



The effect of career commitment on motivation to learn

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Abstract

This literature review examines the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. The existing literature shows that there is indeed an effect between career commitment and motivation to learn. Relevant articles were gathered through the use of the data- base Web of Science and were chosen on the basis of several criteria. Despite, there has been done little research on this specific effect, there is proven a positive effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. Furthermore, the model of Super (1980) is used to clarify the variable career commitment and to categorize the difference in degree of career commitment that employee's experience. Finally the limitations and practical implications are discussed with the use of interviews.

Keywords: career commitment, career development, career path, motivation to learn, learning motivation, learning activities.

Introduction

Today's market is changing and developing on an expeditiously level. Due to the development of communication, knowledge, internalization and globalization, organizations are challenged to work as educational institutions. Organizations rely on different assets to be competitive at the market. One of these assets is human capital. Human capital can be defined as the skills and knowledge people have (Schultz, 1961). To increase the benefit of human capital, organizations need to be as effective as possible in developing their employees (Blundell, Dearden, Meghir & Sianesi (1999). Continuously learning remains important for organizations to compete on the market (Tynjala, 2008). The investment in learning based on training and other learning activities is not only useful for the organization, due to personal development the employee also benefits from learning (Noe, Tews & Dachner, 2010).

To elaborate the concept two types of learning can be distinguished, informal learning and formal learning. Formal learning can be through planned training and activities to obtain job- related skills, theory and learning objectives, but are difficult to put into practice. While formal learning is planned, informal learning happens spontaneously and on a daily basis (Kyndt, Dochy & Nijs, 2009). Because informal learning activities are initiated by employees themselves and take place during work at the workplace, it reduces the cost of formal training for the organization (Van Rijn, Yang & Sanders, 2013).

Learning in the workplace can be analyzed on three levels: individual level, group level and organizational level (Tynjala, 2008). This literature review will focus on the

individual learner in organizations, because the focus is on the individual career path of an employee in this study. The organization can provide formal and informal learning conditions for the individual to develop, but it is the reciprocal interaction between the individual and the organization that determines learning (Kyndt, Dochy& Nijs, 2009). Tjepkema (2002) defines these learning conditions as “characteristics of the organization and the individual that enable or hinder learning from team members” (Tjepkema, 2002, p. 111).

The way individuals participate in learning and development activities depends on which benefits the new knowledge, skills and abilities are gained by the employees. There has been done much research on what individual differences influence learning. Employees do not only differ from each other in the way they identify themselves, but also to the extent of their motivation for learning (Van Rijn, Yang& Sanders, 2013). Noe (1986) describes motivation in general as “the force that influences enthusiasm about the program (energizer); a stimulus that directs participants to learn and attempt to master the content of the program (director); and a force that influences the use of newly acquired knowledge and skills even in the presence of criticism and lack of reinforcement for use of the training content (maintenance)”(p.737). The desire of an employee to learn, is the learning motivation (Noe, 1986).

Through the need of developing and learning for employees in organizations, this study will focus on motivation to learn instead of motivation in general. There are several components that influence learning motivation. Organizational membership, self- efficacy and work environment like for example organizational support (Noe& Wilk, 1993). As stated in the literature by Cheng& Ho (2001), both job involvement and career commitment influence the degree of motivation to learn. Job involvement is seen as the extent in which the employee identifies as a person with work and the degree of importance of work to the total self- image (Kanungo, 1982). The motivation to participate in training activities, which is a part of learning activities, may depend on the extent of employees involvement in their jobs (Noe, 1986). Career commitment is an influencer on motivation to learn as well. Employees with high career commitment have the intention to improve their job performance and increase their competence, with the purpose to secure their employability to pursue career goals (Cheng& Ho, 2001). Since career commitment causes willingness to greater improvement for employees, it is seen as the most important influencer for motivation to learn in this study.

Individuals with high levels of career commitment are continual in pursuing personal career goals and are willing to put more energy in work related learning activities (Goulet& Singh, 2002). Goulet& Singh (2002) define career commitment as “the extent to which

someone identifies with and values his or her profession or vocation and the amount of time and effort spent acquiring relevant knowledge”(p. 75). The personal self- development desire could be an explanation for motivation to learn.

It is expected that employees with high commitment to their career of work, which means that these employees spend more extra time and energy in their work than employees with low career commitment, are usually more open towards learning the content of learning activities. This effect is expected because these employees aim to increase their job performance for future aspects (Cheng& Ho, 2001). High career commitment influences the level of learning motivation for employees who are committed to their career because of the idea that new knowledge and skills are useful to remain in their chosen careers (Cheng& Ho, 2001).

