

# The Influence of Employees' Organizational Commitment on Workplace Loneliness

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**Abstract:** - *The purpose of this present study was to explore the influence of organizational commitment on workplace loneliness. Data were collected from 143 respondents who worked as an employee at one Thai government bank headquarters. Modified versions of organizational commitment scale and loneliness at work scale were used for data collection. The results of multiple regression analysis indicated that affective, continuance, and normative commitment could explain 35% of variance to workplace loneliness ( $R^2 = .345$ ,  $F(3, 143) = 24.858$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Findings demonstrated that continuance commitment and normative commitment had a significantly positive impact on loneliness at work while affective commitment had a significantly negative influence on workplace loneliness. Discussions and recommendations for further studies were also discussed.*

**Keywords:** *Organizational commitment, loneliness in the workplace, employees, Thai government bank*

## Introduction

Interest in organizational commitment has increasingly been investigated in different contexts and settings for years. The concept of organization refers to work-related attitude, which employees form toward their organization. Organizational commitment reflects employee's identification and attachment with the organization and its value and goals. Employees who are highly committed to the organization may perceive themselves as a true member of the company, and ignore minor sources of dissatisfaction, and desire to remain their membership in the organization (Ebert & Griffin, 2015). Research suggested that organizational commitment can help reduce levels of absenteeism and turnover in employees (Robbin & Coulter, 2016).

Loneliness in the workplace has been acknowledged as a critical issue that causes numerous problems to the organization. The latest article in management revealed that today's organizations are currently facing workplace loneliness epidemic, which causes

a lower level of individual performance and satisfaction (Hava, 2017). Previous research suggested that a decrease of workplace loneliness may considerably enhance employee's performance (Sarpkaya, 2014). Also, recent research indicated the significantly negative association between workplace loneliness and affective commitment (Ayazlar & Güzel, 2014). Despite the prevalence of loneliness in the workplace has been highlighted comprehensively, a research attempting to examine the direct relationship between organizational commitment and workplace loneliness has still been limited. Moreover, the evidence of using three-component of organizational commitment to be a predictor variable on organizational commitment has been distracted from the literature (Yilmaz, 2008; Stoica & Brate, 2014). To fill the gap in the literature and enhance a body of knowledge in this area, this present study tends to explore the relationships between three-component of organizational commitment and workplace loneliness by focusing on banking employees in

Thailand. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the effect of banking employees' organizational commitment on loneliness at work.

### Literature Reviews

Organizational commitment is theorized based on two different viewpoints, which are behavioral perspective and attitude. The first perspective describes that organizational commitment is observable and measurable behaviors while the second perspective refers organizational commitment as attitude toward the organization (Tabanali & Korumaz, 2015). By definition, organizational commitment is defined as a degree to which employees are connected to the organization and want to remain as an organizational member (Greenberg, 2011). Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed the three-component model determined employee's degree of connection to the organization, which can be termed as affective, continuance, and normative commitment. An employee who desires to stay with the organization because of an enjoyment of membership and a satisfaction of company's goals and missions refers to *affective commitment*. If an employee desires to remain as a member in the organization because he/she realizes the social and economic costs of leaving the existing company, this refers to *continuance commitment*. If an employee feels obligated to stay with the current organization because of ethical and moral reasons, this indicates *normative commitment* (Greenberg, 2011; Aamodt, 2013).

Loneliness in the workplace is viewed as an undesired behavior that an individual experiences a lack of quality in social interaction with others (Kaymaz et al., 2014). Wright et al. (2006) described that loneliness in the workplace has been emphasized on two dimensions encompassing emotional deprivation and social companionship. Emotional deprivation alludes to the quality of interpersonal relationships in the workplace, which includes key words such as 'feel', 'isolated', 'alienated', and 'disconnected'. Social companionship refers to the scope of the sufficiency of social interaction at work, which involves with

key words such as 'sharing', 'spending time', and 'part of the group'.

