

Organizational Commitment Revisited: Pandemic-Driven Insights from Indian Workplaces

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Abstract

The COVID-19 crisis created significant change in workplaces around the world, disrupting typical recruitment and testing employees' loyalty. This study examines the relative dynamics of employees' organizational commitment pre- and post-pandemic, with the role of remote work transition, job insecurity, communication satisfaction, and work-life balance being the main focus. From 500 responses adopted from various sectors in India, the study uses Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) for testing measurement reliability and structural relationships. Results show that communication satisfaction and work-life balance have significant positive effects on organizational commitment, while job insecurity and remote shift influence it negatively. A moderation analysis reveals that remote work weakens the effect of job insecurity on commitment. The study contributes to emerging literature by identifying key factors affecting post-pandemic commitment and provides actionable insights for HR policy revisions.

Keywords: Organizational commitment, COVID-19, Recruitment, Remote work, Job insecurity, PLS-SEM

1 Introduction

COVID-19's global spread has resulted in a monumental shift in the way companies attract, hire and keep employees. Not only have there been changes in traditional hiring norms as a result of the pandemic, but employees' thoughts on the relationship with their workplace have also transformed (Cooke et al., 2021). With the mainstreaming of remote work and accelerated digitalization of job roles, organizational commitment plays a key role in understanding post-pandemic workforce stability.

Yet, it is proposed by recent studies that follow-up pandemic-based commitment is context-dependent and is determined by the level of communication satisfaction, and perceived job security, and work life balance (Chowdhury & Malek, 2022; Lee & Chen, 2023).

The recruiting terrain was a survivor of a paradigm shift as well. Many companies adopted virtual hiring systems, AI screening, and lower hiring numbers,

particularly during the peak pandemic years (Sharma & Agarwal, 2021). These changes could eventually affect the routine onboarding of organizations and the perceived employer branding, which indirectly influences attitude of commitment (Gupta et al., 2022).

Also? Working from home, once a niche luxury, was a survival requirement. For others, it is enhanced productivity and flexibility (Gajendran & Harrison, 2021) or reduced emotional attachment as a result of decreased face-to-face interaction and team cohesiveness (Wang et al., 2022). Work insecurity, driven by economic uncertainties and layoffs, has also led to greater stress and lower commitment (Nguyen & Hoang, 2021).

Against this background, the current study investigates the relative change in organizational commitment in the context of pre- and post-pandemic. It emphasizes the essential role of variables such as communication satisfaction, job insecurity, remote shift, and work-life balance. Also, the study address the question about

how teleworking moderates the relationship between job insecurity and commitment. The paper undertakes a partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) analysis, and provides the empirical evidence from a sample of 500 Indian employees drawn from various industry sectors.

By incorporating pandemic-induced workplace experiences with extant commitment theories, this study fills a gap in our current understanding of changes in employees' attitudes during an extended unravelling. The results are expected to guide HR managers and policymakers in restructuring the recruitment and retention policies in the post-pandemic phase.

2.0 Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed profound transformations in employee recruitment and organizational commitment across sectors globally. According to Diab-Bahman and Al-Enzi (2020). Similarly, Papageorgiou et al. (2021) found that HR technology adoption in the context of crises not only enhanced recruitment agility, but also transformed employer branding, affecting candidates' organizational commitment even before they joined.

Organizational commitment, which refers to the employee's psychological attachment to the organization, has gained a new interest in the aftermath of the pandemic. While the three-component model by Meyer and Allen (1991) is still fundamental, more recent theoretical work (e.g., Taghrid/Mahmoud 2022) emphasizes the dynamic process of commitment in uncertain remote work environments. This decline in affective commitment has been found to be stronger as a result of physical distance leading to a reduction of social capital within teams (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bakker et al., 2021).

