

Role of Organizational Communication on the Affective Commitment

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Abstract

Socio-economical changes nowadays have significant influence on the internal organizational processes. One considerable psychological predictor for employee efficiency is their commitment to the organization that they belong to. In that context, link between organizational communication as internal organizational processes and psychological factors that have potential influence on the global organizational and individual outputs, arouse interest for this research. Deeper research approach of the psychological factors identifies their causal relationship with organizational processes that enable assumption of activities for humanization of the working process. Subject of this research was level of affective component of organizational commitment influenced by flows of organizational communication (frequency of vertical, horizontal, diagonal and informal communication flow) and identification of difference between two groups of employees: managers and non-managers (executors). Research results toward influence of the communication flow on the level of the affective commitment confirmed the flows of organizational communication have no impact on the level of affective organizational commitment, with the exception of the lateral (diagonal) organizational communication. Communication among employees has significant impact on the degree of affective component of commitment. Research enable design of applicable internal measures and procedures for HRM to increase and maintain significant level of affective commitment such as: internal HRM strategic politics, procedures; practices for building confidence between managers and executives; Improving process of organizational communication.

Key Words: *Affective component, organizational commitment; organizational communication; employees.*

Introduction

The motive and purpose of conducting this scientific research in the field of organizational behavior in public administration is based on a relatively small number of investigated phenomena in this field. The issue stated of this research is referring to influence of flows of organizational communication (vertical, horizontal, diagonal and informal flow of communication) on the level of affective commitment to the civil servants in Macedonia. Sub question of this research is difference between managers and non-managers civil servants on this issue.

Although the research should provide the answer to the fundamental question concerning the impact of flows of organizational communication on the level of affective component of organizational commitment, their common denominator is individual and global efficiency and effectiveness, according to the principles

of efficiency and effectiveness as a result on the level of affective component of organizational commitment.

High levels of affective commitment not only contributes to employees invest more effort in working to achieve organizational goals, but also affects those specific forms of work behavior that belong to specific values (perseverance, innovation, strategic development). Thus, affective commitment bears responsibility for individual and organizational outcomes such as satisfaction, prosperity, low frequency of employees outgoing and increased productivity.

Literature review

Organizational communication and communication flows

The interaction within the organization is based on an established system of communication between employees that takes place in four directions of communication flows:

- 1) Vertical flow of communication,
- 2) Horizontal flow of communication
- 3) Diagonal (Lateral) flow of communication and
- 4) Informal flow of communication

1) Vertical flow of communication is communication between managers and workers. There is vertical downward - upward communication.

Message in *downward vertical communication* is communicated hierarchical, from the heads of the highest hierarchical level to the managers at the lowest level through direct contact, and then to the lowest levels of the hierarchical pyramid structure –to the executors. The lack of information coming from higher hierarchical structures that refer to tasks is a potential source of stress and uncertainty among employees (Donnelly, Gibsson, Ivancevich, 1998).

The *upward vertical communication* or input messages are sent from executors to managers. High level of organizational performance requires effective upward vertical communication, which is difficult to achieve, especially in larger organizational systems. But upward vertical communication is especially important for general decision making. In the course of organizational communication, top management wants to hear the voice of employees and learn organizational problems, and thus is given the opportunity to express their opinions, needs and influence in decision-making (Donnelly, Gibsson, Ivancevich, 1998; Markovits et. al., 2007)

2) Horizontal flow of communication occurs between employees working in the same or a different organizational unit, and is equal in status, in terms of the hierarchical pyramid structure. The contents of their messages can be request of assistance and cooperation for execution for tasks to achieve a personal, social and emotional relationships, formal or informal interaction between managers and workers of various units, and with the same status, which allows coordination of activities. It occurs in two types: problem solving or task execution in the department (communication between employees of the same department) and activities between departments (among employees from different units) (Kraljev, 2001).

