

An Empirical study on Employee Recruitment Satisfaction and Organizational commitment Pre and Post Covid-19

Meharjabeen Yahya^{1*}, Dr. Vijay Agrawal²

^{1*}Research Scholar, Department of Management, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra Patna
Campus Email: meharyahya@gmail.com ORCID ID: 0009-0005-2764-4177

²Associate Professor, Department of Management, Birla Institute of Technology, Patna Campus.
Email: vagarwal@bitmesra.ac.in ORCID ID: 0000-0002-0169-8119

Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped organizational practices globally, with employee recruitment and organizational commitment among the most significantly affected domains. This empirical study investigates and compares employee recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment before and after the COVID-19 outbreak. Using a structured survey of 100 respondents and analysing data through descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and structural equation modelling (SEM), the research identifies critical patterns and predictors of employee satisfaction. The findings reveal that pre-pandemic experiences of recruitment and commitment significantly influence current satisfaction levels, more so than post-pandemic experiences. Despite moderate model fit in SEM, strong covariances between post-pandemic recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment suggest digital processes can still foster employee loyalty. No significant gender-based differences were found, indicating consistency across demographic segments. The study highlights the enduring importance of pre-pandemic organizational culture and recommends integrating those strengths into future hybrid and digital HR practices. These insights provide valuable direction for HR professionals aiming to enhance recruitment strategies and employee engagement in a post-COVID landscape.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has radically altered organizational operations worldwide, affecting every aspect of human resource management. Among the most significantly impacted domains are employee recruitment and organizational commitment. As organizations were compelled to adapt to remote work, digital onboarding, and rapid hiring adjustments, the traditional recruitment models and employee engagement practices underwent substantial changes.

Pre-pandemic recruitment processes largely relied on in-person interviews, job fairs, and formal assessment centers. Organizational commitment during that time was reinforced by physical presence, socialization, and hierarchical interactions. In contrast, the post-COVID-19 era has seen the rise of remote recruitment methods, a greater emphasis on work-life balance, and new psychological contracts between employees and employers.

This study aims to empirically analyze how employee recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment have evolved from pre- to post-COVID-19. The central research questions guiding this investigation are:

1. How has employee recruitment satisfaction changed due to the pandemic?
2. What impact has the pandemic had on organizational commitment?
3. Are there significant differences in these dimensions across different industries or employment sectors?

By examining these questions, the study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap in understanding recruitment and commitment dynamics in crisis and post-crisis contexts. The results are expected to provide meaningful insights for HR practitioners aiming to redesign recruitment strategies and reinforce employee loyalty in the new normal.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Employee Recruitment Satisfaction

Recruitment satisfaction encapsulates how prospective and newly hired employees perceive the hiring process, including communication, fairness, and organizational responsiveness. Pre-COVID recruitment largely emphasized face-to-face assessments and structured interviews, enabling more nuanced candidate evaluation and stronger interpersonal rapport (Breaugh, 2017). Candidates often formed their early organizational impressions based on the recruiter's behavior and the organization's professionalism, which in turn influenced their decision to accept offers and their early commitment levels (Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007).

During the pandemic, many organizations rapidly transitioned to digital hiring platforms. This shift brought about efficiencies in cost and time but also introduced technical barriers. According to Maurer (2020), while virtual interviews provided convenience, many candidates reported dissatisfaction due to technical glitches, lack of human touch, and reduced clarity on job roles and expectations. Guchait et al. (2021) found that the perceived fairness of online assessments and transparency of communication were significant predictors of recruitment satisfaction during the pandemic.

Kuron et al. (2022) emphasized the need for robust virtual onboarding programs. Their study revealed that new hires who underwent structured digital onboarding reported higher role clarity and integration, which in turn increased their satisfaction. They argued that recruitment satisfaction in the post-pandemic world is increasingly contingent on the digital experience's design quality and the organization's ability to provide a personalized touch remotely.

2.2 Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment, a critical predictor of employee retention and performance, includes three dimensions: affective (emotional attachment), continuance (cost-based), and normative (obligation-based) commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Pre-COVID models of commitment relied heavily on in-person socialization, career development opportunities, and visible leadership.

Carnevale and Hatak (2020) explored how organizational support during the pandemic—especially flexibility, empathy, and health safety measures—influenced affective commitment. Employees who perceived their organizations as responsive and humane during crises were more likely to maintain or even increase their emotional commitment, despite the lack of physical presence.

