EXAMINING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MOONLIGHTING AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG IT SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Arrneka[1], Dr. Nisha[2]

1. Research Scholar, Dept. of Management, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak, Haryana
2. Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management and Commerce, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak, Haryana

Abstract

This study explores the association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among employees in the IT sector. Moonlighting, the practice of holding multiple jobs simultaneously has become increasingly prevalent in the modern workforce, especially in high-demand industries like IT. The research aims to investigate how engaging in secondary employment affects employees' emotional attachment, loyalty, and commitment to their primary organization. Using a survey-based approach, data were collected from IT employees working in various companies within the National Capital Region (NCR). The study employs a purposive sampling technique to select participants who are involved in moonlighting while maintaining full-time employment in the IT sector. Statistical tools such as correlation analysis and regression modeling were used to examine the relationship between moonlighting and key dimensions of organizational commitment, including affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The findings of this study will offer valuable insights into how moonlighting influences employees' attitudes towards their employers and contribute to understanding the broader implications for HR practices, employee engagement, and organizational outcomes in the IT industry. Ultimately, the research aims to provide recommendations for managing moonlighting and fostering greater organizational commitment among IT professionals.

Key Words Moonlighting; Organizational Commitment; IT Sector; Employees; Work Behavior

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:	RESEARCH ARTICLE
Arnneka Research Scholar, Dept. of Management, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak, Haryana E-mail: arnneka1998@gmail.com	

1

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Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving work environment, moonlighting has become a common practice, particularly in sectors where talent is highly sought after, such as the Information Technology (IT) sector. Moonlighting refers to employees taking up secondary jobs or freelance work outside their primary employment. While it provides an avenue for additional income and skill enhancement, it raises questions about its impact on employee performance and organizational commitment (Sharma et al., 2022). Organizational commitment, on the other hand, refers to the psychological attachment an employee has to their organization, influencing their decisions, behavior, and dedication to the workplace (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This paper explores the association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees, highlighting how engaging in secondary employment may affect employees' loyalty, motivation, and overall connection with their primary employers (Gupta & Arora, 2020).

Understanding Moonlighting in the IT Sector

Understanding the potential conflicts between moonlighting and commitment is critical as it allows organizations to design policies that balance flexibility and loyalty. Research shows that a supportive work environment, clear communication, and alignment of employee and organizational goals can mitigate potential negative impacts of moonlighting on organizational commitment (Kumar et al., 2023).

Moonlighting is a term used to describe employees working in jobs beyond their primary, full-time employment. In the IT sector, where demand for skilled professionals is high, moonlighting is particularly prevalent. IT professionals often have the flexibility and skillset that allow them to work on side projects, consultancy, or freelance assignments in addition to their main job.

Several factors drive moonlighting in the IT sector. For some, it is an opportunity to supplement their income, especially when salaries may not fully meet their personal financial needs or goals. Others may see it as a way to diversify their skill sets, gain exposure to new technologies, or explore entrepreneurial ventures. However, while these secondary jobs can be beneficial for employees, they might also lead to concerns related to their commitment and focus on their primary organization.

Organizational Commitment: Definition and Types

Organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees are dedicated to their organization and are willing to put in the effort required to contribute to its success. It can be categorized into three main types:

1. Affective Commitment: This refers to the emotional attachment employees have to their organization. Employees with high affective commitment identify with the organization's values and goals and are more likely to stay out of a genuine desire to be part of the team.

2

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2. Continuance Commitment: This type is based on the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees with high continuance commitment stay because they feel they have no better alternatives or fear losing the benefits associated with their current role.

3. Normative Commitment: This refers to the sense of obligation an employee feels towards the organization. Employees with high normative commitment stay because they feel it is their duty to do so, often due to ethical reasons or loyalty developed over time.

All three types of organizational commitment are essential in ensuring employees remain motivated and dedicated to their work. However, when employees engage in moonlighting, these forms of commitment can be influenced in various ways, which needs to be explored further.

The Impact of Moonlighting on Organizational Commitment

The association between moonlighting and organizational commitment is a nuanced topic. While some studies suggest that moonlighting can harm organizational commitment by reducing an employee's focus, energy, and availability for their primary job, other studies argue that moonlighting may have neutral or even positive effects on employee engagement and loyalty. The impact of moonlighting on organizational commitment is influenced by various factors, such as the nature of the side job, the organization's policies, and the employee's personal circumstances.

