

EFFECTS OF INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS AT WORK ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Abstract *Organizational commitment has been one of the most effective implements used for increasing employee performance by enhancing employee participation. On the other hand interpersonal problems at workplace make job conflict, increase job stress which is threatening to create positive job attitudes. This study highlights the effect of interpersonal problems at workplace on three types of commitments i.e. affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between interpersonal problems and organizational commitment, to explore how interpersonal problems affect different types of organizational commitment. The measuring instruments used in this study were: Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-64) (Alden, Wiggins, Pincus and Horowitz, 2000) for measuring different types of interpersonal problems and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, (Allen and Meyer, 1991) for measuring organizational commitment. According to the objective of the present study the obtain data were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation and regression analysis. The results revealed that interpersonal problem is significantly negatively correlated with organizational commitment.*

Keywords: *Job involvement, Employee commitment, Employees participation, Affective commitment, Normative commitment, Continuance commitment*

INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment has become a highly researched job attitude in recent years including several meta-analyses (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovich, and Topolnysky, 2002) of commitment constructs. Management leaders have long assumed that organizational goals are unreachable without the enduring commitment of members of the organizations. Based on the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment, there is growing support for a three-component model proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). All three components have implications for the continuing participation of the individual in the organization. The three components are:

Affective Commitment: Psychological attachment to organization.

Continuance Commitment: Costs associated with leaving the organization.

Normative Commitment: Perceived obligation to remain with the organization.

When employees are committed to their employer, they will deliver higher levels of performance. It is very essential to select the right strategy for increasing organizational commitment based on workplace culture and current objectives. It is also needed to create ideal job conditions for an employee so that he/she will feel committed to the organization, satisfied with the job and motivated to

perform at or above the minimum level of performance. Organizational commitment is determined by a number of factors, including personal factors (e.g., age, tenure in the organization, disposition, internal or external control attributions); organizational factors (working environment, job design and the leadership style of one's supervisor); non-organizational factors (availability of alternatives). All these things affect subsequent commitment (Nortcraft and Neale, 1996).

The work environment is an important organizational factor of employee's work life that can affect job attitudes in a positive and negative way. And an important component of the work environment is interpersonal relationships which are considered as an essential part of the psychosocial working conditions. Stress-free, peaceful, and trustworthy working conditions help people to perform the tasks well and to concentrate on the job more effectively. Healthy interpersonal relationship can play a greater role to ensure that desire working environments. Interpersonal relationships defined as the interaction between co-workers or managers in everyday working conditions. It serves a critical role in the development and maintenance of trust and positive feelings to the employees in an organization. Although humans are fundamentally social creatures, interpersonal relationships are not always healthy. While interpersonal relationships may influence us in positive ways, they may also have important negative effects (Berscheid and Reis, 1998). Examples of unhealthy relationships include interpersonal problems. Interpersonal problems are recurrent difficulties in relating

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to others (Horowitz, Rosenberg, and Bartholomew, 1993). “Interpersonal circle” (Kiesler, 1983) can be subdivided into eight octants. The present study tries to give emphasis on those eight sectors of interpersonal problems which are closely related with personality traits and their relationship with different types of organizational commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The impact of commitment is associated with work outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, performance, motivation, and job withdrawal behaviours (Klein, Becker, and Meyer, 2009). However, despite being so well studied, several aspects of this construct are underrepresented in the body of research. One deficiency in the research is the potential role of interpersonal difficulties as antecedents of commitment. Studies of personality as it relates to commitment are few, and the results are mixed (Klein, et al., 2009).

A deterioration of the organizational environment is accompanied by deterioration in organizational communication (Gilberg, 1993). A social cognitive approach to understanding interpersonal problems assumes that people who react differently to social situations think differently about those situations. It influence on interpersonal demands and —expectations about how others will react to the self and how the self will respond to those reactions. These individual differences in interpersonal expectations may explain some of the individual differences in interpersonal problems (Pierce and Lydon, 1998).

