



# Effects of High Work Involvement on Employees' Affective Organizational Commitment

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**Abstract:** *In the context of modern human resource management theories, the analysis of high employee work involvement and affective organizational commitment is essential for understanding the dynamics between employees and organizational performance. This paper analyzes the concepts of human resource management based on modern paradigms, such as high employee involvement and affective organizational commitment. The primary goal of the research is to examine the interaction between high work involvement and affective organizational commitment of employees. The key research question was posed in the context of the impact of high work involvement on the affective commitment of employees. The paper consists of a theoretical and an empirical segment. As part of the theoretical part, a systematic review of previous research on the topic of high work involvement and affective organizational commitment was carried out. Empirical research was conducted on a sample of 139 employees, including managers and professionals, within the IT sector in the Republic of Serbia. Data collection was carried out through an electronic questionnaire during May 2024. Data analysis was conducted using the PLS-SEM method within the Smart PLS software to test the postulated relationships. The research results indicated the existence of a direct positive influence of high work involvement on affective organizational commitment. Employees who are actively involved in decision-making and problem-solving processes showed significantly higher commitment and loyalty to the organization, which suggests that high involvement can be a key factor in improving organizational commitment.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In modern organizations, human capital is a key factor in achieving competitive advantage and long-term success. In this context, high work involvement has become an increasingly important practice that enables organizations to improve the efficiency and motivation of their employees (Bayraktar et al., 2018). This practice involves engaging employees in decision-making processes related to their work, which directly influences their level of motivation and commitment to the organization (Vance, 2006). High work involvement is increasingly recognized as a key element for improving efficiency and achieving strategic organizational goals, especially in the context of the IT sector (Jevtić & Gašić, 2024). Organizational commitment represents a key aspect of employee attitudes within an organization, relating to their positive emotions and engagement with the organization as a whole, rather than just with the job itself, as is the case with job satisfaction. This form of commitment involves a deep emotional connection employees have with the organization, manifested in their willingness to make sacrifices for its benefit. Organizational commitment goes beyond mere job satisfaction, encompassing employees' willingness to engage

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on a deeper level, often aligning their efforts with the organization's interests, which may include greater dedication, extra effort, and loyalty. Committed employees are not only satisfied with their work tasks, but this satisfaction also positively impacts their personal lives, as they feel connected to the organization's values, mission, and goals, which contributes to their overall happiness and fulfilment (Meyer & Allen, 2001). The goal of this research is to examine how high work involvement affects the affective commitment of employees in the IT sector of Serbia, with the hypothesis that high work involvement positively influences this commitment.

## 2. HIGH WORK INVOLVEMENT AND AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

The practice of high work involvement represents a managerial approach aimed at engaging employees in decision-making processes related to their work, primarily to increase their work motivation. Given the growing importance of human capital and strategic human resource management as one of the key sources of an organization's strategic capabilities, the practice of high work involvement has become a significant part of organizations (Lawler, 2003). According to Bayraktar et al. (2018), high work involvement refers to work and employment practices designed to enhance the empowerment, awareness, motivation, and skills of employees. According to Renkema et al. (2021), the practice of high employee involvement supports employee engagement in the organization's business and influences the increase in organizational commitment by appealing to intrinsic motives, developing employee competencies that support strategy implementation, thus complementing the strategic function of human resources through improving the efficiency of strategic management. Pil and MacDuffie (1996) define high-involvement jobs as a system of managerial practices that, along with employee skills, motivation, and information, result in a workforce that is a source of competitive advantage. Wright et al. (2001) discussed that researchers should explore the role of high-involvement employees in managing internal human resources and use it as a competitive advantage over time. High-involvement management is seen as a key discovery in modern management, having a profound effect on individual employee performance and the organization as a whole.

According to Bayraktar et al. (2018) the multidimensional configuration of high work involvement practices, employee involvement is observed through the lenses of recognition, empowerment, competency development, information sharing, and fair reward practices. Recognition practices have become one of the most important non-monetary forms of reward that organizations grant to employees as a means of compensating their efforts, achievements, and suggestions. Recognition practices are applied to increase employee commitment and organizational performance. Empowerment practices allow employees to make daily decisions regarding work-related activities, which enhances employee performance by generating intrinsic motivation and stimulating positive work attitudes, particularly emotional engagement (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). Competency development practices are recognized as key human resource management practices that increase commitment and, consequently, employee performance through job rotation, mentoring programs, training, and development practices (Behery, 2011). Information-sharing practices also have a positive effect on employees, as they signal that the organization trusts and values its employees (Renkema et al., 2021). Fair reward practices include considerations of fairness in compensation procedures, performance evaluations, and job assignments, signaling that the organization treats employees justly (Boxall et al., 2019).