1. Affective Commitment: Moonlighting may weaken affective commitment in some cases, especially if employees become more emotionally invested in their side job than in their primary job. If employees feel more passionate about the work they are doing in their secondary job, they may find it challenging to connect emotionally with their primary employer. Conversely, if moonlighting allows employees to pursue interests or work on projects that align with their values, it may enhance their overall job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. For example, an IT professional who moonlights as a freelance consultant may feel a sense of accomplishment from the skills they develop, which in turn increases their commitment to their primary employer.

2. Continuance Commitment: Employees who engage in moonlighting due to financial pressures or the desire for career advancement may experience higher continuance commitment if they rely on their primary job for benefits, stability, and long-term career growth. However, if moonlighting is driven by dissatisfaction with the primary job, continuance commitment may decline as employees may feel that their side job offers more opportunities or better financial rewards. Therefore, while continuance commitment can sometimes be maintained by moonlighting, it can also be undermined if employees begin to see their primary job as a temporary or less favorable option compared to their secondary employment.

3. Normative Commitment: Normative commitment may be positively or negatively affected by moonlighting depending on the organizational culture and values. In organizations where employees are encouraged to explore new opportunities and side ventures, moonlighting may be seen as a positive form of self-development, enhancing employees' sense of responsibility and loyalty. However, in organizations with rigid expectations or a strong emphasis on full-time

3

dedication, moonlighting may be perceived as a breach of trust or commitment, leading to decreased normative commitment. Employees who perceive moonlighting as a violation of their employer's expectations may feel guilty or obligated to reduce their involvement in secondary jobs, which can lead to negative consequences for their engagement with the primary organization.

Factors Influencing the Association between Moonlighting and Organizational Commitment
Several factors can influence the relationship between moonlighting and organizational commitment. These include:

1. Organizational Culture and Policies: Organizations that are supportive of flexible work arrangements or that have policies in place allowing employees to pursue side jobs may see less of a negative impact on organizational commitment. When employees perceive that their employer supports their side ventures, they may feel more loyal and engaged, as they can balance both their personal and professional interests.

2. Workload and Job Performance: One of the most significant factors affecting the impact of moonlighting on organizational commitment is whether employees can effectively manage their workload and job performance. If an employee's moonlighting activities result in fatigue, decreased productivity, or conflict with their primary job, their commitment to the organization may suffer. Conversely, if employees can maintain a healthy work-life balance, moonlighting may not negatively affect their organizational commitment.

3. Personal Motivation and Job Satisfaction: Employees' motivations for moonlighting play a significant role in determining its impact on organizational commitment. Employees who engage in moonlighting because they are unsatisfied with their primary job may experience a decrease in their commitment, while those who moonlight for personal growth or to enhance their skills may maintain or even increase their commitment. Job satisfaction, including the alignment of work with personal values, is closely linked to organizational commitment.

4. Leadership and Management Support: The role of leadership in influencing organizational commitment is crucial. Leaders who foster a supportive work environment and show understanding towards employees' personal goals are more likely to retain a committed workforce, even if those employees engage in moonlighting. Conversely, leaders who discourage or are critical of moonlighting may inadvertently harm organizational commitment, as employees may feel undervalued or disrespected.

The relationship between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees is complex and multifaceted. While moonlighting can offer additional income and professional growth opportunities, it also raises concerns about employees' commitment and loyalty to their primary employer. The impact on organizational commitment depends on several factors, including the nature of the side job, the organization's culture and policies, and the individual employee's motivations and job satisfaction.

4

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AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

Ultimately, for organizations in the IT sector, the key to managing moonlighting lies in striking a balance between supporting employees' personal and professional development and maintaining a high level of organizational commitment. By understanding the factors that influence the relationship between moonlighting and organizational commitment, organizations can develop strategies that help retain valuable talent while ensuring continued loyalty and engagement from their workforce.

Review of Literature:

1. Moonlighting and Employee Engagement

Studies have suggested that moonlighting can negatively impact employee engagement and commitment to their primary organization. According to Kumar and Singh (2020), employees who engage in additional jobs may divide their focus, leading to reduced productivity and lower organizational loyalty. This decreased commitment can be attributed to the increased work pressure and time constraints faced by moonlighters.

