

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: THE ROLE OF NEWCOMER ADJUSTMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Attracting talent and improving the intention of newcomers to serve the ever-growing tourism and hospitality business is a fundamental labor problem in the hotel industry (Tsaur et al., 2019). The new generation of employees in the context of the Internet era, whose work values are more self-seeking and de-attachment (Moon et al., 2022), brings some challenges to the new employee socialization practices centered on organizational control.

Previous research on organizational socialization outcomes has placed much emphasis on performance in the workplace (Spagnoli, 2020) but has ignored the people themselves, particularly the affective aspect. For new employees to effectively initiate an affective connection with the organization, developing social capital through autonomy can have a positive effect (Ng & Allen, 2018; Watson & Papamarcos, 2002). However, whether there are more specific mechanisms of influence has yet to be fully verified, so introducing a multiple-assimilation perspective will help to examine the relationship between social capital and affective organizational commitment more clearly and to investigate the mechanisms of influence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social capital and affective organizational commitment.

Based on socialization resource theory, the affective connection between employees and the organization is established from the perspective of relational resources (Korte et al., 2013). Social capital is a socialization resource closely related to

personal relationship networks. In the cultural context of China's "Guanxi" society, the impact of social capital on affective commitment is even more worth exploring.

The mediating role of newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment.

The factors of assimilation are multiple and include the extent to which new employees acquire knowledge, skills, and functional understanding of the new job, make connections with others in the organization and gain insight into the culture of the new organization (Ellis et al., 2015). Song et al. (2012) integrated assimilation factors, with fitting in, role negotiation, standing out, task mastery, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships constitute newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment. Newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment includes fitting in, role negotiation, standing out, task mastery, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships (Song et al., 2012), which together capture the dynamics of employees' adaptation to their tasks, roles, and cultural and psychosocial systems, predicting the embeddedness of new employees in the organization (Akgunduz et al., 2017), but these newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment have not been specifically studied and empirically supported in relation to affective organizational commitment.

Based on the literature, fourteen hypotheses are proposed for testing (Due to the abstract limit of no more than 3 pages, see Appendix B).

METHOD

Quantitative method with the questionnaire is

used, and all the variables involved in this study are adopted from mature and commonly used scales, and the scales are further revised by pre-testing to ensure the operability of the scales (see Appendix A). The social capital measurement scale is from Tsai et al. (1998). The newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment measurement scale, using a scale developed by Song et al. (2013) for the organizational socialization of new hotel employees, has 20 measurement items. They are all measured on 5-point Likert scales. The affective organizational commitment measure scale was selected from a 7-point Likert scale developed by Allen et al. (1990) with 5 measurement items.

The study was conducted in Hainan, China, a popular tropical island where tourism is the pillar industry, and a large number of frontline employees work in numerous hotels. The questionnaire was distributed to luxury hotels (i.e., 4- to 5-star hotels) employees who joined the organizations less than 36 months, and the survey respondents filled out the questionnaire anonymously by their actual situation. A total of 400 official questionnaires were distributed, 357 were filled out and returned, with a response rate of 89.3%. Excluding invalid questionnaires, the final 326 questionnaires were valid, with an effective questionnaire response rate of 81.5%.

Several statistical analysis steps were conducted to test the proposed structural model. SPSS24.0 was used to perform descriptive and correlation analysis, and AMOS 24.0 software was adopted to perform structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis.

FINDINGS

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted first to validate the measurement model and the model fit is acceptable with CFI (.914), TLI (.905), and IFI (.914) are greater than 0.90, RMSEA (.059) is less than 0.08, SRMR (.046) is less than 0.07, and χ^2/df (2.141) should be less than 3 (Bagozzi, 2010). Each index has reached the requirement, which means that the theoretical model has a good match with the data. The values of the square root of the average extracted variance calculated in parentheses on the diagonal line (AVE) show that there is also good discriminant validity

among the variables (Hair, 2011).

Results from the SEM analysis show that social capital had a significant positive effect on affective organizational commitment ($\beta=0.827$, $p=0.000$). The direct effects of social capital on all six factors of newcomer adjustment were significant (95% BC confidence interval, not including 0). The direct effect of social capital on affective organizational commitment ($\beta=0.257$, $p=0.079$) was not significant in this mediated structural model. In contrast, the assimilation six-factor mediating effect between social capital and affective organizational commitment was significant (0.570, 95% BC confidence interval= [0.353, 0.856], $p=0.000$), indicating that the newcomer adjustment fully mediates the relationship between social capital and affective organizational commitment.

The newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment as a whole mediates the relationship between social capital and affective organizational commitment. However, it does not indicate that all six factors do. The analysis of the path-specific mediating effects revealed that fitting in ($\beta=-0.064$, 95% BC confidence interval= [-0.156, 0.009], $p=0.088$), standing out ($\beta=0.013$, 95% BC confidence interval= [-0.095, 0.126], $p=0.759$), and task mastery ($\beta=-0.084$, 95% BC confidence interval= [-0.305, 0.115], $p=0.387$) were not significant in mediating the effect between social capital and affective organizational commitment; the other three factors role negotiation ($\beta=0.113$, 95%BC confidence interval= [0.015, 0.247], $p=0.026$), membership identification ($\beta=0.292$, 95%BC confidence interval= [0.163, 0.415], $p=0.000$) and interpersonal relationships ($\beta=0.275$, 95% BC confidence interval= [0.076, 0.508], $p=0.007$) had significant mediating effects between social capital and affective organizational commitment accounting for 13.67%, 35.30%, and 33.25% of the total effect, respectively, indicating that mainly identity and interpersonal relationships, followed by role negotiation these three factors together play a multivariate mediating role.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions.

