

DRIVING JOB PERFORMANCE THROUGH THE INTERFACE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION, WORK INTENSIFICATION, AND OVERCOMMITMENT

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Abstract

The present research aims to gauge the role of organizational communication on the stress generating factors (work intensification and over-commitment) and employees' job performance. Conservation of resource (COR) theory lays the theoretical foundation of the study. It is a primary research. Data has been collected from frontline Bank employees of private banks in the major cities of Punjab. Data analysis has been conducted on 423 respondents using Smart PLS (4.0). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) has been applied to test the assumed relationships. The outcomes of the study emanate that organizational communication improves employees' job performance but at cost of employees' mental health. Organizational communication has been found to generate high commitment among employees but intensify their work. It has also found that over-commitment improves employees' performance at the job.

Keywords: *Organizational Communication, Work Intensification, Overcommitment, Job Performance, Conservation of Resource Theory.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational members epitomize as the face of the organizations particularly of service organizations. Being boundary spanners, they are exposed to high amount of stress and work overload because of emotional labor, irregular and long working hours. It is also established that they are the first reference point of interaction with the external constituencies. The tendency of being intact with their role and exhibit high amount of energy put pressure of high job demands that can be deemed as the cause of emotional draining for them (Edgar et al., 2017). These stressors influence the motivational process of employees and their tendency to align with the organization.

Past researches have showed that employees' stressors are intrinsic to the organizational processes and practices or the factors endemic of the work environment. In today's contemporary world, abolishing the adage of *putting people first* has become the general propensity of the organizations (Cvenkel, 2018). Thus, understanding of the effect of organizational practices on employees' mental health is critical. It would not only provide deeper insights regarding the ramifications of such practices on

employees' mental and physical health but also addresses its impact on organizational success and performance.

Resting on the conservation of resource (COR) theory, this study speculates that the regular supply of resources at work lessens the detrimental consequences of stressors on employees and elevates their tendency to align with the organization (Hobfoll, 1989). Taking cue from the COR theory, the current study, proposes that organizational communication would furnish large amount of resources that dampens the unfavorable effect of work stressors and augments employees' organizational performance. Thus, this study furnishes to the literature by demonstrating how the regular communication at work would facilitate employees in meeting their high job demands. It would also provide meaningful insights that such resources not only have emotional ramification but also build psychological connection of employees with the organization that would ultimately benefits the organizations.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION:

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory:

COR theory, developed by Dr. Stevan Hobfoll, is a stress and coping theory that delineates that individuals always strive to generate new resources and conserve the existing resources to reduce the stress generating from the resource depletion. It further fosters a feeling among employees that they are not being valued by the organization and reducing their intent to perform the task. The theory also posits that people are stimulated to preserve and accumulate resources because these are vital for their wellness and for dealing with potential future stressors. COR theory also posits that resources form the gain spiral which refers that resources generate further resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Likewise, organizational practices should be such that it provides resources to the organization and such resources generate further personal and group resources.

Organizational Communication (OC):

OC is the critical organizational practice that determines the smooth functioning of the organization. It encompasses the sending and receiving the information within the organization to attain the organizational goals. Effective communication provides a sense of transparency, trust, and inclusion among employees which generates higher levels of engagement and fulfillment at work (Pirjol, 2017). It configures organizational culture by fortifying norms, values, and beliefs, regulating how employees identify and cooperate with each other and with the organization as a whole.

Work Intensification (WI):

WI refers to the process where employers amplify the workload and job demands on employees. It is intended to enhance organizational performance and competitiveness by achieving more output with fewer resources. However, it has also been observed that organizations more often are using work

intensification at the expense of employee well-being that causes stress and burnout among them (Macky and Boxall, 2008). Thus, the present study conceptualizes work intensification as stressor that causes stress, job insecurity, and poor work-life balance among employees. Work intensification can lead to mental health issues, burnout, anxiety, depression, and physical ailments like musculoskeletal disorders and cardiovascular problems among employees due to increased demands and tight deadlines (Spark et al., 2001).

