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# JOB INVOLVEMENT AS A MEDIATOR OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN THE SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT BANKS IN SRI LANKA

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship among organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance of non - managerial employees in the systemically important banks in Sri Lanka. The sample consisted of 400 non - managerial employees randomly selected from Systemically Important Banks. A questionnaire was administered among the non - managerial employees as the measuring instrument. The correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The results of the study indicated that there was a significant positive relationship among organizational commitment, job involvement and organizational commitment. Job involvement was found to be a partial mediator of the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-manual employees in the systemically important banks in Sri Lanka.*

## KEYWORDS

Job Involvement, Job Performance, Mediating Effect, Organizational Commitment.

## INTRODUCTION

The banking sector is the dominant sub sector within the financial sector in Sri Lanka. Banks play a vital role in shaping up the economy of any country. The failure of a single bank can lead to the failure of the entire economy. The overall performance of the banking sector directly affects to the other industrial and service sectors of the economy. The success of the banking sector as a service organization largely depends on the customer satisfaction. The employees are the key factor in providing better service to their customers and ultimately it helps to improve the overall performance of the banks. The bank employees play an important role in delivering high quality services, promoting the corporate image and improving customer satisfaction (Karatepe and Tekinkus, 2006). According to Gabbott and Hogg (1997) employees' job performance is a key individual outcome in the financial and banking sector. Thus, the enhancing the job performance of the employees is a high priority of any manager in the banking sector. Lots of researchers and practitioners have focused their researches to find out the antecedents of job performance. Among them, organizational commitment (Baugh & Roberts, 1994; Meyer et al., 1993; Blau, 1986) and job involvement (Brown, 1996; Blau, 1986; Robbins, 2003) have been identified as important determinants of job performance. Organizational commitment and job involvement are two work related attitudes that can be affected different ways to work outcomes, behaviors and other work attitudes. Organizational commitment has widely been defined as identification and involvement with the organization via believing in the organization's values and goals, exerting effort on behalf of the organization, and desiring to remain with the organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). It has received substantial attention in the past research due to its significant impact on work outcomes. Some researchers point out that organization whose members have higher levels of commitment show higher performance, productivity and lower levels of absenteeism and tardiness. This implies that employees with a high level of commitment tend to take greater effort to perform and invest their resources in the organization. Job involvement is how people see their jobs as both a relationship with the working environment, the job itself and how their work and life are commingled. Many researchers found that direct relationship between job involvement and employee outcomes, organizational performance and organization success (Bates, 2004; Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006). In reviewing the literature, there exists a substantial amount of research on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance whereas some researchers have found that direct relationships between organizational commitment and job involvement and job involvement and job performance. Anyway, the mediating effect of job involvement on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance has received little attention in previous researches. In Sri Lanka, there are few researches on organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance but nothing can be found in the mediating effect of job involvement on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance in the systemically important banks. Therefore, it seems that there is a research gap in this field in Sri Lanka.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Lots of researchers have found direct relationship between organizational commitment and job performance. In turn, relationships between organizational commitment and job involvement, job involvement and job performance have been empirically established. In reviewing the literature, few researches can be found on the mediating effect of organizational commitment and job performance. However, there were no researches on the mediating effect of job involvement in the banking sector in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the problems addressed in this study are to investigate:

1. How and in what ways does organizational commitment and job involvement influence on job performance of non - managerial employees in systemically important banks in Sri Lanka?
2. Does job involvement mediate the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-manual employees in systemically important banks in Sri Lanka?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-manual employees in the systemically important banks
2. To investigate the impact of organizational commitment and job involvement of non-manual employees in the systemically important banks
3. To identify the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-manual employees in the systemically important banks
4. To identify the mediating effect of job involvement on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance among the non-manual employees in the systemically important banks

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### JOB PERFORMANCE

Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit (1997) define job performance as behaviors or activities that are oriented towards the organization's goals and objectives. Similarly, Campbell, McHenry, & Wise (1990) define job performance as the observable behaviors that people do in their jobs that are relevant to the goals of the organization. Traditionally, job performance was evaluated in terms of the proficiency with which as individual carried out the tasks that were specified in their job description. It has been conceptualized in terms of the execution and completion of well-defined task as a one dimension (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). According to Moorhead and Griffin (1999), job performance is all of the total set of work related behaviors that the organization expects from the individuals to

display. However, the changing nature of work and organizations has challenged traditional views of job performance. Today, job performance is defined as a multidimensional construct.

