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## IMPACT OF CONTINGENT PUNISHMENTS ON AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MOTIVATION

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Contingent Punishment, Affective Commitment, Motivation and Higher Education	The credibility of higher educational institutions is squarely anchored on different dynamic forces in which workforces' commitment is leading and most influential factor. The committed and emotionally engaged workforces are considered as building blocks for institutional survival and ultimate development. However, the workforces' commitment and engagement can be daunted by varied changing aspects in which leader traits and institutional practices are foremost in affecting workforces' attitude. In this connection, two aspects are critical in affecting workers' behavior in which contingent reward and punishment are notable. This study aimed at exploring the impact of contingent punishments on the workforces' commitment. This study aimed to examine mediating role of motivation in connection amid contingent punishments and effective commitment. Data was collected from workforces in hailing from higher institution, KP, Pakistan and was analyzed through different statistical procedures. The study offers valuable information about relationships among the research variables.

### INTRODUCTION

The higher education institutions need highly committed, motivated and satisfied workforces to achieve their high valued tasks in contemporary competitive surroundings. The institutions over certain well-concerted efforts can develop workforces' commitment to retain them in the most economical markets to attain sustainable edge (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006). In the modern age of globalization and technological advancement, institutions are required to put their stress more on possessing committed employees to withstand the journey towards sustainable change (Omari, Qablan & Khasawneh, 2008). In this drive, the workforces' inspiration and motivation towards realization of institutional vision and mission over contingent rewards are vital for the leaders in shaping the attitude and behavior of workforces (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010). However, contingent punishments are measured as deterministic tool in building workforces' attitude in caustic manner. Workforces, in turn, avoid their tasks to perform wholeheartedly

which eventually impedes the commitment of concerned workforces towards the institutions (Rehman, Shareef, Mahmood & Ishaque, 2012).

The workforces' commitment can be influenced by different undesirable eventualities which workforces under no circumstances expect from leadership and institutional management. However, it is somehow difficult to distract the effective commitment of the workforces since it is considered as emotional attachment of individuals/employees with concerned institution which cannot be rated at any cost (Irfan, Nawaz, Farhat & Naseem, 2014). When workforces feel discriminations at workplaces in resources distribution and privileges thereby perceiving that rewards are not as per required criteria and which is further reinforced by the punitive behavior of the concerned leadership in the institution (Irfan & Nawaz, 2016). Resultantly, workforces' behavior gets scattered due to which individuals' affiliations with the institution becomes at stake (Silva & Mendis, 2017). In these situation, it is only the phenomenon of the motivation which can play the facilitating role in shaping behavior of individuals through continuous motivation and inspiration of the individuals towards the visions and mission of the institution (Ekaterina, Roman, Maria & Remiao & Teixeira, 2018).

### **Problem Statement/ Rationale**

The problem addressed in this research is aimed at examining facilitating role of motivation in the relationship between contingent punishment and affective commitment. This research is conducted in higher institutional context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan wherein during past decades, there is persistent lack of the committed and motivated workforces and wherein there is persistent use of transactional traits (rigid behavior) of leadership over the practices of the contingent punishments. As per existing research, this rigid behavior not only affects the performance and commitment of the concerned workforces rather it also affects the working potential as well as the working format at workplaces in the institutions.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In higher institutions, the leader uses different motivational techniques to inspire workforces towards higher performances. In this regard, contingent punishments on the part of leader is most critical tool for inspiring workforces towards the task achievements (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Thus, punishments are used as motivational tool by leaders however, this technique on the continuous basis is expected to influence job performances, job satisfaction and affective commitment of workforces (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008). The employees' commitment is most vital instrument used by leaders to motivate their followers towards vision and mission of concerned institutions. Emotionally committed workforces are considered as vital institutional resources and thus it works as the bridge between institutional survival and its development (Teixeira, Rocha, Biscaia & Fonseca, 2012). Thus, motivation is having been considered as vital tool to facilitate link between leaders' punitive behavior and employees' affective commitment. Thus, employees who are influenced by contingent punishments are expected to have caustic behavior towards leader and institution which can be recovered through effective motivational techniques to make them committed and enthusiastic (Munir & Zafar, 2018).