Interpersonal stress at work is concerned with the demands that are placed on us in developing working relationships with other people in our organizations (Knotts, 1996). Employees who suffer a lot of interpersonal problems may react more actively by creating interpersonal and intra-organizational conflicts involving escalating levels of communication problems. Workers may also experience effects in their psychological and physical health. Psychological consequences of interpersonal conflicts may include anxiety, boredom, low self-esteem, forgetfulness, depression, anger, apathy, or worry. These results are just a few of many stress outcomes that may result from the effects of interpersonal difficulties. Workers may also exhibit deviations in their behaviour. Examples of departures from normal behaviour may be overeating/ loss of appetite, smoking, alcohol abuse, sleeping disorders, emotional outbursts, or violence and aggression (Randolfi, 1996). From the organizational aspect, it has many consequences. Reductions in effectiveness, productivity, and communication are results that are not as easy to identify; however, such outcomes can be among the most debilitating for both the organization and for the individual. Other results may include accidents in the workplace, job turnover, low morale, poor work relations, poor organizational climate, and absenteeism (Randolfi,

1996). “Absenteeism, for example, results in 4% of the work hours which are lost, and translates into millions of dollars annually” (Knotts, 1996).

Interpersonal difficulties related to interdepartmental activities within an organization included issues such as poor cooperation, organizational politics, and similar activities. Certain behaviours associated with job burnout have been observed in a wide variety of occupations. These behaviours include a tendency on the part of an individual to blame others in an organization for one’s own problems, increased absenteeism, increased involvement in interpersonal conflicts and confrontation, and increasing isolation from others in the organization (Maslack, 1997). Individuals suffering from job burnout frequently attempt to remove themselves from the situations they perceive to be the source of their problems without actually terminating their jobs. Their strategies in such attempts involve a breakdown in communication, and are often damaging to both their organizations and to their own careers.

On the other hand, organizational commitment is very important for organizations because of the desire to retain talented employees. Employees with high organizational commitment spend more personal resources during the job for the organization and also remain with organization and will not remain in search of other employment (Bret, Corn and Slocum, 1995). Those employees who are not satisfied with their job perceived threat of job security and switch or quit the job, in this case they are also less committed towards the organization they are working for. Researchers remain keen to know the outcomes of organizational commitment since long (Davy, Kinicki, and Scheck, 1991). Dornstein and Matalon (1998) describe eight variables that are relevant to organizational commitment. These are interesting work, coworker’s attitudes towards the organization, organizational dependency, age, education, employment alternatives, attitude of family, and friends. The variables explain 65% of the variance in organizational commitment. The current study seeks to integrate the streams of research regarding organizational commitment and propose a relationship between the different types of interpersonal problems.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research problem addressed through these research questions,

- Is there any relation between organizational commitment and interpersonal problems?
- Which type of interpersonal problems is more vulnerable for organizational commitment?
- What are the dimensions of relationship between eight domains of interpersonal problems and three types of organizational commitment?

OBJECTIVES

This research has the following objectives:

- To investigate the relationship between interpersonal problems and organizational commitment.
- To discover how different types of interpersonal problems affect different types of organizational commitment.
- To explore the dimensions of relationship between eight domains of interpersonal problems and three types of organizational commitment?

HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of literature, following hypothesis was developed

Hypothesis 1. *Interpersonal problems are negatively related to affective commitment.*

Hypothesis 2. *Interpersonal problems are negatively related to continuance commitment.*

Hypothesis 3. *Interpersonal problems are negatively related to normative commitment.*

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population of this research was 250 bankers working in different private banks in Bangladesh. According to annual report of Bangladesh Bank 2010, there are 33 private banks in Bangladesh. The research was conducted within Dhaka. The research sample was selected based on the simple random sampling technique from the list of bankers. For identifying the sample size, confidence level is 95% and confidence interval is 10.

Data Collection

To examine the research questions both primary and secondary data were obtained from different sources.

Primary Data

The primary data was collected by using the measuring scales.

Measures used

To measure the independent and dependent variables (interpersonal problems and job involvement) the following measuring scales were used.

- Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-64) (Alden, Wiggins, Pincus and Horowitz, 2000) for measuring different types of interpersonal problems.
- Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, (Allen and Meyer, 1991) for measuring organizational commitment.