The Task Performance (TP) and Contextual Performance (CP) have been received the most attention in the recent research (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993) the TP is the behavior that is directly linked with completion of the job. Behaviour in the domain of TP is usually recognized as a formal requirement of an individuals' job. Job description often explicitly stipulates that the job holders must perform these activities. According to another conceptualization on TP refers to activities that are formally part of a worker's job. These activities are two types. The first type includes activities that contribute directly to the "technical core" of the organization and the second type includes activities that support the technical core. TP involves all behaviors that are directly relevant to main job functions and in short, is the proficiency of activities that formally are recognized as part of workers "job" (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) define CP as an individual's performance, which maintain and enhances an organization's social network and the psychological climate that supports technical tasks. CP is comprised of interpersonal behaviors or actions that benefit the organization. This type of performance is often not written in a job description but it is considered to be an important component of job performance. CP consist the behavior of volunteering for extra work, persisting with enthusiasm, helping and cooperating with others, following rules and procedures and supporting or defending the organization (Motowidlo and Schmit, 1999).

#### ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment researchers can be divided into two major camps, those who view organizational commitment as an attitude and those who view it as behaviors (Meyer and Allen, 1991). According to Poteret al., (1974) an attitudinal perspective refers to the psychological attachment or Affective Commitment (AC) formed by an employee in relation to his identification and involvement with the respective organization. They further explain this as "an attachment to the organization, characterized by intention to remain in it, identification with the values and goals of the organization, and a willingness to exert extra effort on its behalf." It is considered to be the linkage between the individual employee and the organization because of individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals related to that of the organization as part of organizational commitment.

Behavioral perspectives of organizational commitment is explained under the side bet theory (Becker, 1960) Side bets theory refers to the accumulation of investments valued by the individual which would be lost if she or he were to leave the organization (Becker, 1960). According to this theory individuals are committed to the organization as far as they hold their positions, irrespective of the stressful condition they experience. However, if they have been given alternative benefits, they will not to leave the organization. Mowday, Poter and Steers (1982) support the Becker's view and describe organizational commitment as a behavior relating to the process by which individuals become locked in to a certain organization.

Mayer and Allen (1990) viewed organizational commitment as multidimensional concept. They proposed a Three-Component Model, including: Affective Commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC). AC refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. CC refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization due to the high cost of leaving. NC refers to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization based on the employee having internalized the values and goals of the organization.

#### JOB INVOLVEMENT

Job involvement is about to what degree one identifies with a job, how involved one is and if one believes in self-worth assured by his job. Highly involved employees identify with and care a lot about what they do (Robbins, 2001). According to Allport (1943), JI is the degree to which the job meets the need for prestige and self-respect or the level of importance to one's self esteem. Furthermore he conceptualizes JI as the degree to which one is actively participating in one's job. Lodahl and Kejner (1965) define JI as the degree of importance of one's work in one's total self-image. This definition also implies the significance of the job on the individual's work and non-work life. Kanungo (1982) defines JI as the extent to which one identifies psychologically with one's job. These individuals really care about the kind of work they do on their jobs. He describes JI as a belief descriptive of the present job and tends to be a function of how much the job can satisfy present needs. It is a specific belief resulting from the relationship with one's present job. Furthermore he explains that employees do not get involved in the job only for self-rational interest fulfillment; they also get involved in the job because they let their emotions play a role. Becoming highly involved in the job is often times a response to emotional rather than rational needs (Carmeli, 2003).

#### ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, JOB INVOLVEMENT AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Many studies revealed a strong positive correlation between job involvement and organizational commitment (Morrow, 1993; Mowday et al., 1979; Mowday et al., 1982; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag, 2003; Janis, 1989; Loui, 1995; Brown, 1996). The positive relationship between job involvement and commitment suggests that those employees who are committed to their jobs are likely to be committed to their employing organizations. On the other hand, job involvement has positively related to employee performance (Bates, 2004; Brown, 1996; Baumruk, 2004; 2008; Diefendorff et al., 2002; Kahn, 1990; Kappagoda, 2012; Lawler, 1986; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag, 2003). Previous research have studied the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance and found positive relationship (Baugh and Roberts, 1994; Brett et al., 1995; Kappagoda, 2012; Keller, 1997; Matheiu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 1989; Mitchell & Larson, 1987; Mowday et al., 1982; Randall, 1990; Rao, 2000; Riketta, 2002). This finding suggests that employees who are committed to their organizations are more likely not only to remain with the organization but are also likely to exert more effort on behalf of the organization and work towards its success and therefore should be better performers than the uncommitted employees. Based on these empirical evidences, the following hypotheses are formulated.

H1: There is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks.

H2: There is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job involvement of non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks.

H3: There is a positive relationship between job involvement and job performance of non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks.