The theme of remote work dominated during and post-pandemic period and fundamentally changed employee expectations and organizational dynamics. A meta-analysis of Wang et al. (2022) suggested that although remote work increases autonomy and

satisfaction for some, it contributes to decreased organizational commitment in the absence of structured communication channels. Additionally, having minimal or no face-to-face communication may diminish the emotional connections that connect employees with their organizations (Kumar and Mohanty, 2021).

post-pandemic scenario setting has contributed to work-life balance emerging as a predictor of commitment. Employees who encounter the work-home interference may experience higher levels of stress and burnout which can affect their organizational attachment. But companies who provided flexible policies and wellness programs were more likely to generate strong levels of commitment, even under blended models (Chatterjee et al., 2022).

Satisfaction with communication is still an antecedent of high commitment. Effective digital communication avenues have been proven to counter employee disengagement post-pandemic. A study by Lee et al. (2021) found transparency and frequency of managerial communication to be the determining factors in commitment of remote employees. Additionally, Ahmed and Sharma (2022) argued that synchronous communication service for virtual town halls and chat may provide employees with a greater sense of belonging and purpose.

Among the negative predictors of OC, job insecurity has been a growing threat in the wake of economic uncertainty due to COVID-19. Han, Kim, (2021) supported that: "Perceived job insecurity not only decreases affective commitment but it also activates withdrawal behavior. Similarly, Malik et al. (2023) reported that insecurity was significantly greater in contingent workers and in those with jobs in retail and hospitality and was associated with lower levels of commitment.

A handful of investigations have sought to study the interaction effects between telework and job insecurity. Yet Park and Jang (2022) found that remote work can cushion the psychological damage of job insecurity by enabling flexibility, whereas others point to the potential for isolation to fuel perceptions of

organizational detachment. Therefore, the role of remote work in the commitment equation deserves close scrutiny.

The face of recruitment has also seen digital acceleration since the pandemic. AI-based hiring systems, as studied by Kapoor and Yadav (2021), have improved hiring process, however it has also led to questions on bias and depersonalization. The candidate experience of fairness and transparency in digital recruitment has a direct effect on the new recruits' subsequent OCB (Kshetri, 2022).

For example, Sharma and Roy (2023) in the Indian context demonstrated that the digital hiring process has broadened access to diverse sources of talent in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The impersonal nature of virtual interviews can subspecies the socialization progression necessary for developing initial organizational commitment. Das and Sahu (2021) suggest combining digital onboarding with individual mentoring sessions to overcome this challenge.

A feminine organization: Despite her admiration, Kong regrets the apologies made by (male) leaders concerning their organizations' poor performance following the COVID-19 crisis. Sinha and Tripathi (2022) found that Gen Z workers value work-life balance and job purpose than job security, hence more vulnerable to shifts in work modalities. Meanwhile, women professionals, especially those with caregiving responsibilities, faced more difficulties in the work-from-home transition, which impacted their Organizational Loyalty (Verma & Mehta, 2022).

The extent to which the relationship between commitment and workplace is influenced by culture and industry differences. A study by Al-Harthy et al. (2023) concluded that in collectivist cultures, as opposed to individualistic cultures, peer interaction and group identity are better predictors of commitment than organizational policies. This is especially the case in post-pandemic blended models of education where there is less opportunity for peer learning.

Investments in training and development also help to shape commitment rebuilding in the post-pandemic

era. Khan and Jain (2021) noted that upskilling programs and reskilling workshops do not just lower job insecurity, they also act as hard signals of organizational investments in employees. This exchange reinforces affective and normative elements of commitment.

The communication style of leadership that you have becomes a strong factor in how your employees are committed. Charismatic and transformational leadership during the pandemic have been associated with increased employee resilience and commitment (Narayan & Jha, 2022). Transactional leadership on the other hand was considered insufficient to satisfy the complex psychosocial needs of employees faced with uncertainty over conditions.

Another developing field for research is psychological safety in virtual teams. Rahman and Joshi (2024) contend that in virtual environments the creation of trust-building norms cannot be presumed. If employees feel safe to share opinions or be vulnerable, they're more likely to stay committed, even with fully remote configurations.

Empirical models examining the influence of constructs related to the pandemic on organizational commitment are increasingly in vogue. Based on PLS-SEM results, Vaidya and Prasad (2023) demonstrate that communication satisfaction is a significant mediating variable in the relationship between remote work and commitment. Their model provides empirical support for indirect paths systems of influences that are congruent to the conceptual model of this study.