The following research question is developed based on the information above: *What is the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn?* This review will contribute to the existing knowledge about the effects of career commitment on motivation to learn. Other research focus on career commitment and motivation to learn separately, while this research combines the two variables to study the effect. Furthermore this research will be of practical relevance for organizations since it is useful to know what motivates your employees to keep learning. In today’s rapidly changing market, learning and developing has become crucial for organizations. Career commitment is seen as an influencer for motivation to learn in the literature used for this literature review. Finally, this study continuous with a literature research to determine an answer to the research question.

Method

The two key concepts of this literature review are career commitment and motivation to learn. This section will give an overview of the relevant literature that is used to answer the research question. The literature is gathered through a search in the Web of Science database. The keywords “career”, “career engagement”, “career development”, “learning motivation” and “motivation to learn” were used in different combinations as selection criteria for *title* and *topic*. The search has been done with a time frame of 1988 through 2018 because this resulted in a manageable search outcome. This search resulted in a sample of 140 papers.

Papers were optional if they contained keywords as career engagement, career development, career motivation and career commitment for the variable “career commitment”. For the variable “motivation to learn”, keywords as learning goal orientation,

workplace learning, self- construal, motivation and learning motivation were seen as important keywords.

Based on the relevance to this literature review, papers were included or rejected. Multiple criteria were taken into account to include or reject an article. First of all for the only English studies were practicable. Secondly, the papers were reviewed based on the target group. This literature review focuses on healthy employees. There is no gender and work field distinction made for inclusion of the papers. The search in Web of Science delivered much research about students learning motivation for future career paths. These papers, if included a link between career commitment and motivation to learn for future careers, were also included in the pool. This resulted in a pool of 25 remaining articles.

If an article met the criteria, mentioned above, the relevance of the articles was checked in the main findings of the articles. Only articles, which contained a direct link between the variables “career commitment” and “motivation to learn” were included. This check resulted in a pool of 12 articles.

Furthermore, articles were gathered from reference lists of articles that were found to be useful. This technique is known as snowballing, which entails the use of reference lists of existing papers to check for further relevant articles (Beauchemin & Gonzalez-Ferrer, 2011). This resulted in 2 additional articles in the pool. A total of 14 articles used for this paper are presented in table 2. Of those mentioned, 13 were survey studies and 1 was a cohort study.

Table 1. Literature search

	<i>Search outcome</i>	<i>Articles relevant</i>	<i>Articles used</i>
“Career” AND “Motivation to learn”	124	22	11
“Career commitment” AND “Learning motivation”	45	3	1
“Career development” AND “Motivation to learn”	14	0	
“Career engagement” AND “ Learning motivation”	2	0	
Pooling	2	2	2

Table 2. Overview of literature

Author(s) and year of publishing	Key concepts	Sample characteristics	Main findings	Journal/ impact factor
Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson& Garnett (2012)	Thriving, vitality, learning, construct validation, performance, burnout	Survey study. The sample consisted of 175 young adults and 410 young professionals in a variety of industries.	When individuals are thriving with the sense that they are making progress and getting better through learning at work, they are likely to take the initiative to seek out more opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills helpful for developing their career.	Journal of Organizational Behavior/ 3.607
Newman, Thanacoody& Hui (2011)	Organizational commitment, training, turnover intentions	Self- completion survey study	Well-motivated employees are more likely to have a positive perception of the training environment in their organizations. Strong evidence of a relationship between the perceived career-related and personal benefits of training and both affective and continuance commitment.	International Journal of Human Resource Management/ 1.65
Cheng (2000)	Transfer of training, transfer of learning, knowledge transfer	Survey study. From the 45 institutions providing MBA courses in Hong Kong, only 5 institutions consented to participated	The results revealed that self- efficacy is a significant positive predictor of motivation to learn. Career commitment and job involvement were not related to motivation to learn. Individuals with a high level of career commitment may be motivated to learn when they think that acquiring new knowledge and skills would help them remain in their chosen careers.	International Journal of Human Resource Management/ 1.65
Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia& Plewa (2014)	Career adaptability, adaptivity, goal orientation, proactive personality, career optimism	Survey study. The overall sample consisted of 555 undergraduate university students	Learning goal oriented individuals are more likely to perceive life circumstances (e.g., work transitions) as career enablers rather than barriers. In sum, the adaptive motivational pattern inherent in learning goal orientation facilitates the generation of self-regulative strategies essential to career adaptation as it promotes the establishment, maintenance, and attainment of personally challenging and personally valued achievement goals.	Journal of Vocational Behavior/ 2.555
Maurer& Chapman (2013)	Career success, organizational support, proactive personality, goal orientation, training and development	Archival data and survey study.	People high in proactive personality identify opportunities and act on them, demonstrate initiative, persevere to bring about change. Proactive individuals receive better career outcomes because they select, create, and influence the situations in which they work.	Journal of Vocational Behavior/ 2.555
Van Rijn, Yang& Sanders (2013)	Self- identity, self- construal, career motivation, informal workplace learning	Survey study. Sample consisted of 323 employees within the teaching staff from 4 Dutch VET schools.	Career motivation stimulates employees to engage in informal workplace learning activities. The element of career identity prescribes the direction of motivation. When employees identify their career as managing tasks and improving their knowledge and skills for their jobs, they are willing to use every opportunity to participate in learning activities. The element of career insight energizes employees to participate in informal learning activities. If employees believe that learning can help them achieve their career goals, they will then actively participate in any type of learning activity in any possible way.	Career development international/ 1.038
van Dierendonck&	Young adults, career satisfaction,	Survey study. The survey was sent to a	In conclusion, an individual's goal orientation can be a very relevant	Career development