The results of this study show that social capital had a significant positive effect on affective

organizational commitment. Still, the impact of social capital on affective organizational commitment was insignificant under the mediating condition with newcomer assimilation-specific adjustment. The indirect role of specific components of newcomer adjustment was first verified in which role negotiation, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships among newcomer adjustment had a significant positive effect on affective organizational commitment. In contrast, role negotiation, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships played a critical specific mediating role between social capital and affective organizational commitment. This suggests that social capital had a positive effect on affective organizational commitment through the mediating part of role negotiation, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships.

Contributions to the literature.

This research combines social capital (antecedent) and affective organizational commitment (distal outcome of organizational socialization) while introducing the mediating variable of multiple inclusion factors (proximal outcome of organizational socialization) to investigate the influencing factors and formation mechanisms of affective organizational commitment. In the field of organizational behavior, most previous studies on social capital and organizational socialization have focused on distal outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, personal performance), have not integrated the joint influence of internal and external factors of individual employees (Song, 2012), and have lacked empirical investigation of the specific, actionable processes of organizational socialization. In addition, more research needs to be conducted to focus on the impact of social capital on diverse assimilation factors and affective organizational commitment. The research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how new employees integrate into the organization and understand the impact of various key factors. A paucity of research combines social capital with organizational socialization, particularly in understanding the factors and mechanisms that influence affective organizational commitment. This study can expand the knowledge of the antecedent variables of organizational socialization and further understand the process mechanism of new employees'

assimilation into the organization and the formation of affective commitment.

Implications for managers.

First of all, social capital is a personal social network resource. The level of individual social capital also varies from person to person. It is recommended that companies examine the potential social capital level of employees through some indicators in the recruitment staff screening process. Second, the initial stage of organizational socialization of new employees is crucial for forming affective commitment. Managers can provide guidance and support for organizational assimilation in the three areas of interpersonal relationships, membership identification, and role negotiation for new employees. Finally, in the organizational socialization process of new employees' affective commitment shaping, managers need to focus not only on resource elements (e.g., social capital) but also on two aspects of specific organizational assimilation factors: affective facilitation (role negotiation, membership identification, and interpersonal relationships) and role shaping (fitting in, task mastery, and standing out).

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Appendix A. Measurements

Social Capital.

Structural social capital

- SSC1. In general, I have a very good relationship with my organizational members.
- SSC2. In my organization, I have many colleagues I consider friends.
- SSC3. I have many colleagues from whom I seek

work-related information.

SSC4. I know many colleagues whom I can approach if I want advice on a work-related question.

Relational social capital

RSC1. I can always trust my organizational members to lend me a hand if I need it.

RSC2. Overall, I can rely on the colleagues I work with.

RSC3. Generally speaking, my colleagues and I have confidence in one another.

RSC4. The colleague always keeps his/her promises to me.

Cognitive social capital

CSC1. My organizational members and I always agree on what is important at work.

CSC2. My organizational members and I always share the same ambitions and vision.

CSC3. It feels like my colleagues and I can communicate on the same 'wavelength.'

CSC4. It feels like my colleagues and I can understand each other.

Newcomer Adjustment

Fitting in

NAF1. Accepting the pivotal values of most others in this hotel.

NAF2. Accepting the common attitudes (toward work) of most others in this hotel.

NAF3. Accepting the main ideas of most others in this hotel.

NAF4. Accepting the pivotal organizational norms followed by most others here.

Role negotiation

NAR1. Negotiating with supervisors/coworkers about my desirable job assignment.

NAR2. Negotiating with my supervisors/coworkers about my desirable job changes.

NAR3. Adjusting my work role to best suit my talents and needs.

NAR4. Being allowed by supervisors/coworkers to use my own way to achieve higher job performance.

Standing out

NAS1. Doing the job better than others in this organization.

NAS2. Acting more professionally than other co-workers

here.

NAS3 Gaining my personal competitive advantage over other co-workers in this hotel.

Task mastery

NAT1. I have developed adequate skills and abilities to perform my present job within this organization.

NAT2. I have developed adequate knowledge required in my present job.

NAT3. I complete most of my present work assignments without assistance.

NAT4. I rarely make mistakes when conducting my job assignments.

Membership identification

NAM1. I am proud to be an employee of this hotel.

NAM2. I value being a member of this organization.

NAM3. I have a warm feeling towards this hotel as a workplace.

Interpersonal relationships

NAI1. I get on well with others in this hotel.

NAI2. I feel people in this organization really care about me.

NAI3. Most people in my hotel respect me.

NAI4. Overall, I have established a good “guanxi” (interpersonal relationships) with most other people in this hotel.

Affective Organizational Commitment

OAC1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.

OAC2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.

OAC3. I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own.

OAC4. I think that I could hardly become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.

OAC5. I feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organization.

Appendix B. Research Framework

