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## Examining the five sources of managers' power with the commitment of employees in government organizations in Herat province

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### Abstract

Organizational positions force managers to display certain behaviors. Because human behavior is shaped by complex psychological, biological, social and economic variables, managers must be aware of the issues mentioned and use the sources of power that create a sense of commitment in employees and must be able to change employees' behaviors according to the requirements of the organization. In this descriptive study, the relationship between the five sources of managers' power and employee commitment in government organizations in Herat province from the perspective of employees has been determined by the use of survey method. The sample size was 360 people who were selected from 6758 employees in this province. The results show that there is a relationship between managers' power resources and employee commitment; and out of the five sources of power, the power of expertise and authority has positive relationships with employee commitment, and the power based on compulsion, law and reward has a negative relationship with employee commitment.

**Keywords:** Resources of power, commitment, employees, governmental organizations

### 1. Introductions

The efficiency and development of any organization largely depends on the proper use of human resources. Managers are policy makers and power holders in organizations; and performance of organizations is related to their power. By using the sources of power, managers can provide the ground for growth and excellence or the ground for deviation and corruption of the organization, and this depends on the nature of existence and the way power and its source are used (Haghighi, 2001) [11].

Power has been an essential feature of the role of the manager and provides the ground for his effectiveness in the organization. It is an inevitable phenomenon in the organization which is considered as a negative phenomenon by some managers. The fact is that it depends on how power is used. If the goal of power is organizational goals, it can be considered as a positive and functional phenomenon, and if the goal is to achieve personal and individual goals, it will certainly be a negative and ugly phenomenon.

Mayer defines power as the ability to influence organizational achievement (Mayer: 2001) [17]. It is believed that real power is gained when individuals willingly help their manager or organization to achieve the desired goals.

Alwani "believes that power and influence are intertwined and leadership is achieved by influencing others and influence also originates from power" (Alvani, 2001) [1].

Keith Davis "discusses power alongside politics and believes that managers, in addition to having technical, perceptual and human skills, should also have political power" (Davis and Newstorm, translated by Tusi, 1996: 259) [14].

In policy-based theory, which is based on the two variables of desirable personnel methods and political control, the relationship of power and politics with organizational commitment is examined from different dimensions; for example, two major reasons for leaving the service, dissatisfaction with top management and dissatisfaction with political discrimination between individuals, are among the highlights of the impact of power and politics on the commitment and loyalty of individuals in organizations. Given that, the effective use of power is a difficult challenge for leaders, employees and organizations. Managers should create a sense of commitment in employees by using the tools and resources of power; because manpower is committed to helping the organization achieve its goals. But what tools and power resources should managers use to foster employee commitment in organizations? This study seeks to evaluate employee commitment with a variable such as strength and resources.

## 2. The concept of power

The concept of power in Persian vocabulary: power means ability, being able, ability of authority, coercion, force and influential force (Farhang-e Moin, 1375: 2644) (In Oxford dictionary, power is synonymous with the word authority and it means the power to instruct and persuade others to follow (Oxford Culture, 1991: 67) <sup>[19]</sup>.

Power can be considered as the potential force that each person has to influence the person or people as well as their decision-making ability in such a way that people are forced to do something (Dunham *et al.* 2002, 811-24) <sup>[5]</sup>.

Power at the organizational level: the ability of the individual to influence the individual or members of the group, in other words, the ability of the leader to use material and spiritual resources and facilities to achieve organizational goals can be considered as power at the organizational level (Amirkabiri, 2001: 325) <sup>[2]</sup> He believes that power is the probability that a person in social relations will be in a position to impose his will in spite of resistance (Weber, 1947: 54) <sup>[21]</sup>.

## 3. Resources and types of managers' power

Managers use power to gain influence over people in the workplace, which comes from organizational and individual resources. These resources can be divided into job power and personal power, respectively (Herskovich, 2002-87: 474) <sup>[12]</sup>.

Due to the job position, three bases of power, namely reward power, coercive power and legal power, are given to the manager, and personal power can be considered to include the power of expertise and the power of authority (Irannejad Parizi, 2002: 258) <sup>[13]</sup>. Rezaian generally divides the sources of power into two categories.

**3.1. The power of position and rank:** Includes the power of reward and the power of punishment that is given to individuals along with organizational position and its use depends on the good relations of the manager with the superior management.

**3.2. Personal Power:** includes the power of expertise and the power of authority (Rezaian, 2001: 208) <sup>[20]</sup>.