van der Gaast (2013).	motivation, individual psychology	group of 866 alumni from a major business school in The Netherlands	additional predictor of subjective career success on top of academic competences, the willingness to put in the hours and having a strong CSE. It is may also be advisable to take into account side activities that show their motivation to perform and to learn; activities that allowed them to build competences relevant for their career.	international/ 1.038
Turban, Moake, Wu, & Cheung (2017).	Mentoring, personality, career success, organizational knowledge	Survey study. A survey was mailed to the home of 1,500 randomly selected business school alumni	Proactive individuals tend to “scan for opportunities, show initiative, take action, and persevere until they reach closure by bringing about change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). A recent meta-analysis suggested that proactive individuals had greater career success “because they utilize both contest-mobility and sponsored-mobility pathways to career success” (Fuller & Marler, 2009, p. 337). Career success is greater when individuals have certain characteristics and are sponsored by other individuals	Journal of career development
Kim, Kang, Lee,& McLean (2016).	Organizational ethical behavior, career success, career commitment, careerism, informal learning	Survey study. The data were collected from a sample of 600 employees working for 12 leading firms	The relationship between an employee’s career commitment and motivation to participate in training is valid, in that career commitment is a function of variables relevant to learning, including skill development and learning motivation In terms of the mediation process, the employee’s motivation to participate in training was fully mediated by career commitment. The findings also suggest that, instead of fearing loss of trained staff, employers can maintain a flexible and committed workforce by promoting employees’ motivational processes related to their career commitment.	Journal of career development
Kaspi-Baruch (2016)	Protean career orientation, boundaryless career orientation, big five personality traits, learning motivational orientation, performance motivational orientation	Survey study. Questionnaires were filled in by 273 Israeli students engaged in full-time employment. Convenience sampling was used but the sample was heterogeneous.	People who are motivated to learn may enhance their skills, be more flexible in their career management, and demonstrate willingness to exceed organizational boundaries to learn. Personality is related to various career factors.	European management journal
Blau, Chapman & Neri (2016).	Training, Career motivation, Learning-related training criteria, Personal/home care aides	Pre and post survey study	The higher individuals’ levels of career commitment, the more likely they are to view training as useful. Bertolino et al. (2011) found a significant positive relationship between training motivation and perceived career development from training.	Career development international/ 1.038
Lin (2015)	Learning-goal orientation, Perceived external employability, Perceived internal employability, Protean career attitude, Protean talent	Survey study. Data were collected through 527 workers in private banking sectors in Taiwan by using paper-based questionnaires.	Protean talents also view their career as a series of learning cycles. They attempt to own the freedom and growth that allows them to pursue continuous learning via a learning-goal-oriented approach. That individuals with a high protean career attitude experience greater responsibility for their career choices and opportunities,	Career development international/ 1.038

			and being driven by an intrinsic motivation to attain desired career outcomes.	
Cheng& Ho (2001)	Learning, motivation, job satisfaction, involvement, commitment, career development	Survey study. 81 completed questionnaires usable.	Career commitment is positively related to learning motivation and learning transfer. It is clear that people with strong career commitment are more likely to plan for their career paths. Enhancing future career prospects and improving personal performance are two major career goals.	Career development international/ 1.038
Wolf, London, Casey, & Pufahl, (1995).	Training behaviors, career experience, motivation.	Cohort study. Program participants were 72 unemployed engineers, primarily from the defense industry, who were recruited for a job training and placement program.	Contrary to expectation, training behaviors and career motivation were not significantly related. Career motivation seemed to stymie training behaviors, perhaps because these individuals were wedded to their past careers and found changing gears difficult. The motivation behavior relationship was positive for high experience people, perhaps because among the late career individuals, career motivation is needed to keep their career going at all, regardless of direction	Journal of vocational behavior/ 2.555

