

Examining Organizational Commitment, Work Motivation, and Job Performance in the Post-Pandemic -The Role of Work Motivation and Organizational Communication as Mediating Factors

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance among employees in Taiwanese companies in the post-pandemic era. Additionally, it seeks to explore the role of work motivation and organizational communication as intermediary factors that may influence this relationship. The research employs hierarchical multiple regression analysis and the bootstrap method for analysis. The findings of the study reveal several significant outcomes. Firstly, organizational commitment is found to have a positive and significant impact on both work motivation and work performance. Secondly, work motivation is shown to have a positive and significant influence on work performance. Moreover, the study uncovers that organizational communication acts as a mediating factor between organizational commitment and work motivation. Similarly, work motivation is found to mediate the relationship between organizational commitment and work performance. These research results provide valuable insights into the working conditions of organizations and employees in the post-pandemic context. Furthermore, the findings offer meaningful guidance for business operators in their decision-making and operational strategies.

Keywords: Organizational Commitment, Work Motivation, Job Performance, Organizational Communication, Post-Pandemic

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruptions worldwide, affecting businesses and economies in various ways. Many companies are grappling with challenges stemming from events like the Russo-Ukraine war, global inflation, and economic recession. As a result, businesses are striving to find innovative solutions to sustain their operations. However, the pandemic has left businesses and their employees with uncertainties and numerous questions.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizational models and operations are undergoing transformations. Organizational commitment plays a crucial role in this context, as it fosters a sense of identification among employees with the organization and its goals. This dedication leads to increased employee loyalty, efficiency, and productivity. Organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees actively engage with and are devoted to the organization. It encompasses the desire to remain part of the organization, a willingness to contribute diligently to its objectives, and alignment with the organization's values (Hu et al., 2020). Organizational commitment is characterized by employees' belief in the organization,

acceptance of its goals and values, and their eagerness to exert extra effort at work (Porter et al., 1974). This psychological attachment to the organization is expressed through emotional commitment, continuous commitment, and normative commitment, all of which influence job performance, reflecting the effective use of employees' abilities, skills, and aptitudes within the organizational setting (Steers & Rhodes, 1978).

For a company to thrive under unstable conditions, it requires a workforce that consistently performs above expectations. Achieving a competitive advantage necessitates strategic goal-setting and performance improvement measures (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Job performance is a critical aspect in realizing the organization's goals, vision, and mission within its strategic plan. It refers to an individual's accomplishments in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities. Effective human resource management, including commitment and communication from managers, plays a significant role in motivating employees to work towards the company's objectives and leveraging performance management to achieve organizational goals. However, employees also play a crucial role in performance management, being the frontline executors of the company's operations (Owens & Hekman, 2012).

Numerous studies in the past have shown a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job performance (Angle & Lawson, 1994; Brett, Cron, & Slocum, 2017; Meyer et al., 1989), as well as between work motivation and job performance (Broedling, 1975; Katzell & Thompson, 2009; Knippenberg, 2000). Taiwan comprises a significant number of small and medium-sized enterprises, accounting for over 98% of all businesses. These companies are particularly sensitive to environmental changes, and the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on their operations, affecting the financial well-being of employees and indirectly influencing their work performance, possibly leading to reduced productivity. However, despite the pandemic's implications, there is a dearth of research on how job performance might be affected by factors such as organizational communication, organizational commitment, and work motivation in the post-pandemic period.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether job performance remains consistent with prior research findings after the COVID-19 pandemic, taking into account the potential influences of organizational communication, organizational commitment, and work motivation.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Organizational Commitment, Work Motivation, and Job Performance

Organizational commitment refers to the relative strength of employees' dedication to their participating organizations, encompassing the desire to maintain organizational membership, a readiness and willingness to work diligently on behalf of the organization, and acceptance of the organization's values (Hu et al., 2020). Committed employees strive to ensure that the organization achieves its strategic goals because they perceive it as their duty to contribute to the organization's success (Dessler, 2011). Prior research indicates that employees who make commitments to the organization are more likely to remain with the organization and go beyond the scope of their work contract, demonstrating higher loyalty to the organization (Tarigan & Ariani, 2015; Johar, Nor, Hassan, & Musa, 2019). Engaged employees are also known to exhibit a greater sense of responsibility, reducing supervisory costs for managers and lowering employee turnover, thus decreasing

recruitment and selection expenses (Manla, 2021).