French & Ryan in social psychology classifies sources of power as follows:

"1- The power of coercion 2- The power of reward 3- The power of law 4- The power of authority 5- The power of expertise. The power of coercion rests on the ability to control punishment. This power is the ability to punish or avoid giving positive resources as a means to make others do what you want them to do. Nasr Esfahani considers the power of punishment as a therapeutic method to solve a problem, correct a behavior or reduce undesirable behavior (Nasr Esfahani, 2004: 31) <sup>[20]</sup>.

Reward-based power means that the leader encourages the people under his control to perform their job duties by exercising control over the rewards that are valued by those under his control. In general, if the manager can control the salaries received by his employees, comment on their promotion, and has a role and has a significant opinion in the offering of the job, he has a lot of reward power (Ghasemi, 2003: 355) <sup>[8]</sup>.

French & Bell considers legal power to be based on the fact that the person in power has a legal right to exert influence,

and the person being exerted has a kind of legal obligation to accept that power.

Expertise power is the means by which the holder can control specialized information; because expertise gives managers and employees the assurance that their power of influence and position in the organization is guaranteed. (Hersi Villanchard, 2001 244)

Ultimately, authority is a power arising from charisma, or personal attraction that is created and maintained through favorable relationships between persons who encourage praise and respect for one another (Lyons, 1991: 63) <sup>[15]</sup>.

## 4. Organizational commitment

Various studies have been conducted on organizational commitment. Commitment as a mental state has at least three distinct types. These three types are desire, need and obligation to continue working in any organization. In general, the dimensions of commitment can be considered in three ways:

**4.1. Emotional commitment:** includes the emotional dependence of employees on identifying with the organization and engaging in organizational activities.

**4.2. Continuous commitment:** Includes a commitment that is based on valuing the organization and contributes to the life of the organization.

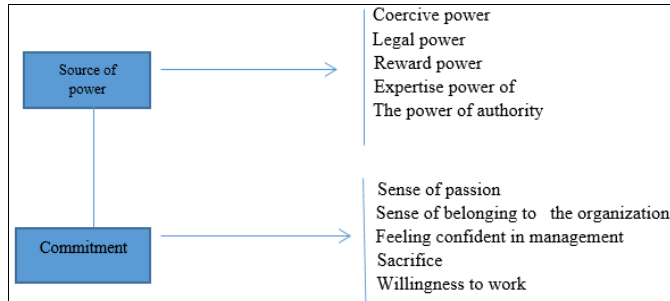
**4.3. Obligatory commitment:** includes the feelings of individuals based on the need to remain in the organization (Moghimi, 1998: 393) <sup>[16]</sup>.

As can be seen, the common denominator of most theories related to commitment is that commitment is a mental state that first determines the employee's relationship with the organization. Second, it implicitly implies the continuation or termination of membership in the organization, and in addition, it is clear that the nature of these mental states is also different. On this basis, in the commitment of the individual, the individual continues to work in the organization; this is because he accepts it and wants to stay in the same organization. In continuous commitment, the individual continues to work in the organization, because he cannot take another step and is under pressure from others. Emotional commitment indicates the emotional connection of the employee and determining his identity with the values and goals of the organization and the extent of his partnership with the organization. Employees who have a strong emotional commitment maintain their membership in the organization and continue to work in it because they willingly and inwardly want to do so. Ongoing commitment represents the costs of leaving the organization. Employees whose initial relationship with the organization is based on ongoing commitment will remain in the organization because staying in the organization is a necessity for them and they need it. Ultimately, normative commitment expresses a sense of religiosity and a need to stay in the organization, and people who have this kind of commitment think they should stay in the organization (Coleman and Cooper 1999: 67) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Connor & Patterson has also recommended a work commitment model to managers in order to create commitment in employees, which is stated in three pillars: 1- Sense of job desire 2- Sense of belonging to the organization and 3- Sense of belief in leadership.

Management of these three senses creates a triangle and a commitment to work; it creates and strengthens a commitment to work.

Also, considering that the phenomenon of power is one of the basic and fundamental factors in organizations and shapes organizational behavior, including organizational commitment. It can be said that one of the results of commitment is that people accept their leader and gain his trust and consider themselves part of leadership. In general, the relationship between the five foundations of power and organizational commitment.



In general, organizational commitment leads to desirable organizational results, as well as better performance, absenteeism and less service leave also leads to a committed workforce and trust in management.