In addition a Demographic Information Blank was also used made by present researcher.

Inventory of Interpersonal Problem (IIP-64):

Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-64) (Alden, Wiggins, Pincus and Horowitz, 2000) was used to measure different types of interpersonal problems. The Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-64) is a self-report instrument that identifies a person's most salient interpersonal difficulties. The IIP-64 contains 64 statements describing common interpersonal problems drawn from an original pool of 127 items. This instrument may be administered to individuals or groups. The test and norms are approved for adults (18 years and older). The items of IIP-64 are divided into two sections: one section begins "The following are things you find hard to do with other people"; the other section begins "The following are things that you do too much". The IIP-64 contains the following eight subscales- Domineering/Controlling, Vindictive/Self-centered, Cold/Distant, Socially Inhibited, Nonassertive, Overly Accommodating, Self-Sacrificing, Intrusive/Needy. The original inventory consists of high level of test-retest reliability ($r=0.56-0.76$; for 8 subscales) and inter subscales correlation of 0.76 to 0.86. The original inventory contains high external validity. The correlation between IIP-64 and Beck Depression Inventory II was found 0.33 to 0.48 for 8 subscales. Also the correlation between IIP-64 and Beck Anxiety Inventory was found 0.31 to 0.44 for 8 subscales.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

To measure organizational commitment, I used the 24 items Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). The items were classified in terms of the three dimensions of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale dictating the extent to which they agreed with each statement as it reflected their present work environment (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree). Cronbach's alphas were as follows: 0.90 for affective commitment, 0.82 for normative commitment and 0.77 for continuance commitment.

Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected from different sources, such as academic articles, journals, books, annual reports of Bangladesh Bank, labor and employment acts, and other published documents.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations (Pearson) of the Measured Variables (N=250)

	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	gender	0.14	0.35	-												
2	age	29.42	6.11	-.14*	-											
3	domineering	75.86	9.35	-0.07	.18**	-										
4	vindictive	67.9	9.07	-0.07	.19**	.44**	-									
5	cold distant	69.18	7.87	-0.06	.15*	.48**	.52**	-								
6	socially inhibited	65.87	7.58	-.23**	.27**	.54**	.63**	.68**	-							
7	non-assertive	64.75	8.92	-0.06	.11	.32**	.42**	.68**	.63**	-						
8	overly accommodating	62.38	7.51	0.04	.06	.38**	.37**	.49**	.54**	.39**	-					
9	self sacrificing	65.96	8.06	-.32**	.27**	.42**	.56**	.46**	.74**	.44**	.26**	-				
10	intrusive	72.75	10.47	-0.08	.15*	.41**	.54**	.50**	.62**	.41**	.38**	.49**	-			
11	total iip-64	72.2	7.959	-.14*	.24**	.65**	.75**	.81**	.90**	.73**	.62**	.74**	.74**	-		
12	Affective Commitment	3.45	0.73	-0.03	.16*	-.59**	-.34**	-.59**	-.49**	-.48**	-.47**	-.42**	-.38**	-.59**	-	
13	Continuous Commitment	3.28	0.64	-0.08	0.1	-.61**	-.53**	-.51**	-.42**	-.36**	-.32**	-.38**	-.23**	-.34**	.80**	-
14	Normative Commitment	3.33	0.64	0.03	.25**	-.41**	-.34**	-.62**	-.37**	-.49**	-.33**	-.43**	-.59**	-.57**	.30**	.70**

*p<.05, **p<.01.

Table 2: The Results of Regression Analyses: Effects of Interpersonal Problems on Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

Dependent Variables	Beta	R	R2
Affective Commitment	-0.59***	0.37	0.34***
Normative Commitment	-0.33***	0.14	0.11***
Continuance Commitment	-0.56***	0.38	0.30***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, Independent Variable: Interpersonal Problems

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlation values among independent variables and outcome are shown in Table 1. This table shows the means, standard deviations and intercorrelations (Pearson) of among variables. In this table, we analyzed the eight domains of interpersonal separately to clarify their affect independently on three types of organizational commitment. All types of interpersonal problems showed negative correlation with organizational commitment. These results proved hypothesis true that interpersonal problems are negatively related to affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment.