Conversely, the sudden shift to remote work led to social isolation and communication challenges, particularly in organizations unprepared for the digital transition. Kniffin et al. (2021) noted that while employees in knowledge-based sectors adapted relatively well, those in labor-intensive or public-facing industries experienced declines in motivation and belonging. These changes adversely impacted organizational commitment, especially in the absence of cohesive digital engagement strategies.

Moreover, Chawla et al. (2022) reported that employees who were hired during the pandemic without ever meeting colleagues in person often struggled to develop a sense of loyalty or shared purpose, which are central to affective commitment. Their research emphasized that organizational culture and commitment must now be nurtured virtually, often requiring a deliberate and continuous effort by managers.

2.3 Interrelation between Recruitment Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Numerous studies have documented the strong correlation between recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment. Allen et al. (2007) argue that early experiences during the hiring process serve as “psychological contracts” that shape an employee's expectations and perceptions. A fair, transparent, and engaging recruitment experience fosters trust, which can later evolve into deeper commitment.

Li et al. (2021) examined recruitment strategies during the COVID-19 era and found that digital recruitment platforms, when supported by real-time interaction and feedback, had a positive influence on organizational trust and engagement. Employees who experienced consistent communication from HR and hiring managers felt more aligned with the organization's goals, despite the remote environment.

In a cross-industry study, Gupta and Pathak (2022) highlighted the importance of empathy and responsiveness during recruitment. They found that organizations that acknowledged the personal and professional disruptions candidates faced during the pandemic—by offering flexible joining dates, mental health support, or hybrid options—reported higher post-hire commitment levels among their employees.

These insights point to a strong, evolving relationship between recruitment experiences and long-term organizational attachment, especially in contexts disrupted by external crises such as COVID-19. Thus, enhancing recruitment satisfaction becomes not just a hiring metric but a strategic tool for cultivating resilient and committed workforces.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This empirical study adopted a **quantitative, comparative design** to explore the relationship between employee recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. A cross-sectional survey approach was used, supplemented with structural equation modeling (SEM) to validate latent constructs and test inter-variable relationships. The primary goal was to assess the variations in perceptions of recruitment processes and commitment levels across two temporal phases—pre- and post-COVID-19—and to identify predictive factors of overall satisfaction.

3.2 Research Objectives

- To measure employee satisfaction with recruitment processes before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To assess organizational commitment levels in both timeframes.
- To examine the interrelationship between recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment.
- To test whether pre- or post-pandemic experiences more strongly predict overall satisfaction.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population consisted of employees from diverse industries including education, healthcare, IT, retail, and public services. A **non-probability convenience sampling** technique was employed. A total of **100 valid responses** were received from individuals representing varied age groups, departments, employment types, and gender identities (41% male, 41% female, 18% non-binary/third gender), ensuring diversity and inclusivity.

4. Data Collection Methods

4.1 Instrumentation

Data was collected using a **structured questionnaire** composed of **27 items** categorized into:

- Employee Recruitment Satisfaction Pre-COVID-19 (ERSPRE)
- Employee Recruitment Satisfaction Post-COVID-19 (ERSPOST)
- Organizational Commitment Pre-COVID-19 (OCPRE)
- Organizational Commitment Post-COVID-19 (OCPOST)
- Overall Satisfaction

All items were measured using a **5-point Likert scale** ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").

5.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Reliability Analysis

To assess the internal consistency of the research instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the 27 items comprising the study's variables. The resulting value was $\alpha = .972$, indicating **excellent reliability**. This suggests that the items measuring employee recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment before and after the pandemic were highly consistent and suitable for further statistical analysis.

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed to understand the central tendencies of the composite scores. The mean scores for key variables were as follows:

Table-1 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
ERS Pre-Covid	3.71	1.32
ERS Post-Covid	3.71	1.31
OC Pre-Covid	3.71	1.32
OC Post-Covid	3.71	1.31
Overall Satisfaction	3.85	1.07

These mean values (on a 5-point Likert scale) indicate that respondents **tended to agree** with statements related to employee recruitment and organizational commitment across both time periods.

5.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients revealed strong, positive relationships between the overall satisfaction variable and all other predictor variables:

Table-2 Correlation Analysis

Predictor Variable	Correlation (r)	Significance (p)
ERS Pre-Covid	.770	< .001
ERS Post-Covid	.762	< .001
OC Pre-Covid	.770	< .001
OC Post-Covid	.762	< .001

These findings suggest a **statistically significant and robust association** between satisfaction levels and perceptions of recruitment and organizational commitment.