**5. Research Hypotheses**

Main Hypothesis: There is a relationship between the five sources of managers' power and employee commitment from the employees' point of view.

**5.1 Sub-hypotheses**

1. There is a relationship between managers' coercive power and employees' commitment from employees' point of view.
2. There is a relationship between the legal power of managers and the commitment of employees from the perspective of employees.
3. There is a relationship between managers' reward power and employees' commitment from employees' point of view.
4. There is a relationship between the expertise of managers and employee commitment from the perspective of employees.
5. There is a relationship between authority of managers and employee commitment from the perspective of employees.

**6. Research Method**

The research is descriptive in terms of correlation (consistency) and in terms purpose, it is applied. This study was conducted by survey method with the aim of determining the relationship between the five sources of managers' power as independent variables and employee commitment as a dependent variable in government organizations of Herat province from the perspective of employees. In this research, an attempt has been made to determine the relationship between variables using the correlation coefficient.

6- Statistical population and sample size of this study was 6758 people of all employees of government departments, institutions and organizations in Herat province, out of which due to the estimation error of  $d = 516\%$  and  $1.96$  and  $p = 0.05$  using Cochran's formula,  $N = 360$  people were selected as the sample size.

The data collection tool in this research was a questionnaire that was used from two standard questionnaires taken from scientific sources. The first questionnaire was used to assess the power resources of managers and the second questionnaire was used to assess the commitment of employees. The validity of the Power Questionnaire was  $V = 0.857$  and that of the Commitment Questionnaire was  $V = 0.9$ . Also, to calculate the reliability of the questionnaires, the double-test method has been used.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency percentage, frequency charts and means have been used to analyze the data. Then, the research hypotheses were examined and analyzed using inferential statistical tests such as Spearman, Pearson and Mann-Whitney tests.

**7. Research Findings**

Based on the information and results of the questionnaires, it can be concluded that 56% of the employees, who identified their gender, were male and 44% of them were female. Among the employees who specified their age, 26.9% were under 30 years old, 43.7% were between 30 and 39 years old, 3.26% were between 40 and 49 years old and 3% were over 50 years old.

Regarding marital status, out of 320 employees surveyed, 267 people indicated their marital status, of which 21.3% were single and 78.7% were married.

Service background of 22.4% of people who have mentioned their service background was 5 years or less, 7.20% between 5-10 years, 8.15% 11 to 15 years, 1.24% 16 to 20 years and 17% of them have been in service for over 20 years.

Regarding the education of the samples, 7.7% had undergraduate, 15% postgraduate education, 43.8% had bachelor's degree and 4.2% had postgraduate education.

**8. Main Research Findings**

The main hypothesis of the research is that there is a relationship between the five sources of managerial power and employee commitment. In this regard, the statistical hypotheses of the test were examined as follows:

**Table 1:** The information obtained Variables

Variables	R- squared	F	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> adj	p-Value
Regression	15262/58	5	0/208	0/193	0/000
St: Error	58181/35	275			
Total	73443/93	280			

The information obtained in Table 1 (1) indicates that due to the dimensions of R and especially R<sup>2</sup> adj (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) because the P-value calculated in the test is less than the significant level  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $H_0$  is rejected at this level. It means that the linear regression model is significant and as a result there is a significant relationship between the five sources of power and employee commitment.



**Table 2:** The results in Table 2 show that there is a relatively weak relationship between rule of law and employee commitment

Variables	Pearson		spearman	
	r	P -value	r	p-value
Legal power of managers and the commitment of employees	0/171	0/002	0/148	0/008
Reward power and employees' commitment of employees	-0/267	0/000	0/263	0/000
Coercive power and employees' commitment	-0/234	0/000	2340/-	0/000
expertise of managers and employee commitment	0/369	0/000	0/365	0/000
authority of managers and employee commitment	0/296	0/000	0/300	0/000

**8.1 Sub-hypothesis 1:** There is a relationship between law-abiding power and employee commitment from the employees' point of view.

The results in Table 2 show that there is a relatively weak relationship between rule of law and employee commitment. The obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.171 and the significance level of 0.05 indicates the existence of a negative and weak relationship. Also, the correlation coefficient obtained based on Pearson test is 0.148. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research is not rejected.