Overcommitment (OVC):

OVC is a facet of employees' commitment which is conceptualized as a set of attitudes, actions, and emotions gleaming extreme striving in amalgamation with a sturdy yearning of being approved and valued. It is manifested as a psychological tendency of employees where they take on more tasks, responsibilities, or commitments than they can realistically handle within their available time and resources. It is generally admitted that over-commitment undoubtedly benefited to the organization but it has adverse ramifications on employees as it impairs their well-being at work (Siegrist et al., 2008). High work involvement, lack of boundaries, and perfectionism are the key features of over commitment that may lead to poor work-life balance and chronic stress to employees. Over-committed individuals often work beyond their normal hours, take on additional tasks without adequate support, and struggle to disconnect from work-related concerns outside of work hours (Cohen, 1993).

Job Performance (JP):

JP refers to the effectiveness and efficiency with which employees fulfill their job responsibilities and contribute to achieving organizational goals. Organizational job performance is fundamental for organization's achievement, as it directly impacts productivity, competitiveness, and the achievement of strategic objectives. It consists of two key dimensions: Task performance: The core duties and specific work outcomes associated with an employee's job description. Contextual performance: Going beyond formal job duties to engage in activities that support the organization's overall well-being, such as helping coworkers and strengthening social networks (Edgar et al., 2017). The present study covers only the task performance of employees.

OC and WI:

OC is served as the organizational practice that clarifies and disseminates the organizational vision, mission and goals to the employees. It facilitates employees with the adequate amount of information to perform their daily work endeavors. Based on the COR theory, it is theorized that organizational communication is deemed as the resource that is supplied by the organization to employees to smoothly or effectively achieve their organizational goals (Hobfoll, 1989). Thus, the regular reception of resources (information) provides employees with the sense of security and reduces the

negative effect of work overload. From the above, it has been hypothesized that: H1: OC lessens the effect of WI.

OC and OVC:

OC fosters a feeling of being valued and psychological ownership among employees that motivate them to deeply ingrain themselves into the job. This engenders high commitment among them in such way that they prioritize the organizational task over their personal ventures. Contingent upon the social exchange theory, it is speculated that incessant communication spawns a feeling of reciprocation among employees to benefit organizations in return through their psychological and emotional connection with the organization (Bao et al., 2020). Thus, from the preceding dialogue, the subsequent hypothesis is framed:

H2: OC generates OVC among employees.

OC and JP:

OC initiates a motivational process among employees and generates a psychological and emotional connection with the organization. Effective communication makes certain that employees realize their roles, responsibilities, and goals clearly. When prospects are communicated transparently, employees are more expected to line up their efforts with organizational objectives, leading to improved job performance (Pirjol, 2017). Communication further provides feedback, guidance, and support that enhance employee engagement, motivation, and performance (Van & Peccei, 2022). It builds trust, a sense of inclusion, and alignment with organizational goals. Thus, it is hypothesized from the ongoing discussion that:

H3: OC augments JP.

WI and JP:

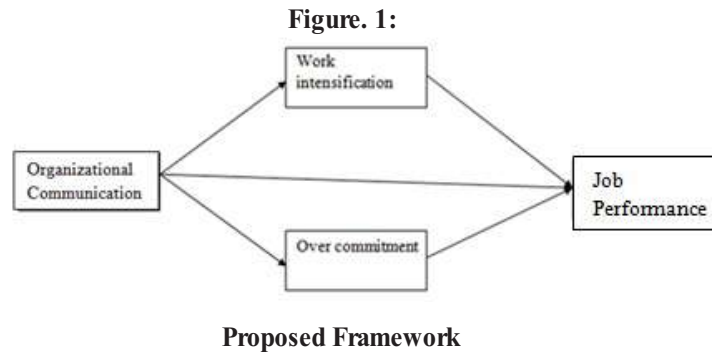
WI is associated with impaired well-being, higher emotional exhaustion, and lower job satisfaction. Increased pressures from work intensification may lead to work overload, time pressure, and depletion of mental and physical resources, which can reduce workplace well-being and performance (Niazi et al., 2022). Work intensification may initially lead to short-term gains in productivity; its long-term effects on job performance can be detrimental. When workloads become overwhelming or unsustainable, it can negatively impact mental and physical well-being, reducing job satisfaction and motivation (Combs et al., 2006). As employees are pressured to work faster or handle increased tasks, the quality of work may suffer. This could lead to errors, reduced attention to detail, and lower overall work quality. The following hypothesis is formulated from the ongoing discussion:

H4: WI has detrimental effect on JP.

