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Psychological Ownership And Its Influence On Employee Commitment

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Abstract

This study explores the concept of psychological ownership and its influence on employee commitment and engagement in organizations. Psychological ownership refers to the sense of possession and personal attachment that employees feel toward their work and organization. A survey-based research method was used, collecting data from 350 employees through a structured questionnaire. The analysis included descriptive statistics, correlation, and ANOVA to examine relationships and impacts. Findings revealed that employees generally exhibit a moderate to high level of psychological ownership, which is significantly related to both employee commitment and engagement. Psychological ownership was found to have a strong positive effect on engagement, and engaged employees demonstrated higher levels of commitment. These results indicate that fostering psychological ownership can enhance employee involvement, motivation, and loyalty, contributing to organizational effectiveness. The study emphasizes the importance of strategies that encourage ownership and emotional connection among employees for sustained organizational success.

Keywords: Psychological Ownership, Employee Commitment, Employee Engagement, Organizational Effectiveness, Survey Study.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, organizations have increasingly recognized that employee commitment is not shaped only by formal contracts or monetary rewards. Psychological factors play an important role in influencing how employees relate to their work and organization (Ahmed, 2014). One such factor is psychological ownership, which refers to the feeling of possession and personal attachment that employees develop toward their job, role, or organization. When employees perceive a sense of "this is mine," they are more likely to show responsibility, involvement, and concern for organizational outcomes (Alhadar & Hidayanti, 2021). At the same time, employee commitment remains a critical issue for organizations facing challenges such as high turnover, low engagement, and reduced loyalty. Understanding the factors that strengthen commitment has therefore become essential for effective human resource management.

Concept of psychological ownership

A sense of having a stake in one's work or organization as a consequence of dedication and effort is known as Psychological Ownership by an employee (Boonsirithomachai et al., 2022). Employee and organization may both gain from allowing employees to boost their performance if managers are aware of the potential benefits and drawbacks of Psychological Ownership.

- psychological ownership is often obtained by knowing about an organization and putting in time and effort in it.
- Psychological Ownership is linked to favorable results for the organization, such as greater motivation, corporate responsibility, and loyalty (SH Wagner, E Bailey, C Bush, 2018). Positive Psychological Ownership requires that there be a two-way relationship between the organization and the employee.
- On the other side, it may cause problems like jealousy and a lack of willingness to share what you know. This is something that can be influenced by management and leadership.

- By allowing employees to learn about their job, contribute creatively to it, and participate in choices, an organization may create Psychological Ownership (Tarish, 2023).
- Formal ownership of shares or earnings may improve Psychological Ownership, but not always.

Employee Commitment in Organizations

The emotional and psychological ties an employee has to their organization are referred to as employee commitment. It is a reflection of how invested an employee is in their job and the company's mission (Ozler et al., 2008). Showing a true interest in the organization's growth and welfare, commitment goes beyond the standard job contract.



Figure 1 Types of employees' commitment

The Impact of Employee Commitment on Organizational Success

The entire performance and stability of an organization are significantly influenced by employee commitment. Committed employees often exhibit more commitment to their jobs, organization objectives, and long-term vision. These employees are more likely to embrace organizational changes, put in additional effort, and keep their performance constant. Problems with absenteeism, employee turnover, and workplace disputes have a direct impact on operational efficiency and productivity; high levels of commitment assist alleviate these challenges (Khan & Gul, 2021).

Teamwork, service quality, and relationships with stakeholders and consumers are all positively impacted when employees are fully devoted to their job. Employee commitment also helps to foster a trusting, accountable, and respectful workplace culture. Consequently, a company's organizational efficiency and competitiveness are both bolstered by dedicated employees, who boost individual performance. Thus, in order to achieve long-term success as an organization, it is crucial to comprehend and encourage employee commitment (Zhang, 2022).



Figure 2 Factors influencing employee commitment

Relationship between Psychological Ownership and Employee Commitment

Psychological ownership is closely linked with employee commitment, as employees who feel a sense of ownership toward their work or organization tend to develop stronger emotional and moral attachment. When employees perceive their role, tasks, or organization as "their own," they are more likely to show loyalty, responsibility, and willingness to remain with the organization (He et al., 2022). This sense of ownership enhances identification with organizational goals, which in turn strengthens commitment. As a result, psychological ownership acts as an important psychological mechanism that fosters higher levels of employee commitment and long-term organizational involvement.