The concept of organizational commitment is rooted in social exchange theory, which posits that social behavior results from an exchange process involving a normative obligation or rule to reciprocate benefits in a specific manner (Suliman & Iles, 2000). According to this theory, employees feel obligated to repay the organization for its support, leading to improved job performance.

Job performance, on the other hand, is the outcome of applying an individual's abilities, skills, and aptitudes in the organizational work environment (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Steers & Rhodes, 1978). Job performance is influenced by job complexity and can be defined in various ways based on the multiple stages and intricacies of the job (June & Mahmood, 2011). Employees with high commitment to their work tend to be more energized and dedicated, leading to enhanced job performance. Conversely, those with low work commitment may experience fatigue, resulting in reduced job performance (Chordiya, Sabharwal, & Goodman, 2017).

Motivation, according to Padave and Kanekar (2021), involves the desire to accomplish something for satisfaction and achievement. It serves as the driving force that prompts individuals to act and provides a basis or reason for their actions. Work motivation emphasizes the concept of needs, explaining the various needs that influence organizational behavior (Zhao, Ghiselli, Law, & Ma, 2016). It plays a critical role within an organization as motivated employees are driven to work hard and achieve positive results. Motivation instills a sense of purpose, leading individuals to work cooperatively and effectively to attain goals (Aizza, Shakeel, & Hassan, 2018; Triswanto & Yunita, 2021; Gift & Obinda, 2020). This indicates that work motivation significantly impacts employee performance, and stronger work motivation should generally lead to better job performance.

The present study aims to investigate whether employees exhibit increased dedication to their work and organization due to a sense of responsibility following the pandemic. Specifically, it explores the potential effects of organizational commitment on work motivation and job performance, as well as whether work motivation acts as a mediator between organizational commitment and job performance. Based on the above literature, this study establishes research hypotheses after the COVID-19 pandemic:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and job performance.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and work motivation.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between work motivation and job performance.

H4: Work motivation has a mediating effect on organizational commitment and job performance.

2.2 Organizational Commitment, Organizational Communication, and Work Motivation

Organizational commitment is a widely discussed and extensively studied concept that can serve as a dependent, independent, and mediator variable due to its significance in understanding employee behavior (Rehman et al., 2012). According to Mathis and Jackson (2006), organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees embrace and believe in the organization's goals, leading them to choose to remain with the organization rather than seeking alternatives. Meyer and Allen (1997) defined organizational commitment as a psychological state that characterizes the relationship between an employee and the organization, influencing the decision to become a dedicated member of the organization.

Studies by Yu and Ko (2017) have shown a meaningful relationship between upward cognitive communication skills and job performance. Effective communication skills not only correlate with managerial success but also impact employee achievements. Carroll (2013) found that employee communication significantly influenced supervisors' ratings of their performance. Sutherland and Yoshida (2015) emphasized the importance of proactive employee communication facilitated through supervisors, which positively affected employee performance. Additionally, interpersonal communication has been found to enhance coordinated activities and lead to improved team performance (Venter, 2019). Consequently, cohesive work teams with active and effective communication efforts are more likely to achieve success in their job tasks. In essence, effective communication enhances coordination, resulting in improved job performance. Based on the above literature, this study establishes research hypotheses after the COVID-19 pandemic:

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational communication.

H6: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational communication and work motivation.

H7: Organizational communication has a mediating effect on organizational commitment and work motivation.

III. Methodology

3.1 Research Framework

This study aims to investigate the potential impact of organizational commitment and organizational communication on employees' work motivation and job performance after the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve this goal, a research framework has been proposed based on the research purpose and relevant literature (see Figure 1). To analyze the relationships among organizational commitment, organizational communication, work motivation, and job performance after the pandemic, Pearson correlation analysis will be employed to understand the relevant situation of the tested samples. Furthermore, stepwise regression analysis will be conducted to test for any positive influences between these variables. To explore the mediating effects of work motivation on organizational commitment and job performance, as well as the mediating effect of organizational communication on organizational commitment and work motivation, the PROCESS software developed by Hayes (2017) will be utilized. Model 4 in the plug-in model will be applied for bootstrap analysis (with 5,000 sampling repeats) to test the mediating effects. In this research, the independent variable is organizational commitment, while the intermediary variables are work motivation and organizational communication. The dependent variable is job performance. The research model is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