OVC and JP:

OVC employees may sacrifice quality in favor of quantity, leading to potential errors, rework, and

customer dissatisfaction. OVC often leads to chronic stress and burnout. Employees who constantly push themselves beyond their limits may experience physical and mental exhaustion, leading to decreased job satisfaction and overall well-being (Shoman et al., 2023). Fatigue and stress can impair cognitive functions, decision-making abilities, and overall job performance. OVC often results in neglecting personal life, relationships, and leisure activities (Edgar et al., 2017). This imbalance can lead to dissatisfaction, strained relationships, and eventually impact job performance negatively. Thus, from the above discussion, it is speculated that: *H5: OVC impairs employees' JP.*



3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection:

The present study has taken banking sector as the context of the study. The population of the study is frontline employees of private sector banks of Punjab. Top three banks in private sector have been selected based on their geographical penetration. Three major cities of Punjab (Jalandhar, Amritsar and Ludhiana) have been selected. Purposive sampling technique is applied to collect the data. Prior permission of bank manager has been taken to gather the data by telling him the objective of the study. The frontline employees who were having the experience of at least one year have been surveyed. Consequently, a sample of 455 respondents was gathered from which 423 questionnaires were utilized as rest were found deficient.

The self-administered questionnaire is framed to gather data in English language. At the time of the data compilation, the respondents were assured about their privacy and anonymity.

Measures:

Organizational Communication. Garas et al. (2007) scale has been utilized to measure the OC. The sample item is "My manager regularly gives me feedback about issues affecting the work environment".

Work Intensification. 4 items scale of Macky and Boxall's (2008) has been taken to measure WI. The sample item is "There is too much work to do everything well."

Over-commitment. Three items scale of Siegrist et al.'s (2008) was taken to determine OVC. The sample item is "Work rarely lets me go, it's still on my mind when I go to bed".

Job Performance. Scale of Griffin et al. (2007) was taken to determine JP. The sample item is "I Carried out the core parts of my job well".

Control Variables: Age, gender, marital status and experience of the employees were taken as control variables as they may have the significant impact on the variables under the study.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two step procedure was utilized. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to check the measurement model at the first stage and Structural Equation Modeling using SMART-PLS software was exercised to analyze the hypotheses at the next stage. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) provides a well-built framework for examining the intricate relationships among different variables (Hair et al., 2019) thereby enhancing the grasp of the researched phenomena.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	1	2	3	4
OC (1)	0.906	0.943	0.680	0.825			
WI (2)	0.818	0.820	0.646	0.142	0.804		
OVC (3)	0.778	0.795	0.690	0.160	0.630	0.830	
JP (4)	0.872	0.943	0.738	0.148	0.279	0.321	0.865

Source: Authors' Calculation using Smart PLS

Measurement Model:

The results depict that the one item from WI scale and one from OVC scale were removed due to low factor loadings. Then, PLS algorithm was re-executed and the results shows that all the statements have factor weights more than 0.70. Table 1 shows that Cronbach alpha and composite reliability were greater than 0.70, thus confirming the reliability. Moreover, the construct validity was determined from convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was gauged from the values of AVE which was greater than the threshold limit of 0.50. The discriminant validity was determined from the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. As the table1 shown the inter-construct correlation of all the constructs were below the square root of AVE of each respective construct thus, confirms discriminant validity too.

Structural Model Assessment:

The current study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to gauge the associations among variables (Hair et al., 2019). For this, bootstrapping with 5,000 iterations was applied. The analysis also checked for common method bias using EFA. After loading all the variables on a single factor the

Table 2 depicts the outcomes of the structural model. It is found that contrary to the hypothecation made, there is positive impact of OC on WI ($\beta = 0.142, p < 0.01$). Thus, H1 was not accepted. Further on, the results depicts that OC positively impacts OVC ($\beta = 0.160, p < 0.01$) and JP ($\beta = 0.148, p < 0.01$), thus H2 and H3 were supported. No significant effect of WI was found on JP, thus rejecting H4. Results further shows that contrary to the hypothesis, there is a positive relation between over-commitment.