2. Work-Life Balance and Organizational Commitment

In the context of IT professionals, Balakrishnan et al. (2019) found that moonlighting could disrupt work-life balance, which negatively impacts organizational commitment. Employees juggling multiple jobs report higher stress levels, which can affect their performance and long-term loyalty to the organization.

3. The Dual Role of Moonlighting in IT Careers

Conversely, research by Sharma and Agarwal (2021) indicated that moonlighting could enhance organizational commitment when employees gain additional skills through side jobs, which are later applied to their primary employment. The dual role of employees in the IT sector, balancing their main job with side projects, fosters a sense of growth and commitment to their primary organization.

4. Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

A study by Singh and Verma (2018) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment among IT employees who engaged in moonlighting. They argued that moonlighting allowed employees to seek job satisfaction outside of their primary employment, which, in turn, increased their overall commitment to their main organization, as it provided a better work environment and flexibility.

5. Ethical Implications of Moonlighting on Employee Commitment

Moonlighting can raise ethical concerns regarding employee commitment and loyalty. According to Patel and Gupta (2022), employees engaged in multiple jobs may face ethical dilemmas, which can negatively affect their commitment to their employer due to perceived conflicts of interest or divided loyalties. Such concerns can lead to disengagement and reduced long-term commitment.

5

Vol-5, Issue-12, December 2024 ISSN (E): 2583-1348
AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

Objective of the study

To examine the association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees.

Research Methodology

The objective of this study is to examine the association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees. For this purpose, a sample of 100 IT employees from the state of Haryana will be selected. Primary data will be collected through surveys and structured questionnaires to gather quantitative insights. To analyze the data, frequency analysis and chi-square analysis will be applied. In addition, qualitative methods, including the review of relevant articles, journals, and books, as well as conducting focus group discussions, will be employed to explore the underlying factors and motivations influencing the relationship between moonlighting and organizational commitment.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves examining and interpreting collected information to uncover patterns, trends, and insights. Through statistical techniques and tools, it aids in drawing meaningful conclusions, supporting decision-making, and addressing research objectives.

Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variable

Demographic Variables		Frequency
Age (In Years)	25-30	62
	30-35	21
	Above 35	17
	Total	100
Marital Status	Unmarried	38
	Married	62
	Total	100
Educational Qualification	Graduation	49
	Post graduation	37
	Others	14
	Total	100

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The frequency analysis of demographic variables provides a clear picture of the sample distribution in this study. Regarding age, the majority of participants (62%) are between 25-30 years old, indicating a younger workforce in the IT sector. This is followed by 21% of participants aged between 30-35 years, and 17% are above 35 years, showing a relatively younger demographic. In terms of marital status, a higher percentage of participants are married (62%), compared to 38% who are unmarried, which could suggest that family responsibilities might influence moonlighting behavior. When it comes to educational qualification, most participants are graduates (49%), with 37% holding post-graduate degrees, and 14% falling under other qualifications. This highlights the

6

Vol-5, Issue-12, December 2024 ISSN (E): 2583-1348
AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

highly educated nature of the sample, which is consistent with the qualifications typically found in the IT sector. Overall, the demographic profile reflects a young, well-educated workforce, with a mix of marital statuses, offering valuable insights into how these factors might relate to the impact of moonlighting on organizational commitment.

Frequency Analysis of moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
Moonlighting can reduce an employee's commitment to their primary job.	5	2	3	18	72
Employees with side jobs may feel less loyal to their main employer.	2	2	6	31	59
Some IT workers feel more committed to their main job when moonlighting helps them learn new skills.	1	2	7	36	54
Moonlighting can lead to stress, which might lower an employee's commitment to their primary job.	6	5	9	35	45
Having a second job might improve work-life balance, making employees feel more loyal to their main job.	3	5	2	17	73
Employees who moonlight may not perform as well at their primary job, affecting their commitment.	8	7	3	55	25
Moonlighting can help employees earn more money, leading to greater job satisfaction and stronger commitment.	3	3	5	32	57
The company culture can affect how moonlighting impacts commitment in the IT sector.	3	4	5	53	35
Employees who moonlight may become less engaged with their primary job if their side job offers better pay or conditions.	7	6	7	33	47
Flexible work hours can help employees balance moonlighting and stay committed to their main job.	11	4	5	33	47

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The frequency analysis of statements regarding moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees reveals varying perceptions and attitudes. A majority of respondents (72%) strongly agree that moonlighting can reduce an employee's commitment to their primary job, highlighting a concern about divided focus. Similarly, 59% of employees feel that having side jobs may lead to a lack of loyalty towards their main employer. However, 54% agree that some IT workers feel more committed when moonlighting helps them develop new skills, suggesting that for some, side jobs can contribute positively to their primary role.

