

# The Impact of Participative Decision-Making on Organizational Commitment: A Study among Employees of Mobile Telecom Companies in Yemen

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The study aimed at examining the relationship between participative decision-making and organizational commitment among employees working in mobile telecom companies in Yemen.

**Approach/Methodology/Design:** This study is descriptive-analytical. The study population comprised the employees working at the four mobile telecom companies in Sana'a, Yemen's capital city (Yemen Mobile, Sabafon, MTN and Y-Telecom). One hundred twenty questionnaires were collected and were valid for the data analysis. Different statistical tools, including regression analysis and correlation coefficients, were applied, and data were analyzed using SPSS.

**Findings:** The regression analysis output shows a significant positive relationship between participative decision-making and affective commitment ( $\beta = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, the regression analysis shows a significant positive relationship between participative decision making and continuance commitment ( $\beta = 0.59$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In addition, the significance of regression analysis tested using the regression coefficients shows a significant positive relationship between participative decision-making and normative commitment ( $\beta = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Practical Implications:** The study recommends that the companies managers need to motivate and inspire their employees to actively participate in the decision-making process to enhance their level of organizational commitment.

**Originality/value:** The study presents evidence from a new setting where insufficient analysis has been performed to investigate the direct relationship between the variables tested.

## 1. Introduction

Rapid changes occur around the globe nearly every day, and the business market is getting more competitive. Hence organizations are to take great strategies to sustain in the marketplace. Most organizations have realized the significance of involving their employees in every work activity and allowing their participation in decision-making to remain active and committed (Scott-Ladd & Marshall, 2004). Employees are known as a source of idea generation, and they are the backbone of any organization (Halawi & Haydar, 2018). Therefore, workers have a tremendous need to participate and engage in organizations' decision-making process. In addition, management should take their views and voices into account (Constantin & Baias, 2015). If the workers dedicate themselves to their companies, they do much more than if they are not.

Participative decision-making is considered a special form of delegation where employees

participate in making decisions and choices that bridge the gap of communication between the management and workers. Participative decision-making is the same as employee involvement, in which employees gain autonomy to be involved in organizational activities such as planning and directing, which leads them to be committed and productive (Noah, 2008).

In many organizations, the decision-making task is undertaken by top management teams without the participation of lower-level managers and implementing such decisions taken by senior management sometimes becomes difficult, especially when those decisions are not favorable to the staff who are the implementers (Dede, C. H. 2019). Somech (2002) argues that decentralized authority structures have the potential to achieve results than the traditional top-down bureaucratic structures.

One of the most critical aspects of every organization's success or failure is the mobilization and focusing of people's power to achieve the organization's goals. The importance of employee participation practice is essential for the growth of organizations. It guarantees that employees are willing to engage in organizationally appropriate professional decision-making and market planning methods that are appropriate for their position within a corporation (Ekerman, 2006).

Previous research linked participative decision-making with organizational performance, employee performance and Job satisfaction (Saputra et al., 2015; Princy & Rebeka, 2019; Srinivasan, 2021; Dede, 2019); some other studies considered employee commitment as a mediator variable (Phipps et al., 2013; Han et al., 2010; Butali & Njoroge, 2018). This study examined the direct influence of participative decision making on the individual aspects of organizational commitment as well as investigated the controlling role of the demographic measures (control variables). Many comparable experiments have been carried out in developed countries, with less evidence gained in developing countries. This research is being carried out in Yemen, where inadequate analysis has been carried out to explore the relationship between the factors investigated.

## **Objectives of the Study**

### **General objective:**

To investigate the relationship between participative decision making and organizational commitment among employees working in the mobile telecom companies in Yemen.

### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To determine the relationship between participative decision-making and affective commitment.
2. To explore the relationship between participative decision-making and continuance commitment.
3. To assess the relationship between participative decision-making and normative commitment.

## **Research Hypotheses**

- H 1: A significant positive relationship exists between participative decision-making and affective commitment.
- H 2: A significant positive relationship exists between participative decision-making and continuance commitment.
- H 3: A significant positive relationship exists between participative decision-making and normative commitment.