Regression was run to test/verify the significance level of interpersonal problems with dependent variables. Table 2 shows the regression result of interpersonal problems and organizational commitment. These finding confirmed the significant relationship between interpersonal problems and affective commitment ($\beta = -.59$, $p < .001$). Results also showed that interpersonal problems has significantly negative relationship with continuous commitment ($\beta = -.33$, $p < .001$) and the result of regression regarding interpersonal problems and normative commitment, Interpersonal problems has significant negative relationship with normative commitment ($\beta = -.56$, $p < .001$).

DISCUSSION

An important component of the work environment is interpersonal relationship which is considered as an essential part of the psychosocial working conditions. Healthy working conditions help people to perform the tasks well and to concentrate on the job more effectively. While on the other hand organizational commitment is considered very important outcome for the individual and organizational performance. The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between interpersonal problems and organizational commitment and to explore how interpersonal problems affect different types of organizational commitment. The results of the study revealed that all the hypothesis developed in this research study got significant support and proved that interpersonal problems are negatively related to organizational commitment.

Overall study proved the significance of interpersonal problems with employee commitment. This clearly indicates that those organizations that have interpersonal problems among workers, their employees are less committed with organization than those organizations that do not have interpersonal difficulties.

Domineering/ Controlling

The result of the study showed that Domineering/ Controlling domain of interpersonal problems is negatively related with affective commitment ($r = -.592$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.611$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.418$, $p < .01$). Domineering/ Controlling indicates difficulties in relinquishing control over others. People described themselves as too controlling or manipulative. They might characterize their efforts to influence other people as hostile, but the emphasis here is more on control than hostility. Sometimes a loss of control is threatening to the person because it produces a feeling that he or she has lost dignity, worth, or self- respect. In extreme cases, the person's very identity is threatened- the person's sense of self gets rattled whenever another person sense seems to be giving him or her orders, guidance or instruction. Indeed, some people find it so unpleasant to relax control that they can not even listen to another person's point of view without challenging it. Unable to consider another person's perspective, the individual may argue excessively with others (Horowitz et al, 2000). All of the characteristics may influence negatively a person to make commitment to his or her job.

Vindictive / Self-centered

Vindictive / Self-centered domain of interpersonal problems is also showed negative relationship with affective commitment ($r = -.341$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.535$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.346$, $p < .01$). Vindictive / Self-centered describes problems of hostile dominance. The person readily experiences and expresses anger and irritability, is preoccupied with getting revenge, fights too much with other people. Person with this type of problem reflects distrust and suspiciousness toward other

people; the person suspects, for example, that other people are being exploitive or deceptive. The person hold grudges and finds it difficult to forgive insults or slights. As a result the person reports feeling little support or concern for other people and not caring much about their needs, happiness, success or welfare (Horowitz et al, 2000). Thus the people suffer in this problem are facing difficulty in doing job and less committed in his or her job.

Cold / Distant

Cold / Distant domain of interpersonal problems is also negatively related with affective commitment ($r = -.590$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.513$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.623$, $p < .01$) as the result indicated. The characteristics that cold / distant refers to low degrees of affection for and little connection with others. People with this problem do not feel close to or loving toward others, and they find it hard to make and maintain long term commitments to other people (Horowitz et al, 2000). Thus they may also feel difficulty to maintain commitment with his or her job.

Socially Inhibited

Socially inhibited domain of interpersonal problems is also negatively correlated with affective commitment ($r = -.492$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.426$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.371$, $p < .01$). Socially inhibited indicates feelings of anxiety, timidity, or embarrassment in the presence of other people. The person finds it hard to initiate social interactions, express feelings to other people, join groups, or socialize. People who are socially avoidant are described as introverted, aloof, distant, and unsociable. Such people do not desire or enjoy close relationships; they almost always choose solitary activities and lack close friends or confidants (Horowitz et al, 2000). They may avoid welcoming attitude towards people working in the workplace to uphold friendly working environment that may create barrier to maintain commitment about job.