5.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive impact of ERS and OC (both pre- and post-pandemic) on overall satisfaction.

- **Model Fit:** $R = .773$, $R^2 = .597$, Adjusted $R^2 = .589$

The model explained **59.7% of the variance** in overall satisfaction.

- **ANOVA Results:** $F(2,97) = 71.88$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was **statistically significant**.
- **Regression Coefficients:**

Table-3a Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	t	Sig.
Constant	1.582	7.605	.000
OC Pre-Covid	1.221	2.033	.045
OC Post-Covid	-0.611	-1.003	.318

Only **OC Pre-Covid** emerged as a **significant predictor** ($p = .045$), while OC Post-Covid did not ($p = .318$). This indicates that **organizational commitment before the pandemic had a lasting influence** on current satisfaction levels.

Table-3b Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	t	Sig.
Constant	1.582	7.605	.000
ERS Pre-Covid	1.515	2.033	.045
ERS Post-Covid	-0.748	-1.003	.318

Only **ERS Pre-Covid** emerged as a **significant predictor** ($p = .045$), while ERS Post-Covid did not ($p = .318$). This indicates that **Employee Recruitment satisfaction before the pandemic had a lasting influence** on current satisfaction levels.

5.5 Independent Samples T-Test

An independent samples t-test was performed to examine gender-based differences in perceptions of employee recruitment and organizational commitment. No statistically significant differences were found:

Table-4 Independent Samples T-Test

Variable	Sig. (2-tailed)
ERS Pre-Covid	.987
ERS Post-Covid	.973
OC Pre-Covid	.987
OC Post-Covid	.973

These results suggest **no gender-based variation** in perceptions of recruitment satisfaction and organizational commitment.

5.6 Frequency and Demographic Analysis

Demographic data indicated a well-distributed sample across gender, age, department, employment type, and position level. Notably:

- **72%** of respondents were full-time employees.
- **39%** "Agreed" and another **39%** "Strongly Agreed" that the recruitment process was efficient before the pandemic.
- Items related to **post-pandemic flexibility and leadership communication** received consistently high agreement (means around 3.9).

These patterns reinforce that respondents **hold generally favourable views** regarding both the recruitment process and their commitment to the organization.

5.7 Summary of Findings

- The research instrument demonstrated **high reliability**.
- Respondents expressed **positive perceptions** toward recruitment and organizational commitment.
- **Pre-pandemic organizational commitment significantly predicted overall satisfaction**, while post-pandemic commitment did not.
- No significant gender differences were observed.

Descriptive and frequency data highlight **strong endorsement** of both pre- and post-pandemic recruitment efforts.

6.0 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS

To further validate the measurement and structural relationships among the variables—Employee Recruitment Satisfaction Pre (ERSPRE), Employee Recruitment Satisfaction Post (ERSPOST), Organizational Commitment Pre (OCPRE), and Organizational Commitment Post (OCPOST)—AMOS was employed to perform a confirmatory factor analysis and assess the model fit.

6.1 Model Fit Indices

Table-5 Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
Chi-Square (CMIN)	428.057	—	High (see below)
Degrees of Freedom	164	—	—
CMIN/DF	2.610	< 3.0	Acceptable model fit
RMSEA	0.128	< 0.08 ideal, < 0.10 acceptable	Moderately poor fit
CFI	0.810	≥ 0.90 preferred	Below threshold
TLI	0.780	≥ 0.90 preferred	Below threshold
PCFI	0.699	≥ 0.50	Acceptable fit
Hoelter (0.05 level)	46	≥ 200	Poor sample adequacy

Interpretation: The model shows a moderate to poor fit, particularly in RMSEA and CFI. However, the CMIN/DF value is within the acceptable range, indicating the model is statistically permissible. Model modifications may improve the fit.

6.2 Regression Weights and Significance

The standardized regression weights show that all factor loadings are significant at $p < .05$, except for a few noted below:

6.3 Covariances Between Latent Constructs

All latent variables showed significant positive covariances, suggesting interdependence among constructs:

Table 6- Covariances Between Latent Constructs

Covariance Between	Estimate	C.R.	p-value	Interpretation
ERSPRE ↔ ERSPOST	0.427	4.296	***	Strong positive relationship
ERSPRE ↔ OCPRE	0.293	3.680	***	Moderate positive relationship
ERSPRE ↔ OCPOST	0.338	3.706	***	Moderate positive relationship
ERSPOST ↔ OCPRE	0.407	4.272	***	Moderate to strong relationship
ERSPOST ↔ OCPOST	0.555	4.996	***	Strongest relationship in the model
OCPRE ↔ OCPOST	0.367	4.039	***	Moderate relationship

6.4 Normality Assessment

Skewness and kurtosis values for many observed variables exceed recommended thresholds (skew $> \pm 1$, kurtosis $> \pm 3$), particularly for OC2_Post, ERS2_Pre, and ERS4_Post. Multivariate kurtosis is 92.224 (critical ratio = 15.544), indicating violations of multivariate normality.

