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THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON COMPLIANCE WITH INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

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ABSTRACT

Security threats are a growing problem affecting individuals and organizations across the globe. In many cases, employees are unknowingly the source of data breaches due to poor cyber awareness. A key focus of information security research has therefore been on how to motivate employees to engage in more secure behaviors and to improve compliance with an organization's Information Security Policy (ISP). To our knowledge, the multiple dimensions of organizational commitment have not been considered as a means of understanding and thereby improving employee security compliance behavior. We address this gap by developing a research model and hypotheses, theoretically grounded in the three-component model of commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991), to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and compliance with an organization's ISP.

We define commitment according to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001): "Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets. As such, commitment is distinguishable from exchange-based forms of motivation and from target-relevant attitudes, and can influence behavior even in the absence of extrinsic motivation or positive attitudes" (p. 301). We extend the application of Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organizational commitment to employee compliance with ISP. This theoretical model recognizes three dimensions of organizational commitment to organizations, including affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment is an emotional attachment to an organization (Meyer et al., 2012). We define affective commitment as a *desire to comply* with the ISP. Continuance commitment is commitment accompanied by a cost-avoidance mind-set (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). We define continuance commitment as the *perceived cost of not complying* with the ISP. The behavioral focus for normative commitment may be either a sense of obligation to remain with an organization or to comply with pressures to perform job responsibilities (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). We define normative commitment as an *obligation to comply* with the ISP.

This study will provide implications for practice by determining intrinsically driven commitment that influences employees to comply with ISP, enabling managers to identify ways to motivate employees to engage in secure behaviors in compliance with ISP.

Keywords

Information security compliance behavior, Organizational commitment, Three-component model of organizational commitment, Affective commitment, Continuance commitment, Normative commitment

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