Results

To understand the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn, it might be an advantage to start with elaborating the definitions of career commitment, defined by the literature used for this study. There will be given an overview of definitions of career commitment and motivation to learn from the different articles of the dataset. The definitions of the variables will be elaborated to discover similarities, unanimity or differences between the literature in de dataset. The different definitions will be structured and categorized. These definitions will be compared to one another. Furthermore the relationships between the variables will be examined, based on the stated definitions, to examine if the authors have a different definition of the relationship between career commitment and motivation to learn. The effect of career commitment on motivation to learn could differ among the literature in the dataset. These effects will be analyzed. Finally a conclusion will be drawn based on the results of the dataset and using a three- career stage model theory of Super (1957).

Definitions career commitment

Table 3 presents an overview of definitions found in the articles.

Table 3. Overview of multiple definitions of “career commitment

<i>Source</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Group</i>
van Dierendonck& van der	Defined in terms of the positive psychological outcomes focused on	Individual differences

Gaast (2013)	intrinsic aspects like career satisfaction.	
Kaspi-Baruch (2016)	Employees play an independent role in their career management; therefore, they are self-directed. They also rely on their own, rather than organizational, values and are therefore value driven	Individual differences
Newman, Thanacoody & Hui (2011)	Normative commitment, depends on the prior attitudes and values of employees	Individual differences
Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia & Plewa (2014)	Higher learning goal orientation associated with increased self-directed learning, career aspirations, career decision-making self-efficacy, and career satisfaction	Individual differences
Turban, Moake, Wu, & Cheung (2017).	Proposes that individuals compete with each other on a “level playing field” such that success depends on the person’s abilities, attributes, and effort	Individual differences
Lin (2015)	Can be a process of professional growth that can be developed through work-related learning. Employees can pursue learning goals and increase personal employability as they adapt to organizational changes.	Proactive approach
Maurer & Chapman (2013)	A variety of individual difference variables that predispose one toward development behavior, including broad dispositional and demographic constructs	Proactive approach

Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson & Garnett (2012).	A proactive approach to developing one's career to enable growth over time.	Proactive approach
Van Rijn, Yang & Sanders (2013)	A concept representing the motivation of employees to develop themselves in their jobs and careers	Proactive approach
Blau, Chapman & Neri (2016)	Refers to a person's identification with and desire to maintain membership in one's occupation, which is distinct from commitment to an organization, i.e., organizational commitment	Identification with the job
Cheng (2000).	An affective concept which represents identification with a series of related jobs in a specific field of work	Identification with the job
Cheng & Ho (2001)	Is a component of the subjective dimension of career. It is defined as "an affective concept which represents identification with a series of related jobs in a specific field of work and is behaviorally expressed in an ability to cope with disappointments in the pursuit of career goals"	Identification with the job
Kim, Kang, Lee & McLean (2016)	Refers to identification with and involvement in one's occupation	Identification with the job
Wolf, London, Casey & Pufahl (1995)	A combination of three factors: career resilience, insight, and identity.	Identification with the job

On the basis of the definitions mentioned above, three groups can be made through the similarities between the authors.

Firstly, research (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012, Maurer & Chapman 2013, Van Rijn, Yang, & Sanders, 2013 and Lin, 2015) focused on developing and growth when they defined career commitment. They emphasize a **proactive approach** of an employee towards learning, growth and setting goals for their career. The proactive approach of individuals can be due to their proactive personality, which can be defined as individuals who “identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful change occurs” (Crant, 2000, p. 439). Maurer and Chapman (2013) define career commitment as personal characteristics, which incline one toward development behavior. Lin (2015) defines career commitment based on proactive behavior as employees who increase personal employability, due to their ability to adapt to changes.

Secondly, research (Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2011, Turban, Moake, Wu, & Cheung, 2017, Kaspi-Baruch, 2016, Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, & Plewa, 2014) and van Dierendonck, & van der Gaast, 2013) focused on the **individual differences** between employees and their individual beliefs and abilities when defining career commitment. The intrinsic aspects and career satisfaction of the individual are highlighted. An individual’s norms, values, effort and abilities play the most important role in pursuing a career. Therefore career commitment is self- directed. Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui (2011) define career commitment based on individual differences as one’s previous attitudes and values. Correspondingly, Kapsi- Baruch (2016) defines career commitment as value driven. Employees rely on their own values and not on organizational values. These values could differ among employees who work in the same organization.