According to Karatepe (2013) and Kilroy et al. (2016), high work involvement refers to work and employment practices designed to enhance employees' empowerment, awareness, motivation, and skills. Kim and Sung-Choon (2013) argue that the practice of high employee involvement supports their integration into the organization's operations and contributes to increased organizational commitment by appealing to intrinsic motives, fostering the development of employee

competencies that aid in strategy implementation, and thus complementing the strategic function of human resources by improving the efficiency of strategic management. From an economic perspective, high work involvement is considered the most cost-effective and efficient method of motivation, as employees are more likely to be engaged in their work when they are involved in decision-making processes, leading to a stronger sense of belonging to the organization. Lawler (2003) emphasizes employee participation in decision-making, as it increases employee commitment and satisfaction, which, in turn, positively impacts their performance and benefits the organization.

In the last two decades, the concept of organizational commitment has attracted significant attention. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) confirmed that the concept of organizational commitment has prompted numerous empirical studies that cover both its consequences and antecedents. The increased interest in the literature on organizational commitment resulted from the belief that this concept is an important part of the psychological conditions of employees, as it is believed that employees who experience high organizational commitment exhibit positive workplace behaviors, such as high job performance and engagement in activities that benefit the organization (Paré & Tremblay, 2007).

According to Paré and Tremblay (2007) and Renkema et al. (2021), organizational commitment includes three types: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective organizational commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to the organization, their identification with it, and their involvement in the organization (Kwon et al., 2010).

High work involvement practices can enhance employees' affective commitment by facilitating their participation in the organization and their connection to the employer, which is why they are considered attractive organizational practices. Employees who are committed to their organization are willing to put in extra effort to make the organization more efficient, effective, and innovative (Wright & Kehoe, 2008). Affective commitment reflects the attitude employees have towards the organization, while normative and continuance commitment reflects attitudes directed towards the outcomes of behavior (Stazyk et al., 2011). Affective commitment is crucial for employees to demonstrate discretionary behaviors, such as innovative behavior, as committed employees are more likely to stay in the organization and, therefore, more likely to reciprocate by engaging in innovative behaviors (Jafri, 2010). Thus, high work involvement practices are positively associated with affective commitment, leading to an improvement in innovative behavior. Employees with strong affective commitment stay in the organization because they want to, those with strong continuance commitment stay because they have to, and those with strong normative commitment stay because they feel they should (Renkema et al., 2021). Considering the subject and purpose of this study, as well as previous research on the topic, the primary hypothesis to be tested is:

H: High work involvement leads to positive effects on the affective organizational commitment of employees in the IT sector in Serbia.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, the sampling method will be presented, the way participants had the opportunity to respond to the questions, the timeframe for sample collection, as well as the presentation and description of the sample.

In the process of researching the effects of high work involvement on affective organizational commitment, an electronic questionnaire, "Google Forms" was used. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part included questions such as gender, age, education level, position within

the organization, organization size, market served by the organization, work experience, and work patterns within the organization. The second part of the questionnaire presented statements related to the assessment of high work involvement and affective organizational commitment. High work involvement is the independent variable, while affective organizational commitment is the dependent variable. For the purposes of the research and measurement, a Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents “strongly disagree,” 2 “disagree,” 3 “neutral,” 4 “agree,” and 5 “strongly agree” (Joshi et al., 2015). The questionnaire link was exclusively distributed to employees in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia.

The questionnaire related to the effects of high work involvement on the affective organizational commitment of employees was exclusively intended for managers and skilled workers (software engineers) in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia. The questionnaire was completed by 139 employees, including managers and skilled workers in the IT sector within the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Sample collection lasted throughout May 2024. The sample primarily consisted of a higher representation of male respondents (57.6%), younger employees aged 18 to 25 (37.4%), those with completed four-year academic studies (39.6%), and employees in the position of skilled workers – software engineers (66.9%). The sample predominantly consisted of employees in small organizations (33.8%). In the sample structure, employees’ work experience ranged from 1 to 5 years. The most dominant work pattern in the observed sample was the hybrid work model, combining work from home and office-based work (61.2%).

