

## Organizational Commitment of Tour Guides

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### Abstract

The commitment of employees to the organization receives special attention from managers. This is because when employees are closely attached to the organization, the efficiency of work is improved, enhancing the organization's innovation and creativity, and aiming for sustainable development. This study was conducted to demonstrate the factors influencing the commitment to the organization of tour guides. Research data was collected from a survey of 305 tour guides working in travel companies in Vietnam. Using quantitative research methods, the study has shown that the organizational commitment of tour guides is influenced by 8 factors, including job nature, work environment, training and promotion, income and benefits, leadership style, relationships with colleagues, rewards and recognition, and empowerment. Among them, empowerment is identified as the most significant factor, with the strongest influence on the organizational commitment of tour guides. Finally, the study has proposed some managerial implications to enhance the commitment to the organization of tour guides.

**Keywords:** organizational commitment, tour guides, travel companies.

### Introduction

Employee commitment is the secret that helps companies overcome crises. To achieve positive outcomes in maintaining the organization's workforce, employee commitment is a top priority (Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). From an organization's perspective, a loose attachment to the organization can lead to a loss of human resources, reduced work efficiency, and significantly impact business performance (Van Allen, 2013; Dung et al., 2014). The higher the level of employee commitment, the more it can improve the company's competitiveness (Baldoni, 2013). Therefore, increasing employee commitment to the organization has significant implications for the organization's effectiveness (Koç et al.,

2014; Cherif, 2020). In the post-COVID-19 pandemic era, the Vietnamese tourism market has shown signs of recovery and remarkable growth, with record increases in both international and domestic tourist numbers. Consequently, the demand for human resources in the tourism industry has rapidly risen, particularly for tour guides. Many travel companies have introduced attractive policies and competitive salaries to attract experienced tour guides. However, tour guides usually face psychological pressures and irregular working hours, resulting in a high turnover rate among tour guides. This high turnover rate can lead to fluctuations in the operations and development of travel companies. Given these challenges, identifying the factors that influence the

commitment of tour guides to the organization is essential to creating policies that maintain and develop stable and professional tourism human resources.

## Theoretical framework and research hypotheses

### Theoretical framework

Social Exchange Theory suggests that when an organization provides resources for employees to pursue career development, including benefits, job advancement, training, and development, employees will develop a sense of obligation and loyalty toward the organization (Liu et al., 2017). Organizational commitment is a positive emotion exhibited by employees toward the organization which is reflected in the organization's values and goals (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Commitment to the organization is a psychological state of strong connection between employees and the organization, related to the decision to remain a member of the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Employees with strong attachment to the organization are more motivated and contribute more than others (Meyer & Allen, 1997). As presented by Macey et al. (2011), employee organizational commitment is of great significance as the bond between employees and the organization is related to the success of each individual and the organization's effectiveness.

### Research hypotheses

#### Relationship between job nature and organizational commitment

Job nature is related to the challenges of the job, opportunities to utilize personal skills, and the sense of excitement while performing the job (Smith et al., 1969). Job nature directly affects employees' commitment to the organization (Nam & Lan, 2021). Several studies have demonstrated the positive impact of job nature on employee attachment to the organization (Tuu & Liem, 2012; Tan, 2013; Anh et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020). Therefore, the study proposes hypothesis H1:

Job nature is positively correlated with the organizational commitment of tour guides.

#### Relationship between the work environment and organizational commitment

A reliable work environment encourages employees to generate new ideas, fosters creativity, and enhances work performance (Sundaray, 2011). The work environment is considered one of the crucial factors determining the extent of employee commitment to the organization (Canh et al., 2021). The relationship between the work environment and employee commitment has been demonstrated by many researchers (Tan, 2013; Anh et al., 2018; Vuong & Chau, 2021; Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). Hence, the study proposes hypothesis H2: The work environment positively affects the organizational commitment of tour guides.

#### Relationship between training and development and organizational commitment

Employee commitment depends on the opportunity to learn new skills, acquire knowledge, and develop the potential of employees (Canh et al., 2021). Several studies have argued and demonstrated a positive relationship between training and development opportunities and employee organizational commitment (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Tuu & Liem, 2012; Anh & Dao, 2013; Kumaran et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2017; Mohan et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020; Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). The study proposes hypothesis H3: Training and development positively impact the organizational commitment of tour guides.

