



## Job Conditions Mediating the Relationship between Commitment to Managers and Company and Employee Innovation

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### Abstract

*Previous research on job conditions, commitment to managers and company, employee innovation have been done standard employee of hotel industry. Empirical research need to be done on non-standard employees (students) of the hotel who are actively participating in the achieving organization goals. Therefore, this research has aim to test the mediating impact of job conditions between commitment to managers and company and employee innovation. In this study, we have taken response on structured questionnaire from 135 hospitality students of three important education institutes of India. These all students were pursuing either undergraduate program or post graduate program and have completed at least two industrial training in five star hotels for six months. Data were collected through structured questionnaire containing structured scales of commitment to managers & company, job conditions, and employee innovation. Reliability and validity was tested then proposed relationships were being tested by deploying series of separate hierarchical regression analyses. Baron and Kenny's guidelines have been used to test proposed mediation hypothesis. Findings are consistent with standard employee of previous studies. This study showed that all three latent variable (Commitment to managers, Job conditions, and employee innovation, are having positive correlation among themselves. As per Baron and Kenny's guidelines job conditions completely mediates the relationship between commitment to managers and company and employee innovation.*

*This study acknowledges certain limitations. First, this study has cross-sectional survey design, therefore cause and effect relationship cannot be established. Second limitation due to students as respondents, other nonstandard employee of hotel has not been included in the study. Hotel industry can make liquid workforce proactive by improving their commitment to manager and company, job conditions, and personal benefits. Hotel managers should focus on job conditions in order to enhance the impact of commitment to manager and company on employee innovation.*

**Keywords:** Student nonstandard employee, Hotel Industry, commitment to manager & company, job conditions, and employee innovation.

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### Introduction

Service sector is being considered as a prime sector for India's economic growth. In the last 15 years Indian hospitality is growing very fast due to increase in domestic travel, innovation in industry offerings, and government support for infrastructure development, 49 % Foreign direct investment (FDI) in civil aviation sector, increasing number of internet users, ever increasing connectivity with domestic and international destination, emerging of new customer segment (baby boomers, double income no kids), new forms of tourism (MICE, Medical, Health), industry

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loyalty programs and promotions are significantly contributing in the development of hospitality industry in India (National skill development corporation, 2017). This industry has immense opportunity in India but some hurdles have been acknowledged by experts such as high growth rate with little increase employee productivity (Hiemstra, 1990), supply and demand of rooms in all seasons (CII, 2012), employee turnover, and low wages etc. (Denvir & McMahon, 1992) mention that in order to deal with these challenges, industry need to make more appropriate and flexible job conditions for employee innovation.

In today's era of global competitiveness, earning employee commitment is a desire for every organization in order to get expected outcome from their employees. Those days are gone, when employee used to work for one or two employers in their entire careers. In present era, employees leave their commitment as soon as they get better opportunity in the market (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Today's volatile employment conditions have increased the level of ambiguity regarding what employees can expect and what they want from the employment relationship (Arthur et al., 2005). In all sectors, financial performance of the organization is determined by employee participation and commitment (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2000). Human resource of any organization plays very vital role for competitiveness, survival, and creation of positive image in client's mind (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017). An employee's dedication, emotional investment, continuous commitment to the organization is the pivotal factor for long term survival of the organization (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). Vance (2006) stated that highly engaged and committed employees give competitive advantage to their organization by increasing productivity and decreasing employee turnover.

In tourism and hospitality industry, employee personality is recognised as most important predictor of employee performance and more emphasis being given on job position and human values because human values are predictor of level of commitment and motivation (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017). In order to determine hotel industry success, use of liquid knowledge workers, employee commitment and employee proactivity are very crucial aspects. Committed and proactive nonstandard employee/ liquid workforce may help to deliver services beyond the customer expectations.