In the Indian context, Sharma and Roy (2023) found that digital hiring practices have widened access to diverse talent pools, particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. However, the impersonal nature of virtual interviews may dilute the socialization process essential for cultivating early organizational commitment. Das and Sahu (2021) recommend blending digital onboarding with personalized mentoring sessions to bridge this gap.

Resilience at organisational level, as frequently

discussed, also has implications for micro-level outputs including employee commitment. Gupta and Arora (2022) find that employees report higher levels of postcrisis commitment to their organisations when their experience of their employer is one of an agile, empathetic, technology embracing (i.e. resilient) organisation.

Theoretically, social exchange theory remains the best foundation for the explanation of changing commitment. Perceived organizational support and social exchange play a role on the part of employees when deciding about their level of attachment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; extended by Zeng & Luo, 2022 in digital contexts).

There was also a rethinking of the psychological contract in light of the pandemic. Workers expectations about safety, transparency, and flexibility has also changed, and perceptions that this new contract has been violated can lead to lower commitment (Huang & Wang, 2022). Accordingly, the strategies for building commitment need to be reconsidered.

From a methodological perspective, there is a rising trend among HR and behavioural researchers of applying PLS-SEM to model latent constructs. Sarstedt et al. (2021) argue in favor of the flexibility of PLS-SEM to deal with complex models incorporating both formative and reflective indicators, thus supporting its use in the present study.

Similarly, longitudinal research such as that of Liu and Tang (2024) clearly indicates that organizational commitment has not simply changed as a result of the pandemic, but is also changing in response to policy actions, in leadership adaptation, and in ongoing employee experiences. This highlights the importance of this current comparative approach in capturing dynamic changes along the pre- and post-pandemic continuum.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a **quantitative, cross-sectional**

research design to investigate the shifts in organizational commitment and related workplace factors among employees before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The model was tested using **Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)**, suitable for prediction-oriented research and analysis of latent constructs with non-normal data.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The target population comprises full-time employees across various sectors in India, including IT/ITES, education, manufacturing, healthcare, and government services. A **purposive sampling** technique was employed to ensure inclusion of respondents who experienced pre-pandemic and post-pandemic organizational environments. The final dataset included **500 responses**, meeting the statistical requirements for PLS-SEM analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

3.3 Instrumentation and Measures

A structured questionnaire divided into three sections was used:

Section A: Demographic Profile

This section collected demographic variables such as:

- Age group (e.g., Below 25 to 55+),
- Gender,
- Sector of employment,
- Years of work experience, and
- Current work mode (e.g., remote, hybrid, onsite).

Section B: Pandemic-Induced Work Changes

This section captured binary and ordinal responses on:

- Remote work transition,
- Job insecurity experiences,
- Work-life balance during the pandemic,
- Organizational communication satisfaction, and

- A key single-item measure on “**commitment change post-pandemic**” with response options: *Increased, No Change, and Decreased*.

This inclusion allowed comparative analysis on commitment variations linked to pandemic-related workplace dynamics.

Section C: Organizational Commitment Scale

Organizational commitment was measured using a modified version of the **Meyer and Allen (1991)** Three-Component Model. The items covered affective, continuance, and normative commitment, with 12 Likert-type items (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Reverse-coded items were identified and appropriately recoded during preprocessing.

The reliability and validity of the commitment construct were confirmed through internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.987$), composite reliability (CR = 0.988), and AVE = 0.873.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected via Google Forms during February–March 2025. The digital questionnaire was disseminated through professional networks, email lists, and LinkedIn, with a cover note ensuring anonymity and voluntary participation. A total of **500 valid responses** were obtained after data cleaning and validation.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis was conducted using **SmartPLS 4.0**. The process involved:

- **Descriptive statistics** for demographics and pandemic experience indicators.

- **Measurement model assessment** for reliability and validity.
- **Structural model evaluation** including R^2 (OC_Item_ = 0.728), path coefficients, and f^2 effect sizes.
- **Moderation analysis:** Remote work mode was tested as a moderator on the relationship between job insecurity and organizational commitment.
- **Model fit indicators:** SRMR = 0.013, d_ULS = 0.022, confirming good model fit.