3) Lateral (diagonal) flow of communication in the organization is particularly important in circumstances where employees can not communicate effectively through other flows of organizational communication. There is advantage over vertical and horizontal communication flow in situations when it's used to minimize the time and effort required for communicating messages in extensive organizational systems and between different organizational units. Lateral communication may occur in two types of communication:

- communication between employees of different levels of hierarchy, and
- communication between employees from different organizational units (Kralev, 2001).

4) Informal flow of organizational communication allows for informal transmission of information between employees, through informal, unofficial ways, and serves as a bypass mechanism in certain situations that is significantly faster than the formal communication system flow.

The attitude of the management structures of organizational systems to the informal flow of communication can be different. In larger organizational systems, management may consider informal communication for faster and efficient, as the precision that involves interaction of direct (face to face) communication among employees which has strong potential for rapid transmission of messages (information). Regarding the possibility of partial image and imprecision of data it is undesirable form of internal communication for management and acceptable form in terms of meeting the psychological needs of many employees. In organizations where it is undesirable, side effects are minimized by improving the information available to employees using other communication flows. In practice, the application of this internal communication flow allows management to provide feedback on the views of employees, their feelings and ideas and the transmission of messages to staff when is not available to be transferred to the same formal way.

Organizational commitment

Most studies link between employee and employer explaining with the term of organizational commitment. Widely accepted definition of organizational commitment is one that covers most of its aspects, concerns the extent to which employees are committed to the organization and agree to take more than the obligatory duties to support the organization, contribute to its success and to stay in it (Mowday, Porter and Streers, 1982; McMahon, 2007).

Organizational commitment has been the focus of empirical research series, because of its strong relationship with many attitudes and forms of behavior associated with the work. Among the numerous definitions and models of commitment concerning different aspects, Meyer and Allen (1990) has synthesized, now widely accepted and applied multidimensional concept of commitment, believing that it is the relationship of the employee with the organization of which reside in power to reduce the number of arbitrary abandonment, departures from the organization.

There is three-component model that distinguish three dimensions of commitment to the organization (Meyer and Allen 1990):

- 1) Affective commitment;
- 2) Normative commitment and
- 3) Continuous (permanent) commitment.

1) Affective commitment is the most representative component of organizational commitment. The weight of this component of the commitment, compared to the other two, due to her strong determination and prediction of the behavior of employees. Affective commitment is significantly effected by the quality of supervisor – subordinate relationships (Gerstner and Day 1997; Brunetto et. al, 2012; Matzler and Renzel, 2007)

The employees develop a sense of affective commitment to the organization when they feel competent to perform their tasks and are satisfied with their roles as members of the organization. The three dimensions of affective commitment which are at the same time indicators of the degree of development are:

- Emotional attachment to the employee with the organization;
- Identification with the organization and
- Involvement (participation) in the organization.

Employees with high affective commitment remain in organizational systems at their will, because they want to.

Meyer & Allen (1997), Trombetta & Rogers (1988), Thornhill et. al., (1996), Guzley (2001) and Sawalha & Zaitouni (2012) confirmed that open and transparent communication along with access to adequate information and participative decision - making involvement builds positive affective commitment. On the other hand, Young & Worchel (1998) highlighted that fostering a downward and upward flow of communication among different levels of the organization would influence the level of an employee's commitment and comfort in the workplace.

2) Normative commitment is reflected by a sense of moral duty, obligation and responsibility to stay with the organization, to behave in a way which is believed to be morally right, but not in a way that will meet their personal goals. Employees with a high level of normative commitment remain in the organization because they have to consider that it is morally right act (due to fees received for additional education, investment in training and professional development, etc.).

Factors contributing to the development of normative commitment to the work experience of employees, support from management, organizational rules and fairness as well as the working environment and clearly defined and described job and work as a whole (Meyer, 2002; Varona, 2008).