Interpretation: These results suggest data non-normality, which might affect parameter estimation accuracy. Consider using bootstrapping or robust estimation techniques in future analyses.

6.5 Modification Indices

Several high modification indices ($MI > 10$) were observed among error terms (e.g., $e_{17} \leftrightarrow e_{18}$, $MI = 14.29$). Adding covariances between specific error terms could improve model fit.

Interpretation: The modification indices suggest the potential to improve the model fit by correlating some error terms, particularly within the same construct group (e.g., OC_Post items). However, such adjustments should only be made if they are theoretically justifiable.

6.6 Conclusion on SEM

Despite some model fit indices falling below the ideal threshold (notably RMSEA and CFI), the model demonstrates statistically significant and theoretically consistent relationships among the latent variables. The factor structure is well supported, and most observed variables load strongly onto their respective constructs. Improvements in data normality or sample size, as well as theoretically guided model modifications, could enhance model adequacy in future studies.

7. Findings and Discussion

7.1 Key Findings

1. Recruitment Satisfaction and Commitment Levels Are Positively Perceived (Pre and Post COVID-19)

Descriptive statistics show that the mean scores for all variables ranged from **3.60 to 3.94**, indicating generally favourable perceptions. Notably, participants "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with items relating to recruitment efficiency and post-pandemic flexibility.

2. Strong Interrelationship Among Variables

Pearson correlation coefficients revealed **very strong, statistically significant** associations between recruitment satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall satisfaction ($r \approx .762$ to $.770$, $p < .001$). This supports existing literature that emphasizes the synergistic link between positive recruitment experiences and stronger organizational loyalty.

3. Pre-Pandemic Experiences Have Greater Predictive Power

Multiple regression analysis showed that **organizational commitment before COVID-19** ($\beta = 1.221$, $p = .045$) significantly predicted overall satisfaction, whereas post-pandemic commitment did not ($p = .318$). A similar pattern was observed for recruitment satisfaction. This indicates a **legacy effect**, where pre-pandemic workplace culture and onboarding experiences have a more profound impact on current employee sentiment.

4. SEM Model Reveals Strong Covariances Among Constructs

The AMOS SEM analysis confirmed statistically significant relationships between all latent variables. The strongest observed relationship was between **ERSPOST and OCPOST** (covariance = **0.555**, $p < .001$), highlighting that effective post-pandemic recruitment practices can still enhance organizational commitment—even if they don't fully replace pre-pandemic bonding experiences.

5. Gender Differences Are Not Statistically Significant

Independent samples t-tests revealed **no meaningful gender-based differences** in perceptions of recruitment satisfaction or commitment. This suggests that HR interventions and recruitment strategies have been perceived as inclusive across diverse gender identities.

7.2 Discussion

The findings align with prior literature (e.g., Allen et al., 2007; Carnevale & Hatak, 2020), which suggests that employee experiences during recruitment have lasting effects on organizational trust and affective commitment. The strong predictive power of **pre-COVID commitment** may reflect

employees' nostalgia for stable work environments, rich interpersonal connections, and structured onboarding systems—many of which were disrupted during the pandemic.

Interestingly, the SEM results reinforce the **importance of adapting HR processes**, as the relationship between post-COVID recruitment and commitment remains strong. This shows that digital methods, when executed thoughtfully, can build or sustain engagement even in virtual contexts. Organizations that adapted successfully were able to mitigate the damage caused by physical distancing and remote onboarding. However, model fit issues and data normality limitations (e.g., RMSEA = 0.128, multivariate kurtosis = 92.224) suggest that future studies could benefit from improved sampling, bootstrapping methods, or longitudinal tracking to better capture evolving perceptions.

8. Recommendations

Based on the study's empirical insights, the following practical and theoretical recommendations are proposed:

8.1 For Human Resource Practitioners

1. Leverage Pre-Pandemic Best Practices in Hybrid Models

Organizations should reintegrate elements of pre-pandemic recruitment that fostered strong commitment, such as personalized communication, mentorship programs, and face-to-face onboarding, within hybrid or virtual models.