#### The relationship between income and benefits with organizational commitment

Salary is the income that employees receive corresponding to their job positions (Nam & Lan, 2021). The positive impact of salary, bonuses, and benefits on employees' organizational commitment has been demonstrated by many researchers (Tuu & Liem, 2012; Tan, 2013; Anh et al., 2018; Minh & Lan, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020; Canh et al., 2021; Vuong & Chau, 2021; Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). Therefore, the study proposes

hypothesis H4: Income and benefits have a positive influence on the organizational commitment of tour guides.

The relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment

A positive relationship between the direct manager and employees will make employees feel secure and trust in leadership, leading to increased effort at work, the generation of new ideas, and organizational commitment (Kahn, 1990; Saks, 2006). Many researchers have argued and demonstrated that leadership style has a positive impact on employees' organizational commitment (Tan, 2013; Anh et al., 2018; Minh & Lan, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020; Canh et al., 2021; Vuong & Chau, 2021; Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). Therefore, the study proposes hypothesis H5: Leadership style positively impacts the organizational commitment of tour guides.

The relationship between relationships with colleagues and organizational commitment

Good peer relationships support employees in improving job performance (Araya & Haiyan, 2015) and enhance employees' organizational commitment (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). Some studies have argued and demonstrated that positive peer relationships have a favorable impact on employees' organizational commitment (Tan, 2013; Dung et al., 2014; Minh & Lan, 2020; Canh et al., 2021; Nguyet & Duyen, 2022). Therefore, the study proposes hypothesis H6: Relationships with colleagues positively affect the organizational commitment of tour guides.

The relationship between rewards and recognition with organizational commitment

Rewards and recognition are correlated with employee job satisfaction and significantly affect work motivation (Danish & Usman, 2010). Rewards and recognition have a positive impact on employees' organizational commitment (Zain et al., 2009). The positive impact of rewards and recognition on employees' organizational commitment has been demonstrated by many researchers (Kumaran et al., 2013; Nguyen et al., 2020;

Vuong & Chau, 2021). Therefore, the study proposes hypothesis H7: Rewards and recognition positively affect the organizational commitment of tour guides.

The relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment

Empowering employees helps them become more proactive in their work, take more responsibility, and be more satisfied with their jobs, leading to a stronger bond with the organization (Tuu & Liem, 2012). Empowering employees in their work improves job performance, satisfaction, and stronger organizational commitment (Lee et al., 2018). Some studies have argued and demonstrated that empowerment has a positive impact on employees' organizational commitment (Tuu & Liem, 2012; Kumaran et al., 2013; Nguyen et al., 2020). Therefore, the study proposes hypothesis H8: Empowerment positively impacts the organizational commitment of tour guides.

Based on the literature review, the study utilizes a group discussion (qualitative method) with eight tour guides working in travel companies in Vietnam. The research model is established as follows:

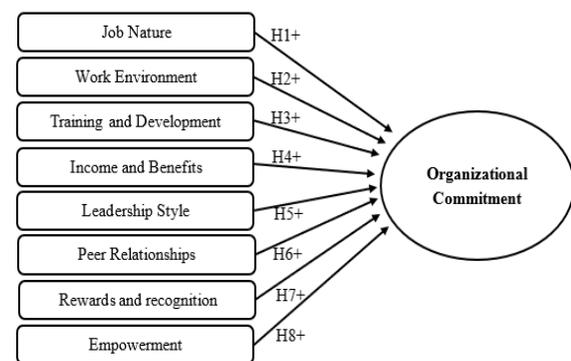


Figure 1: Proposed research model

Table 1: Interpretation of observed variables in the research model

Factor	Observed variables	Scale
Job Nature	JN1: The job is suitable for my major.	Liker t 1-5
	JN2: The job is not too heavy and does not have risks.	Liker t 1-5