3) Prolonged (permanent) commitment reflects the assessment of losses and gains that could be achieved by staying in the organization and an assessment of the "price" that you have to pay employees for the eventual decision to leave the organization because the costs (losses) from leaving the organization are more important and bigger than the benefits. The costs include the loss of a solid salary and package of benefits already built up a network of business associates and contracts, reputation, require reallocation and cost of seeking a new job. Employees with a high level of sustained commitment remain in organizational systems because they have needs.

Factors affecting the development of the level of ongoing commitment to accumulated personal investment in the organization (to become a member of the system or to obtain a higher status) and the small number of alternative options for another job outside the specific organization.

Methodological Approach

For the purpose of the research, the data were collected by personally administered questionnaire comprised of 22 statements, divided into two sub groups, Organizational Commitment (15 statements) and Organizational Communication (7 statements). The responders marked their answers for each statement at 5 point Likert rating scale, that was used for measurement of extend to which respondents agree with each statement.

Responders were 202 employees in public administration in Macedonia, from four state institutions selected by random choice. Sample of respondents is deliberate, consists of respondents selected by assessment of representative ness of their role and hierarchical position in the population of employees (69 managers and 133 executors).

Interpretation of empirical data was obtained by processing of the received data with descriptive statistics- arithmetic mean (M) and standard deviation (δ).

To determine the impact of Flows of Organizational Communication on the dependent variable (affective component of Organizational Commitment) was applied the linear correlation method known as Pearson coefficient of correlation (r) given that the data were obtained at intervals of scale and expected proportional relationship between the variables.

By using the presented method, the aim of this study is to identify the influence of flows of organizational communication on affective component of organizational commitment through testing of the following hypothesis:

H: Flows of organizational communication influence positively to higher affective component of organizational commitment among civil servants

Flows of organizational communication has been treated as *independent variable*; affective component of organizational commitment as *dependent variable*; and emotional attachment to the institution, involvement with the organization and identification with the institution as *indicators*.

Results and Discussion

From the data obtained from respondents are calculated descriptive statistics, the arithmetic mean (M) and standard deviation (σ) for both groups of respondents - managers and executors (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

VARIABLE		Respondents					
		managers			executors		
		N1	69		N2	133	
		M (f)	σ	M	M (f)	σ	M
Affective component of organizational commitment		10,51	2,97	1,71	10,62	2,59	1,6
Flows of Organizational Communication	Downward vertical communication	3,28	0,58	3,54	3,21	0,85	3,47
	Upward vertical communication	4,35			4,35		
	Horizontal communication	4,64			4,53		
	Lateral (diagonal) communication	2,67			2,11		
	Informal communication	2,78			3,13		
Self-perception		4,64					
Need		4,52			4,69		

Legend:

- M- Arithmetic mean
- M₁- Arithmetic mean of managers
- M₂- Arithmetic mean of executives
- M (f) - Arithmetic mean of frequency of communications
- σ - Standard deviation
- σ_1 - Standard deviation of managers
- σ_2 - Standard deviation of non-managers
- S² - Variance

Distribution of scores of Affective component of organizational commitment

Sub - scale of questionnaire for examining the dependent variable of the study - affective component of organizational commitment, is composed of 15 statements, divided for all three indicators of affective commitment: emotional attachment of employees who work in the organization, identification and involvement with the institution in the work. For each of these indicators are placed several claims. Following, Table 2 shows the mean (M) for the three subcomponents of affective commitment.