### Pilot Study

A pilot study has been conducted among 30 employees, and the results indicated that the questionnaire items are reliable. The following figure represents the results of Cronbach's Alpha test.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Remark
Participative Decision Making	0.850	4	Good
Organizational Commitment	0.915	13	Excellent

*Source: Author*

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

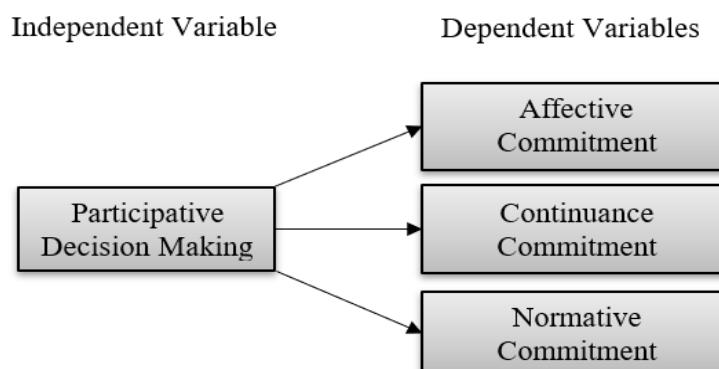


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the Study

## 2. Literature Review

### Theoretical Review

#### Participative Decision-Making

Participative decision-making refers to the process of involving, empowering and encouraging employees to give inputs towards value creation and organizational performance improvement (Sofijanov & Chatleska, 2013). Westhuizen (2010) also defines employee participation as the

direct and indirect involvement of employees either individually or as groups and their contribution to the decision-making process.

Employee participation is commonly characterized as a process through which authority is exchanged between individuals who are otherwise hierarchically separated (Locke & Schweiger, 1979; Wagner, 1994). Staff involvement in decision-making balances supervisors' participation in information collecting, decision-making, as well as problem-solving activities by their subordinates (Wagner, 1994).

For effective implementation of management strategies, employee's participation takes a vital role (Harber&Marriot, 1991). The participation of employees is a behavioural and emotional repetition that helps fulfil human and corporate objectives (Higgins, 1982). For example, According to Appelbaum et al. (2000), the opportunity to actively participate in policymaking fosters trust between employees and their managers, increasing employee engagement and motivation.

### **Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment is defined by Porter (1990) as the continued tendency of staff to take on or engage in unique organizational activities. It is a product of employee trust and fear of losing their current positions if they have demonstrated no contribution to their job. As Rebecca (2013) adds, organizational commitment is seen as not just binding workers to their organizations' goals and priorities but also having a sense of value and an understanding of those objectives, encouraging them to make a significant effort on behalf of the company to uphold and protect their dedication. The accomplishment of corporate goals and the execution of the work within a limited period and with minimal expenses can be done by empowerment and involvement in decision-making. It motivates employees to strive harder or to measure more thoroughly. However, their findings showed that workers employed in a given organization could obtain more experience and skills to perform the requisite work. They thus foster their efficiency and operational effectiveness (Salleh et al., 2013; Yeh et al., 2012).

### **Types of Organizational Commitment**

According to Annakili, P. and Jayam, R (2018), organizational commitment is seen in the following different forms:

**Affective or moral commitment** happens as workers actively accept the aims and principles of the company and take responsibility for the organization's performance. They thus typically demonstrate a high degree of achievement, optimistic attitudes to work and a readiness to continue in the company.

**Continuance Commitment** occurs when employees stay in the organization because they get a return and rewards for their efforts. When their rewards match their expectations, they tend to pay more effort. They also demonstrate devotion since they are frightened of losing their jobs if they quit the organization.

**Normative commitment** is connected with standards of behavior and social norms. The attitudes of employees under this pattern are similar, like those having affective commitment.

## **Empirical Review**

Previous research has shown that participation in decision-making and commitment are related (Louis and Smith, 1992). When employees are willing to participate in decision-making, they perceive it as a boost for their working group's performance (Kukenberger et al., 2015). Business analysis in Malaysia revealed that management stresses their subordinate participation in decision-making (Matt, 2007). Menderson (2009) has pointed out that this dedication gives staff ample respect and increases workplace satisfaction. In this sense, it was said that workers' participation in decision-making would enhance their job satisfaction and thus theoretically stimulate teachers' work. Mwangi (2011) also stated that delegation decision-making contributed to improved productivity and motivation.