### **Contingent Punishment**

In institutional setting, punishments are considered by researchers as the emphasized decision of leader to transact certain reaction against adverse work behavior and adverse performance of workforces at the institution (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). The researchers recommend that punishments at the institutions should be commensurate with the work deficiencies and lack of interests in institutional activities. Contingent rewards are used by leaders for respectable performances while the punishments are used when workforces are not able to meet required/desired standards for the performances (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). The literature revealed that it is vital to understand the reactions of workforces as punishments require an evaluation that how punished workforces realize that what has transpired to them (Maryam, Suandi, Silong & Omar, 2013). These self-evaluation prospects help workforces in balancing their sense of possession and errands that what they are receiving and what they are delivering to the institution (Saqib, Siraj & Irfan, 2016). Various researchers proposed the self-referenced and institution-referenced mechanism for rewards and punishments by associating them with performance of concerned workforces in institutions (Silva & Mendis, 2017).

### **Affective Commitment**

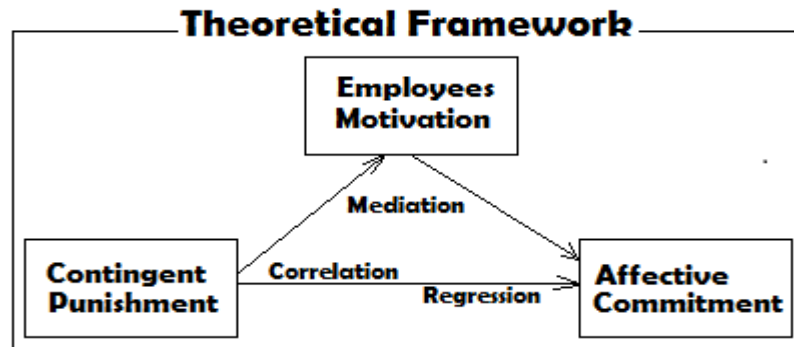
The commitment, in work environment, denotes to workforces perceived emotional bondage with concerned institutions which is theorized as multi-dimensional construct with different dimensions like affective, continuance and normative commitment (Feather & Rauter, 2004). In this regard, effective commitment is part of organizational commitment wherein workforces are psychological attached with concerned institution without the cost-benefit considerations and without the moral compulsions (Fornes, Rocco & Wollard, 2008). Thus, the psychological attachment of workforces is contingent with emotional balances regarding the norms and values of institution which are further link with specific requirements of the institution (Dogan & Aydin, 2012). Thus, institutional needs (aims & vision) and employees' efforts (enthusiasm & performance) are directly rooted toward affective commitment. The workforces, due to this bond, have strong affiliations with institutions which cannot be overawed by any lucrative prospects offered to workers (Saqib, Siraj & Irfan, 2016). This commitment is not influenced by any actions (punishment) as this commitment is willingness of workforces to exert efforts over certain motivational practices used by leaders (Thabo, Esther, Wilson, Forcheg & James, 2018; Odoardi, Battistelli, Montani & Peiró, 2019).

### **Employees Motivation**

The motivation is important phenomenon which is widely recognized as significant facilitator towards various organizational outcomes like performance, satisfaction and commitment. In this regard, in higher educational context, the workforces' motivation is considered as the most vital tool for employees' inspiration towards the institutional short term and long term desired goals (Palmer & Collins, 2006). In this connection, motivation act as driving force in shaping behavior of the individuals towards institutional norms and values. The literature revealed that motivation and contingent rewards are vital predictors of affective commitment

of the workforces while contingent punishment is considered to have undesirable impact on commitment of concerned workforces (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Both, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have significant impact on commitment level as higher motivation, greater will be commitment and better will be performance of workers (Gopal & Chowdhury, 2014). In this connection, recognition and various perks and privileges offered to workforces have been considered as vital gears towards higher emotional affiliation, greater performance and greater sense of task achievements (Mirela & Semsudin, 2017).

Figure 1 Theoretical Framework



### Research Hypotheses

This study aimed at pursuing the clear and specified hypotheses (research questions) which are explicitly supported by the problem statement and extracted from conceptual framework of the study by following the systematic procedures.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is Positive & Significant Association between the Predictors and Criterion Variable

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The Relationship between the predictor & Criterion variables is facilitated by Mediator

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of each study specifies procedures and methods for postulating different tools and techniques which are used to collect and analyze the measures for conducting the specific issue addressed in problem statement of the study through the process of postulating the testing of hypotheses by determining the extent that whether or not the hypotheses are true or otherwise (Ader, Mellenbergh & Hand, 2008). In social research, the data collection to address problem commonly requires to identify evidence type required to test the theory by evaluating methodology and to accurately define and measure the significance related to the recognizable phenomenon (Creswell & Williams, 2012).