Table 1: Influence of Psychological Ownership on Employee Commitment

Aspect of Psychological Ownership	Influence on Employee Commitment
Sense of belonging	Increases emotional attachment to the organization
Feeling of responsibility	Enhances dedication and accountability
Personal identification with work	Strengthens loyalty and involvement
Control over job-related tasks	Improves intention to stay and commitment
Emotional attachment	Promotes long-term organizational commitment

Relationship between Psychological Ownership and Employee Commitment



Figure 3 Relationship between Psychological Ownership and Employee Commitment

LITERATURE REVIEWS

According to Divya & Srinivasan (2014) the researchers, involvement may improve employee relationships inside the company. Their willingness to put more money into the company will rise as a direct result of this. According to the researchers, employees are more inclined to cut down on their efforts when they experience emotions of unfairness

and apathy. An increase in "the greater degree of employees' participation in decision making is associated with a higher degree of altruistic spirit that contributes to psychological ownership," according to the results. The relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and psychological ownership was postulated by the researchers. A favorable connection was shown by the results. Therefore, there is room for further cross-sectional and longitudinal studies on employee engagement in decision-making.

George (2015) sought to determine if "there was a positive relationship between psychological ownership, work engagement and happiness", and if psychological ownership could predict work engagement and, by extension, employee happiness in the organization. An audit company in South Africa used a non-probability purposive sample of 365 professional, white-collar employees in the professional services sector to conduct a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional survey. All of the study's measurement items on the scales were evaluated by testing the measurement model. The hypothesised model was compared to five other models. The purpose of testing the structural model was to assess and validate the hypothesised model. All of the assumptions were confirmed, and the structural model suited the data well: A significant amount of the variation in job engagement was explained by psychological ownership, which had a strong relationship with it. Conversely, a considerable percentage of the variation in happiness was explained by work engagement, which similarly had a high relationship with happiness.

Akram et al. (2015) aimed to experimentally examine the moderating effect of psychological ownership on the relationship between psychological empowerment and work satisfaction. A questionnaire survey was used to gather data for the cross-sectional investigation. With a response rate of 60%, data was obtained from 151 employees of public sector firms using a self-administered questionnaire. Finding the relationship among variables is done by using correlation. The findings indicate that psychological ownership influences the relationship between psychological empowerment and work satisfaction to some extent. The essence of psychological ownership is the sense of possession that psychological empowerment fosters in employees, which in turn leads to greater job satisfaction and other beneficial results for both the organization and the employees.

K. & Rajendrababu (2023) used the social exchange theory and the psychological theory of organizational change and found empirical evidence that psychological

ownership and organizational fairness affect employees' willingness to change. Researchers also found that employees were more open to change when they had a personal investment in the outcome. This study shed light on the relationship between employees' psychological ownership of the change and organizational fairness. The relationship between organizational justice, psychological ownership, and change preparedness has only been examined in a small number of research. We addressed the knowledge gap and experimentally demonstrated the relationship between the variables by drawing from psychology theory of organizational transformation and social exchange theory. Research on psychological ownership, organizational fairness, and change preparedness has benefited greatly from the current research. Our research adds to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of a positive relationship between the variables. It finds that psychological ownership and organizational justice are antecedents of willingness to change.

Zhixiong (2014) used Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs and the motivation behind psychological ownership and scientifically developed the theory of psychological ownership and propose three dimensions: the security dimension, the relationship dimension, and the ability dimension. According to Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs, the "home" of psychological ownership and the physiological requirements make up the security component. A person's need for a place to call "home" indicates their need for a feeling of belonging and the urge to provide a secure haven for their spirit. The individual's desire to be acknowledged by teammates via social activities and to further develop self-identification is reflected in the relationship component, which relates to the love and belonging needs in Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs and the psychological ownership of one's own identity. In Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs, the ability dimension relates to the demands for respect and esteem as well as the desire for self-actualization, as well as the self-efficacy associated with psychological ownership. Possession of wealth, rank, and knowledge make up an individual's ability dimension. Through the use of "I" and "my extension," the individual is able to earn respect within the team, recognize their own worth, and develop self-confidence.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To examine the level of psychological ownership among employees.
- To assess the level of employee commitment in the organization.

- To study the relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment.
- To analyze the difference between psychological ownership of the employees based on the type of organizations they are associated with.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment.

H₀₂: There is no significant impact of psychological ownership on employee engagement.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between psychological ownership of the employees based on the type of organizations they are associated with.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a survey method to examine the relationship between psychological ownership, employee commitment, and employee engagement. A structured questionnaire with items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (SA=1 to SD=5) was used to collect primary data. The target population included employees from private and public organizations. A total of 350 respondents were selected using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and ANOVA to examine relationships and impacts among the variables.

