

# Impact of Organizational Communication on Organization Commitment and Job Satisfaction: Assessing the Moderating role of Physical Work Environment

<sup>1</sup>Shahid Jan Kakakhel, <sup>2</sup>Asad Khan, <sup>3</sup>Samina Gul, <sup>4</sup>Dr. Muhammad Jehangir

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor & Chairman, Department of Management Sciences, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

<sup>2,3</sup> PhD Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, Abasyn University Peshawar, Pakistan

<sup>4</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – Importance of communication cannot be denied at any level and in any organization. It affects the employee's commitment with the organization and their satisfaction level. The purpose of this study is to access and understand that how organizational communication affects the employee job satisfaction level and the level of commitment with their organization. The other dimension of this study is to measure the moderating impact of physical work conditions on the organizational communication, organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data was collected from a sample of 300 employees working in the different organizations and different levels by using a close ended questionnaire.

**Findings** – It was concluded that organizational communication has a direct and positive relation with the employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The analysis further proves that the physical work environment as moderator weakens the relationship between communication, organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

**Originality/value** – Although much of the previous research has identified associations between organizational communication Organization commitment and job satisfaction but this is the first known attempt to assess the physical work environment with relation to other variables of the study.

**KEY WORDS:** Organizational Communication, Organization Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Physical Work Environment

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## INTRODUCTION

Importance of communication cannot be denied in any area of life. Communication remained center of attention for numerous researchers over the decades and still it is. Hargie, Tourish and Wilson (2002) referred internal communication as key element for the success of an organization. A clear communication promotes organization commitment among the employees as they know what organization want from them (Byrne and Le May 2006).

The mix of organizational communication, job satisfaction and organization commitment is been tested and measured by various researchers. Ruppel and Harrington (2000) highlighted the combined effect of ethical environment and communication on satisfaction and innovation. Calabrese (2004) studied the quality of organizational communication and proposed that a more complex model can be developed to measure the quality of communication and its effect on other organizational practices. Relation between organizational communication and job satisfaction is an important aspect of organizational atmosphere and has a significant effect on job performance (Giri and Kumar, 2010). Muchinsky (1977) has pointed that more research is needed to discuss other parameters of communication.

Researchers also discussed the effect of work environment on the job satisfaction and organization commitment but there is still room for research in it. Carnevale (1992) argue that people in organizations are given the primary importance but importance of physical settings cannot be denied in workplace. While discussing the organization's environment effect on the training Kupritz (2002) concluded that the workplace distraction affect the learning ability of the employees. A caring working environment affects the job satisfaction, job performance and commitment of employees equally directly and indirectly (Fu and Deshpande, 2013). Physical elements of work place e.g. Furniture, seating positions, noise, building structure etc are the source of motivation or de-motivation of employees (Naharuddin and Sadegi, 2013).

It is evident that distraction in the work place affects the quality of other functions of the organization. Although organizational communication and work place conditions are discussed by various researchers but the moderating effect of physical work environment on the communication, job satisfaction and commitment needs to be studied. Work place environment is essential to discuss while assessing the impact of communication on other variables.

This study assesses the effect of organizational communication on the job satisfaction and commitment along with the effect of physical work environment on the process of communication and their combined effect on job satisfaction and organization commitment.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Organizational Communication;** Organizational communication is a very vast area and it is a very tricky concept to assess.. Porter & Roberts, (1976) termed communication as one of the most hard to pin down organizational variable. Price (1997) recognized organizational communication as a theoretical variable that measures the amount of information which organization passes on to its employees. This contains information about job and place of work. Organizational communication is an intersection between the study of human communication and the study of human organization (Farace, Monge, & Russell, 1977). This intersection of communication and organization has been influenced by several intellectual perspectives, which helped in establishing knowledge. These different perspectives of organizational communication are established by the different researchers. Putnam & Pacanowsky (1983) discussed the cultural, interpretive perspective of organizational communication. Another perspective is critical, postmodern perspective (Deetz, 1992; Mumby, 1987). Third is network perspective (Monge & Contractor, 2003).