Widanto & Satria (2019) investigated the influence of participation in decision-making and psychological ownership on organizational commitment, which leads to employee knowledge sharing. The study had 153 respondents from various sectors. The study's findings indicated that participatory decision making will increase employee commitment through the use of psychological ownership. However, the findings revealed no effect on knowledge sharing behavior.

Saputra et al. (2015) in their study, revealed that participative decision making has a significant and positive impact on the job performance of the University of Utara Malaysia. The study recommended that the management of the university recognize the diversity of their staff and implement a practice to increase the level of job performance and keep them motivated. The study argued that employee participation is a key factor for increasing the job performance of the university academic staff.

Phipps et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between employee involvement and organizational productivity, considering organizational commitment as a moderator in this relationship. According to the study, both involvement as well as commitment go hand in hand in influencing organizational productivity.

Elele & Fields (2010) investigated the link between decision-making involvement and organizational commitment among Nigerian and American employees working in the public sector. Employee actual and desired participation are related to affective and normative commitment but not to continuance commitment among Nigerian workers. Only actual vs desired levels of participation were positively associated to affective and normative organizational commitment among American employees. Actual levels of participation, on the other hand, were negatively associated with continuance commitment.

In his research, Singh (2009) claimed that due to competitive pressures and quickly changing market circumstances, firms must adopt flexible, adaptable, and lucrative strategies in today's complicated working environment and fierce competition. Furthermore, businesses recognize

that their workers are their most valuable asset, and the company's performance is dependent on employees' increased engagement in the generation of new ideas. Employee engagement may help businesses find inspiration, develop working habits, and make better decisions at work in various ways.

Bhatti, K. K., & Qureshi, T. M. (2007) Argued that the engagement of workers has a positive impact on employee satisfaction, commitment and productivity. According to the report, rising employee engagement is a long-term mechanism that requires commitment to both management and employee initiative.

### **3. Methodology and Procedures**

#### **Research Design**

To examine the link between participative decision and organizational commitment, a descriptive-analytical design was adopted.

#### **Population**

The employees of the four mobile phone companies' main branches in the capital city of Yemen (Sana'a), namely: Yemen Mobile, Sabafon, MTN Yemen, and Y-Telecom.

#### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

The researcher applied a simple random sampling technique in which 30 employees from each company were selected randomly, establishing **120** respondents from the headquarters of the four companies in the capital city of Yemen. This technique gives an equal chance for every unit in the population to be selected and represented. It helps in avoiding sampling bias.

#### **Tools for Data Collection**

Primary as well as secondary data were employed in this study. A survey was used to collect primary data, while extensive desk analysis was used to obtain secondary data. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire survey adapted from Tabouli, E. M., Habtoor, N. A., and Nashief, M. (2016) and Abdullah (2011). The independent variable is 'participative decision-making'. On the other hand, the dependent variable is organizational commitment, which was measured in terms of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The questionnaire begins with demographic information and is then followed by two parts that reflect participative decision making as the independent variable and organizational commitment as the dependent variable. The questionnaire contains seventeen (17) items in total. A total of 120 questionnaires were valid for the data analysis. A five-point Likert scale ranges from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree was adopted. Regression and correlation analysis were used to evaluate the three hypotheses.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Table 2: Gender of respondents

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	108	90
Female	12	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Authors*

The results of the study in the table above show that out of 120 respondents, 90 employees are males, representing 90%, and 12 employees are female, representing only 10%. Hence the majority of the respondents are males. The number of male staff working in the mobile telecom companies is much higher than the number of women staff due to the nature of the telecom industry in the country.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
From 31-40	102	85
From 41- 50	18	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Authors*

The table above shows that out of 120 respondents, 102 employees, representing 85%, were between 31- 40 years old, and 15 respondents representing 15%, were between 41-50 years old. This indicates that most of the employees are below 40 and above 30 years old.