### Philosophy & Approach

The re-examination of existing realities in native environment thereby using the statistical tools and techniques to measure these realities quantitatively by using the specific research approach are the requirements of philosophy of positivism (Nicholas & James, 2008). As this

research followed the same procedures by using the survey approach, therefore, positivism is research philosophy of this study. Besides, survey has been widely recognized as best tool for collecting views (secondary & primary) of the researchers/respondents about the issues under considerations (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Therefore, survey approach has been applied in this research study by using the questionnaire as adopted from the existing research studies.

### **Population & Sample**

The population of this study comprised of the administrative workforces working in one of the leading university of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The population study comprises the administrative workforces working in selected higher educational institution as without the support of the administrative working forces, the institutions might not be able to achieve their desired tasks in contemporary competitive environment. It is worth mentioning not to mentioning the institutional identity due the transactional behavior of the leaders. From the higher educational institution, the sample has been drawn (150) by using statistical formula recommended/endorsed by Taro Yemini (1967). The simple random technique was used and thus, total 150 questionnaires have been distributed among the workforces in wherein 142 questionnaires were re-collected.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The secondary data about problem has been collected from different available and accessible existing data while the primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire adapted from previous research studies. The questionnaire comprised of different questions about the personal characteristics of respondents and to measure the research variables. The collected data was analyzed by using different statistical tools like correlation and regression to chase the answers of research hypotheses about relationships among research variables.

### **Context & Validity Examination**

The data was collected from workforces in selected higher institution. There are many oldest and developed universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in which different workforces (teaching & non-teaching) workforces are working in different units. The employees from administration has been included in this research as these employees experienced diverse leadership traits (transformational & transactional) during past few decades. To measure variables, instrument have been adapted from various existing studies (for contingent punishment = Bass & Avoid, 1990, for effective commitment = Mayer & Allen, 1991 & for motivation = Edward & Richard, 2001) which have been validated by using the tools of the validity and reliability.

Table 1 The Reliability Statistics

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
1	Contingent Punishment	10	.782
2	Affective Commitment	10	.868
3	Employees Motivation	10	.792
4	Instrument	30	.889

Table 2 Validity Statistics (Contingent Punishment)

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Matrix	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.777	Items	Score
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	516.517	CP1	.604
	df	28	CP2	.477
	Sig.	.000	CP3	.462
	Required		CP4	.440
KMO test	= or > .7	Computed	CP5	.576
Bartlett's test	= or < .05	.754	CP6	.448
Factor Loadings	= or > .4	.000	CP8	.642
*Items with < .4 were excluded from analysis.			CP10	.615

Table 3 Validity Statistics (Employees Motivation)

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Matrix	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.754	Items	Score
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	623.756	EM1	.454
	df	21	EM2	.482
	Sig.	.000	EM3	.589
	Required	Computed	EM5	.569
KMO test	= or > .7	.754	EM7	.471
Bartlett's test	= or < .05	.000	EM8	.461
Factor Loadings	= or > .4		EM9	.712
*Items with < .4 were excluded from analysis.				

Table 4 Validity Statistics (Affective Commitment)

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Matrix	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.836	Items	Score
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	755.340	AC2	.439
	df	24	AC3	.735
	Sig.	.000	AC4	.633
	Required	Computed	AC6	.453
KMO test	= or > .7	.836	AC7	.695
Bartlett's test	= or < .05	.000	AC8	.550
Factor Loadings	= or > .4		AC9	.690
*Items with < .4 were excluded from analysis.				

The reliability (internal consistency) of the measures and validity of the instruments (items) have been examined in current section. In this regard, KMO tests provides the sample-size adequacy which is required to above (.7) while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values are required to be in range of (.05). Similarly, the item factor loading acceptable value is .4 and in present case, all the values of KMO, Bartlett and factor loading are within the required range, however, the items who have the factor loading below .4 have been excluded from the results. Therefore,

from the above results of validity and reliability, it is concluded that the data is suitable for the factor analysis.

