follows with (high) 5.9%; Level 1 (low) has the lowest percentage (0.9%). Overall, the great majority is in medium or lower level, and only 5.9% of agency workers are in high level, with relatively higher organizational identification.

### 3.2 Correlation analysis between JS and OC

Table 1. Correlation analysis results between JS and OC

	JS	EMC	SC	IC	ECC	CC
JS	1					
EMC	0.581**	1				
SC	0.375**	0.624**	1			
IC	0.654**	0.656**	0.420**	1		
ECC	0.078	0.221**	0.216**	0.222**	1	
CC	-0.130	0.015	0.048	-0.074	0.587*	1

\*P<0.05;\*\*P<0.01

In order to get the relationship between JS and OC, correlation between them is specially analyzed. In Table 1, JS shows significantly positive correlations with EC, NC and IC, for the correlation coefficients are between 0.375 and 0.654 and all of them get through the significance test below the level of 0.01. However, OC does not show such significant correlations with ECC or CC ( $r=-0.249$ ,  $P=0.078>0.05$ ;  $r=-0.130$ ,  $P=0.055>0.05$ ).

### 3.3 Regression analysis between JS and OC

To further investigate the degree of influence between JS and OC, regression analysis was conducted into this research, taking demographics variables and JS as independent variables, and EC,

NC and IC as dependent variables. During regression analysis, redundant attributes are tested by variance inflation factor (VIF). All VIFs are less than 3 and between 1 and 1.3, which are conformed to the standard, without multicollinearity problem. Table 2 shows that demographics variables have no significant influence on EC, NC and IC. However, after adding JS as variable, its positive effect on EC, NC and IC is demonstrated by regression analysis results. All of the three regression coefficients (0.511, 0.256, 0.661) get through the significance test below the level of 0.001. The explanatory power of every model is 35.8%, 16.2% and 44.8% respectively. This indicates agency workers' JS could positively affect EC, NC and IC.

Table 2. Regression analysis results of JS and OC

Variable	JS-EMC		JS-NC		JS-IC	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Gender	0.695	0.697	0.512	0.471	1.184	1.372
Age	1.083	0.731	2.138	1.956	-0.163	-0.927
Seniority	1.558	1.076	0.673	0.298	1.270	0.651
Education	-1.021	-1.167	-0.301	-0.295	1.519	2.030
Employer types	1.445	0.743	0.351	-0.145	1.900	1.466
JS		9.317**		4.972**		12.087**
F	5.667***	21.110***	4.144***	7.961***	4.133***	30.161***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.118	0.376	0.089	0.185	0.089	0.463

\* $P<0.05$ ; \*\* $P<0.01$ ; \*\*\* $P<0.001$

## 4 DISCUSSION

Both JS and OC of agency workers are not high and at medium level. On one hand, more than half of agency workers are not satisfied with their work. According to Expectancy Theory (Victor H. Vroom), JS derives from the degree that employees' evaluation of their individual work meets expectations. Unsatisfied would arise if employees fail to achieve desired expectations. Chinese employees value job stability highly, while most agency workers engage in temporary short-work. So it is hard for them to achieve their expectations of job stability. Furthermore, most agency workers engage in the work with high strength, low income, limited development space, and repetitive or transactional work. From the perspective of working intensity, income level, career development, technology and diversity, it is difficult for agency workers to realize work expectations. As a result, it is certain that their JS is not high. On the other hand, the OC to the majority of agency workers is in the medium level or even lower, which suggests the strength that they identify and participate in organization is not high. In other words, they haven't strong sense of identity and belonging to their employers. This is also related to their status - Temporary Employee. Due to their status, many agency workers feel inferior to permanent workers, and get unfair treatment, even unequal pay for equal

work. Therefore, a number of them are unwilling to pay more efforts for employers, and even choose to leave once a better chance turns up.

Research performed by Jeffrey P. Slattery (2005) has found that temporary employee's JS is correlated positively with OC.[2] However, this research finds JS is correlated positively with EC, NC and IC, while JS has not shown such significant correlation with EC and OC. For further explanation, JS plays a positive role in predicting EC, NC and IC. The conclusion improves that agency workers' perception to work is ahead of and causes their perception to organization. The reason for this conclusion might be: when agency workers are satisfied with their work, they would appreciate their employers, abide by the basic rules, and hope to continue to stay there to achieve their career objective. Besides, the research shows JS is not significantly correlated with ECC and CC. This may be related to agency workers' not high income expectations and perceptions that they think their core competitiveness are not significant, especially transferable competences are insufficient. Leaving their current job does not mean they can find a better one. Even though they are not satisfied with work, they can accept the reality reluctantly and keep staying in the organization. Therefore, if employers make efforts to improve JS in agency workers, their EC, NC and IC to the organization will be improved.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Through the research above, we can draw the following conclusions: Firstly, Agency workers' JS and OC are both in the medium level. Secondly, JS shows a significantly positive correlation with EC, NC and IC, while JS does not show such significant correlation with ECC and OC. Thirdly, JS plays a positive role in predicting EC, NC and IC, which demonstrates every effort that labor dispatch agency and employer has made can effectively promote OC, especially EC, NC and IC for agency workers.

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