**Organizational Communication and Job Satisfaction:** Employee's satisfaction with its job is the key to success for every organization. Over the time various definitions have been developed to define the job satisfaction. Price & Mueller (1986) defined job satisfaction as the degree of positive affect an employee feels about his/her employment. Another definition is "Job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs. (Spector, 1997). Organizational communication and job satisfaction has a strong relationship which has been tested by various researchers. Giri & Kumar (2010) concluded that organizational communication has a significant relationship with job satisfaction and job performance. Pincus (1986) also observed that communication in the organization has a strong relationship with job satisfaction and job performance. Discussing the dimensionality of organizational communication Muchinsky (1977) surmised that the both dimensions downward and lateral directionality were significantly correlated with job satisfaction. Where lateral direction was negatively correlated and downward direction was positively correlated with job satisfaction.

*H1:* Organizational communication and job satisfaction has a significant relationship and positively related to each other.

### **Organizational Communication and Organization Commitment**

Organizational commitment defines the emotional attachment of employee with his or her organization; it holds an important place in the study of organizations. Bateman and Strasser (1984) gave an operational definition of commitment that is "multidimensional in nature, involving an employee's loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, degree of goal and value congruency with the organization, and desire to maintain membership". Researchers have identified three different types of commitment e.g. Affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991)

Organizational communication and commitment with organization are very closely related to each other. Postmes, Tanis & Wit (2001) concluded that although employee feel committed with their organization when they communicate with their coworkers but commitment is more strongly related to the communication of top management (vertical communication). Allen (1992) described that the quality of communication between top management, supervisors and subordinates is strongly and positively related to the organizational commitment.

*H2:* There is significant relationship between organizational communication and organizational commitment.

### **Physical Work Environment and Job Satisfaction**

Employee's job satisfaction is the core area of research and a huge number of studies have been conducted to measure the impact of different organizational variables on it. Relationship between physical work environment and job satisfaction is comparatively a new area of research (Hall, 1966). It is evident that physical soundings of work place contribute towards the feeling of job satisfaction (Carnevale, 1992). Researchers have considered the physical work condition as a higher order issue and a good physical working environment has a significant contribution in

employee job satisfaction (Carnevale, 1992). Discussing the influence of physical work environment in which people work Vischer, (1989, 1996) argued that physical work environment equally affects the employee's performance and job satisfaction.

*H3*: Physical work environment has significant mediating effect on job the satisfaction of employees.

### **Physical Work Environment and Organization Commitment**

Many factors affect employees commitment with the organization among those physical work environment is one. Uzee, (1999) illustrated that the physical settings and layout of the workspace alongside the involvement of management plays a key role in improving employees commitment and productivity.

Analyzing the Characteristics of hospital physical environment such as quality of patient areas, safety and quality of work spaces Janakiraman, Parish & Berry (2011) concluded that these physical characteristics are positively associated with commitment.

*H4*: Physical Work Environment has an indirect and positive effect on Organizational Commitment.

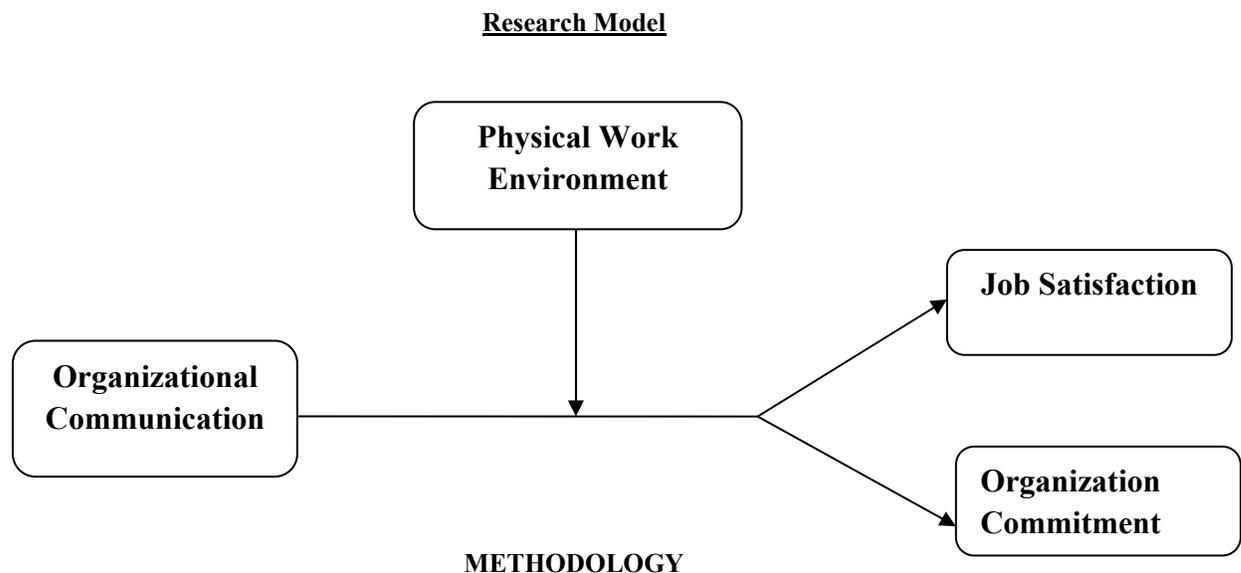
### **Moderating Role of Physical Work Environment**