Table 2: Path Coefficients

Particulars	β Coefficient	T statistics	Hypothesis acceptance
OC—WI	0.142**	2.843	H1 Rejected
OC—OVC	0.160**	3.135	H2 Rejected
OC – JP	0.148**	2.996	H3 Rejected
WI—JP	0.004	0.036	H4 Rejected
OVC—JP	0.309*	2.319	H5 Rejected

Source: Author's own calculation

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

5. DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS:

The present research is based on the COR theory and shows that the continuous supply of organizational resources augments their emotional connection with the organization and facilitates them to perform their jobs. The results show that contrary to the previous researches, OC enhances WI among employees. The rationale behind such findings could be that the regular communication generates a sense of over-burdened among employees. They perceive such communication as an additional psychological pressure on them, thus may feels stressed and experience burnout. Furthermore, results support the proposition that OC enhances employees' OVC with the organization. They feel psychologically connected to the organization and a feeling of being important generates within them that make them emotionally engagement with the organization (Garas et al. 2016). Findings further delineate the augmenting effect of OC on JP. It is established that an experience of proper inflow of information generate a feeling of reciprocation among employees that motivate them to perform in the favor of the organization. Besides, no direct effect of WI on JP has been found. Thus, the findings suggest that the presence of some mediators that serves as a connection between WI and JP. Lastly, contrary to the hypothesis made, the positive affect of OVC on JP has been found. The results suggest that over commitment employees due to their high emotional engagement

with the organization prioritize their organizational goals over their personal growth. They mix their destiny with the organization and visualize themselves from the mirror of the organization, thus performing their job efficiently.

The present research apprehends the present literature theoretically and simultaneously provides several managerial implications to the banking sector. The present study has utilized COR theory to describe the impact of organizational practices (organizational communication) on employees' mental health. It uniquely delineates both the dark and bright sides of internal communication and theorizes that regular communication improves employees' mental health up to a certain level and after a point employee perceives such information and reminders as additional burden thus, augments their perception towards intensified work practices. It improves employees' affective connection with the organization in such way that they seize their personal interest for the interest of the organization and work as per the organizational goals. Thus, bank manager while communicating to employees should define the purpose behind such information and its relevance in their respective jobs. The bank manager may further focus on the intensity of the communication rather than the frequency of the information. Moreover, he may further lessen the hierarchical levels of information transmission to reduce the communication gap. Thus, managers should utilize communication practices to boost employees' commitment rather than to augment their mental stress and burden.

The current study also theorizes that employees' tendency of give and take. Employees reciprocate to the organization only when they receive the adequate resources and experience happiness and burden free at their jobs. Contingent on the maxim of happy worker is the most productive one; the present research focuses on the psychological and mental happiness of the employees rather than their monetary satisfaction. It is established that employees have psychological and actualization needs rather than the economic needs. Thus, the bank manager should provide overall growth opportunities to the employees. He should concentrate on the psychological and security needs of the employees so that their maximum benefit can be leveraged from them.

Furthermore, the present study shows the ambivalent role of employees' over-commitment on organizational performance. Literature established that over-commitment fosters identity threat and cause psychological fatigue to employees thus, adversely affect their efficient performance. Contrarily, the present findings demonstrate that over-commitment enhances the job performance of employees. The cause behind this finding could be the psychological contract associated between employees and the organization. The confirmation of the contract may boost employees' motivation to perform their respective jobs. Moreover, the over-commitment may be advantageous to the organizations in short run but it may lead to employees' exhaustion and burnout in the long run. Thus, bank managers can make sure that the energy and emotions of the over-committed employees should

be utilized for the benefit of the organization. The manager may regularly observe the psychological and cognitive conditions of their workforce to know about their mental pressure and burnout at work and try to reduce the impact of such negative psychological phenomenon by providing them proper work-life balance, well-being at work and quality of life.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

The current research contains some limitations. First, it is cross-sectional in nature. Thus, the long-term effect of some psychological factors such as over-commitment and work intensification in the present case and organizational practices (organizational communication) can't be determined. As the results recommend the positive effect of over-commitment on organizational performance which contradicts the previous findings thus, the longitudinal study could be performed in the future to know the non-linear relation of these variables. Furthermore, the effect of demographic and personal characteristics is not undertaken. These variables may have impact on the speculated relations thus; future studies may be conducted to test the moderation effect of these variables. The present study is limited to the one sector only i.e. private sector banks. To test the robustness of the present model, the future study can be conducted in the other sectors too.

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