Thirdly, research (Cheng, 2000, Kim, Kang, Lee, & McLean, 2016, Blau, Chapman, & Neri, 2016, Cheng, & Ho, 2001 and Wolf, London, Casey, & Pufahl, 1995) defined career commitment as the **identification with the job**. This represents the way individuals define themselves in the career context (McArdle, Waters, Briscoe & Hall, 2007). The identification with a series of jobs in a specific field define which career an individual wants to pursue and it reflects the desire of an employee to maintain in one’s occupation (Blau, Chapman, &Neri, 2016).

While the proactive approach focus on the drive of an employee to pursue their career path, the individual differences definitions focus on employee’s values and differences among employees. It states that employees are self-directed and rely on their own values instead of the organizational values. The differences among employees concerning their abilities, attitudes and values define their career commitment. In contrast to the proactive approach and individual differences, the identification with the job definitions are based on the

identification with the job and the desire to pursue one’s occupation and career path. Career identity is the extent to which individuals stay informed of developments in their occupation and the degree in which individuals view themselves as a professional expert (Wolf, London, Casey& Pufahl, 1995). In contrast to the proactive approach and individual differences the identification with the job definitions are not focused on individual desire, abilities or differences among employees.

In sum, the proactive approach focuses on a proactive individual with development behavior and willingness to develop their career. In the individual differences approach, individual characteristics like an individual’s values are central and the identification with the job approach focuses on career identity and identification with one’s occupation.

Definitions motivation to learn

Table 4. Overview definitions “motivation to learn” and “learning motivation”

Source	Definition	Group
Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett (2012)	People who are thriving experience growth and momentum marked by both a sense of feeling energized and alive (vitality) and a sense that they are continually improving and getting better at what they do (learning).	Effort
Newman, Thanacoody& Hui (2011)	Well-motivated employees are more likely to have a positive perception of the training environment in their organizations. This has been shown to lead to greater participation in training activities	Greater participation
Cheng, (2000).	A trainee’s specific desires to	Desire

	learn the content of the training course	
Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia& Plewa (2014)	A relatively stable dispositional trait characterized by the pursuit of competence development and effective persistence in the face of obstacles	Stable trait
Maurer& Chapman (2013)	Individuals who are motivated to learn often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge (learning goal)	Development
Van Rijn, Yang& Sanders (2013)	Individuals who are motivated to learn will actively participate in any type of learning activity in any possible way	Greater participation
van Dierendonck& van der Gaast (2013)	Individuals who are motivated to learn are oriented toward developing new skills, trying to understand their work, improving their level of competence, or achieving a sense of mastering based on self-referenced standards	Development
Turban, Moake, Wu, & Cheung (2017).		
Kim, Kang, Lee& McLean (2016)	Individuals who are motivated to learn try to learn as much as they can from education/training programs and are willing to make efforts to improve their skills and competencies for learning purposes.	Greater participation
Kaspi-Baruch (2016)		

Blau, Chapman, & Neri (2016)		
Lin (2015)	Refers to the goals pursued by individuals in achievement situations and is a motivational variable that affects the allocation of effort during learning	Effort
Cheng& Ho (2001)	Learning motivation can be defined as the specific desire of a learner to learn the content of a training program	Desire
Wolf, G., London, M., Casey, J., & Pufahl, J. (1995)	The nature of the investment in their own human capital, shape their behaviors relative to both development and job search.	Development

The second variable in this study is ‘motivation to learn’. The definition of motivation to learn is approached in different ways by the authors used in this paper. Not all the authors are explicit in their definition of motivation to learn, so some definitions are derived from the measures used in those studies. Five groups can be distinguished according the definitions of motivation to learn stated in table 4.

The first item that stands out is that according to Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia& Plewa (2014), motivation to learn is seen as a stable dispositional trait. This definition is different from the others, because in most cases motivation to learn is seen as a changeable variable, while a stable dispositional trait means that individuals respond in stable, predictable ways. It can be said that this is not relevant to the current study, which means it could be removed from the dataset.

The second group of definitions of motivation to learn that can be conducted focuses on the effort of an individual to learn. Researchers (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, &Garnett, 2012 and Lin, 2015) defined motivation to learn as the degree of effort that an individual committed in the growth of developing. Lin (2015) refers to goals that are pursued by individuals and Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, &Garnet (2012) refer to continually improving by learning.