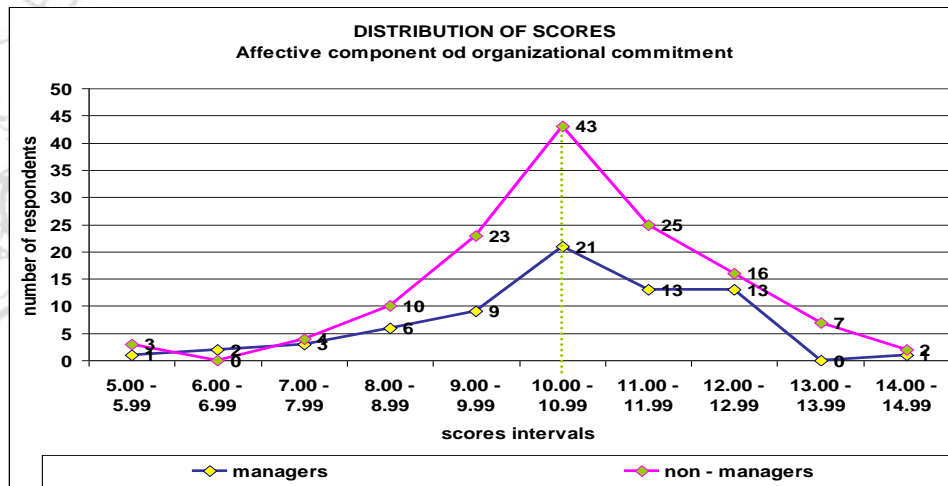
The value of the obtained score that indicates the extent of the affective component of organizational commitment for each respondent's is sum of scores that respondent has achieved for each predictor of affective commitment.

Table 2. Distribution of scores of Affective component of organizational commitment

VARIABLE	Respondents	
	managers	non - managers
	N = 69	N = 133
	M	M
Affective commitment	10,51	10,62
Emotional attachment to the authority	3,29	3,38
Identification with the organization	3,35	3,52
Work involvement	3,87	3,66

The lowest value of the obtained scores for affective commitment is 5.61, while the highest value achieved is 14.43. Obtained scores of survey about respondent's level of affective commitment are distributed at intervals, due to their high variability, in order to be graphically displayed. The Figure 1 shows the distribution and percentage of achieved scores that indicate the level of affective commitment, at intervals with a value of 5.00 - 5.99 14.00 - 14.99. Twenty one manager respondents that are 31% of the total number of manager respondents have value of affective commitment in the interval from 10.00 to 10.99. Forty three non- manager respondents that is 32% of the total number of non - manager respondents reached almost affective commitment with the same value in the interval from 10.00 to 10.99.

Figure 1. Distribution of scores



Distribution of scores of Flows of Organizational Communication

The second part (sub – scale) of the questionnaire for examining the flows of organizational communication is composed of 7 claims of which one claim is set only for managers. In the second part of the questionnaire respondents expressed the frequency of communication with various flows.

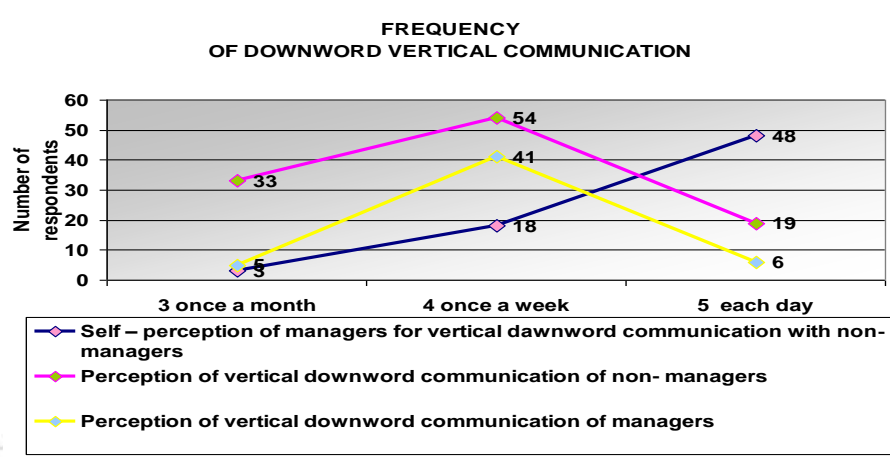
Vertical communication

Downward vertical communication

For the frequency of downward vertical communication that managers under the hierarchy have with their subordinates, are taken into account the opinion of executives, managers and the self-perception of managers. The Figure 2 shows the distribution of scores for employees perception of vertical downward communication that apply managers according to hierarchy and scores for the self-perception of managers in the implementation of the ongoing organizational communication with subordinates. Despite the results

of managers and executives that the frequency of communication with their supervisor has the highest weekly scores (which reported 59% of managers and 38% of executors), a high percentage of 70% or 48 respondents of managers subjectively assessed by self-perception that meet the daily needs of their employees for the transmission of the information from qualitative and quantitative point of view on issues of interest to the working performance of tasks.