Hotel employees who have positive perception about training, development, recruitment and selection policies of their organization are found to have positive and significant affective commitment towards their organization. Training and development practises, performance appraisals, hiring practices, and communication contribute affective commitment but training and development contribute highest among all of them (Nassar, 2017). Hotel employees' attitude and behaviour can be shaped by implanting employee oriented human resource management practices. Good HRM practices help in building an environment in which employee show cooperation and coordination in order to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, there is a close relationship between employee commitment and HRM practices (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003).

### **Hospitality industry in India**

Hospitality is all about being kind, welcoming and looking after the basic needs of human beings, mainly in relation to food, drink and accommodation. Hospitality industry comprises of four important areas like travelling, lodging, food service and recreation and its demand for huge skilled, semiskilled and unskilled manpower in order to create memorable customer experiences. Ministry of tourism, India (2012) has conducted research for the assessing the requirement of manpower in hospitality sector which says that Gross annual demand of employees in the hospitality sector has crossed 500,000 in 2009 – 10 and is likely to grow to almost 920,000 in 2021 – 22. The total employment is likely to increase to 76 lakhs by March, 2022.

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Accommodation units will have the largest number of employees at over 44 lakhs, followed by eating outlets at 24 lakhs. Medical wellness is also likely to become a substantial employer, with a little over 600,000. Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage service are contributing highest percentage in any hotel workforce followed by security and administration. Managerial staff contributes least. India presently has an estimated 114,000 hotel rooms spread across various hotel categories. This is around 150,000 rooms short from what is required. (Hospitality Insight, CII, 2012). There is a huge gap between demand and supply of manpower in Indian hospitality industry due to inappropriate training infrastructure, high growth rate increases the demand for manpower, high attrition rate. The academic inputs are focusing on operational aspects not on building management competencies such as developing national and international brand, cost management, and building brand equity. Therefore, these hospitality graduates are not able to see career opportunities beyond the four major functions (housekeeping, food production, food and beverage service, and front office) of this industry Jauhari (2006).

**Student as liquid knowledge worker in hotel industry**

For last many years, training and skill development are the key challenges of hospitality industry in order to delight the customer and it will remain the area of concern because new generation of employees are coming and industry has very high turnover (Davidson et al. 2011). Role overload has positive impact on employee innovation and role ambiguity and role conflict have inverse impact on employee innovation. Role overload and employee innovation relationship is mediated by quality of relationship between employee and employer (Montani et al., (2017). Walsh, (2016) stated that career based job features (challenging work, learning), trusting relationship with customers and extrinsic rewards having positive impact on employee commitment and motivation. Human resource plays very vital role for competitiveness, survival, creation of positive image in client's mind. Therefore, human resource department should focus on human values and job position during the final selection because human values determine the level of commitment and motivation (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017).

In order to become a good hospitality professional, Chung, K. Y. (2000) found fundamentals of Marketing Management, Hotel management, foreign language basics, accounting, finance, f & b service, communication, hotel administration, hotel engineering and room division management, are found most important subjects and hospitality students have to acquire certain skills such as ability to innovate, commitment to work, ability to understand market trends, ability to understand financial operations, customer service orientation and global exposure but Indian hospitality institutes are not sufficient to imbibe these skills in their students due to out-dated curriculum, teaching methodology and inefficient faculty in teaching management aspect of this industry Jauhari (2006). Industrial training provides an opportunity to know and acquire job competencies. It can be used as a tool to equip necessary managerial competencies in students. Indian hotels are not providing quality industrial training. Therefore, duration and content of training need to be upgraded in order to produce industry relevant, brand ambassadors, committed and motivated workforce for this industry (Jauhari, 2006).

Use of hospitality student as a liquid workforce is a win - win situation for both. Industry need relevant workforce to delight its customer but student do not have appropriate amount of knowledge and skill because educational institutes are training only for operational competencies not for managerial competencies in Indian private and public hospitality education institutes Jauhari (2006). For hotel industry, liquid knowledge workers may help to reduced employment cost Kalleberg et al., (2000) adjustment in size as per the fluctuations in the market Kalleberg et al., (1997) to expand work force Worland & Wilson (1988).