Factor	Observed variables	Scale
	JN3: The job helps improve working knowledge and skills.	Likert 1-5
	JN4: The job brings interesting things.	Likert 1-5
<i>References: Robinson et al. (2004), Dung (2005)</i>		
Work Environment	WE1: Fully equipped with equipment and tools for the job.	Likert 1-5
	WE2: Reasonable working location and time.	Likert 1-5
	WE3: Clean and comfortable workplace.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Robinson et al. (2004), Dung (2005)</i>	
Training and Development	TD1: The company has training on job skills.	Likert 1-5
	TD2: The company pays for necessary training programs.	Likert 1-5
	TD3: The company's promotion policy is transparent and fair.	Likert 1-5
	TD4: The company creates opportunities for personal development.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Robinson et al. (2004), Dung (2005)</i>	
Income and Benefits	IB1: Salary commensurate with work results.	Likert 1-5
	IB2: The company fully complies with employee welfare policies.	Likert 1-5
	IB3: The increased income policy is fair and satisfactory.	Likert 1-5
	IB4: Salaries are paid in full and on time.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Robinson et al. (2004), Dung (2005)</i>	
Leadership Style	LS1: I receive respect and trust from leaders.	Likert 1-5
	LS2: I receive support from leaders when needed.	Likert 1-5
	LS3: Leaders always listen to employees' opinions.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Perrin (2003), Dung (2005)</i>	
Peer Relationships	PR1: Colleagues are pleasant and friendly.	Likert 1-5
	PR2: Colleagues work well together.	Likert 1-5
	PR3: Colleagues are willing to help each other.	Likert 1-5
	PR4: I have reliable relationships with my colleagues.	Likert 1-5

Factor	Observed variables	Scale
	<i>References: Canh et al. (2021), Nguyet &amp; Duyen (2022)</i>	
Rewards and Recognition	RR1: Rewarded in front of the group when achieving good results.	Likert 1-5
	RR2: Evaluation and reward results are used to promote positions.	Likert 1-5
	RR3: The Company recognizes the contributions of all employees.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Robinson et al. (2004), Nam &amp; Lan (2021)</i>	
Empowerment	EM1: I am given authority and responsibility for assigned work.	Likert 1-5
	EM2: The company provides me with the necessary resources.	Likert 1-5
	EM3: The company listens to employees' opinions to make decisions.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Snowden &amp; MacArthur (2014), Anh &amp; Huong (2022)</i>	
Organizational Commitment	OC1: The company is important to me.	Likert 1-5
	OC2: I feel like I am a member of the company.	Likert 1-5
	OC3: I am proud to work at the company.	Likert 1-5
	OC4: I feel responsible for everyone in the company.	Likert 1-5
	<i>References: Meyer &amp; Allen (1990), Macdonald &amp; MacIntyre (1997)</i>	

## Research methodology

### Analytical method

The internal consistency reliability test is used to assess the degree of correlation among observed variables in the measurement scale. The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is used to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scale. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used to test the suitability of research data. The structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test research hypotheses.

### Data collection method

Currently, according to many researchers, a larger sample size is preferable (Tho, 2011). According to Hair et al. (2006), to use

exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the observation-to-variable ratio is 5:1, meaning that a minimum of 5 observations are required for each measurement variable. According to Hoelter (1983), the sample size limit in structural linear modeling is 200. Due to the extensive scope of the research space, convenience sampling is used to collect data. The online interview method (Google Form) is employed for data collection. The survey participants are tour guides working in travel companies in Vietnam. The survey was conducted from April 2023 to June 2023. The total number of survey responses obtained is 312, after excluding unreliable answers, a total of 305 valid survey responses were used to test the research hypotheses.

### Research results and discussion

#### Evaluating scale reliability

Table 2: Internal consistency reliability test result

Scale	Number of observed variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Min corrected item-total correlation
Job nature (JN)	4	0.899	0.734
Work environment (WE)	3	0.871	0.729
Training and development (TD)	4	0.904	0.772
Income and benefits (IB)	4	0.898	0.762
Leadership style (LS)	3	0.892	0.759
Peer relationship (PR)	4	0.838	0.628
Rewards and recognition (RR)	3	0.867	0.713
Empowerment (EM)	3	0.874	0.727
Organizational commitment (OC)	4	0.937	0.823

#### Step 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Based on Table 3, all statistical values are assured (Hair et al., 1998), including Bartlett's test of the correlation among observed variables has a significance value of Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05; The suitability of the model is

Table 3: Exploratory Factor Analysis Result

Scale	Sign	Factor								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Job Nature	JN1	0.729								

To identify factors affecting tour guides' commitment to the organization, the study used SPSS 22 and AMOS 22 software to support analysis, and the estimated results are shown below.