2. Enhance Digital Recruitment Quality

To sustain post-COVID recruitment satisfaction, HR teams should invest in **user-friendly platforms**, provide **real-time updates**, and ensure **humanized interaction** in virtual interviews to reduce impersonality.

3. Focus on Relationship-Based Onboarding

Virtual onboarding should go beyond technical training. Create avenues for informal interaction, cross-functional networking, and cultural immersion through digital town halls or peer-buddy systems.

4. Reinforce Organizational Commitment via Flexibility

Commitment can be revitalized post-COVID through **employee-centric policies**, including flexible schedules, mental health days, and continuous communication from leadership.

5. Monitor and Adapt Based on Feedback

Use regular pulse surveys or focus groups to track employee satisfaction and commitment levels across departments and demographics. Iteratively refine recruitment and engagement strategies based on data.

8.2 For Future Research

- Conduct **longitudinal studies** to observe how employee perceptions evolve over time in relation to changing work environments.
- Explore industry-specific trends, particularly in sectors that transitioned poorly or exceptionally well to remote and hybrid operations.
- Investigate the role of **leadership communication** and **team cohesion** in moderating the link between digital recruitment and commitment.

References

1. Allen, D. G., Mahto, R. V., & Otondo, R. F. (2007). Web-based recruitment: Effects of information, organizational brand, and attitudes toward a website on applicant attraction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(6), 1696–1708. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.6.1696>

2. Breagh, J. A. (2017). Talent acquisition: A guide to understanding and managing the recruitment process. SHRM Foundation. <https://www.shrm.org/foundation/ourwork/initiatives/resources-from-past-initiatives/pages/talent-acquisition.aspx>
3. Carnevale, J. B., & Hatak, I. (2020). Employee adjustment and well-being in the era of COVID-19: Implications for human resource management. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 183–187. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.037>
4. Chawla, D., Srivastava, R., & Nanda, P. (2022). Onboarding in the virtual workplace: Impact on organizational commitment of new hires during COVID-19. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 12(1), 134–149. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v12i1.19489>
5. Guchait, P., Cho, S., & Meurs, J. A. (2021). Recruitment fairness, applicant reactions, and organizational attractiveness during COVID-19. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, 20(2), 144–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332845.2021.1877028>
6. Gupta, V., & Pathak, G. S. (2022). Reimagining talent acquisition and retention strategies during COVID-19: An Indian perspective. *Human Resource Development International*, 25(2), 131–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2021.1975994>
7. Kniffin, K. M., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S. P., Bakker, A. B., ... & van Vugt, M. (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, issues, and insights for future research and action. *American Psychologist*, 76(1), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000716>
8. Kuron, L. K. J., Lyons, S. T., Schweitzer, L., & Ng, E. S. (2022). New employee onboarding during COVID-19: A mixed methods study. *Human Resource Management Review*, 32(4), Article 100831. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2021.100831>
9. Li, Y., Wang, Z., & Wang, Y. (2021). Digital transformation and employee engagement during COVID-19: The mediating role of trust and the moderating role of leadership. *Information Technology & People*, 35(4), 1103–1126. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-11-2020-0801>
10. Maurer, R. (2020, March 20). Recruiting in the age of COVID-19: How companies are adapting. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/pages/recruiting-during-covid19.aspx>
11. Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(91\)90011-Z](https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z)
12. Akkermans, J., Richardson, J., & Kraimer, M. L. (2020). The COVID-19 crisis as a career shock: Implications for careers and vocational behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 119, 103434. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103434>
13. Cooke, F. L., Dickmann, M., & Parry, E. (2021). IJHRM review symposium: COVID-19 and people management—Past, current and future research agenda. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 32(12), 2673–2681. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2021.1911525>
14. Spurk, D., & Straub, C. (2020). Flexible employment relationships and careers in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 119, 103435. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103435>
15. Tuzovic, S., & Kabadayi, S. (2021). The influence of social distancing on employee well-being: A conceptual framework and research agenda. *Journal of Service Management*, 32(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-05-2020-0140>
16. Wang, B., Liu, Y., Qian, J., & Parker, S. K. (2021). Achieving effective remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic: A work design perspective. *Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 16–59. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12290>
17. Zhao, H., & Zhou, Q. (2021). COVID-19 stress and employee organizational commitment: The mediating role of burnout and the moderating role of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 106(5), 667–680. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000884>