Previous studies attempted to scrutinize the relationship between organizational commitment and loneliness or loneliness in the workplace. Yilmaz (2008) investigated associations between organizational commitment and loneliness and life satisfaction levels. A total of 548 school principals in Turkey were gathered by using cluster sampling technique for data collection. Findings indicated that loneliness was positively correlated to compliance levels of organizational commitment, and negatively associated with identification levels of organizational commitment. Moreover, Stoica and Brate (2014) examined relationships between resilience, organizational commitment, supervisory support and loneliness at work in a medical unit. A sample of 138 employees of a medical unit completed the questionnaire. The results of this study found that resilience and organizational commitment had an influence on workplace loneliness. This study also demonstrated that employees with lack of supervisory support had higher workplace loneliness scores than employees who received support of superiors. A similar research related to the relationship between loneliness in the workplace and organizational commitment has also been reviewed. Ayazlar and Güzel (2014) studied the impacts of workplace loneliness on employee's organizational commitment. Of 156 usable questionnaires were analyzed to examine the association between these two variables. Results of regression analysis indicated that workplace loneliness had a significantly negative impact on organizational commitment. To be more specific on each dimension of loneliness at work and each component of organizational commitment, this research found that social companionship had a significantly negative effect on affective and continuance commitment while emotional deprivation was not found a significant influence on both components of organizational commitment. However, Chan and Qiu (2011) who explored the correlation between loneliness, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of migrant workers

found no significant relationship between loneliness and organizational commitment. Although past studies tried to investigate the correlation between organizational commitment and loneliness in the workplace, the numbers of investigation were very little. In addition, the evidence of using three-component of organizational commitment to be a predictor for organizational commitment has been absent from the literature. To fill the gap in the

literature and enhance a body of knowledge in this area, this present study aimed at examining the influence of three-component of organizational commitment on loneliness in the workplace. Therefore, the research hypothesis of this present study was proposed as “three-component of organizational commitment of government bank employees has a significant effect on loneliness at work.”

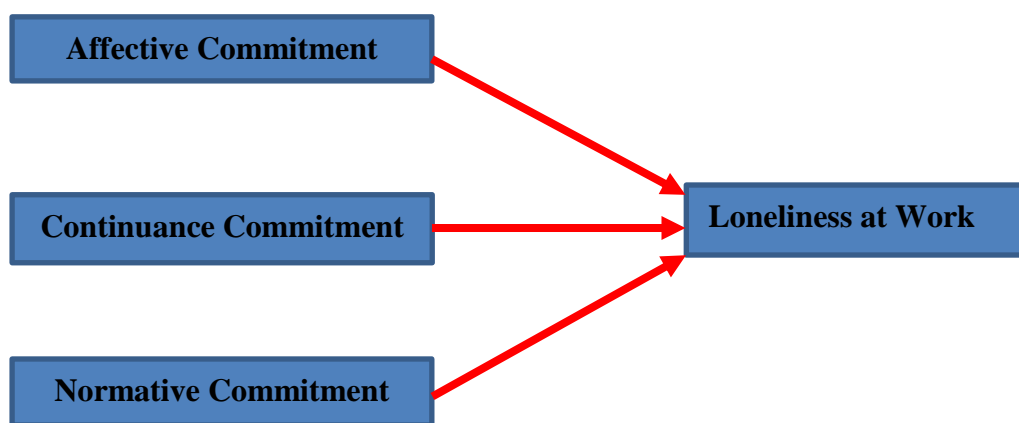


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

**Methodology**

This empirical study was conducted based on the organizational commitment theory of Meyer and Allen (1991) and concepts of workplace loneliness proposed by Wright et al. (2006). A sample of 143 respondents was participated in this present study by returning a complete questionnaire to the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of three parts including socio-demographics part, organizational commitment, and loneliness at work. Organizational commitment scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1991) was modified to a 17-item of 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly

disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to measure government bank employees’ organizational commitment. Workplace loneliness was measured by a 16-item of Loneliness at Work Scale (LWS) initially proposed by Wright et al. (2006). This scale was a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To ensure the quality of these scale measurements, validity and reliability were conducted. Table 1 exhibited the satisfactory internal consistencies of both scales in which alpha scores were greater than 0.7, according to Nunnally (1978). Multiple regression analysis was used to test research hypothesis of this present study.

Table 1 Reliability Coefficients of Three Dimensions of Organizational Commitment and Loneliness at Work

Scale Measurement	No. of Items	Alpha Score
Affective Commitment	10	0.73
Continuance Commitment	4	0.77
Normative Commitment	3	0.75
Loneliness at Work	16	0.77

**Results**

The analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents revealed that female was the majority of participants in this study (69.2%). Age between 31-40 years (56.6%) was the most frequently reported by respondents. Contributors in this study were mostly educated in an undergraduate level (58.7%). More than a half of respondents were in managing position (52.4%). Almost a half of them reported that they had work experience with this bank more than 15 years.