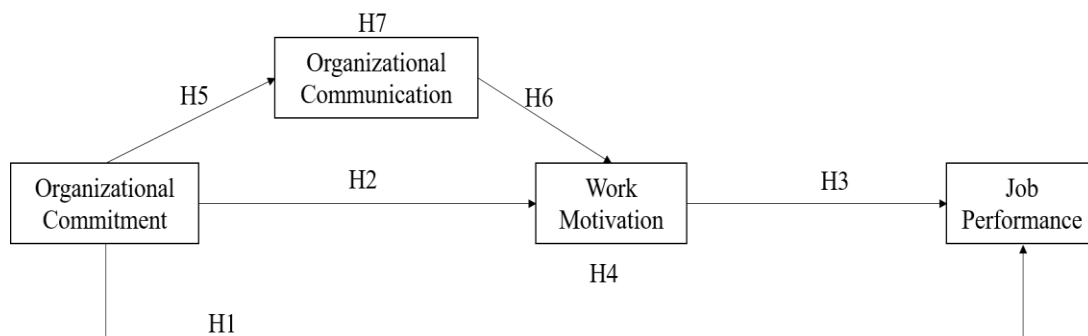


Figure 1. Research model.

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

Our study utilized a survey questionnaire to collect data. Initially, we developed the questionnaire based on relevant literature. To ensure its clarity and appropriateness, we conducted a pretest with 50 senior employees and managers from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in relevant industries and revised

the questionnaire based on their feedback. We further conducted a pilot test with 30 senior SME employees to assess the distribution of their responses and made necessary amendments to the questionnaire accordingly.

The finalized questionnaire was then distributed to our target population via email and Google Form on three separate occasions with two-week intervals. In total, we received 500 responses, out of which 485 were deemed usable, resulting in an effective response rate of 97%. We excluded 15 significantly incomplete or insincerely filled-out surveys. The respondent demographic structure in our research sample is categorized into five groups: gender, age, marital status, education, and occupation, as presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Demographic Information of the Data

Variables	Item	Samples
Gender	Men	179 (36.2%)
	Women	306 (63.1)
Age	Under 25 years old	31(6.4%)
	26-35years old	189 (39.0%)
	36-50years old	247 (50.7%)
	51 years old	18 (3.7%)
Education	Senior high school	55(11.3%)
	College	105(21.6%)
	University	269(55.5%)
	Master	56(11.5%)
Marriage	Single	246 (50.7%)
	Married	239 (49.3%)
Occupation	Manufacturing	214 (44.1%)
	Service industry	271 (55.9%)

Source: Compiled by this study

IV. Findings

4.1 Analysis Results of Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire used in this study, an extensive review of previous literature was conducted. The relevant theoretical framework from previous studies was adopted, and key theoretical components suitable for the research background and scope were selected to form the questionnaire content. The study employed a questionnaire survey method comprising four parts: organizational commitment, organizational communication, work motivation, and work performance.

The scale for organizational communication was adapted from Roberts and O'Reilly (1974). Organizational commitment was based on the scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991), which divides organizational commitment into three dimensions and measures them separately. Work motivation measurement items were revised, with 30 items from the work preference scale proposed by Amabile (1988). Job performance was adapted from the 18 items of Fernández, Koopmans, Ramos-Villagrasa, and Barrada (2019).

To evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurements, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed. Construct reliability was assessed using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach’s alpha. The findings, presented in Table 1, indicate that the measurements exhibit a high level of reliability, surpassing the recommended minimum value of 0.7 for both CR and Cronbach’s alpha (Hayes, 2017).

Furthermore, convergent and discriminant validity tests were conducted to assess the dimensionality of the constructs. All items demonstrated clear loadings on their intended factors, with factor loadings exceeding the cutoff value of 0.60. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each scale was also higher than the threshold of 0.5, confirming an appropriate level of convergent validity (Nunnally, 1967). These results provide support for the validity of the factor solution.

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the scale data, and inappropriate items were excluded. The Cronbach α values for all facets were found to be higher than 0.8 (organizational commitment = 0.827, organizational communication = 0.907, work motivation = 0.824, work performance = 0.832), indicating strong convergent validity and high reliability. The confirmatory factor analysis was carried out on the data from 485 sample respondents, and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (N = 485)