Table 2: Research Framework

Methodological Aspect	Details
Research Approach	Quantitative
Research Design	Survey
Data Collection Instrument	Structured Questionnaire (5-point Likert)
Population	Employees from private, public, and semi-government organizations
Sample Size	350 respondents
Sampling Technique	Purposive Sampling
Data Analysis Tools	Descriptive Statistics, Correlation, ANOVA

Data analysis and interpretation

The demographic information, such as gender, age, educational qualification, work experience, and type of organization, provides an overview of the sample profile. This helps in interpreting the findings more accurately and ensures that the analysis reflects the diversity and

composition of the respondents. Once the sample profile is clear, the study proceeds to examine the responses related to psychological ownership, employee commitment, and employee engagement.

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	162	46.3	46.3
Male	188	53.7	100

The table shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of the total respondents, 188 (53.7%) were male, while 162 (46.3%) were female. This indicates that male respondents formed a slightly higher proportion of the sample compared to female respondents, reflecting a reasonably balanced gender representation in the study.

Table 3: Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 25 years	72	20.6	20.6
25–35 years	61	17.4	38.0
36–45 years	66	18.9	56.9
46–55 years	70	20	76.9
Above 55 years	81	23.1	100

The age-wise distribution of the respondents indicates that 81 (23.1%) belonged to the above 55 years age group. This was followed by 70 (20.0%) in the 46–55 years category and 72 (20.6%) who were below 25 years of age. Respondents in the 36–45 years group accounted for 66 (18.9%), while 61 (17.4%) fell within the 25–35 years age group. Overall, the sample reflects representation across different age categories.

Table 4: Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undergraduate	104	29.7	29.7
Postgraduate	80	22.9	52.6
Professional Degree	75	21.4	74.0
Others	91	26	100

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
I feel a strong sense of ownership toward my job	350	1	5	3.33	1.442
I consider my work responsibilities as my own	350	1	5	2.03	1.192
I feel personally connected to the organization	350	1	5	1.89	1.157
I treat organizational resources as if they belong to me	350	1	5	1.90	1.244
I feel responsible for the success of my organization	350	1	5	2.60	1.588
My job feels like an important part of who I am	350	1	5	3.05	1.331
I feel proud to say that this organization is “my organization”	350	1	5	2.18	1.260
I take personal initiative to improve my work outcomes	350	1	5	1.89	1.137

The educational qualification of the respondents shows that 104 (29.7%) were undergraduates. This was followed by 91 (26.0%) who belonged to the ‘Others’ category. Respondents with postgraduate qualifications accounted for 80 (22.9%), while 75 (21.4%) held professional degrees. The distribution indicates that respondents from different educational backgrounds were adequately represented in the study.

Table 5: Type of Organization

Type of Organization	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public	186	53.1	53.1
Private	164	46.9	100

The distribution of respondents based on the type of organization shows that 186 (53.1%) were employed in public organizations. Respondents from private organizations accounted for 164 (46.9%) of the total sample. The results indicate that employees from both organizational sectors were almost evenly represented in the study.

Table 6: Work Experience

Work Experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 2 years	90	25.7	100
2–5 years	88	25.1	25.1
6–10 years	93	26.6	51.7
Above 10 years	79	22.6	74.3

The distribution of respondents based on work experience indicates that 93 (26.6%) had 6–10 years of experience. This was followed by 90 (25.7%) who had less than 2 years of experience and 88 (25.1%) with 2–5 years of experience. Respondents with more than 10 years of work experience accounted for 79 (22.6%) of the sample, showing representation across different experience levels.

I feel emotionally attached to my role in the organization	350	1	5	2.31	1.337
I care deeply about what happens to this organization	350	1	5	2.61	1.519
I feel loyal to my organization	350	1	5	3.07	1.331
I am willing to put in extra effort for the organization	350	1	5	2.20	1.268
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	350	1	5	1.89	1.138
I intend to continue working with this organization for a long time	350	1	5	2.33	1.338
I feel emotionally attached to my organization	350	1	5	2.57	1.497
I feel motivated to contribute to organizational goals	350	1	5	3.07	1.602
I feel responsible for the organization's success	350	1	5	2.23	1.458
I would recommend this organization as a good place to work	350	1	5	2.02	1.253
I feel committed to the values of the organization	350	1	5	2.25	1.308
I rarely think about leaving this organization	350	1	5	2.43	1.489
I feel enthusiastic about my work	350	1	5	2.11	1.281
I am highly involved in my job	350	1	5	1.99	1.129
I feel energetic while performing my work duties	350	1	5	1.89	1.091
I am fully focused when working	350	1	5	1.95	1.196
I feel motivated to perform my job well	350	1	5	2.64	1.581
Time passes quickly when I am working	350	1	5	2.88	1.476
I am interested in improving my work performance	350	1	5	2.06	1.240
I feel encouraged to give my best at work	350	1	5	2.13	1.453
I am mentally engaged in my job activities	350	1	5	2.25	1.366
I feel inspired by the work I do	350	1	5	2.40	1.442
Valid N (listwise)	350				