**8.2 Hypothesis 2:** There is a relationship between reward-based power and employee commitment from employees' point of view. According to the results (Table 2) in this study, the correlation coefficient of Spearman and Pearson is equal to -0.267 and 0.263, and therefore, at a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the second hypothesis of the research is confirmed and shows that there is a negative and weak relationship between power based on employee reward and commitment.

**8.3 Hypothesis 3:** There is a significant relationship between coercive power and employee commitment from employees' point of view. According to the statistical results of Table 2 (there is a negative relationship between coercive power and employee commitment). Having  $\alpha = 0.05$ , it can be said that managers' use of the source of coercive power does not increase employee commitment and in some cases also has a negative effect on employee commitment.

**8.4 Hypothesis 4:** There is a relationship between power based on expertise and commitment of employees from the perspective of employees.

Spearman correlation coefficient between the two variables in this test is equal to 0.365 and Pearson correlation coefficient with a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  is equal to 0.369. Employee commitment is positively correlated, thus confirming the fourth hypothesis of the research.

**8.5 Hypothesis 5:** There is a relationship between authority-based power and employee commitment from the perspective of employees. The results of data analysis (Table 2) show that there is a positive relationship between these two variables. Existence of weak relationships.

**9. Discussion and Conclusion**

Managers work with various tools and resources in the field of guiding and forcing employees to work in order to achieve organizational goals. Situations force managers to behave in certain ways. Because human behavior is shaped by complex psychological, biological, social, and economic variables, managers have to be aware of the issues at hand and use power resources that are more effective than others. The results of data analysis in this study show that there is a relationship between the sources of managerial power and

employee commitment. Among these five sources, the power of expertise and authority have a positive relationship with employee commitment, and the power of coercion, law, and reward have a negative relationship with commitment.

Most management experts and psychologists believe that the use of coercive power (punishment) as a tool to influence subordinates and employees due to its adverse effects on the body and mind, has more negative effects than positive effects: 31).

The result obtained in this study is also consistent with what the management scientists have portrayed.

The mere use of a legal source affects the commitment of individuals relatively; this means that using the above power source without considering and using other sources of power, not only does not increase employee commitment, but the continuous use of this resource also reduces employee commitment.

It seems that due to the dryness and inflexibility of formal laws in organizations, the effect of legal power on the commitment of employees of organizations is negative. The results of this study confirm this. The result obtained from the relationship between reward-based power and employee commitment in this study indicates that there is a negative relationship between these two variables.

The reason for the weak and negative relationship between reward power and employee commitment in this study seems to be the poor economic situation of families and society; this means that because of failure to meet the biological needs of individuals in the workplace, small material rewards do not affect the motivation of people and as a result, external rewards will not be significant. It can also be attributed to the misuse of material rewards.

Usually, managers who have experience, knowledge, skills and logical judgment and are more accurate in evaluating things, are naturally more preferred by subordinates. The presence of these managers with these characteristics in the workplace, creates more confidence and trust in employees and employees work wholeheartedly to do things the right and optimal way, without wasting time and resources.

Usually, managers who use the power of authority, have effective and efficient management and acceptable behavior, are trusted by subordinates, and are fairer than others. Subordinates also choose them as their role models in terms of behavior and attitude due to their personal attraction and special traits and they like to determine their identity with them.

In all the researches that have been conducted in this field, the results indicate that the more the source of power tends towards the person, the more effective the performance is. Personal power is more stable and resilient because of the attraction of permeability within individuals, and lasting power can also be internalized, and whatever is internalized creates commitment.

In general, it can be said that all managers need to use power to maintain their position and their organizations; and successful managers are those who, while recognizing the sources of power and awareness of their effects, take into account the mental and emotional conditions of employees to be effective in motivating employees and strengthening their commitment.

#### 10. Suggestions according to the research results

1. The results show that the relationship between reward power and employee commitment is a negative relationship. Therefore, it is recommended that managers of organizations make it more effective by identifying the wants and needs of employees, and use it in order to increase employee commitment.
2. Considering that the relationship between expertise and authority with commitment is a positive relationship, in order to increase employee commitment, it is recommended to senior managers of organizations to select managers who, in addition to specialization, have personal traits and characteristics that are acceptable to employees.
3. Considering the negative effect of coercion on employees' commitment, it is suggested that managers do not use coercion and, if necessary, use it as the last resort in the form of positive punishment to make behavior correction easier.
4. It is suggested to the officials to make arrangements so that the employees of the organizations get acquainted with the culture of survey and research, in which case the results of the research will be more accurate and practical.

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