Indian hospitality industry is having weak market conditions. It is characterized by excess labour, lack of minimum wage rate, a bureaucratic organization structure, long working hours, etc. (Jauhari (2006)). Weak marketing condition will not create workable climate for liquid workforce. Reskin and Hudson, 2000 named nonstandard jobs as bad jobs due to certain characteristics like less compensation, no health insurance, no job security, lack of protections from unions and labour laws (Ferber and Waldfogel 1996; Kalleberg et al. 1997; Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 1999) even they have similar personal characteristics and education qualification. Therefore, policy makers have to rethink about the policy of nonstandard employment/liquid knowledge workers benefits such as health insurance and employee rights etc (Kalleberg et al., 2000). Broschaket. al., (2008) stated interestingly that after retaining contingent workforce/nonstandard workforce, managers should not expect any incremental change in productivity, commitment and helping behaviour.

Despite many positive aspect of liquid knowledge workers, it may have certain negative such as negative social psychological reactions among supervisors, peers, and work groups Broschak & Davis-Blake (2006) and able to create pressure groups Olsen (2006). These effects are more visible on those employees who are at lower positions in organizational hierarchy than who are at higher in hierarchy. But students are considered as special case of liquid knowledge workers. Connelly & Gallagher (2004) stated that contingent work is a multidimensional concept. It has many difference in contract terms and also differences in their job. In literature nonstandard employee and liquid work force has been used interchangeably.

The present study advances research and practice in several ways. First, it contributes the literature on commitment to manager and company, job conditions and employee innovation in the hospitality (student as nonstandard employee) context. This area has the potential to improve employee innovation with the help of nonstandard employee. Second, this study concludes that employee commitment is important for employee innovative work behaviour but this relationship can be mediated by good job conditions. To the best of our knowledge, the present studies examine how good job conditions mediate the relationship between employee commitment and employee innovation.

The paper is structured as follows. The next section discusses arguments leading to the hypothesis. The method and results section presents detail about the sample study, the measures used in the study and the data analysis performed. The final section discusses the main findings, the implications of the results for both theory and practice, the limitation of the research and the direction for the future research.

### Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Mediating the role of job conditions in the relationship between commitment to managers and company and employee innovation (innovative work behaviour at work place)

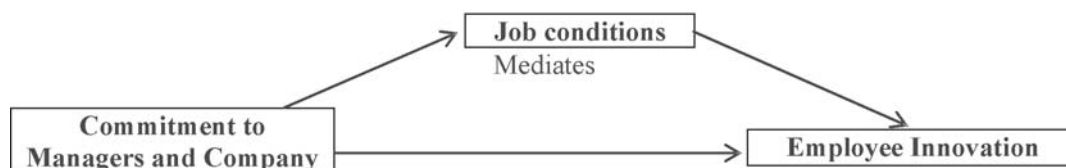


Figure: 1 Conceptual model

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Service organizations can build stronger organization commitment and reduce intention to quit by providing job features important to their careers. The job features could be opportunities to perform challenging work, experience trusting relationships with customers/clients, and obtain extrinsic rewards (Walsh, 2016). Employee career oriented job conditions may be useful to get employee innovative work behaviour at workplace. Conventional human resources theories, developed some 50 years ago by Maslow and Herzberg, suggest that satisfied employees tend to be more productive, creative and committed to their employers. The success of productivity improvement strategy is dependent on employee commitment, job satisfaction, skills, and motivation. Job satisfaction and organization commitment found the strongest predictor of intention to quit (Cohen et al., 1991). If employees are planning to quit the organization then they may not be willing to contribute meaningfully in order to enhance the growth of an organization. Job conditions like departmental cooperation, skill utilization, task significance, job security, job involvement, task clarity and staff support are able to differentiate the employee commitment in low, medium, and high levels (Cohen et al., 1991). High level commitment is necessary to get innovative work behaviour from employees. Then, organizations need to provide best work place to work for getting innovative performance from their employees. Hsu and Chen, (2015) found that organization innovation climate is most effective predictor of creativity and organization innovation. Their study results showed that positive psychological capital fully mediates the relationship of organization innovation climate and organization innovation. A good job condition helps to develop positive organization behaviour which may lead to organization innovation.