The mediation effect was not tested due to absence of a theoretically grounded mediator variable, but future research may incorporate organizational support or psychological safety as potential mediators.

4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0 to assess the influence of key organizational factors—namely **communication satisfaction, job insecurity, remote work shift, and work-life balance**—on **organizational commitment (OC)** in the post-pandemic workplace. The bootstrapping procedure was run with 5,000 resamples to ensure robust statistical significance.

4.1 Path Coefficients and Significance Testing

Table 4.1 presents the results of the structural model, including standardized path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values for each hypothesized relationship. All paths in the model were found to be **statistically significant at the 0.001 level** ($p < 0.001$), indicating strong predictive relationships between the exogenous constructs and organizational commitment.

Table 4.1 Path Coefficients and Significance (Bootstrapping Output)

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Significance
Communication Satisfaction → OC	0.695	32.80	0.000	***
Job Insecurity → OC	0.162	7.08	0.000	***
Remote Shift → OC	-0.169	7.12	0.000	***
Work-Life Balance → OC	0.433	17.51	0.000	***

*** $p < 0.001$

4.2

Interpretation of Findings

The analysis reveals that **communication satisfaction** has the most substantial influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.695$, $p < 0.001$). This finding reinforces the critical role of transparent and effective communication in fostering a committed workforce, particularly in hybrid or digitally mediated work environments. Employees who perceive their organizations to be communicative and responsive exhibit significantly higher commitment levels.

Work-life balance also emerges as a strong and significant predictor ($\beta = 0.433$, $p < 0.001$), underscoring the importance of flexibility and wellbeing in employee retention strategies. Post-pandemic, employees increasingly prioritize equilibrium between personal and professional spheres, and organizations that support this balance are likely to benefit from enhanced commitment.

Interestingly, **job insecurity** is positively related to organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.162$, $p < 0.001$). While counterintuitive, this may reflect a **continuance commitment effect**, where employees feel compelled to stay due to limited job alternatives in a volatile labor market.

On the contrary, **remote shift** shows a **negative and significant impact** on commitment ($\beta = -0.169$, $p < 0.001$). This could be attributed to reduced interpersonal bonding, informal interaction, and diminished organizational identification experienced in remote work environments.

4.3 Model Evaluation

The high t-values and significance across all predictors suggest strong empirical support for the proposed structural relationships. These results confirm that communication quality, perceived job security, work-life balance, and the nature of work arrangements are critical antecedents to organizational commitment in the post-COVID era.

4.4 Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Accuracy

The **R^2 value** for Organizational Commitment was found to be **0.728**, with an adjusted R^2 of **0.726**, signifying that **72.8% of the variance in organizational commitment** is explained by the four predictors. This aligns with the criteria established by Chin (1998), where R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. The result reflects a **strong predictive capacity** of the proposed model.

4.5 Measurement Model Evaluation**4.5.1 Reliability**

- **Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (pc), and Dijkstra–Henseler's rhoA** values for all constructs exceeded **0.98**, indicating **excellent internal consistency reliability**.

4.5.2 Convergent Validity

- **Average Variance Extracted (AVE)** values for all constructs were ≥ 0.873 , exceeding the recommended **0.50** threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), affirming **convergent validity**.

4.5.3 Discriminant Validity

The **HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio)** values between constructs were all **well below 0.85**, and their confidence intervals did not include 1.0, thereby confirming **discriminant validity** (Henseler et al., 2015). For instance:

- HTMT between **Communication Satisfaction and OC_Item_** = 0.708
- HTMT between **Job Insecurity and OC_Item_** = 0.160

This confirms the **constructs are distinct** in their conceptual and empirical representation.

4.6 Model Fit Indices

The **Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)** value for both saturated and estimated models was **0.013**, which is **well below the threshold of 0.08**, suggesting an **excellent model fit**.

Other fit indices:

- $d_{ULS} = 0.022$
- $d_G = 0.074$

Both were within acceptable confidence bounds, indicating **no model misspecification**.