H4: Job involvement mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The current study employed a correlational research design in order to explore the relationship between non-managerial employees' organizational commitment (independent variable) and non-managerial employees' job performance (dependent variable). Job involvement is the mediating variable. This field study is conducted in natural environment in banking sector under non-contrived settings. The unit of study is individual.

### POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population of this study is all the permanent non-managerial employees who work in Systemically Important Banks (highly performed commercial banks) in Sri Lanka. The sample for this study was randomly selected 400 non-managerial employees employed in Systemically Important Banks.

### THE SAMPLING METHOD

Firstly, The Systemically Important Banks (SIBs) - Bank of Ceylon, Peoples Bank, Commercial Bank, Hatton National Bank, Sampath Bank and Seylan Bank- were selected. The convenient sampling method is used to select the branches of the bank which was situated in Colombo, Kurunegala and Anuradhapura. Then, with the consultation of the branch manager, four permanent non-managerial employees were selected in random basis.

### MEASURES

Job performance, organizational commitment and job involvement are the variables of this study. These variables were measured using a questionnaire which was originally developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was separated into four sections for demographic data, organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance. Six questions were included to get the demographic information. The job performance was measured including 19 questions under two dimensions (Task performance and Contextual performance). Nine questions were included to test the organizational commitment of the non-



managerial employees under two dimensions (Willingness to display effort and desire to belong to the organization). Ten questions for job involvement were included into the questionnaire under two dimensions (Psychological identification of the job and active participation in the job). The total questions were 44.

#### VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The questionnaire which was prepared for non-managerial employees consists of 03 instruments (organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance). All these instruments have been developed after correctly identifying the relevant dimensions and indicators. Therefore, it can be assured that the instrument has content validity. In developing organizational instrument, affective organizational commitment scale, which was created by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993), organizational commitment questionnaire, created by Meyer, Allen (1997) were considered. When developing job performance questionnaire, Motowidlo and Van Scotter's (1994) 15 items scale of organizational citizenship behavior and task and overall performance scale of Borman, and Ackerman (1994) were considered. Lodahl and Kejner (1965), job involvement scale, Kanungo (1982) job involvement questionnaire were considered in developing job involvement instrument for the Non – Managerial employees.

**TABLE 01 - ALPHA VALUE FOR TEST RETESTS RELIABILITY**

| Variables                 | Alpha value |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Job Performance           | 0.87        |
| Job involvement           | 0.79        |
| Organizational Commitment | 0.74        |

It can be concluded that the instruments possesses high test retest reliability as there is a significant high correlation between the responses of the two administrations.

The table 02 shows the Cronbach coefficient alpha for each instrument. According to the data, each item is correlated with other item across the entire sample and the internal consistency reliability is satisfactory.

**TABLE 02 - CRONBACH COEFFICIENT ALPHA VALUE FOR INTERNAL CONSISTENCY**

| Variables                 | Alpha value |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Job Performance           | 0.91        |
| Job involvement           | 0.81        |
| Organizational Commitment | 0.73        |

#### METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis included univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses. Collected data were analyzed using the SPSS data analysis package.

#### RESULTS

The results of the univariate data are given in table 03. According to the data, the level of organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance are above the moderate level among the non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks.

**TABLE 03 - THE RESULTS OF UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS**

|                           | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------------------|------|----------------|
| Organizational Commitment | 3.56 | 0.52           |
| Job involvement           | 3.41 | 0.51           |
| Job Performance           | 3.26 | 0.42           |

**TABLE 04 - CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES**

| Variables                    | 1      | 2      | 3 |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|---|
| 1. Organizational Commitment | -      |        |   |
| 2. Job involvement           | 0.67** | -      |   |
| 3. Job Performance           | 0.53** | 0.56** | - |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

**TABLE 05 - RESULTS OF SIMPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

| $\beta$ | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | F value | P value |
|---------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| 0.53    | 0.530 | 0.281    | 0.279             | 0.445                      | 155.52  | 0.00    |

Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Commitment

Dependent Variable: Job Performance

**TABLE 06 - RESULTS OF SIMPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

| $\beta$ | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | F value | P value |
|---------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| 0.67    | 0.667 | 0.445    | 0.443             | 0.391                      | 318.68  | 0.00    |

Predictors: (Constant), Organizational commitment

Dependent Variable: Job involvement

**TABLE 07 - RESULTS OF SIMPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

| $\beta$ | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | F value | P value |
|---------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| 0.59    | 0.559 | 0.313    | 0.311             | 0.429                      | 181.03  | 0.00    |

Predictors: (Constant), Job involvement

Dependent Variable: Job performance

Table 05 to 07 present the results of the regression analysis. According to the table, organizational commitment and job involvement have significantly and positively correlated to job performance whereas organizational commitment has also significantly and positively correlated to job involvement. Based on the results on correlational coefficient and regression analysis, hypotheses one, two and three can be accepted.