Table 4: Education level of respondents

<b>Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bachelor degree	54	45
Master	60	50
Doctorate	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Authors*

The research data indicates that out of 120 respondents, 54 employees representing 45% have a bachelor's degree, 60 employees representing 50% have a master's degree, six employees representing 5% have a doctorate. Hence, most of the employees are master's degree holders, which indicates that employees of the telecom companies in Yemen possess higher qualifications.

Table 5: Years of Experience of respondents

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than five years	6	5
From 5 to 10 years	36	30
From 11 to 15 years	48	40
From 16 to 20 years	30	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Authors*

In this study, out of 120 respondents, 6 of them representing 5%, has less than five years of work experience, 36 employees representing 30% have 5-10 years of experience, 48 employees representing 40% have 11-15 year experience, 30 employees representing 25% have 16-20 year experience. Hence the majority of the employees having 11- 15 years of work experience.

### Descriptive Statistics

The study's hypotheses were evaluated using a variety of statistical approaches. Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between variables. The hypotheses were evaluated using regression analysis. The means, standard deviations, and correlations for the independent and dependent variables are shown in the following table.

Table 6: Mean, standard deviations and correlations between variables

Variables	Mean ± SD	Employees Participation	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
<b>Participative Decision making</b>	3.413 ± 0.708				
<b>Affective commitment</b>	4.040 ± 0.713	.483**			
<b>Continuance commitment</b>	3.838 ± 0.764	.599**	.848**		
<b>Normative commitment</b>	3.688 ± 0.693	.724**	.768**	.704**	
<b>Gender</b>	-	-.373**	.263*	0.126	-0.091
<b>Age</b>	-	0.002	0.134	-0.002	0.140
<b>Qualification</b>	-	0.209	-0.062	0.203	0.137
<b>Experience</b>	-	-0.126	0.010	-0.038	-.229*

\*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

Source: Authors

The table displays the hypothesized relationship between the variables. The three elements of organizational commitment were positively correlated with one another. These components are also related positively to participative decision-making, suggesting that the higher the degree of employee participation in decision-making, the greater their commitment to the organization. Among the demographic measures, the age and educational qualification of the respondents were not correlated with participative decision-making and all the aspects of organizational commitment. However, gender and work experience had a significant, although negative, correlation with participative decision-making and normative commitment, indicating that the higher the work experience, and the lower is the responsibility or obligation of the employees towards the organization.



The above correlations permit analysis of the effect of participative decision-making on the individual aspects of organizational commitment while controlling the demographic measures (control variables).

Table 7: Model summary and coefficients for the impact of participative decision-making on affective commitment

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value
	B	SE	Beta		
Participativedecision making	2.380	0.348		6.842	0.000
Affective commitment	0.486	0.100	0.483	4.872	0.000
$R^2 = 0.233, F(1,78) = 23.239***$					

$p*** < 0.001$

Source: Authors

The regression analysis in Table above shows the percent of the variance in the dependent variable (affective commitment) expressed by the independent variable (participative decision making), (analysis of  $R^2$ ). The findings reveal that the participative decision making was significant ( $F[1, 78] = 23.739, p < 0.001$ ) with  $R^2$  value of 0.233, which shows that 23.3% of the corresponding variation in active commitment can be accounted by a change in the level of participative decision making. Further, the significance of regression analysis tested using the regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ) shows that a significant relationship between participative decision making and affective commitment exists ( $\beta = 0.48, p < 0.001$ ), thereby confirming hypothesis 1. The results of the current study are consistent with the findings of Kumar and Saha (2017), in which participation in decision-making is a determinant of job satisfaction and affective commitment. While the greater the flexibility provided to employees to have a say in organizational decisions, the greater the affective commitment they demonstrate.