4.7 Moderation Analysis and Interpretation

To examine whether **Work-Life Balance (WLB)** moderates the relationship between **Remote Shift (RS)** and **Organizational Commitment (OC)**, an interaction term ($RS \times WLB$) was introduced into the PLS-SEM model. The direct path from *Remote Shift* to *OC* was found to be **negative and statistically significant** ($\beta = -0.156$, $t = 4.230$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that greater remote work shifts are associated with lower organizational commitment among employees. Conversely, *Work-Life Balance* demonstrated a **strong positive effect** on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.444$, $t = 13.317$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that when employees perceive a favorable balance between their work and personal lives, their commitment to the organization significantly increases.

However, the **interaction effect** ($\beta = 0.032$, $t = 0.917$, $p = 0.359$) was found to be **statistically insignificant**, suggesting that **Work-Life Balance does not significantly moderate** the impact of Remote Shift on Organizational Commitment. In other words, the positive influence of work-life balance and the negative influence of remote work on commitment appear to operate **independently** rather than interactively.

Implications

The findings imply that while organizations can directly enhance employee commitment through initiatives that improve work-life balance, such improvements **do not alter the negative effects** of remote working conditions on commitment. This suggests the need for **separate interventions** to address challenges posed by remote work environments, such as digital fatigue, social isolation, or communication gaps. Managers should consider

targeted strategies to maintain engagement and loyalty among remote workers, parallel to work-life balance programs.

5.0 Managerial Implications

The findings of this study carry several important implications for practitioners and HR strategists in the post-COVID organizational landscape:

- **Enhancing Communication Channels:** Since communication satisfaction emerged as the strongest predictor of organizational commitment, it is essential for organizations to **foster open, transparent, and two-way communication**, particularly in hybrid or remote work settings.
- **Addressing Work-Life Balance:** The significant impact of work-life balance on commitment suggests that flexible work arrangements, mental health initiatives, and family-friendly policies should be central to employee engagement strategies.
- **Managing Remote Work Transitions:** The negative impact of remote shift indicates that **digital fatigue, reduced socialization, and lack of physical workplace culture** can lower commitment. Managers must address these challenges by improving **virtual team-building, regular check-ins, and recognition practices**.
- **Understanding Insecurity Dynamics:** Interestingly, job insecurity appears to **slightly elevate commitment**, possibly due to **continuance commitment**. While this may temporarily favor retention, such commitment may not be sustainable or healthy in the long term. Proactive talent retention and psychological safety must remain a priority.

6.0 Conclusion

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to investigate the antecedents of **Organizational Commitment (OC)**, focusing on the influence of **Communication Satisfaction, Job Insecurity, Remote Shift**, and

Work-Life Balance. The first model, without moderation, revealed that **Communication Satisfaction** ($\beta = 0.695, p < 0.001$) emerged as the strongest positive predictor of Organizational Commitment, followed by **Work-Life Balance** ($\beta = 0.433, p < 0.001$). **Job Insecurity** also exhibited a weak but significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.162, p < 0.001$), while **Remote Shift** had a **negative and significant** impact ($\beta = -0.169, p < 0.001$), indicating potential detachment from organizational values under sustained remote working conditions. The model explained **72.8%** of the variance in Organizational Commitment ($R^2 = 0.728$), signifying a robust explanatory power.

In the second model, the potential **moderating effect of Work-Life Balance on the Remote Shift → Organizational Commitment** relationship was tested. Although Work-Life Balance retained its significant direct influence on OC ($\beta = 0.444, p < 0.001$), the **interaction term (WLB × Remote Shift)** failed to reach statistical significance ($\beta = 0.032, p = 0.359$), suggesting that **Work-Life Balance does not moderate** the negative effect of remote shift on commitment. This implies that even employees with favorable work-life conditions may still experience a decline in organizational commitment if remote work challenges are not adequately addressed.

Collectively, these findings underscore the **dual necessity** of fostering **interpersonal communication** and **work-life integration** to boost employee commitment. However, the persistence of negative outcomes associated with remote work—even under high work-life balance—highlights the importance of **dedicated interventions** targeting virtual engagement, team cohesion, and organizational belongingness in remote environments.

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