Non-assertive

Non-assertive domain of interpersonal problems is also negatively connected with affective commitment ($r = -.483$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.367$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.495$, $p < .01$). Non-assertive indicates a severe lack of self confidence and self esteem. People with this trait are described as self-doubting and unassertive. They have difficulty taking the initiative or being the center of attention. They especially avoid situations that involve social challenge or require the exercise of power

or influence over other people (e.g., being another person's boss, expressing opinions authoritatively). Similarly, they have difficulty being firm with other people and sticking to their guns in the face opposition. Other people's disapproval or negative evaluation threatens their already shaky self esteem so they avoid making their wishes and needs known (Horowitz et al, 2000). The characteristics may influence negatively a person to keep commitment to his or her job.

Overly Accommodating

The result also indicated that overly accommodating domain of interpersonal problems is negatively linked with affective commitment ($r = -.472$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.323$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.328$, $p < .01$). Overly accommodating indicates an excess of friendly submissiveness. In an effort to please other people and win their approval, they try to be inoffensive. They are reluctant to say no to other people and allow themselves to be easily persuaded. They may be contrasted with people whose problems fall in the vindictive or self centered; instead, they are loathe expressing or even to feel anger, lest they incur another person's hostility or retaliation. They assume that assertive acts offend and they avoid being assertive in order to maintain friendly relationships. They characterize themselves as obliging, accommodating, deferential, and gentle; they freely acknowledge their own errors and avoid being argumentative, egotistical or devious. Among their problems, they report being too exploitable, too easily taken advantage of by others and too gullible (Horowitz et al, 2000). These features may make difficulties a person to create commitment to his or her job.

Self-sacrificing

Self-sacrificing domain of interpersonal problems is showed negative relation with affective commitment ($r = -.420$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.387$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.427$, $p < .01$). Self-sacrificing indicates a tendency to affiliate excessively. The people in this domain regard themselves as warm, nurturing, generous and use terms like kind, sympathetic, forgiving to describe them. They easily connect with other people emotionally and readily provide help and care for people in need. However, these socially desirable characteristics have become problematic; describe themselves as too eager to serve and too ready to give- too generous, too caring, too trusting and too permissive. They complain that they find it difficult to set limits, to maintain boundaries on other people. He or she empathizes too readily with another person's misery and experiences the other person's needs as extremely pressing. They put other people's need before their own. This protective attitude towards others also makes it difficult

to permit themselves to feel angry toward someone they like (Horowitz et al, 2000). In this way, they face problems to maintain healthy relationship with his or her colleges and failed to create commitment to his or her job.

Intrusive/ Needy

Intrusive/ Needy domain of interpersonal problems is also negatively related with affective commitment ($r = -.385$, $p < .01$), continuous commitment ($r = -.233$, $p < .01$) and normative commitment ($r = -.590$, $p < .01$). Intrusive/ Needy describes problems with friendly dominance. People with it describe themselves as friendly, outgoing, and sociable. The person has a powerful need to feel engaged with other people and imposes his or her presence onto their attention. The person finds it difficulty to spend time alone. The person may disclose personal things in appropriately, involve himself or herself in another person's business in ways that others find offensive, and take in appropriate responsibility for solving other people's problems. In other words, the person's poor boundaries create interpersonal difficulty. People with it report that they open up too much, tell personal things too much and have a hard time keeping things private from other people (Horowitz et al, 2000). In spite of being friendly, it creates problems in workplace. So they do not maintain commitment towards their job.

The regression result of interpersonal problems and organizational commitment confirmed the significant relationship between interpersonal problems with affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment. Thus the people having interpersonal problems are less committed with his or her job than the people who can able to keep healthy interpersonal relationship. Adeyemo and Aremu (1999) in their study of 319 human service organization workers analyzed the effects of multiple predictors (job, organization, and worker characteristics) on satisfaction and commitment. According to their findings, worker characteristics is an important predictor of organizational commitment, present study support that and tried to explain workers characteristics through interpersonal problem domains that create difficulties in making as well as maintaining commitment towards job.

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