#### Step 1: Evaluating internal consistency reliability

The study examined the internal consistency reliability of the measurement scales using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Based on the test results in Table 2, all research scales have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.8. This indicates that all the measurement scales meet the requirement for internal consistency reliability (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994; Slater, 1995). Furthermore, all the variables within each measurement scale have item-total correlations greater than 0.3 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Therefore, all observed variables are used in the subsequent exploratory factor analysis (EFA) step.

confirmed ( $0.5 < KMO = 0.927 < 1$ ); The factor loading of observed variables is greater than 0.5. As a result, 9 factors are formed from the 36 observed variables, and there is no cross-loading of observed variables among the factors.

	JN2	0.839							
	JN3	0.799							
	JN4	0.843							
Work Environment	WE1		0.830						
	WE2		0.879						
	WE3		0.745						
Training and Development	DT1			0.829					
	DT2			0.828					
	DT3			0.799					
	DT4			0.834					
Income and Benefits	IB1				0.803				
	IB2				0.884				
	IB3				0.781				
	IB4				0.813				
Leadership Style	LS1					0.885			
	LS2					0.791			
	LS3					0.843			
Peer Relationships	PR1						0.731		
	PR2						0.764		
	PR3						0.803		
	PR4						0.692		
Rewards and Recognition	RR1							0.831	
	RR2							0.836	
	RR3							0.705	
Empowerment	EM1								0.850
	EM2								0.807
	EM3								0.749
Organizational Commitment	OC1								0.856
	OC2								0.883
	OC3								0.912
	OC4								0.702
KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) = 0.927; Sig. = 0.000; Cumulative % = 79.095%									

### Step 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

According to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the statistical conditions are all met (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) as follows: Chi-square/df = 1.600 < 2 with P = 0.000 ≤ 0.05; The TLI and CFI indices have values of 0.957 and 0.963, respectively, both >

0.9; RMSEA = 0.044 < 0.08. This indicates that the model is a good fit for the market data.

Table 4: Scale reliability test result

Scale	Number of observed variables	Critical Ratio (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job nature (JN)	4	0.900	0.692
Work environment (WE)	3	0.872	0.695
Training and development (TD)	4	0.904	0.702
Income and benefits (IB)	4	0.899	0.689
Leadership style (LS)	3	0.893	0.737
Peer relationship (PR)	4	0.838	0.566
Rewards and recognition (RR)	3	0.868	0.687
Empowerment (EM)	3	0.875	0.700
Organizational commitment (OC)	4	0.938	0.791

Based on the results of composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) in Table 4, it is evident that the CR and AVE of Table 5: Research hypotheses test result

Relationship	Unstandardized			Standardized Estimated Value	P-value
	Estimate	Standard Error S.E.	Critical Ratio C.R.		
JN → OC	0.132	0.056	2.365	0.142	0.018
WE → OC	0.132	0.050	2.644	0.146	0.008
TD → OC	0.108	0.051	2.130	0.180	0.033
IB → OC	0.160	0.048	3.321	0.114	0.000
LS → OC	0.112	0.047	2.354	0.126	0.019
PR → OC	0.144	0.069	2.101	0.104	0.036
RR → OC	0.118	0.052	2.269	0.135	0.023
EM → OC	0.178	0.059	3.032	0.186	0.002

Based on the analysis result in Table 5, the nature of the job positively influences the commitment of tour guides to the organization. In practice, being a tour guide is one of the best professions among young people, offering opportunities to explore new places, learn new things, meet people, and build relationships. Additionally, different skill sets and empowerment of being a tour guide encourage them to commit to the organization. This

all measurement scales meet the conditions (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, the test result shows that the correlations between the conceptual constructs are distinct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, all the measurement scales meet the requirements for both value and reliability, supporting the research hypothesis test.