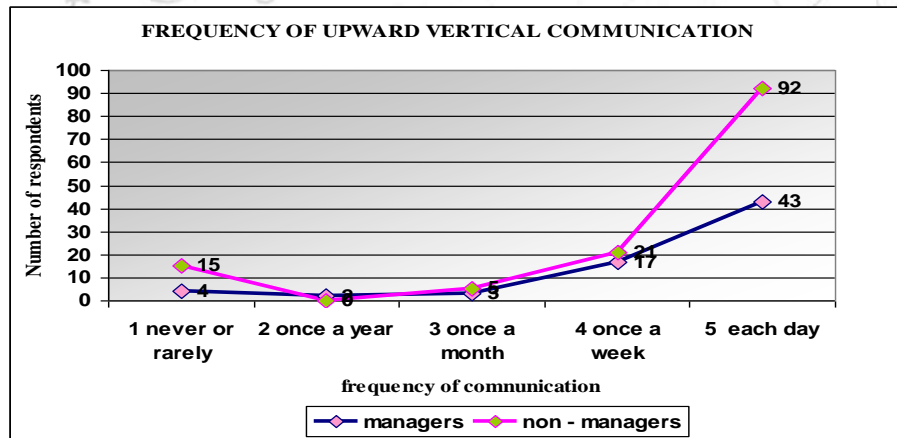
Figure 2. Frequency of downward vertical communication



Upward vertical communication

The results for the frequency of communication in the direction of the executors to the management structures of the system specifically for the application of vertical upward communication, is shown in Figure 3. The results show a high frequency of upward vertical communication each day (which is reported by 92 managers - 59% and 43 of executors - 38%).

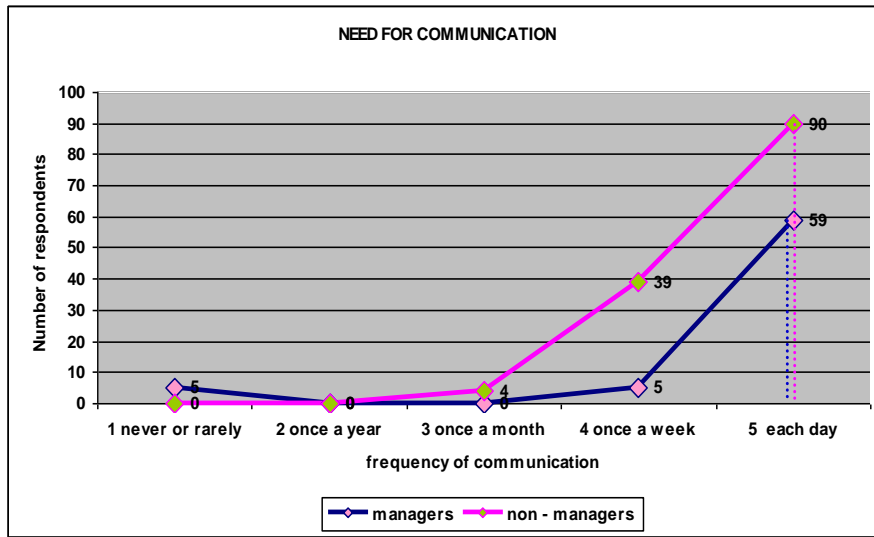
Figure 3. Frequency of upward vertical communication



Need for vertical communication

In Figure 4 is shown the need for vertical communication of both groups of respondents. The need for vertical communication shows upwards in terms of frequency - need for vertical communication every day that said 86% managers (59 respondents) and 68% of executors (90 respondents).