## DATA ANALYSIS

This is the main section where the empirical results about the primary data has been produced to make the decision about the hypotheses acceptance and rejection and to validate the results of the existing research studies thereby conducting this study in a native environment. The hypotheses were mainly related with the association (correlation), cause-&-effect (regression) and mediating role of mediator (hierarchical regression) to examine the desired relationships among the research variables under study and to offer some new conclusions based upon the results obtained from this study.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is Positive & Significant Association between Predictors and Criterion Variables

Table 5 Correlation Analysis

		Motivation	Punishment
Contingent Punishments	Pearson Correlation	.564**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	140	140
Employees Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.564**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	140	140
Affective Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.661**	-.711**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002
	N	140	140

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results through correlation analysis concerning the first hypothesis (association), shows that all the research variable are significantly associated with each other. The results showed that the contingent punishments are significantly and negatively associated with the affective commitment (-.711 & .002). Employees' motivation is positively and significantly associated with affective commitment (.661 & .000) while contingent punishment is significantly and positively associated with employees' motivation (.564 & .000). Therefore, the results confirm the negative association between the contingent punishments and affective commitment but also confirms the significant association with the employees' motivation. Thus, from the results of correlation, the hypothesis # 1 is partially accepted.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The Relationship between predictor & Criterion is variables is facilitated by Mediator

Table 6 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
1	.461 <sup>a</sup>	.348	.342	82.112	.002 <sup>b</sup>
2	.512 <sup>b</sup>	.470	.458	93.026	.000 <sup>c</sup>

Table 7 Coefficient of Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.304	.385		14.584	.000
	Contingent Punishments	-.590	.071	-.461	-9.180	.002
2	(Constant)	5.263	.314		15.093	.000
	Contingent Punishments	-.348	.105	-.243	-.659	.447
	Employees Motivation	.469	.114	.386	4.097	.000

a. Independent Variable: Contingent Punishments

b. Mediating Variable: Employees Motivation c. Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

The second hypothesis was about indirect influence of employees' motivation in relationship between the contingent punishments and affective commitment. To test above relationships, multiple regression procedure was run. The first model provides the direct effect of contingent punishment of the affective commitment thereby 35% variation in affective commitment due to the contingent punishment with Beta value (-.590) and significant value (.002). However, in the second model, after the inclusion of motivation as mediator, variance has been increased to 47% with the reduction of Beta value for contingent punishment from (-.590 to -.348) and further the significant value (.002) remained insignificant (.447). The above changes in model # 1 is due to inclusion of motivation in model # 2 which confirms that employees' motivation significantly mediate the association amid contingent punishments and affective commitment. Thus, results from hierarchical regression confirms full mediation of employees' motivation. Hence, the hypothesis # 2 is accepted and substantiated.

## DISCUSSION

The higher education institutions are widely recognized to play significant role in providing competent and committed workforces to different sector of economies (Cullen, Joyce, Hassall & Broadbent, 2003). These institutions might only be able to perform these responsibilities more efficiently and effectively when they possess committed workforces (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006). In this connection, there are certain factors which can affect the commitment level of workforces in the higher institutions among which the contingent punishment is the most critical factor (Park & Rainey, 2008). The contingent punishment is widely recognized to have negative influence on affective commitment of the workforces (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Still, this influence can be managed effectively when motivation on part of institutional leaders towards their workforces is active and dynamic (Raza & Nawaz, 2011). The leaders use both contingent rewards and punishments to inspire workforces that the institutional affective vision is only be possible over the affective participation of the workforces in the institutional activities (Maryam, Suandi, Silong & Omar, 2013).

Though, as per the existing research, commitment boosts the performance of the employees positively while the contingent punishments effect the performances of concerned employees



negatively. The same are the results as extracted from the findings of the present study thereby conducting the field survey. Therefore, the leaders' persistent attitude towards punishing their employees are expected to influence their commitment on huge scale (Apaka & Sefer, 2015). Consequently, these leaders can recover hole/weaknesses through the effective motivation and commitment towards their workforces (Mirela & Semsudin, 2017). The employees those who are effectively committed with the institution and those who perform their responsibilities wholeheartedly are valuable assets of the institutions and deserve only the contingent rewards (Odoardi et al., 2019). Therefore, results of this study have been validated through the results of the previous studies. Consequently, this study provides valuable and significant information in concluding study about relationships among research issues/concepts under considerations thereby validating through the existing research studies.

## CONCLUSION

The results obtained through statistical procedures provide enough information to conclude the study and to reach the judgement. The results confirmed that contingent punishments are critical in influencing the affective commitment of workforces by providing enough statistical relationships (correlation & regression) among both research concepts. However, motivation showed the significant facilitating role thereby providing full mediation in the relationship between contingent punishment and affective commitment. The statistical results empirically confirmed significant role of motivation in relationship between contingent punishments and affective commitment. Therefore, it is concluded that employees' emotional affiliation with the concerned institutions can be undesirably influenced by contingent punishments which are provided by concerned leadership in the institutions. Therefore, the institutional leaders are required to be more focused on the effective commitment of the employees in institutions so that, employee may perform wholeheartedly in achieving the institutional objectives.

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