Testing the research hypotheses

In social science research, all proposed causal relationships with a reliability level of 95% (or a significance level of 5%, corresponding to p-value ≤ 0.05) are considered good (Cohen, 1988). Based on the test result in Table 5, all research hypotheses are accepted with a 95% level of reliability. This demonstrates that the attachment of tour guides to the organization is influenced by job nature, work environment, training and development, income and benefits, leadership style, relationship with colleagues, rewards and recognition, and empowerment.

research finding aligns with the studies of Sundaray (2011) and Nguyen et al. (2020). Furthermore, the study has demonstrated that the work environment has a positive impact on the commitment of tour guides to the organization. When a travel company provides a good work environment, tour guides' commitment to the organization becomes stronger. The work environment is considered one of the crucial factors determining an

employee's level of commitment (Canh et al., 2021; Nam & Lan, 2021).

Based on the research results in Table 5, it is shown that training and development have a positive relationship with the commitment of tour guides to the organization. Training and development are key activities aimed at maintaining and enhancing employees, thereby increasing their attachment to the organization (Nguyen et al., 2020). According to Dockel et al. (2006), if an organization offers training and development opportunities, employees feel respected, which enhances their attachment to the organization. Additionally, the study also indicates that income and benefits positively influence the commitment of tour guides to the organization. This suggests that if the income and benefits provided by the travel company meet the expectations of tour guides, their organizational commitment becomes stronger. This finding is consistent with the study of Nhut & Trang (2015), highlighting income as the most important factor in determining employee commitment to the organization.

The research results show a positive relationship between leadership style and the commitment of tour guides to the organization. When employees have a strong bond and trust in their superiors, they exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviors toward their work and the organization (Saks, 2006). Friendly and inspirational managers who care about employee interests foster employee attachment to the organization (Sundaray, 2011). The relationship between managers and employees is a determining factor in employee attachment to the organization (Dung, 2005; Minh & Lan, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020). Additionally, the relationship with colleagues has a significant impact on the commitment of tour guides to the organization. In practice, positive relationships with colleagues can make the work environment more appealing, improve job satisfaction, and enhance employees' organizational commitment (Canh et al., 2021). Cooperation and mutual support in work, or competition and lack of enthusiasm in work, also affect employee attachment (Vuong & Chau, 2021).

Table 5 shows that rewards and recognition have a positive influence on the commitment of tour guides to the organization. If employees are satisfied with the rewards policy, it will motivate them to become more attached to the organization (Vuong & Suntrayuth, 2020). Notably, rewards and recognition have a significant impact on employee attachment (Anh & Huong, 2022). According to a survey conducted by Psychometrics, 58% of employees stated that being recognized increases their attachment to their jobs (Bakker, 2015). Importantly, the research also reveals that empowerment has the strongest impact on the commitment of tour guides to the organization. In practice, employees always want to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their work. Therefore, when employees are empowered, they become more attached to both their work and the organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Empowerment is a simple way to motivate employees and increase their commitment to the organization (Yukl & Becker, 2006).

## Conclusion

When employees are attached to the organization, they work with focus, responsibility, and creativity, which leads to improved job performance. Therefore, employee commitment to the organization is a topic of interest to managers. The research results have demonstrated the positive influencing factors on the organizational commitment of tour guides, including job nature, work environment, training and development, income and benefits, leadership style, relationships with colleagues, rewards and recognition, and empowerment. Among these factors, empowerment is identified as the most important and strongest factor influencing the attachment of tour guides to the organization. As a result, the research suggests several management implications to enhance organizational commitment. (1) Developing appropriate empowerment policies that provide opportunities for tour guides to contribute creative ideas and participate in important decisions; (2) Creating a collaborative work

environment within the tour guide team, promoting support and sharing to achieve work objectives; (3) Conducting regular training programs to enhance the knowledge and skills of tour guides, improving their capabilities; (4) Managers should listen, evaluate, and provide feedback on tour guides' opinions, motivating and assisting them in completing their tasks; (5) Adjusting rewards and recognition policies to ensure fairness, transparency, and motivation for the career development of tour guides; (6) Income and benefits policies for tour guides should meet individual expectations and be in line with their dedication and contributions.

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