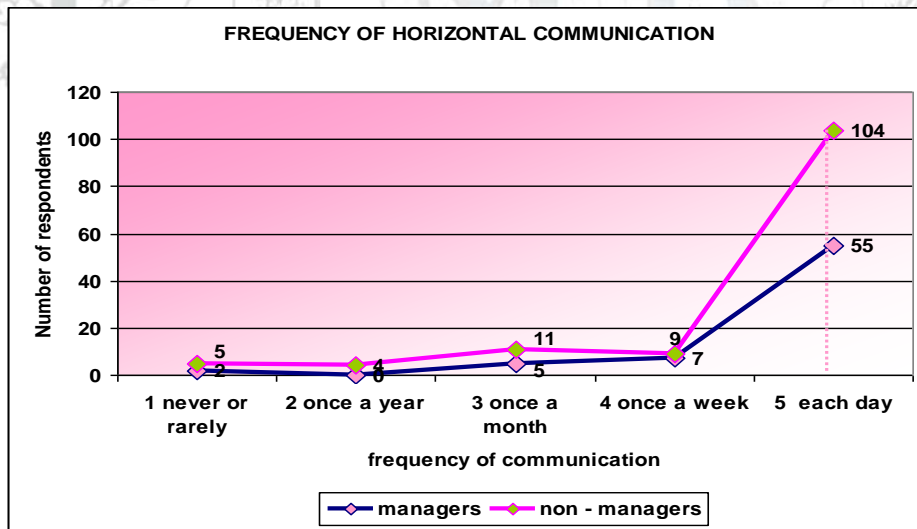
Figure 4. Distribution of scores that identified need for communication



Horizontal communication

Distribution and percentage of scores for the frequency of communication among employed with the same status, or title, of the same or other organizational unit is illustrated by Figure 5 and show a highest frequency for each day communication.

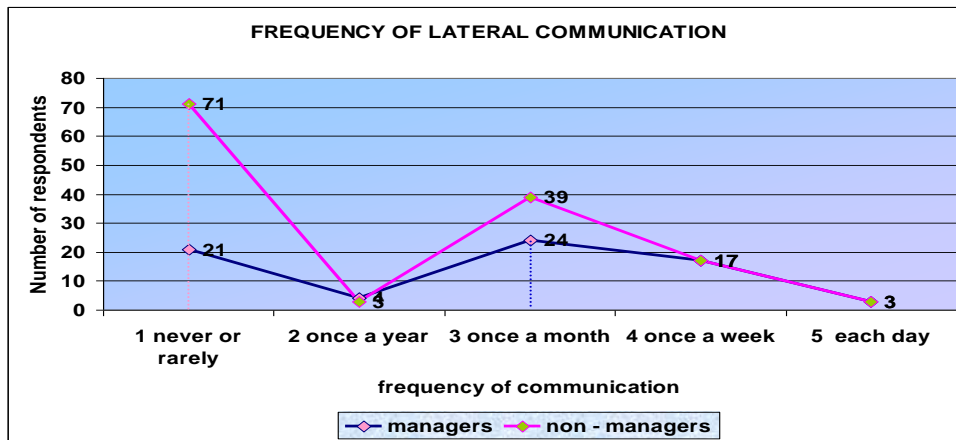
Figure 5. Frequency of horizontal communication



Lateral (diagonal) communication

Scores for the frequency of application of organizational communication with diagonal flow that achieved both groups of respondents are presented in Figure 6 and show low level of communication frequency.