As it is discussed that organizational communication is positively related with the job satisfaction and both variables have a strong relationship. At the same time better physical work environment positively contribute towards the job satisfaction level of employees (Carnevale, 1992).

For that reason it is predicted that as a moderator, physical work environment will strengthen the relationship between organizational communication and job satisfaction.

While discussing the impact of organizational communication on organizational commitment it was seen that communication positively impacts the organizational commitment. So it can be concluded that the physical work environment will positively affect this relationship as a moderator.

*H5*: Physical work environment has a positive moderating effect on the relationship of organizational communication and job satisfaction.



### **Population and Sample**

To increase the generalization of responses the data was collected from private sector organizations using convenient sampling technique. Most of them were service oriented organizations. It was important to get responses from people who actually understand what is being asked. So to ensure the accuracy of data employees with a good level of understanding were requested to fill the questionnaire. All participants had filled the questionnaire voluntarily and it was assured to them that their responses will remain confidential and anonymous.

A total 280 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, out of which 240 were received back, among those 5 questionnaires were not filled correctly or responses were not clear. An 86% response rate was calculated.

Among the participant (52 %) were married, males were (68 %) with average ages of (20 - 40) of them (33 %) were working in public sector organizations and (67 %) were working in private sector organizations.

### Measures Used

All variables of this study were measured on a 5 points liker scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

*Organizational communication* was measured using “Organizational Communication Scale” Downs and Hazen (1997). Example of items is, “I receive information about my progress in my job”.

The alpha reliability for this scale was 0.997.

*Organizational Commitment* was measured using 7 items scale developed by Allen & Meyer (1990). Example of items is, ‘I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization”.

The alpha reliability for this scale was 0.995.

*Job Satisfaction* was measured using 7 items scale developed by Taylor & Bowers (1972). Example of items is, ‘I am satisfied with my job now”.

The alpha reliability for this scale was 0.996.

*Physical Work Environment* was measured using 7 items scale used by Tetteh et al. (2012).

Example of items is, “Ample amount of natural light comes into my office”.

The alpha reliability for this scale was 0.988.

## RESULTS

### Correlation Analysis

Multiple linear regression analyses were used to test all main effect hypotheses. Demographics are entered in the first step followed by the independent variable. Table 1 reports means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations among studied variables.

**Table 1**  
**Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities**

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Gender <sup>a</sup>	1.3167	.46615									
2	Age	1.4792	.70828	-.157*								
3	Marital status	1.5250	.50042	-.106	.621**							
4	Education	2.4375	.56042	.092	-.256**	-.076						
5	Org Type	1.3250	.46935	-.109	.058	.037	.014					
6	Org communication	2.6440	.94021	.124	-.040	-.054	-.249**	-.089	(.997)			
7	Org commitment	2.6857	.93465	.126	-.049	-.056	-.250**	-.085	.980**	(.995)		
8	Job Satisfaction	2.6631	.93533	.124	-.036	-.045	-.248**	-.087	.985**	.991**	(.996)	
9	PWE	2.6631	.94982	.131*	-.034	-.040	-.242**	-.083	.985**	.979**	.990**	(.988)

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *N*= 240. Alpha reliabilities are presented in parentheses, Org = Organization; PWE = Physical work environment.