The third group of researchers (Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2011, van Rijn, Yang, & Sanders, 2013, Kim, Kang, Lee, & McLean, 2016) defined motivation to learn based on the degree of participation in training activities. According to the researches, employees with a high degree of motivation to learn have a positive perception of training and learning activities. This positive perception causes greater participation in the training and learning activities. Individuals who are motivated to learn attempt to learn as much as they can from training and learning activities (Kim, et al., 2016). Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui (2011) state that well-motivated employees are shown to have a higher participation to learning activities because of their positive perception towards these learning activities.

The fourth group of definitions focuses on the desire of an employee to learn the training or program content. Researchers (Cheng, 2000 and Cheng, & Ho, 2001) defined motivation to learn as an individual's specific desire to learn the training or program content. Cheng (2000) literally states that motivation to learn is the same as one's desire to learn.

The last group of definitions focuses on individual's development. Van Dierendonck, & van der Gaast (2013) and Wolf, London, Casey, & Pufahl (1995) defined motivation to learn as individuals who are developing oriented. They are motivated to develop new skills, broaden their knowledge and improve their own human capital. Wolf et al. (1995) define motivation to learn as the way that employees build their behavior based on development.

In sum, in this study motivation to learn is a changeable variable, which differs across individuals. This can be due to different factors, like environment, personality characteristics and opportunities provided by the organization, but in this study the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn is conceptualized. Therefore motivation to learn cannot be mentioned as a stable dispositional trait. Different types of definitions are conducted from the researchers from the database. These definitions are categorized in to five groups. Except, the first group, based motivation to learn as a stable trait, should be removed. Four groups remain. Motivation to learn based on the effort that an individual puts into learning, motivation to learn based on the participation of an individual in training and learning activities, motivation to learn based on the desire of an individual to learn and the last group defines motivation to learn based on the development orientation of an individual.

Relation between career commitment and motivation to learn

Three groups of career commitment were conducted from the definitions from the database. Definitions based on a proactive approach, definitions based on individual

differences and definitions based on the identification with the job. In this part the relationship between career commitment and motivation to learn will be examined.

The first group of definitions of career commitment is focused on a proactive approach. The researchers (Porath, et al., 2012, Maurer, & Chapman, 2013, van Rijn, Yang, & Sanders, 2013 and Lin, 2015) found a positive relation between their proactive approach career commitment and motivation to learn in general. When people acknowledge that making progress and developing their career can be supported by acquiring more skills and knowledge, they are more likely to take action through learning. This can be concluded as that if they are career driven, they are more motivated to learn (Porath, et al., 2012). An example of individuals who are career driven are protean talents. Protean talents are individuals who identify their career success as psychological success and find the ability to accomplish their own dreams the most important factor in their career path (Lin, 2015). These individuals are proactive driven and have a greater feeling of responsibility of their career choice and are therefore motivated to use opportunities for learning and achieve desired career outcomes (Lin, 2015).

When people identify their career as improving their knowledge and skills for their jobs, they take initiative and are willing to make the most of every opportunity to participate in learning activities. This means that they are motivated to participate in learning activities, which is a part of motivation to learn.

The second group of definitions of career commitment is based on individual differences. Individual differences can be found in the characteristics of an individual. Career success is, according to Turban, et al. (2017), dependent to characteristics, which means that career success is higher when employees have certain characteristics. Kapsi- Baruch (2016) agrees with the fact that the differences in someone's characteristics is related to various career factors, including career commitment. These career factors influenced by personality have a different effect on motivation to learn. A positive effect has been found by Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui (2011). If learning activities are advantageous for career related and personal benefit, employees are more motivated to learn from learning activities. The more employees are career committed and have a need of positive personal benefits of learning activities, the more they are motivated to learn. Self-regulative strategies, which differ among individuals, are important to career adaption. Career adaption promotes the maintenance of personally difficult challenges and personal valued accomplishment of goals (Tolentino, et al., 2014). By this it can be concluded that the career adaption, which is linked to career commitment, motivates individuals to learn and achieve their own values.

The third group of definitions of career commitment is based on identification with the job. Researchers (Cheng, 2000, Kim, et al., 2016, Blau, Chapman, & Neri, 2016, Cheng, & Ho, 2001 and Wolf, London, Casey, & Pufahl, 1995) defined career commitment as identification with the job and found a positive effect on motivation to learn. Individuals, who have identified themselves with their occupation and are motivated to remain in their chosen career, could think that acquiring new skills and knowledge is helpful. When they have a high level of career commitment, they may be motivated to learn (Cheng, 2000). Individuals who have a strong sense of career commitment due to identification with the job are more likely to plan their career. To improve their career they need to improve their personal performance, which can be accomplished by learning. This means that their drive for their career path stimulates their motivation to learn. (Cheng, & Ho, 2001). Blau, Chapman, & Neri (2016) agree with the valid relationship between career commitment and variables relevant to learning. The higher individuals level of career commitment, the higher the positive perception of training. This positive perception of training can broaden the participation to training and learning activities, which works as a motivation stimulant to learn. Individuals with identification to their jobs are usually individuals in their late career phase. In this case, career commitment could have a positive effect because these individuals need to be motivated to learn to keep their career going. These individuals do not care about the direction of their career path, due to the late career phase that they are in.