Factors	Item	Factor loading	S.E.	CR	AVE	Cronbach’s α
Organizational communication	OCU1	0.793***	0.7006	0.928	0.684	0.907
	OCU2	0.835***	0.8645			
	OCU3	0.841***	0.8563			
	OCU4	0.846***	0.8923			
	OCU5	0.870***	0.9010			
Organizational commitment	OCU6	0.773***	0.8326	0.885	0.658	0.827
	OCI1	0.832***	0.876			
	OCI2	0.886***	0.9260			
	OCI3	0.789***	0.7983			
Work motivation	OCI4	0.730***	0.8427	0.845	0.576	0.756
	WM1	0.723***	0.6408			
	WM2	0.755***	0.6426			
	WM3	0.814***	0.7093			
Job performance	WM4	0.742***	0.6482	0.867	0.570	0.732
	JP1	0.764***	0.68253			
	JP2	0.758***	0.67947			
	JP3	0.786***	0.68574			
	JP4	0.707***	0.71205			
	JP5	0.757***	0.70046			

Notes. T-values for n = 485 samples; CR, composite reliability; SE, standard error; AVE, average variance extracted; *** p < 0.001.

4.2 Analysis Results of Correlations

Table 3 displays the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables. As anticipated by our hypotheses, all correlations between the variables are positive and statistically significant, aligning with the expected direction of the relationships. It is noteworthy that the direct relationships between variables exhibit higher correlations compared to the indirect relationships, which is consistent with the assumptions in our models. To ensure the absence of multicollinearity, we conducted an examination of the variance inflation factor (VIF) scores. Our analysis confirmed that there were no issues of multicollinearity among the variables. Additionally, the maximum VIF score in the models was 1.96, which is well below the conventional cutoff point of 10.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix (N = 485)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Organizational commitment	3.5789	0.72858	-	0.684**	0.412**	0.405**
2. Organizational communication	3.6481	0.69697	0.684**	-	0.402**	0.309**
3. Work motivation	3.9505	0.50527	0.412**	0.402**	-	0.601**
4. Job performance	3.9847	0.48106	0.405**	0.309**	0.601**	-

Notes. SD: Standard Deviation; * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01.

4.3 Analysis Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression

Subsequently, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationships among organizational commitment, organizational communication, work motivation, and job performance. After analyzing the collected data, the study utilized hierarchical multiple regression analysis to further validate the significance of the correlations between the variables. Demographic variables such as gender, age, marriage, education, and occupation were included as control variables. Organizational commitment served as the independent variable, job performance as the dependent variable, and organizational communication and work motivation as mediating variables.

The results of Model 1 to Model 6 in Table 4 present the findings of the multiple regression analysis, which explores the impact of organizational commitment on work motivation and job performance, as well as the effect of organizational commitment on organizational communication and work motivation, while considering all control variables. The coefficients for organizational commitment on job performance (b = 0.184, p < 0.001), for organizational commitment on work motivation (b = 0.408, p < 0.001), and for work motivation on job performance (b = 0.594, p < 0.001) are all positive and statistically significant, thereby providing support for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Moreover, the coefficients for organizational commitment on work motivation (b = 0.408, p < 0.001), and organizational communication on work motivation (b = 0.403, p < 0.001) are both positive and significant, thereby supporting Hypotheses 5 and 6.

Table 4 Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Work Motivation and Job Performance.

	Job performance			Work motivation		
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Control variables						
Gender	-0.011	-0.16	-0.002	-0.017	-0.008	-0.004
Age	0.030	0.031	0.027	0.005	0.056	0.033
Marriage	-0.002	0.025	0.023	-0.027	-0.017	-0.026
Education	-0.059	-0.042	-0.039	-0.037	-0.041	-0.037
Occupation	-0.047	-0.036	-0.03	-0.034	-0.045	-0.036
Independent variables						
Organizational commitment	0.396***		0.184***	0.408***		0.232***
Organizational communication					0.403***	0.248***
Work motivation		0.594***	0.520***			
R ²	0.171	0.368	0.395	0.173	0.169	0.201
Adj-R ²	0.161	0.360	0.386	0.163	0.159	0.189
F	16.488***	46.291***	44.498***	16.677***	16.228***	17.141***
Change in R ²	0.028	0.199	0.026***	0.004		0.03***

Notes. *** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05.

4.4 Analysis Results of Mediation Effects

To assess the mediation effects statistically in our mediation models, we followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) causal step approach, which involves computing the lower limits (LLCI) and upper limits (ULCI) of a 95% confidence interval using a bootstrap method with 5,000 samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Table 5 presents the findings of the bootstrap significance test for the total, indirect, and direct effects of organizational commitment on job performance and work motivation. The results indicate that both the indirect and direct effects of organizational commitment on job performance and work motivation are significantly positive, which aligns with the conclusions drawn from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis. As a result, Hypotheses 4 and 7 are confirmed.