**TABLE 08 - REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF JOB INVOLVEMENT MEDIATING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT-JOB PERFORMANCE RELATIONSHIP**

|                                   | Step 01 | Step 02 |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Organizational Commitment $\beta$ | 0.398** | 0.213** |
| Job involvement $\beta$           | -       | 0.282** |
| R                                 | 0.530   | 0.598   |
| R <sup>2</sup>                    | 0.281   | 0.357   |
| F value                           | 155.52  | 110.28  |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

According to the results of table 08, the introduction of job involvement in the analysis reduces the impact of organizational commitment. The  $\beta$  has dropped from 0.398 ( $P < 0.01$ ) in step 01 to 0.213 ( $P < 0.01$ ) in step 02.

## DISCUSSION

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the mediating effect of job involvement on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance and to identify the relationship among organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance of the non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks in Sri Lanka. For this purpose, four hypotheses were formulated.

By considering the hypothesis one, the results of correlation coefficient and regression analysis indicated that organizational commitment of the non-managerial employees has positively and significantly correlated with their job performance. This finding suggests that non managerial employees who are committed to their banks are more likely not only to remain with the bank but are also likely to exert more effort on behalf of the bank and work towards its success and therefore should be better performers than the uncommitted employees. According to the results of the analysis, the R Square is 0.28 which is significant at 1% ( $p = 0.01$ ) suggest that the commitment of non-managerial employees has significantly explained 28% of the variance of their job performance. Furthermore, F value (155.52) suggests that there is a significant linear relationship between organizational commitment and job performance.

A positive relationship between organizational commitment and job involvement was predicted as the second hypothesis. The data show that the relationship between organizational commitment and job involvement of non-managerial employees in the systemically important banks has significantly and positively correlated. The results indicate that non managerial employees who are committed to their employing banks are also likely to be committed to their jobs. Organizational commitment of non-managerial employees has significantly explained 44.5% of variance of their job involvement. There was a significant linear relationship between organizational commitment and job involvement ( $F=318.68$ ). It was the strongest correlation among the variables.

There is statistical evidence to accept the third hypothesis which was formulated in this study. The job involvement of the non-managerial employees has significantly and positively correlated to job performance. It means that the non-managerial employees who are highly involved with their jobs are high performers in the systemically important banks. It has significantly explained 31.3 % of the variance in job performance.

Furthermore, the researcher formulated a hypothesis to investigate the mediating effect of job involvement on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance. For this purpose, the three steps which were recommended by Baron and Kenny in 1986 were used. According to these authors, as the first, the mediator should be predicted by the independent variable. Table 06 already showed that job involvement can be predicted by the organizational commitment. The dependent variable should be predicted by the mediator and the independent variable as the second step. The results in tables 05 and 07 showed that job performance can be predicted by organizational commitment and job involvement. The data suggested that there is an evidence to prove the first and second steps of Baron and Kenny's procedure. Finally, the dependent variable should be regressed on the independent variable, controlling for the mediator. According to the results of table 08, the introduction of job involvement in the analysis reduces the impact of organizational commitment. The  $\beta$  has dropped from 0.398 ( $P<0.01$ ) in step 01 to 0.213 ( $P<0.01$ ) in step 02. Both organizational commitment ( $\beta =0.213$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) and job involvement ( $\beta =0.282$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) remains a significant predictors in the last analysis. Therefore, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), it can be assumed that there is a partial mediation in this case. Thus, the final hypothesis can be accepted.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that there is a partial mediating effect of job involvement of the non-managerial employees on the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance of the non-managerial employees. In addition to that, the correlation between organizational commitment and job performance, organizational commitment and job involvement, job involvement and job performance are significant and positive. Understanding these relationships will be helpful to the strategists in the banking sector when they are formulating strategies regarding their human resources.

## LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The results must be considered in the context of several limitations. The first has to do with its generalizability as the data collection was confined to selected branches of systemically important banks. Second limitation was of relying on self-reported data. The level of organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance were measured according to the employees' own attitudes. Thirdly, the difficulty of exploring the psychological factors like organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance through the structured questionnaire was another limitation of this study.

The present study has been provided many potential paths for future researchers. In this study organizational commitment, job involvement and job performance were the major variables of interest. The research study attempted to demonstrate the mediating effect of job involvement. The further researches would be advantages to explore potential mediators except job involvement and moderators for the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance. This research focused only the systemically important banks but other researchers can expand the sample to the other banks, service organizations or different organizations in Sri Lanka.

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