Table 8: Model summary and coefficients for the impact of participative decision-making on continuance commitment

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value
	B	SE	Beta		
Participativedecision making	1.632	0.341		4.729	0.000
Continuance commitment	0.646	0.098	0.599	6.605	0.000
$R^2 = 0.359 F(1,78) = 43.630***$					

$p*** < 0.001$

Source: Authors

Similarly, the findings in table above reveal that the participative decision making was significant for continuance commitment ( $F [1,78] = 43.630$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with  $R^2$  value of 0.359, which shows that 35.9% of the corresponding variation in continuance commitment can be accounted by a change in the level of participative decision making. Further, the significance of regression coefficients shows a significant relationship between participative decision making and continuance commitment ( $\beta = 0.59$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), thereby proving hypothesis 2. The analysis results also correspond to the Bhatti, K. Et Al. research (2011), which demonstrated direct participation in the continuous organizational commitment of workers in the banking industry in Pakistan as a significant positive relationship.

Table 9: Model summary and coefficients for the impact of participative decision-making on normative commitment

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value
	B	SE	Beta		
Participative decision making	1.272	0.266		4.773	0.000
Normative commitment	0.708	0.076	0.724	9.261	0.000

$R^2 = 0.524$ ,  $F (1,78) = 85.760^{***}$

$p^{***} < 0.001$

Source: Authors

Further, the regression analysis in table 9 shows that the percentage of the variance in the dependent variable (normative commitment) is expressed by the independent variable. The findings reveal that the participative decision making was significant ( $F (1,78) = 85.760$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with  $R^2$  value of 0.524, which shows that 52.4% of the corresponding variation in normative commitment can be accounted by a change in the level of participative decision making. Further, the significance of regression analysis tested using the regression coefficients shows a significant relationship between participative decision-making and normative commitment ( $\beta = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), thereby proving hypothesis 3. The study also conforms to the Bhatti, K study et al. (2011) indicating a significant positive relationship between participative decision making and normative organizational commitment of banking sector personnel in Pakistan.

As the participation of employees in the process of decision-making is still a debatable topic in the organizational context, identifying its potential effect on the employees' commitment towards the organization is essential. The present study made an attempt to address this concern, and the findings reveal that the positive impact of employees' participation in all three aspects of organizational commitment, indicating that the increasing involvement of the employees in

decision making can increase their commitment and sustainability towards the organization. The result is also in accordance with the observation that the employees' involvement also increases their influence within the organization (Ohana et al., 2013; Farooq et al., 2019). The present findings indicate that employees' perspectives should be taken into consideration for organizational decisions, thereby leading to improved performance by employees.

### **Theoretical Implications**

There are a few similar studies conducted in countries other than Yemen, and most of those studies linked participative decision-making with organizational performance, employee performance and Job satisfaction (Saputra et al., 2015; Princy & Rebeka, 2019; Srinivasan, 2021; Dede, 2019); some other studies used employee commitment as a mediator variable (Phipps et al., 2013; Han et al., 2010; Butali & Njoroge, 2018). Inside Yemen, and as per the researcher knowledge, no previous study has been conducted to test the same variables. The researchers thus assume that the present study theoretically contributes to the body of knowledge by presenting data from a different market context and examining the influence of participative decision making on the individual aspects of organizational commitment as well as investigating the controlling role of the demographic measures (control variables).

### **Managerial Implications**

This study has several implications for managers. Firstly, managers should involve the employees in the decision-making process to obtain their commitment towards the organization's goals and end objectives and for accomplishing the tasks in the given time and with minimal cost. Secondly, employees should take part in the organization's decisions because they will implement such decisions and strategies, and the more they are involved, the more efficient they would perform.

## **5. Conclusion and Suggestion**

The study investigated the relationship between participative decision-making and organizational commitment among employees of the mobile Telecom companies in Yemen. The results of the study indicated a significant relationship between participative decision-making and the three patterns of organizational commitment (affective, continuance, as well, as normative commitment). Hence, a change in the level of participative decision-making causes a variation in the level of commitment. Normative commitment receives the highest variation among others. The study also revealed that the longer the years of experience of employees, the lesser commitment they show towards their organizations. It can indicate that employees at the time of joining the organization feel committed and loyal towards their organizations, but within the time, they gradually lose interest and obligations towards their jobs. Accordingly, they should be encouraged and involved more in the decision-making process. As a result, the study suggests that management enhance staff empowerment and involvement in decision-making processes in order to promote organizational commitment.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors of the article declare no conflict of interest.

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