To ensure the suitability of using multiple regression analysis, basic assumptions were carefully checked. A normal Q-Q Plot was shaped to virtually check normality. The plot illustrated no serious departures of dependent variable, which indicated that normality assumption was met. Shapiro-Wilk test also confirmed that the sample distribution was formed like a normal curve as the p-value was greater than .05 (p=.07). The Durbin-Watson was calculated to check autocorrelation in regression data. The value of 1.627, which was between the two critical values of 1.5<d<2.5, could be assumed that there was no first order linear autocorrelation in multiple linear regression data. Multicollinearity was also checked to detect the intercorrelations among independent variables. As results of tolerance values were greater than 0.2, and variance inflation factor (VIF) were less than

10, multicollinearity was not problematic for running multiple linear regression analysis.

Next, the multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to examine the associations between three-component of organizational commitment and loneliness at work. The results revealed that affective, continuance, and normative commitment could explain 35% of variance to workplace loneliness ( $R^2 = .345$ ,  $F(3, 143) = 24.858$ ,  $p < .01$ ). As shown in Table 2, all three components of organizational commitment were significant predictors. By comparing standardized coefficient, continuance commitment ( $\beta = .536$ ) had a higher effect on workplace loneliness than affective ( $\beta = -.295$ ) and normative commitment ( $\beta = .266$ ). In short, it can be concluded that continuance commitment and normative commitment had a significantly positive impact on loneliness at work while affective commitment had a significantly negative influence on workplace loneliness. This means that the more government bank employees were affectively committed to their bank, the less they felt lonely while being at work. On the other hand, the more these employees had desires to stay with this bank because of greater costs of leaving and feeling obligated, the more likely they experienced loneliness at work. The regression equation was:

$$LWS = 2.128-.299(AFF)+.402(CON)+.178(NOR)$$

**Table 2 Multiple Regression Analysis of Organizational Commitment on Loneliness at Work**

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	2.128	.207		10.278	.000		
AFF	-.299	.101	-.295	-2.966	.004**	.475	2.105
CON	.402	.095	.536	4.230	.000**	.292	3.43
NOR	.178	.081	.266	2.190	.030*	.318	3.146
<b>n = 143</b>							
<b>F = 24.858      df = 3      p-value &lt; .01      R = .591      R<sup>2</sup> = .349      Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .335</b>							
<b>S.E = .479</b>							
<b>Durbin- Watson = 1.627</b>							

\*Significant at 0.5 level, \*\*Significant at 0.01 level.

## **Conclusion, discussions, and recommendations**

The purpose of this present study was to examine the influence of organizational commitment on workplace loneliness. The results of multiple regression analysis indicated that banking employees' organizational commitment had a significant impact on workplace loneliness. This finding was consistent with the studies of Yilmaz (2008) and Stoica and Brate (2014) who found the significant correlation between organizational commitment and loneliness. However, since this present study was the first study that used three-component of organizational commitment as predictors for workplace loneliness. Further findings needed to be addressed and described exclusively. The results of multiple regression analysis indicated that affective commitment had a significantly negative effect on loneliness at work while continuance commitment and normative commitment had a significantly positive influence on workplace loneliness. The finding of relation between affective commitment and loneliness in the workplace confirms Ayazlar and Güzel's findings in which the negative association between loneliness at work and affective commitment was found. This can be described that when banking employees feel that they want to stay with this government bank because an enjoyment of membership and a satisfaction of company's goals and missions, they should experience an adequacy of qualitative social interaction with others in the bank. That's why the relationship between these two variables was found in a negative direction. On the other hand, continuance and normative commitment were found to have a positive effect on workplace loneliness. This may be explained that banking employees who desire to stay with this government bank because of feeling obligated and ethical reason and social and economic costs of leaving the bank, may feel that they have a lot of pressures from people around them leading to establish a poor quality of interpersonal connection with the others. The more they felt the pressures or burdens for living to survival, the further they fade away from the group of their

colleagues at the bank. For research implication, this government bank should place more emphasis on the projects and activities that can help increase employees' affective commitment as this component of organizational commitment can prevent employees from workplace loneliness.

As this present study gathered data from employees who worked at the government bank headquarters solely, the future study should extend data collection to employees who work in other branches of this bank. Furthermore, as this study only focused on a government bank, the further study should place its emphasis on a private or commercial bank as well. Other predicting factors that could explain loneliness at work such as job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors should also be investigated in the future research.

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