In sum, the relation between career commitment and motivation to learn is overall positive among the different definitions of career commitment. Career commitment based on a proactive personality has a positive effect on motivation to learn. Individuals with a proactive personality act on opportunities to improve their career. One of these opportunities is learning. It can be concluded that these individuals are career driven and motivated to learn. The second group of is based on individual differences, the relationship between career commitment and motivation to learn is seen as positive because career adaption, which is a part of career commitment, motivates individuals to learn and achieve their own values. The last group, based on identification with the job, elaborates a positive relation between career commitment and motivation to learn. This is due to the fact that employees who are identified with their occupation have a drive to remain in that occupation. To remain in their occupation it could be useful to acquire new skills and knowledge. If employees think that learning is helpful for their career, they are more motivated to learn. Only an overall conclusion can be made about motivation to learn. This will be elaborated in the conclusion and discussion part.

Conclusion and discussion

The importance of learning at the workplace increases in today's market due to the development of new knowledge, techniques and types of communication. Continuously learning remains important for organizations to compete on the market (Tynjala, 2008). It is convenient to take a closer look at what motivates employees to keep learning. This literature review provides an overview of the existing literature about the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. The following research question is examined: *What is the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn?*

Through a literature research, different studies were found which contained a relationship between career commitment and motivation to learn. Via the literature, definitions of career commitment and motivation to learn were conceptualized. Career commitment can be grouped in to three groups of definitions and motivation to learn in to four groups of definitions. We found a positive relation between career commitment and motivation to learn.

If we compare our findings with a theory of Super (1957), a practical view and conclusion of career commitment in an individual's work life can be given. The definitions of career commitment derived from the literature in the database, could be linked to the three-career stage theory of Super (1957). Originally the three-career stage model consists of four stages: trial, stabilization, maintenance and decline. Only the first three stages span an individuals working life and career commitment is central, which takes place in the working life (Aryee, Chay & Chew, 1994). Each stage is known for different characteristics. In the trial stage individuals are occupied with finding out their interests, available qualities and enable themselves to do the job they are hired for. In the stabilization stage, employees are more independent and more concerned with career development and growth. Employees are more individually focused and career growth is pursued to create career progress and to get access to more challenging opportunities. In the last stage, maintenance, it is expected that employees have settled in their career pattern. They have broadened their capabilities and interest and are feeling more responsibility for others.

The definitions of the different authors can be placed in this model. First of all the trial career stage is mentioned above as the learner role for employees to find out their own interests and capabilities. The definitions that focus on individual differences, abilities and effort can be placed in this stage. The importance of finding one's interests and learn the capabilities for the job by putting in effort is defined in this stage.

The stabilization stage focuses on growth and developing, as well the authors who use developing and personal growth as a definition for career commitment. Researchers (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012, Maurer, & Chapman, 2013, Van Rijn, Yang, & Sanders, 2013 and Lin, 2015) emphasized the learning and growth aspect of career commitment through the definitions based on a proactive approach.

The last career stage is maintenance. This stage is characterized by a settled career pattern. Career commitment defined as an identification of the individual with the job or career, could be placed in the maintenance career stage because of the employees in this stage are fully focused on their interests and their own capabilities. This is related to the identification and desire to pursue a career.

Career commitment is positively related to motivation to learn, stated by multiple researchers from the database. Due to the different types of career commitment that are defined by the three- career stage theory of Super (1957), it can be concluded that the different stages of career commitment have a specific effect on motivation to learn. The trial career stage is formed by finding out one's interest and capabilities, the career commitment definitions of individual differences, which focus on individual values, interest and capabilities, could be placed in this stage. The individual differences career commitment is positively related to motivation to learn because career adaption promotes the maintenance of personally difficult challenges and personal valued accomplishment of goals. By this it can be concluded that the career adaption, which is linked to career commitment, motivates individuals to learn and achieve their own values (Tolentino, et al., 2014).

The stabilization stage is more concerned with career development and growth. The proactive approach of career commitment is centered in the stabilization stage. The effect of the proactive approach career commitment on motivation to learn is positive. Because when employees acknowledge in the stabilization stage that learning activities will improve their career, they will act more on opportunities to accomplish their goals through development and growth. Which will lead to a higher degree of motivation to learn.

