

Does it work? Research on the Relationship between Workplace Friendship and Job Performance—the Organizational Commitment as Mediator

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Abstract. The hotel industry has flourished in China, and the turnover rate of employees has always been high. In the past, the workplace friendship and organizational commitment will not only reduce the turnover rate of employees but also improve work performance in other industries, and what is the situation in the hotel industry? This study mainly verified the relationship between workplace friendship, organizational commitment and job performance in the hotel industry. The sample was carried out in January and February of 2018 by high star hotel employees, 300 valid questionnaires were collected, and the PROCESS analysis method was used to verify the hypothesis. The results show that workplace friendships have a significant impact on organizational commitment and job performance, and organizational commitment has a significant impact on job performance, and organizational commitment also shows complementary mediating effects. The friendly workplace atmosphere will affect the performance of the employees, and then affect the hotel's operating conditions and results. According to the results of this study, we suggested that the hotel establish a good working environment and promote good friendship development in the workplace, so as to achieve work performance and organizational goals.

1. Introduction

China's hotel industry is booming. However, the employee turnover rate is still high. How can we effectively reduce it? Previous studies have found that workplace friendship is a spontaneous, informal and intimate interpersonal relationship between employees and colleagues in the workplace [1]. The positive interpersonal relationship is conducive to enhancing the emotional relationship between employees and organizations, improving job satisfaction, improving organizational performance, and effectively reducing employee turnover rate [2-3]; In addition, it was found that higher organizational commitment resulted in better job performance and lower turnover rate [4], and workplace friendship positively affected organizational commitment [5]. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to verify whether there is a mediating effect between organizational commitment and job performance to provide some academic and practical advice on employee management.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Workplace friendship and organizational commitment

Becker mentioned that high-quality workplace friendships can promote the trust of employees' organizations [6]. Nielsen, Jex, and Adams found that workplace friendship can positively influence and enhance organizational commitment [7], and Teimouri and Hamid have the same results [5]. Xie and Yang studied the relationship between workplace friendship and organizational commitment, and explored the relationship between job satisfaction and group cohesion as mediator variables, and found a positive relationship between workplace friendship and organizational commitment [8]. Above all, this study proposes the hypothesis 1.

H1: Workplace friendships have positive effects on organizational commitment.

2.2 Workplace friendship and job performance

Hackman and Lawler found that friendship opportunities could promote interaction between employees and improve work performance [9]. Barsade also suggested that colleagues through workplace friendships

can reduce each other's gap, promote cooperation and improve job performance [10]. On the other hand, it is also found that workplace friendship brings many contradictions, causes unnecessary trouble to employees, and then reduces employee performance [11]. Teimouri and Hamid suggest that the workplace friendship can also bring about office romance, gossip, and protection, so as to reduce the efficiency of [5], therefore, this study proposes the hypothesis 2.

H2: Workplace friendships have positive effects on job performance.

2.3 Workplace friendship and job performance

Previous studies show that organizational commitment is positively related to job performance, the higher the organizational commitment will bring the better work performance [12-14]; Fu and Zhang's studies found that organizational commitment and job performance have a positive impact, and the organization with high commitment will have higher work performance [15], Ma, Wang, and Xing considered organizational commitments has a positive impact on job performance [16]. Above all, this study proposes the hypothesis 3.

H3: Workplace friendships have positive effects on job performance.

2.4 Dimensions related research

Previous studies suggest that workplace dependence increases collective effectiveness [17], and Gorgievski and Hobfoll find that workplace dependence will motivate employees to accomplish organizational tasks and show better work behavior, thus improving their professionalism [18], Hou and Fan found that employees' sense of belonging in the organization can promote their positive behavior [19], Xu and Wu found that good workplace friendship will enhance the exchange opportunities for employees in the workplace, when there is a friendship between the members of the organization, it will make the individual develop emotional support, form unity and lead to the identity and sense of belonging of the individual to the organization [20]. Therefore, proposes the hypothesis 4.

H4: Organizational commitment has a mediating effect on workplace friendships and job performance.

3. Research Methods

This study cites and modifies the workplace friendship scale of Sun and Jiao [21], the organizational commitment scale of Meyer and Allen [22], and the Borman and Motowidlo (1993) [23] work performance scale. Using the purposive sampling method, the employees of high star hotels in Fuzhou city and Xiamen city of Fujian province were selected as the research objects. 100 pre-test questionnaires were carried out in December 2017. After the analysis and modification, the formal questionnaire was made, and 330 copies were formally issued between January and February in 2018, and 300 copies were effectively recovered. The analysis method uses a PROCESS approach, process 3.0 software and bootstrap to verify the hypothesis.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Convergent validity and discriminant validity

The quality of the confirmatory model analysis mainly comes from the construction validity, and the constructive validity includes two concepts, which are the convergent validity and the discriminant validity. The main purpose of convergence validity is to measure the dimensions and variables with medium correlation. According to the standards of Fornell and Larcker [24] and Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black [25], Cronbach's alpha and factor loading should be more than 0.6 to be accepted. The results showed that the workload of workplace friendship, emotional commitment, normative commitment, continuous commitment and job performance was between 0.674-0.869, and Cronbach's alpha was between 0.786-0.931, the results indicated that the five dimensions had convergence validity.