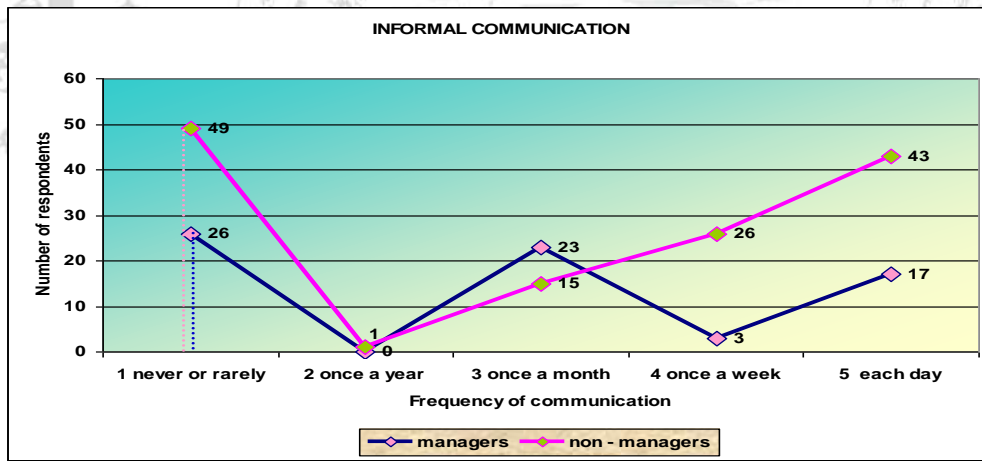
Figure 6 Frequency of lateral communication



Informal communication

The results for the manifestation and application of informal communication of employees within the organization are shown in Figure 7. Application or non-application of this flow of communication under frequency never and every day is almost equal - percentage of respondents who said they never used informal communication with colleagues is almost equal with the percentage of respondents who reported that apply informal communication every day.

Figure 7. Frequency of informal communication



Pearson coefficient of correlation (r)

Research hypothesis that H: Flows of organizational communication influence positively to higher affective component of organizational commitment among civil servants is testing with Pearson correlation coefficient (r) (Table 3).

Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficient (r)

r	df	p
0,112	200	> .05

The result of Pearson coefficient of correlation demonstrates that the value for relevance of the level 0.05 is greater than the value of the correlation coefficient, which shows that *organizational communication flows have no influence on the level of affective organizational commitment.*

The obtained values of the Pearson correlation coefficient for the separate influence of each of the four flows of organizational communication on the degree on the affective component of organizational commitment is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Pearson correlation coefficient (r)

Flows of organizational communication	r	df	P
Downward vertical communication	0,116	200	> .05
Upward vertical communication	0,08	200	> .05
Horizontal communication	0,163	200	> .05
Lateral (diagonal) communication	0,05	200	< .05
Informal communication	0,065	200	> .05

Obtained statistical parameters for Pearson correlation coefficient for each of the four flows of organizational communication, shows that only the *lateral (diagonal) flow of organizational communication* confirms the presumed claim that the more frequent communication with colleagues *have influence for higher degree of affective organizational commitment.*

Conclusion

The results of this survey have confirmed that the flows of organizational communication have no impact on the level of affective organizational commitment, with the exception of the lateral (diagonal) organizational communication. Communication among employees has significant impact on the degree of affective component of commitment.

The positive impact of lateral (diagonal) organizational communication on affective component of organizational commitment comes as a result of spontaneous and proactive collaboration with colleagues to overcome work situations, sharing views and values without feeling the fear and competitiveness arising from subordinates and ordered relations within the hierarchy of the organization. Thus, this way of communication flow affects the emotional attachment of liability to employees for individual and organizational performance and productivity in the work.

The results of low frequency of lateral (diagonal) organizational communication of the survey participants, both the managers and the executors in public administration in Macedonia, indicating a lack of proactive cooperation of public servants, in cases when rapid and qualitatively significant meeting of work task is required. On the other hand, hierarchical flow of information as a regular and defined systematic process remains an important aspect of organizational management.

Research results enable design of applicable internal measures and procedures for HRM such as: Concern about human factors in organization; Creating, defining and implementing process for discovering internal politics, procedures: Short and long term policies; Building confidence between managers and executives; Improving process of organizational communication on individual and organizational level; Commitment and managers attention toward affective component of organizational commitment.

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