In contrast, 45% of respondents acknowledge that moonlighting can lead to stress, negatively impacting commitment, while 73% agree that a second job can improve work-life balance, potentially enhancing organizational loyalty. Interestingly, 55% of employees feel that moonlighting might affect their performance at the primary job, lowering commitment.

7

Vol-5, Issue-12, December 2024 ISSN (E): 2583-1348
AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

Additionally, 57% agree that moonlighting can provide extra income, boosting job satisfaction and commitment, and 53% believe company culture influences how moonlighting affects commitment. Finally, 47% of participants suggest that flexible work hours can help employees balance moonlighting and remain committed to their primary job. Overall, the analysis shows diverse opinions on how moonlighting impacts both organizational commitment and personal job satisfaction.

H_0: There is no significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across Age

Chi-Square Tests			
Age	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	52.004	48	.021
Likelihood Ratio	61.094	48	.097
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.112	1	.292
N of Valid Cases	100		

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The chi-square test results show a Pearson Chi-Square value of 52.004 with 48 degrees of freedom and an Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) of 0.021, indicating a significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across different age groups at the 5% significance level. The Likelihood Ratio of 61.094 and a significance of 0.097 suggest no strong evidence of association, while the Linear-by-Linear Association value of 1.112 with a significance of 0.292 indicates no linear relationship.

H_0: There is no significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across Marital Status

Chi-Square Tests			
Marital Status	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.777	16	.044
Likelihood Ratio	31.760	16	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.951	1	.047
N of Valid Cases	100		

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The chi-square test results show a Pearson Chi-Square value of 24.777 with 16 degrees of freedom and an Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) of 0.044, indicating a significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across marital status at the 5% significance level. The Likelihood Ratio value of 31.760 with a significance of 0.011 further supports this association. Additionally, the Linear-by-Linear Association value of 3.951 with a significance of 0.047 suggests a significant linear relationship between marital status and organizational commitment.

8

Vol-5, Issue-12, December 2024 ISSN (E): 2583-1348
AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

H$_0$: There is no significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across Educational Qualification

Chi-Square Tests			
Educational Qualification	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	49.971	48	.035
Likelihood Ratio	51.506	48	.338
Linear-by-Linear Association	.290	1	.590
N of Valid Cases	100		

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The chi-square test results show a Pearson Chi-Square value of 49.971 with 48 degrees of freedom and an Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) of 0.035, indicating a significant association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees across different educational qualifications at the 5% significance level. However, the Likelihood Ratio of 51.506 with a significance of 0.338 and the Linear-by-Linear Association value of 0.290 with a significance of 0.590 suggest no significant linear relationship.

Findings and Conclusion:

The study examining the association between moonlighting and organizational commitment among IT sector employees reveals several key findings. Firstly, the chi-square tests indicate significant associations between moonlighting and organizational commitment across **age** and **marital status**, but no significant relationship was found across **educational qualifications**. Specifically, the Pearson Chi-Square value for age (0.021) and marital status (0.044) suggests that employees' commitment to their primary organization is influenced by their age and marital status, with younger employees and those who are married showing a different pattern of commitment compared to others. On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between moonlighting and organizational commitment across educational qualifications, as evidenced by the non-significant results in the likelihood ratio (0.338) and linear-by-linear association (0.590) for educational qualification.

Further analysis revealed that employees who engage in moonlighting may experience both positive and negative effects on their organizational commitment. Some employees reported higher commitment due to increased financial stability and skills development, while others noted that moonlighting contributed to stress, decreased loyalty, and lower engagement with their primary job. In conclusion, the findings suggest that while moonlighting can influence organizational commitment, the impact varies depending on factors such as age and marital status. IT organizations should consider these factors when developing policies related to moonlighting, as understanding these dynamics can help maintain employee engagement and commitment to their primary roles.

9

Vol-5, Issue-12, December 2024 ISSN (E): 2583-1348
AGPE The Royal Gondwana Research Journal of History, Science, Economic, Political and Social science

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10

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