Organization behaviour research has summarized that employee becomes more committed to company and managers, when they are getting good job conditions for performing job. Good job conditions includes authentic leadership (Zhou et al., 2014; Deleghach et. al, 2017), relations with supervisors and social involvement (Fukami et. al., 1984), labour-management relationship climate, job satisfaction and company tenure (Kim & Rowley, 2006), supportive HRM environment practices (open communication, empowerment, participation, investment in employee development) (Rubel et. al., 2017), positive work experiences (Meyer et. al 1998), decision making quality (Joe,2010), managerial coaching, role clarity, and satisfaction with work have (kim, 2014). Committed employees perform their job beyond the expectations of an organization. Person organization fit predicts job satisfaction and organization commitment (Cho, 2017). Job self-efficacy is as important as organizational commitment, because they are both critical to great performance (e.g., Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Employee commitment has positive impact on customer, supplier, internal integration and organisation's performance. Internal integration leads to better supplier management, customer integration and improved organisation's performance (Hooshangi et al., 2017; Alfalla-Luque et. al, 2015).

Human resource management (HRM) has a role in generating new knowledge, motivating employees, and supporting the hotel to gain a sustainable competitive advantage over other firms (Bae& Lawler, 2000). Good job conditions helps to earn employee commitment and build confidence about the capability for performing job. Human resource (HR) practices such as job satisfaction, employee commitment, workplace friendship and team culture have been noted to be promoting and regulating employees' behaviour (Swart and Kinnie, 2003). HR practices have been found to be associated with employees' pro-social behaviour (Cetin et al., 2012). Employee commitment, workplace friendship and team culture predicts knowledge sharing in service firms (Boateng et al., 2017). Knowledge sharing and employee innovation both are positively related, creative self-efficacy mediates the relationship between knowledge and employee innovation and job satisfaction makes stronger the relationship between creative self-efficacy employee innovation (Hu and Zhao, 2016). Pro social behaviour leads to knowledge sharing and knowledge sharing leads to employee innovation. Learning strategies mediates the relationship job design and employee innovation process (Gao et al., 2011).

Employee innovation is essential for organization innovation, especially in service firms (Li & Hsu, 2016). Employee behaviour at work place is critical factor in order to keep an organization competitive and affluent. Job autonomy and time pressure has positive influence on innovative work behaviour (De Spiegelaere et al., 2015). There are various factors which has positive influence on employee innovation such as employee's problem solving network (Grosser et al., 2017), role overload and employee innovation relationship is mediated by quality of relationship between employee and employer (Montani et al., (2017), individual performance related pay weakens the relationship task – level job resources like learning opportunities and employee innovative work behaviour but this relationship become more strong, when individual and collective performance related aligned with pay (De Spiegelaere et al., 2016), managerial support was the most proximal contextual influence on innovative behavior and mediated the effect of organizational support and national culture (Lukes et al., 2017), Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between psychological climate for creativity and work performance (Yee et al., 2014).

H1. Job condition mediates the positive influence of commitment to manager and company on employee innovation (innovative work behaviour)

H1a There is no significant relationship between commitment to managers and company and job conditions

H1b There is no significant relationship between commitment to managers and company and employee innovation (Innovative work behaviour)

H1c There is no significant relationship between job conditions and employee innovation (innovative work behaviour)

H1d There is significant relationship between commitment to managers and company and employee innovation (Innovative work behaviour) in the presence of mediating variable job conditions.

## **Method**

### ***Sample and data collection***

This research is conducted on hospitality students who are studying in their final year at various private and government education institutes of India. We used printed questionnaire to collect the primary data and these questionnaires were collected from the students in the presence of faculty members of that particular institute. We administered survey questionnaires directly to students while industry report presentation at their teaching institute for 5-6 days in three education institute of India. In survey, questions were asked related to basic demographic and attitude toward the reasons for loyalty and employee proactivity in the organization. While collecting the questionnaire from students, it was ensured that students understand the purpose of study for getting the appropriate and honest response. Participants (students) who have completed at least two six months training in five star hotels in India and prepared to join hospitality industry in coming next six months. The 150 questionnaires were distributed at three prestigious education institutes (Lovely Professional University, Institute of Hotel Management, New Delhi, and Punjab University) but 135 questionnaires were selected successfully for the study. In order to understand the overall industry training experience, we had interacted with 35 students of all three education institutes.