The last stage, maintenance, is defined as a settled career and linked to the definitions of career commitment of identification with the job. The effect of career commitment by identification with the job on motivation to learn is positive. This can be concluded because individuals who are identified with the job would like to remain in their occupation and use learning as a tool to accomplish this goal. Because individuals who have identified with their jobs are usually in their late career, this can be linked to the maintenance career stage. These individuals need to be motivated to learn to keep their career going.

In conclusion, career commitment has a positive effect on motivation to learn, but the effect can differ through the different career stages.

Limitations

Despite the findings in this paper, a few limitations should be acknowledged. First of all, the sample of articles used in this literature review is very small, it is difficult to generalize the conclusion of this study. If the data- base would be broadened it would be more reliable to apply the conclusion in practice. Secondly, there is a lack of information in the definition table for motivation to learn. Not all the articles used in this study gave a clear overview of their definitions for motivation to learn. Furthermore, this study only focuses on the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. To define a clear conclusion of what stimulates employees to learn, more variables should be taken into account.

Theoretical and practical implications

This literature review contributes to the existing literature about the specific effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. When discussing the theoretical implications it must be said that research about this topic has been done on a broader scale, but this research gives an overview of the effect of career commitment on motivation to learn. Much of existing research does not focus only on the specific effect of career commitment on motivation to learn, but involve other factors that can influence motivation to learn.

Concerning the outcomes of this research, some practical implications can be stated. The effect found in this literature review is relative small to generalize in practice, but for organizations extra knowledge is useful to stimulate their employees to keep learning. Through all the changes in the market concerning technical developments but also in communicational developments, employees need to adjust. To adjust they need to learn how to cooperate with the new developments within and around the organization. For organizations it is useful to invest in their existing pool of employees, to avoid costs of hiring. To not waist time and effort in providing training and information, it is useful to know what motivates your employees to learn.

Through this study it can be concluded that career commitment has a positive effect on motivation to learn. This knowledge can be useful for organizations if they provide opportunities for their employees to focus on their career path. Through the commitment for

their career, employees could be more motivated to learn and put in effort to learning activities that could be useful for the organization they work for.

Furthermore organizations could use the knowledge about the positive effect of career commitment on motivation to learn to provide opportunities for employees to promote in the organization. A step forward in their career could have a positive effect on their motivation to learn. The motivation to learn is useful for the organization, through it helps the organization develop.

If it is important for employees to find the training and information useful for their own career path, organizations need to focus on that. They have to respond to the need of the employee. As confirmed in an interview with an HR employee (appendix 1), there is a difference in the degree of career commitment among employees. This can be explained using the model of the three- career stage theory of Super (1957). In an organization, young employees are more career- focused than the older ones. Younger employees are more motivated to develop themselves and make them selves attractive for the labor market. To realize their future career plans, they work harder to accomplish their goals. These younger employees attach more value to training and information provided by the organization.

An organization could divide the learning activities equally, but because of the higher career commitment among younger or newly to the labor market workers who are still in their trial or stabilization career stage, it is more effective to provide more learning activities to those workers who are more motivated to learn, due to their higher career commitment.



Appendix 1.

Summary of interview

Interviewer: Marle Roebroek, student Tilburg University

Interviewee: Carmen Aerts, Loyal Interim

In the organization, Loyal Interim, a lot of time is invested in learning activities. There are training activities provided by the organization but it is also very appreciated that employees learn from each other at the workplace. This form of informal learning is the focus of this organization. The employees are stimulated to cooperate with each other and to share their knowledge. Carmen Aerts notes that employees who are willing to learn are more open towards the training and are more motivated to share and accept knowledge from coworkers. There is a difference in the degree of motivation among the employees at Loyal Interim, this can be due to the lack of effort by these employees, states Carme Aerts. As formal training activities, Loyal Interim provides courses from legal and accountancy experts, to train their employees in these sectors.

A lot of post- graduates work at Loyal Interim. The management wants to invest in these new talents. This is the reason why there is a lot of time invested in learning activities. These post- graduates are career focused and use the opportunities given by the organization to invest in them selves. Both the management and the employees see the importance of development. Carme Aerts notices that the post- graduates are more willing to put effort in the learning activities and want to learn more from the organization than the older employees. This can be due to their future plans for their career, according to Carmen Aerts.

The post- graduates are young workers new to the labor market. These employees are at the beginning of their careers. Carmen Aerts notice a difference in the employees with an explicit career plan and the employees who do not which direction they want to go. The employees with an explicit career plan invest more time in collaborating with coworkers to exchange their knowledge and to gather more skills for their future career.

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