4.2 Verification analysis

The purpose of this study is to verify the mediating effect between workplace friendship and job performance and to explore the impact of emotional commitment, normative commitment and continuous commitment in organizational commitment, and the use of bootstrap 5000 times and software Process 3.0. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Regression Analysis Result

Independent Variable	Hypothesis 1	Hypothesis 2	Hypothesis 3	Hypothesis 4
Workplace Friendship	0.776*** (0.040)	0.711*** (0.037)	-	0.582*** (0.055)
Organizational Commitment	-	-	0.584*** (0.041)	0.161** (0.053)
Constant	0.979*** (0.2)	1.771*** (0.205)	2.597*** (0.220)	1.613*** (0.209)
F	379.676	367.022	199.039	193.1067
Adj-R ²	0.560	0.550	0.398	0.565
Effect	Effect size	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Total Effect	0.711	0.037	0.638	0.784
Direct Effect	0.586	0.055	0.477	0.695
Indirect Effect	0.125	0.059	0.017	0.246

Note: 1. *** $p < 0.000$, ** $p < 0.01$

2. LLCI: low limit confidence interval, ULCI: up limit confidence interval

From table 1, the path coefficient of workplace friendship to organizational commitment is 0.776, the path coefficient for work performance is 0.711, and the path coefficient of organizational commitment to work performance is 0.584, and the three of them have significant positive effects. The path coefficient of workplace friendship to organizational commitment and job performance is 0.582 and 0.161, the total effect is 0.711, the direct effect is 0.586 and the indirect effect is 0.125. The effect coefficient does not contain 0 in the confidence interval, which indicates the effect is significant, and hypothesis 4 is established. There is a partial mediator effect between organizational commitment and job performance, and the proportion of the total effect is 17.58%, while the standard of judgment proposed by Zhao, Lynch, and Chen [26] is a complementary mediator variable.

Follow up effects on emotional commitment, normative commitment, and continuous commitment was verified in the following table 2. According to table 2, it is found that the indirect effect of emotional commitment is 0.267, which has a positive effect on work performance and is a complementary mediation. The indirect effect of continuous commitment is -0.056, which has a negative effect on work performance and is a competitive mediation, and the normative commitment is not significant because the confidence interval contains 0.

Table 2 Comparative Analysis of Mediating Effect

Dependent Variable	Job performance	Emotional commitment	Normative commitment	Continuous commitment	Job performance
Workplace friendship	0.711*** (0.037)	0.897*** (0.039)	0.823*** (0.045)	0.609*** (0.069)	0.406*** (0.060)
Emotional commitment	-	-	-	-	0.298*** (0.059)
Normative commitment	-	-	-	-	0.115* (0.056)
Continuous commitment	-	-	-	-	-0.092** (0.033)
Constant	1.771*** (0.205)	0.567** (0.216)	0.863*** (0.216)	1.505*** (0.382)	1.641*** (0.198)
F	367.022	529.619	337.147	77.6549	117.489
Adj-R ²	0.552	0.640	0.531	0.208	0.614
Effect	Effect size	SE	LLCI	ULCI	
Total Effect	0.711	0.037	0.638	0.784	
Direct Effect	0.406	0.060	0.288	0.524	

Cont. to Table 2					
Indirect Effect - emotional commitment	0.267	0.074	0.126	0.419	
Indirect Effect - normative commitment	0.095	0.069	-0.043	0.227	
Indirect Effect - continuous commitment	-0.056	0.023	-0.106	-0.014	
Difference of effect	Emotiona - normative	0.180	0.118	-0.045	0.418
	Emotional - continuous	0.338	0.081	0.181	0.502
	Normative - continuous	0.157	0.803	-0.009	0.319

Note: 1. *** $p < 0.000$, ** $p < 0.01$

2. *LLCI*: low limit confidence interval, *ULCI*: up limit confidence interval

5. Conclusion

This study shows that the organizational commitment between in-service friendship and job performance has a mediating effect. The results show that the hypotheses are all established, and the results are the same as those of the past. In addition, we found that emotional commitment has a complementary mediation effect, normative commitment without mediation effect, continuous commitment is a competitive mediation effect, and the mediation effect of emotional and continuous commitment has significant differences. In the hotel industry, the workplace environment and atmosphere have become an important factor in reducing the loss of talent and improving the performance of the work. When the employees are deeply involved in the organization, the workers in the workplace get along well, and the turnover intention will be reduced, and then the job performance will be improved. The follow-up study found that the effect of emotional commitment intermediary was significant, and that the normative commitment was not significant, and that the obligation and commitment of the hotel staff to the organization did not affect the work performance. Continuous commitment refers to the resources and benefits that employees have invested in the organization. This study finds that the continuous commitment is a negative impact. We suggest that management organizations should create friendly workplace environment and welfare policies, and to promote and stimulate employees' sense of mission and centripetal activity to the company, or to carry out training activities, so that employees can be emotionally supported, skilled and able to improve and grow, and improve their work performance.

6. References

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