a. Gender: 1 = Male, 2 = Female

Table 1 show that organizational communication has a strong and positive correlation with organizational commitment (.988,  $p < 0.01$ ); in the same way organization communication has a strong and positive correlation with job satisfaction (.985,  $p < 0.01$ ). Moderating variable physical work environment demonstrated a strong degree of association with organizational commitment (.979,  $p < 0.01$ ) similarly relationship between physical work environment and job satisfaction has a strong and positive relationship (.990,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Regression Analysis**

The results gained from regression analysis are presented in table 2. The results indicate that Organizational communication has a strong positive effect on organizational commitment ( $\beta = 0.516, p < 0.001$ ), thus Hypothesis 1 is accepted. The relationship of Organizational communication with job satisfaction behavior was found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.311, p < 0.001$ ), so hypothesis 2 is also accepted. Regression analysis further point to that physical work environment has a strong and positive effect on organizational commitment ( $\beta = 0.457, p < 0.001$ )

**Table 2**  
**Results for Main Effects and Moderated Regression Analyses**

Predictors	Organizational Commitment			Job Satisfaction		
	B	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
<b>Step 1</b>						
Control variables		0.094			0.061	
<b>Step 2</b>						
Communication	0.516***			0.311***		
PWE	0.457***	0.967	0.872***	0.671***	0.984	0.922***
<b>Step 3</b>						
Com x PWE	- 0.687***	0.979	0.013***	-0.419***	0.988	0.005***

*n* = 240. PWE = Physical Work Environment  
\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

That’s why hypothesis 3 is accepted. In the same way, physical work conditions possess a strong positive relation with job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.671, p < 0.001$ ), which leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 4. The results of moderated regression analysis shows that physical work environment weakens the relationship of organizational communication and organizational commitment ( $\beta = -0.687, p < 0.001$ ), as a result hypothesis 5a is rejected. The moderation effect of physical work environment on the relationship of organizational communication and job satisfaction was negatively related hence it weaken the relationship between organizational communication and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.419, p < 0.001$ ) therefore hypothesis 5b is also rejected.

**DISCUSSION**

In this study it was observed that the findings support all the hypothesis of direct relations. As hypothesized it is found that organizational communication has a positive effect on job satisfaction. It indicates that if employees are communicated about their roles, responsibilities and performance it increase the level of job satisfaction among them. Supervisor’s communication with their employees is another major area of communication which develops the sense of satisfaction among employees. These results are in lined with work of Giri & Kumar (2010) who concluded that organizational communication has a significant relationship with job satisfaction and job performance. Pincus (1986) also observed that communication in the organization has a strong relationship with job satisfaction and job performance.

Results also supported the hypothesis that organizational communication has a significant effect on organizational commitment and are positively related. As mentioned earlier the quality of communication and its accuracy results in the increased level of commitment. Employees feel more committed when they are communicated by the top management. This relationship was discussed by Postmes, Tanis & Wit (2001) and he also concluded that commitment is more strongly related to the communication of top management (vertical communication). The work of Allen (1992) also supports the findings of this study he stated that the quality of communication between top management, supervisors and subordinates is strongly and positively related to the organizational commitment.

It was hypothesized that physical work environment is strongly related to job satisfaction and it positively affects the level of employee job satisfaction. Findings support the hypothesis. Physical work settings make the job easy for the employees. When employees feel comfortable on their work place, they work more efficiently and feel satisfied with their work. Same findings are reported that physical surrounding of work place contributes towards the feeling of job satisfaction (Carnevale, 1992). Vischer, (1989, 1996) argued that physical work environment equally affects the employee’s performance and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis also support the findings that physical work environment has a positive relationship with employees commitment with their organization. It is observed that employees feel more committed when the work places are according to their needs. A well organized work place is a source of commitment for employees. Findings of Janakiraman, Parish & Berry (2011) supports the findings of the study he argued that physical environment such as quality of patient areas, safety and quality of work spaces are positively associated with commitment

When the moderating role of physical work environment was tested with the organizational communication, job satisfaction and organizational commitment the result does not support the hypothesis which was made. It was predicted that physical work environment strengthen the relationship between organizational communication, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. But the results indicate that physical work environment weakens the relationship between organizational communication, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This result point out that physical work environment should be taken as an important aspect of organizational environment. Distraction in work place like noise, poor seating arrangements, ill building structures and no privacy are possibly the reasons for this relationship.