Table 5 Bootstrap Significance Test for Mediating Effects

Path	Effect	B	Boot (SE)	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	P value
Organizational commitment-work motivation-job performance	Total effect	0.267	0.027	0.213	0.321	0.000
	Direct effect	0.125	0.026	0.075	0.176	0.000
	Indirect effect	0.142	0.021	0.103	0.187	0.000
Organizational commitment-organizational communication-work performance	Total effect	0.286	0.029	0.229	0.342	0.000
	Direct effect	0.179	0.039	0.102	0.255	0.000
	Indirect effect	0.107	0.033	0.044	0.176	0.000

Notes. Mediation analyses include all the control variables. LLCI: Low Limit Confidence Interval; ULCI: Upper Limit Confidence Interval. Bootstrap samples: 5,000.

4.5 Contributions

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the state of employee motivation and performance in Taiwanese enterprises remains consistent with pre-pandemic levels after the COVID-19 pandemic. The research analysis in this section reveals that organizational communication and organizational commitment play vital roles in enhancing work motivation and job performance. By addressing employees' concerns regarding the pandemic's potential impact on the company's operations, organizations can instill confidence and trust among their workforce. This positive work environment then contributes to increased work motivation and improved performance levels.

V. Conclusion and Discussion

5.1 Conclusions

The Covid-19 pandemic, which originated as a public health emergency in early 2020, had severe immediate economic consequences. It triggered the worst economic recession since World War II, with a global contraction of 3.5 percent in 2020, resulting in soaring unemployment rates and deteriorating public finances (World Bank, Citation2021).

When comparing small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to multinational enterprises (MNEs), SMEs face challenges due to their limited resources, standards, R&D capabilities, organizational culture, and utilization of advanced manufacturing technologies. Despite these constraints, the significance of SMEs cannot be underestimated. They are considered essential for generating new jobs, promoting fair distribution of existing ones, and contributing to the expansion of Asian exports. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the

impact of employees on organizational commitment and work performance in Taiwan after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the statistical analysis mentioned above, the research findings are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6 Hypothesis Test Summary Table

Hypotheses	Result
H1: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and job performance.	Supported
H2: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and work motivation.	Supported
H3: There is a significant positive relationship between work motivation and job performance.	Supported
H4: Work motivation has a mediating effect on organizational commitment and job performance.	Supported
H5: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational communication.	Supported
H6: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational communication and work motivation.	Supported
H7: Organizational communication has a mediating effect on organizational commitment and work motivation.	Supported

The findings reveal several significant relationships among the variables. Organizational commitment has a direct and substantial positive impact on both work motivation and work performance. Additionally, organizational communication has a noteworthy positive influence on work motivation, and work motivation, in turn, significantly affects job performance.

Regarding the mediating effects, work motivation acts as a mediator between organizational commitment and job performance, while organizational communication serves as a mediator between organizational commitment and work motivation. These results provide support for all the research hypotheses. In summary, the research outcomes indicate strong support for the relationships between organizational commitment, organizational communication, work motivation, and job performance as well as for the mediating effects proposed in the study.

5.2 Discussion

In general, the survey respondents demonstrated high levels of organizational commitment and job performance, indicating their ability to adapt and remain dedicated to their roles despite the challenges posed by the post-COVID-19 pandemic. This reflects their unwavering commitment to professionalism and fulfilling their responsibilities as employees. The results further indicate that respondents perceive a direct link between organizational commitment and job performance. They believe that the level of organizational commitment directly influences their performance, suggesting that the company's strong commitment to its employees fosters a sense of responsibility among employees, leading them to believe that their dedication directly impacts productivity. Moreover, a strong correlation was observed between job performance and all the independent factors examined in this study.

5.3 Limitations and future research

This study is based on a sample survey of individuals in Taiwan and may not encompass the circumstances of all corporate employees. Due to time and resource constraints, conducting a large-scale survey was not feasible, and therefore, only a preliminary investigation could be carried out. Future researchers

interested in this field are encouraged to conduct more comprehensive and in-depth studies, focusing on different industries or regions. For example, exploring work motivation and job performance after the COVID-19 pandemic in various sectors, such as the tourism service industry, agriculture, fisheries, and manufacturing, may yield varying significance. By conducting more targeted research, a deeper understanding of the dynamics and variations across different industries and regions can be achieved.

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