All 135 participants are below 25 ages. Out of 135 students, 93 (68.9%) male students and 42 (31.1%) female students have given their response. These all students have completed their training in five star hotels in all four major departments like front office, housekeeping, food production, and food and beverage services department across 15 states of India. 54 (40%)

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undergraduate students and 81 (61%) post graduate students have participated in this survey. 120 (88.9 %) undergraduate and post graduate students believe that market is having full of opportunity for hospitality students but 15 (11.1%) students are not optimistic about the availability of opportunities in the market.

### **Measures**

Specific scales have been used to obtain responses from respondents. Detail information about various scales mention below along with cronbach's alpha results.

#### ***Commitment to manager and company***

To measure commitment to manager and company, we adopted Ineson et al. (2013) five items scale. A sample item of this scale is "I enjoy good communications with my managers". The scale has shown an internal consistency (alpha) reliability of .95 in this study.

#### ***Employee innovation***

Innovative work behaviour is measured using six items scale developed by Dhar&Dhar (2009). A sample item of the scale is "People are able to generate new ideas and put them into practice". The reliability (Alpha) of this six item scale is .92.

#### ***Task significance***

Innovative work behaviour is measured using six items scale developed by Dhar&Dhar (2009). A sample item of the scale is "I find similarities in my values and the organization's values". The reliability (Alpha) of this six item scale is .92.

#### ***Personal benefits***

To measure personal benefits, we adopted Ineson et al. (2013) four items scale. A sample item of this scale is "The salary offered is good". The scale has shown an internal consistency (alpha) reliability of .91 in this study.

#### ***Job conditions***

To measure job conditions, we adopted Ineson et al. (2013) five items scale. A sample item of this scale is "I receive good training with this company". The scale has shown an internal consistency (alpha) reliability of .95 in this study.

#### ***Control variable***

We have used four control variables in our study such as gender, education and market opportunity and training department. Gender is measured as categorical variable coded as 1 for male and 2 for female. These all students are pursuing either post graduate or undergraduate course. So education is measured as dichotomous variable coded 1 for undergraduate and 2 for post graduate and availability of market opportunity is also measured as categorical variable coded as 1 for Yes and 2 for No.

We have also controlled training department of students. Previous research has mentioned training department of student may change the perception of students due to different working culture, work load, and different timings. So students training department measured as categorical variable coded for 1 if student did entire training in one department, coded 2 if student did training in two departments, coded 3, if student completed training in 3 department and coded 4, if student has done training in all four major departments (Housekeeping, Front Office, Food & beverage service, and Food production) of hotel.

## Analysis Strategy

### Mediation through regression

**Table 1: Inter-construct correlations**

	Employee Innovation	Job conditions	Commitment to company and managers
Employee Innovation	1		
Job conditions	.890**	1	
Commitment to company and managers	.824**	.861**	1

## Results

### Hypothesis Testing

We have used hierarchical multiple regression analysis to test our hypothesis. All regression analysis has been performed by using SPSS 20. Hypothesis 1 stated that job conditions mediate the relationship for commitment to company and managers with employee innovation. As per Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation guidelines, there are four necessary conditions: (1) the independent and mediating variables must be significantly related; (2) the independent and dependent variable must be significantly related; (3) the mediator and dependent variable must be significantly related; and (4) the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable should be non-significant or weaker when the mediator is present.

The regression results for testing mediation are present in Table 2.