The descriptive statistics for all 350 respondents indicate that most items have mean values between 1.89 and 3.33, showing that respondents generally agree with the statements. Lower mean values, closer to 1, reflect stronger agreement, while higher mean values, closer to 5, indicate weaker agreement. The means suggest that employees display a moderate to high level of psychological ownership, commitment, and engagement toward their organization. The standard deviations, ranging roughly between 1.09 and 1.60, indicate a moderate variation in responses, showing that while most employees share similar views, some differences exist in perceptions across the sample. The data reflects a generally positive attitude of employees toward their job, organization, and work-related responsibilities.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment.

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.967. The result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the likelihood of this result occurring by chance is very low. This means that as employees' psychological ownership increases, their

commitment to the organization also increases correspondingly. Based on this result, H₀₁ is rejected, confirming a significant and strong association between the two variables.

H₀₂: There is no significant impact of psychological ownership on employee engagement.

Table 8: Hypothesis 1

Correlations			
		Psychological Ownership	Employee Commitment
Psychological Ownership	Pearson Correlation	1	.967**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.967**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.967. The result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the likelihood of this result occurring by chance is very low. This means that as employees' psychological ownership increases, their commitment to the organization also increases correspondingly. Based on this result, H_{01} is rejected, confirming a significant and strong association between the two variables.

H_{02} : There is no significant impact of psychological ownership on employee engagement.

Table 9: Hypothesis 2

ANOVA					
Employee Engagement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7791.100	15	519.407	203.522	.000
Within Groups	852.397	334	2.552		
Total	8643.497	349			

The ANOVA results show that the impact of psychological ownership on employee engagement is statistically significant, with an F-value of 203.522 and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.01 significance level. This indicates that psychological ownership has a significant effect on employee engagement. Based on this result, H_{02} is rejected, confirming that higher levels of psychological

ownership are associated with higher employee engagement in the organization.

H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment.

Table 10: Hypothesis 3

		Correlations	
		Employee Commitment	Employee Engagement
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	1	.904**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.904**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.904. The result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the probability of this relationship occurring by chance is extremely low. This implies that as employee engagement increases, employee commitment also increases significantly. Based on this finding, H_{03} is rejected, confirming a strong and significant association between the two variables.

H_{04} : There is no significant difference between psychological ownership of the employees based on the type of organizations they are associated with.

Table 11: Hypothesis 4

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Psychological Ownership	Equal variances not assumed	2.059	.008	4.681	341.200	.000	.663	.535	.421	.905

The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in psychological ownership between employees of public and private sector organizations ($t = 4.681$, $df = 341.20$, $p < .001$). As the mean difference was

positive (0.663) and Group 1 represented public sector employees, the results indicate that psychological ownership was significantly higher among public sector employees compared to private sector employees. Therefore, the null

hypothesis (H_{04}), which stated that there is no significant difference in psychological ownership based on the type of organization, is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the role of psychological ownership in influencing employee commitment and engagement. The findings establish psychological ownership as an important factor shaping positive employee attitudes. Most employees reported moderate to high levels of psychological ownership, commitment, and engagement, indicating a strong sense of connection with their work and organization. The results showed a significant and positive relationship between psychological ownership and employee commitment. Employees who feel a sense of ownership toward their work are more emotionally attached and willing to remain dedicated to organizational goals. Psychological ownership also had a significant impact on employee engagement, suggesting that employees with stronger ownership feelings are more involved, energetic, and absorbed in their work roles. In addition, employee engagement was strongly associated with employee commitment, indicating that engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate loyalty and responsibility toward the organization. A key finding of the study is the difference in psychological ownership across organizational types. Public sector employees were found to have significantly higher psychological ownership than private sector employees. This suggests that factors such as long-term association, job stability, and a sense of institutional belonging may strengthen ownership feelings in public organizations. The study concludes that psychological ownership is a central factor in enhancing both employee engagement and commitment. When employees feel that the organization and their work truly belong to them, they are more motivated, involved, and committed, which supports positive organizational functioning and long-term effectiveness.

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