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To present the results of the research on the effects of high work involvement on employees’ affective organizational commitment, two statistical software programs were used: “SPSS IBM” and “Smart PLS.” The research aimed to determine the direct effect of high work involvement on employees’ affective organizational commitment. Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for the observed variables.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for observed variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
High work involvement practice	139	1,00	4,83	2,2527	0,83012
Affective organizational commitment	139	1,00	4,38	2,8467	0,61566

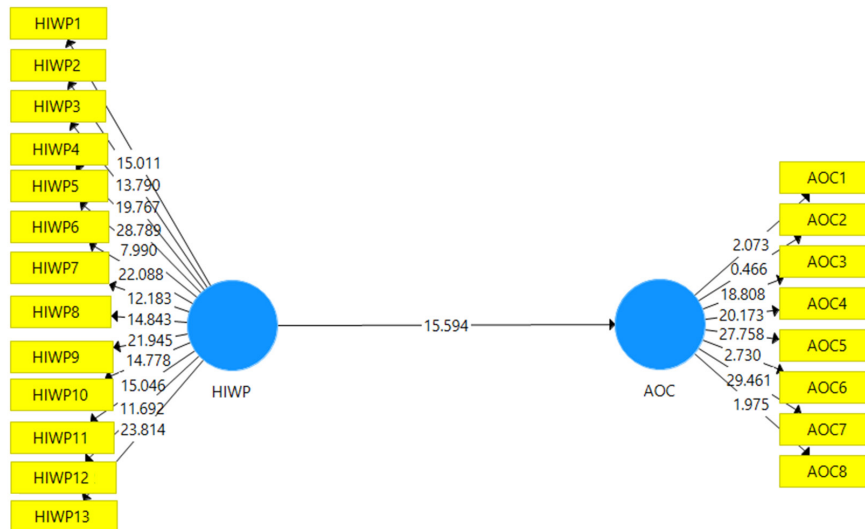
**Source:** Own research

Using the statistical software “SPSS IBM,” descriptive statistics are presented, including the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation.

Figure 1 shows the research model, which includes the two observed variables, the statements that the variables encompass, as well as the bootstrapping results.

Table 2 includes standard deviation, t-statistic, and p-value. The results obtained using the statistical software “Smart PLS” indicate a statistically significant positive effect of high work involvement on affective organizational commitment ( $\beta=0.690$ ,  $t=15.594$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that high work involvement positively impacts affective organizational commitment. Consequently, the hypothesis about the existence of a positive effect between the observed variables can be confirmed. This positive effect can be explained by the fact that high work involvement allows employees to actively participate in decision-making processes, which gives them a greater sense of control and value within the organization. Through such engagement, employees

develop a stronger emotional connection with the organization's goals and values, resulting in increased commitment and a desire to contribute to the achievement of these goals. Increased affective organizational commitment can lead to positive outcomes within the organization, such as higher work motivation, better productivity, and lower employee turnover. Employees who are emotionally connected to the organization are more likely to stay, invest their effort in their work with greater enthusiasm, and take initiative in improving organizational processes. These findings provide valuable guidance for managers in the IT sector, who can use high work involvement practices as a tool to enhance employee loyalty and engagement, which will result in better business outcomes and innovation.



**Figure 1.** The path model with bootstrapping results

Source: Own research

**Table 2.** Statistical significance testing – direct effect

	Original sample	St. deviation	T statistics	p-values	Hypothesis
High involvement work practices Affective organizational commitment	0,690	0,044	15,594	0,000	H: Accepted

Source: Own research

## 5. CONCLUSION

The research confirmed that high work involvement has a significant positive effect on employees' affective organizational commitment in the IT sector Republic of Serbia. Statistical data show that involving employees in decision-making increases their emotional connection to the organization, leading to higher engagement, loyalty, and productivity. High work involvement practices, such as empowerment, recognition of achievements, and information sharing, enhance employee motivation and reduce turnover. Employee commitment is an important form of attitude within an organization that, according to research by authors in this field, has positioned itself as a significant driver of change and a foundation for efficient and effective business operations in modern business and human resource management conditions. It focuses on individuals who, with their knowledge, abilities, and readiness for change and innovation, contribute to the organization's competitiveness. These results suggest that managers in the IT sector can use these practices to improve business outcomes and innovation.



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