**Table 2: Regression Results for Testing Mediation**

Commitment to managers and company	Employee innovation			Job conditions (Mediator)		
	Step -1	Step - 2	Step -3	Step - 1	Step - 2	Step -3
	.82**					
			.22			.69**
Employee Innovation					.89**	
N = 135; **p < .01						

Results in Table 2 show that, commitment to managers and company is positively associated with job conditions ( $\beta = .69$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Thus condition 1 is supported. Commitment to company and managers is positively related with employee innovation ( $\beta = .82$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Thus, Second condition for mediation is supported. Job conditions and employee innovation have significant positive relationship ( $\beta = .89$ ,  $p < .01$ ) which supports third condition for mediation. Further, results show that after job conditions is taken into account, the effects of commitment to company and manager became weaker, and insignificant, which suggest that job conditions completely mediates the relationship of commitment to company and managers with employee innovation.

## **Discussion**

### ***Theoretical contributions***

This study significantly contributes to existing literature. First, the study enhances our knowledge about the nonstandard employee (students) behaviour and attitude. The relationship between commitment to company and managers and employee innovation and job conditions mediates this relationship. Commitment to company and managers act as antecedents of employee innovation. Managerial support was the most proximal contextual influence on innovative behavior and mediated the effect of organizational support and national culture (Lukes et al., 2017). The mediating effect of job conditions on commitment to company and managers - outcome relationship contributes to the literature by showing the committed employee may show innovative work behaviour, if they perceive good job conditions. Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between psychological climate for creativity and work performance (Yee et al., 2014).

Second, the study has significant contribution in term of its unique sample. Examining the process of workplace motivation in hotel's non-standard employees (hospitality students) who can play very vital role in managing workplace fluctuations. There are many studies which have examined the workplace innovative behaviour but limited studies made an attempt to examine the behaviour of non-standard employees (hospitality students). The results of study exhibit that committed employees to company and managers how it influences innovative work behaviour while taking into the considerations job conditions perceptions.

### ***Practical implication***

This study acknowledges certain important managerial implications. The relationship among employee commitment to company and managers, employee innovation and perception about job conditions can play very vital role in motivating employee for innovative work behaviour. Previous research has highlighted that employee commitment has positive influence on employee performance at work place. Many hotels today face competitive and rapidly changing operating environments because of changes in labor markets, advancement in technology, globalization, and regulation. They, therefore, need to find a way to gain a competitive advantage in these dynamic markets. Hotels' success now depends on their ability to continuously improve their performance and, at the same time, reduce operating costs (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003). One of the significant challenges modern organizations and leaders face is the limited commitment of employees to their organizations (Delegach et. al, 2017). Hotel managers should improve managerial support (Lukes et al., 2017), psychological climate for creativity (Yee et al., 2014), Managerial coaching, role clarity, and satisfaction with work have (Kim, 2014), job involvement (Barling et al., 1990), Relations with supervisors and social involvement (Fukami et al., 1984), decision making quality (Joe, 2010), performance related pay like learning opportunities (De Spiegelaere et al., 2016), employee-management relationship climate (Kim & Rowley, 2006), provide supportive HRM environment (open communication, empowerment, participation, investment in employee development (Rubel et. al., 2017), positive work experiences (Meyer et. al 1998). These all practices will help hotel managers to earn commitment of nonstandard employees. This employee's commitment for company and managers will lead to positive organizational outcomes such as innovative work behaviour at work place. Satisfaction with pay makes employee more committed to their careers (Walsh, K. 2016). Organizations expectations from employee are keep on changing in dynamic environment. Therefore, to competitive environment, organizations need to go beyond the general commitment in order to achieve more specific organizational goals (Delegach et. al, 2017).

### **Limitation and Future Research Directions**

The results of this study cannot be generalized because this sample is not true representative of student as nonstandard employee in Indian service organization. In future student of different service industry like hospital, telecom and other can be taken for further study. In this is conducted only on the hospitality student of three educational institutes. Therefore, in future study can be done on all students who are studying in various educational institute of India. However, the scope of the study is limited to only student as nonstandard employee. So interestingly, this study can be extended to other nonstandard employee of hospitality industry and comparison can be done between student as nonstandard employee and nonstandard employee.

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