### **Implications for Managers/Policy Makers**

This study provides valuable implications for managerial staff. As this study highlights the importance of the relationship of work place environment with job satisfaction and commitment. It gives a clear path to managers and policy makers to design the physical settings of work place in the way that improve the relationship between organizational communication, job satisfaction and employees commitment. By utilizing the results of this study managers can understand that why the communication within the organization in not bringing the required output. These reasons can be the noise, low lights and poor seating arrangements etc. By tackling these problem areas relationship between organizational communication, job satisfaction and organizational commitment can be strengthen which will help the organization to perform its functions more efficiently.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

Although it is tried to minimize the limitations which previous researches have faced, but it is hard to overcome all these limitations. This study has some limitations. Its conclusions are based on self-reported data, collected at one point in time which causes the common-method variance. In the process of data collection it was not possible to gather data from all different sectors of industry, so the results may not be generalized to every sector equally. Sample size is another factor that can limit the generalizability of this study as it is a vast area of study and a small number of responses may manipulate its actual result.

As an early attempt to find the moderating affect of physical work environment on the other variables of this study, this model inevitably has loose ends. Therefore it is need to conduct further research to explore these relationships with a more comprehensive design to measure other dimensions of physical work environment. In this study physical work environment is tested as a moderator, its affect as a mediator should also be studied. The role of physical work environment should also be tested with other variables of work life e.g. motivation, productivity, performance etc. The moderating role of physical work environment could also be studied in a multicultural context to expand its scope.

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**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Respondent Profile**

Please tick (✓) for the most appropriate responses / answer in respect of the following items.

1. **Gender:** Male  Female

2. **Age:** 20 – 30 year old  31 – 40 year old   
 41 – 50 year old  51 – 60 year old

4. **Marital Status:** Single  Married

**5. Educational Level:**

Intermediate  Bachelor’s degree

Master’s degree  PhD

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Organization Communication</b>						
1.	I receive information about my progress in my job	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I receive information about personnel	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I receive information about my departmental policies and goals	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I receive information about the requirements of my job	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I receive information about employee benefits and pay	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I receive information about how my job compares with others	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I receive information about how I am being judged	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I receive recognition of my efforts	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I receive information on how problems in my job are being handled	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Upper management knows and understands the problems faced by employees	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Upper management listens and pays attention to me	1	2	3	4	5
12.	My supervisor offers guidance for solving job-related problems	1	2	3	4	5
13.	My supervisor trusts me	1	2	3	4	5
14.	My supervisor is open to ideas	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The amount of supervision given me is about right	1	2	3	4	5
16.	This organization’s communication motivates and stimulates my enthusiasm for meeting organization goals	1	2	3	4	5
17.	People in my organization have great ability as communicators	1	2	3	4	5
18.	This organization’s communication makes me identify with it or feel a vital part of it	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I receive on-time information needed to do my job	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels	1	2	3	4	5
21.	This organization’s publications are interesting and helpful	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Our meetings are well-organized	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Written directives and reports are clear and concise	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Attitudes toward communication in my organization are basically healthy	1	2	3	4	5
25.	The amount of communication in my organization is about right	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Org Commitment</b>						
26.	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	I do feel like 'part of family' of this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	I do feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	This organization has a 'sentimental value' to me.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	I do feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>						
33.	I am satisfied with the members in my work group.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	I am satisfied with my immediate supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	I am satisfied with my job now.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	I am satisfied with this organization, compared to other company	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Considering my skills and level of education that I have, I am satisfied with my pay and benefit that I get in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	Most people in this organization are satisfied with the job that done now	1	2	3	4	5
39.	I never thought to leaving this organization even the condition of this company is not stable for this moment	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Physical Work Environment</b>						
40.	My furniture is flexible to adjust, rearrange or reorganize my workspace.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	My furniture is comfortable enough so that I can work without getting tired till 5pm.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	The physical conditions at work influence my productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	My work environment is quiet.	1	2	3	4	5
44.	Noise free environment will increase my productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Ample amount of natural light comes into my office.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	Would your overall productivity would increase if the related office environment Problems are solved.	1	2	3	4	5