

## Social Support and Job Involvement in Prison Officers

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An attempt was made to find out the relationship of social support and job involvement in prison officers. Job Involvement Scale developed by Kapoor and Singh and Social Support Scale developed by Cohen et al., were administered on a sample of 200 prison officers. The result shows that social support (overall) and its dimensions, namely, appraisal support, tangible support and belonging support have significant positive relationship with job involvement. Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis suggests that overall social support is a significant predictor of job involvement in prison officers. The other predictors are belonging, support, appraisal support and tangible support.

Psychology plays a very significant role in present social system. Be it an individual life, a family, a group or an organization. Success of any of the above depends upon the overall psychology of an individual who forms the different groups as above. For example, a private sector is, by and large, more successful than a government sector. The reason is the behaviour of the employee that differs significantly in two types of organization. Here, the behaviour refers to both the types of overt and covert. The covert behaviour of an employee refers to psychological phenomenon as job-involvement, motivation and other related attitudes such as absenteeism, tardiness, etc. the success of jail department is concerned, to a large extent, with job involvement of the employee. There are numerous factors that affect the job-involvement of prison officers. In this study we have studied two psychological variables, i.e., job-involvement and social support.

The concept of job-involvement has received much empirical and theoretical

attention. Many different terms have been used to describe job-involvement such as central life interest to work, role involvement, ego involvement, job-satisfaction, finally, job-involvement. In the recent years the concept of job-involvement has steadily gained importance because of its pivotal role in providing a link between performance or employees and the quality of working life.

Job-involvement refers to your involvement with or alienation from a specific job. Lodahl and Kejner (1965) have defined the term as job-involvement is the internalization of value about goodness of work or importance of work in the worth of the person, perhaps, it, thus, measures the case with which the person can be further socialized by an organization. Job-involved employees are likely to believe in the work ethic, to exhibit high growth decision making.

In India researches concerning job involvement is considerably much later and less rapid in comparison to the west. Some researchers in India have attempted to explore

the influence of job-involvement on other variables like demographic variables (Anantharaman, 1980; Sharma and Sharma, 1978) different occupational groups (Anantharaman and Deviasenapathy, 1980; Anatharaman and Begum, 1982; and Singh, 1988) role conflict and role ambiguity (Madhu and Harigopal, 1980; Harigopal and Kumar, 1979; Singh, 1981; Srivastava and Sinha, 1983; Singh and Mishra, 1983), perceived importance of satisfaction of employee needs (Kanungo, Mishra and Dayal, 1975; Gupta, 1993; Mishra and Gupta, 1994), union involvement (Pestonjee, Singh and Singh, 1981a; Singh and Srivastava, 1984), job anxiety (Mishra, 1999).

Keplan et al., (1977) have noted that conceptualization and operationalization of social support has been very inconsistent among different writers, perhaps due to the frequent usage of post hoc analysis and explanations in research on stress. House (1981) has defined social support as 'emotional concern, instrumental aid and information aid for appraisal given to people by each other.' Primary sources of social support are those people who have an intimate association with the person and who provide social support as a part of their friendship with him or her. Secondary sources are those people with whom the person has a less intimate relationship. Keeping the above view in mind an attempt was made to find out the relationship between social support (overall and area wise) and job-involvement in prison officers.

### Hypotheses

1. There would be positive relationship between social support and job-involvement in prison officers.
2. There would be positive relationship between appraisal support (social support) and job-involvement in prison officers.
3. There would be positive relationship between tangible support (social support) and job-involvement in prison officers.

4. There would be positive relationship between belonging support (social support) and job-involvement in prison officers.

5. Social support (overall and area wise) will significantly predict the job-involvement in prison officers.

### Method

#### Sample

The study was conducted on 200 prison officers incidentally selected from different jails in U.P. and Sampurnanand Jail Training Institute, Lucknow (U.P.), the age range of the respondents ranged between 30-50 years with the average age of 40 years. Their monthly income ranged between Rs, 4500- 8000 with average monthly income of Rs. 5500 their qualification ranged between undergraduate to postgraduate.

#### Measures

To study the variables in the present investigation the following two psychometric devices were utilized.

**Social Support Scale:** The social support scale has been used to measure the level of social support in prison officers. Cohen et al., (1985) developed Interpersonal Support Evaluation List or ISEL which consists of statement concerning perceived availability of potential social resources. The items are counter balanced for desirability with half of the items being positive statements and the other half negative statements. ISEL covers four domains of supportive social resources that could potentially facilitate coping with stressful events. The "tangible" subscale is intended to measure perceived availability of material aid, the appraisal "subscale, measures of perceived availability of someone to talk to about one's problems, the belongingness subscale measures the perceived availability of people one can do things with and finally the self esteem" subscale how highly an individual rates him / herself.

The subscales are reasonably independent of one another as indicated by their moderate inter correlation that are in the range of 0.30 to 0.50 ranges. According to Cohen et al., (1985) complete independence of these scales is neither desirable nor possible since people often receive different kinds of support from the same person in their networks. Adequate internal and test-retest reliabilities reported by Cohen et al., (1985) for the four subscales range from 0.77 to 0.92 and from 0.70 to 0.90 respectively. In the present study three subscales of ISEL appraisal, belongingness and tangible are used to assess the exchange of three aspects of social support in prison officers at work. Six most appropriate items from each subscales were selected for use in the present study. The appropriateness of the items was judged on the basis of experts' ratings

**Job Involvement Scale:** In the present investigation the Hindi adaptation (Kapoor and Singh, 1978 of Lodahl and Kejner's Job Involvement Scale consists of 20 statements in Likert format) with four alternative responses namely, agree, strongly agree, disagree and strongly disagree was used to assess the job involvement in prison officers. The items of the scale are framed in such a way that they can be used for measuring the degree of involvement of all the subjects irrespective of the nature of their work, organizations and machines and tools they use.

The index of reliability of the scale was ascertained by computing Cronbach's alpha

coefficients (1951) that has found to be ( $r=0.82$ ) to ascertain the extent of consistency of the result by the Job involvement scale, the split-half reliability coefficient by odd-even method on the reliability of 200 employees was computed. The reliability coefficient and index of reliability computed by Spearman and Brown's formula was found to be 0.73 indicates that the scale is free from internal defects and possess the fair amount of accuracy in assessing the extent of job involvement.

The index of homogeneity and internal validity of the scale were tested by computing the point-biserial correlation. The scores of Lodahl and Kejner's job involvement scale was used as one of the validation criteria for this job involvement scale. The coefficient of correlation between the scores on the two scales was found to be 0.58 on a representative sample of 100 blue-collar workers.

### Procedure

Prior to administration of the test, prison officers were told about the utility of the study. Single prison officer was contacted at a time and one by one the two psychometric devices viz Job Involvement Scale and the general population form of Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL) were administered to them. These prison officers were asked to fill the questionnaires by themselves according to the instructions written on each of the questionnaires.

### Results

**Table 1: Inter correlation matrix for Social Support (overall and area wise) and Job Involvement.**

S.No	Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)
1	Appraisal Support and Job Involvement	0.43**
2	Tangible Support and Job Involvement	0.35**
3	Belonging Support and Job Involvement	0.20**
4	Overall Social Support and Job Involvement	0.49**

\*\* $p<0.01$

**Table 2: Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) prediction for job involvement**

Variables	R	F-ratio
Overall social support	0.78	72.5360**
Belonging support	0.22	13.8278**
Appraisal support	0.18	7.2498**
Tangible support	0.15	6.3877**

p<0.01

### Discussion

Table 1 indicates that the coefficient of correlation between appraisal support (social support) and job involvement is significantly positive. The nature of correlation indicates as the level of appraisal support of prison officers increases, to a great extent determine their job involvement. It means that prison officers who receive high appraisal support from the social groups in the society which increases the level of job involvement. In other words the prison officers who talk their job related problems to others. They receive some solution, to cure this problem. This solution of the problem increases the job-involvement of prison officers.

The coefficient of correlation between second area "tangible" support (social support) and job involvement is significantly positive. It shows that tangible support is positively associated with job-involvement. It means that prison officers who receive material aid from others, their job involvement will also increase.

The relationship between third area of social support (belonging support) and job-involvement is found to be positive and significant. It supports the idea that if the belonging supports increase the level of job involvement also increases and vice-versa.

Coefficient of correlation between social support (overall) and job-involvement is also significantly positive. It means the prison

officers having high social support are committed more to their job involvement as compared to prison officers having low social support. The nature of correlation suggests that if the level of overall social support increases then the level of job involvement also increases and vice-versa. Thus the first, second, third and fourth hypotheses are confirmed.

Table-2 indicates that overall social support has highest F-value in step wise multiple regression analysis. Thus, the overall support has predicting power for job-involvement in prison officers. The other predictors for job-involvement in prison officers are belonging support, appraisal support and tangible support. Thus, on the basis of the step wise multiple regression analysis we can suggest that for prison officers overall social support as well as its three dimensions, namely, belonging support, appraisal support and tangible support are the predictors of job involvement. So the government should provide proper supportive system in the work settings of prison officers for maintaining and enhancing the high level of job-involvement. Thus, the fifth hypothesis is confirmed.

### Conclusion

It is concluded from the investigation that the social support (overall and area wise) and job involvement have highly significant positive relationship with each other. Overall social support is the highest significant predictor of job involvement for prison officers. The other predictors are belonging support, appraisal support and tangible support.

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