“The impact of working conditions on commitment of academic employees: A socio-affective perspective”

AUTHORS	Baphiwe Daweti Njabulo Khumalo Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha

ARTICLE INFO	Baphiwe Daweti, Njabulo Khumalo and Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha (2024). The impact of working conditions on commitment of academic employees: A socio-affective perspective. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, *22*(1), 524-533. doi:10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42
DOI	http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42
RELEASED ON	Monday, 11 March 2024
RECEIVED ON	Thursday, 12 October 2023
ACCEPTED ON	Thursday, 04 January 2024

JOURNAL	"Problems and Perspectives in Management"
ISSN PRINT	1727-7051
ISSN ONLINE	1810-5467
PUBLISHER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”
FOUNDER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”

NUMBER OF REFERENCES	NUMBER OF FIGURES	NUMBER OF TABLES
40	0	5

BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES

LLC "CPC "Business Perspectives"
Hryhorii Skovoroda lane, 10,
Sumy, 40022, Ukraine

www.businessperspectives.org

Baphiwe Daweti (South Africa), **Njabulo Khumalo** (South Africa),
Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha (South Africa)

THE IMPACT OF WORKING CONDITIONS ON COMMITMENT OF ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES: A SOCIO-AFFECTIVE PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

Academic employees face declining working conditions that may reduce the level of commitment to resource-constrained public higher education institutions. The purpose of the study is to examine whether strong social interactions at work affect academic employee commitment amid a poor state of physical working conditions in under-resourced public higher education institutions. A cross-sectional survey obtained data from 63 academic employees across six faculties at a large, under-resourced public higher education institution located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Academic employees taught many under-prepared students, primarily from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, using limited physical resources. The linear regression (r = –.0.52, CR = 3.21, p = < .001) results showed that stable social interactions were associated with high employee commitment in resource-constrained institutions. Academic employees remain highly committed to the institution despite the poor physical working conditions. The study extends the affective perspective by showing that employees build regular social interactions to remain highly committed and overlook limited access to physical workplace resources. Leaders ought to create regular social interaction opportunities between employees to foster high employee commitment amid inadequate physical working conditions.

Keywords social interactions, affective, employee commitment, physical working conditions, higher education

JEL Classification J81, D23, M12

Received on: 12th of October, 2023
Accepted on: 4th of January, 2024
Published on: 11th of March, 2024

Baphiwe Daweti, M. Tech, Lecturer, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Durban University of Technology, South Africa. (Corresponding author)

Njabulo Khumalo, Ph.D., Lecturer, Management, Information Technology, and Governance Department, College of Law and Management Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Durban University of Technology, South Africa.

Conflict of interest statement:
Author(s) reported no conflict of interest

INTRODUCTION

The external and internal drivers of employee commitment have been established in organizational research. The extensive use of external resources for employee development has reduced the internal desire for employees to leave an institution by remaining committed to the workplace. Using financial resources to improve physical working conditions creates foundations that support employees to increase motivation and commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ren et al., 2023). Beyond physical working conditions, more implementation of intentional social interaction opportunities between academic employees is likely to enhance the level of commitment to a resource-constrained public higher education institution in the developing world. In South Africa, academic employees face pressure to remain committed to under-resourced institutions characterized by a rising number of under-prepared students, declining state financial support, and inadequate physical working conditions.

It is interesting to examine whether the commitment of academic employees depends on the strength of social interactions with peers amid

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42

a poor state of physical working conditions in a historically disadvantaged public higher education institution. Academic employees are likely to be highly committed to an institution if social interactions between peers are strong. In addition, employees may remain highly committed to an institution despite limited physical working conditions.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

An early stream of research on organizational commitment explored the external financial investments leaders make in employees for retention. The outcomes of developed and highly committed employees are additional to value and the organization's overall performance. Building on the earlier research stream (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Becker, 1960), later studies (Cohen, 2007; Colquitt et al., 2013) uncovered the internal psychological foundations that employees use to maintain high levels of commitment toward an organization. Employees who are highly committed to an organization show high internal motivation to perform job tasks and maintain continuous loyalty to the workplace. Both earlier and later research streams have deepened the definition and measurement of organizational commitment within organizational research.

There is consensus among scholars about defining and measuring the concept of organizational commitment in organizational scholarship. Organizational commitment is an employee who is psychologically and emotionally attached to an organization. Highlighting the widely accepted definition shows the maturing development of organizational commitment (Becker, 1960; Mwesigwa et al., 2020; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017; Schwarz et al., 2023). Extending the definition is the adoption of a widely validated employee satisfaction scale used to measure organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). While the definition and measurement of the concept have been established, examining organizational commitment continues to generate research among scholars from multiple perspectives.

Organizational commitment is analyzed from the normative, continuance, and affective perspectives. The normative perspective suggests that an employee feels indebted and obligated to remain employed by the organization for moral and ethical reasons. The continuance perspective points to an employee who derives beneficial economic value from remaining employed by the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Maltin, 2010; Ngo-Henha & Khumalo, 2022). The affective perspective is about an employee who feels emotionally aligned with the organizational values. After considering the multiple perspectives of organizational commitment, the affective lens seems most appropriate to investigate the drivers and outcomes of employee commitment, especially in resource-constrained contexts such as the public higher education sector in the developing world.

The drivers and workplace outcomes of organizational commitment have been established in several studies over time. To exemplify, the job-related well-being driver has been associated with employee competence from the affective perspective (Kim & Beehr, 2020; Mihalache & Mihalache, 2022; Soundararajan et al., 2021; Tang & Vandenbergh, 2020). Further studies have assumed the affective perspective as foundational to increased job performance, improved organizational success, and reduced labor turnover outcomes. Yet, employees may be loaded with more work for showing affective commitment to the workplace in resource-constrained contexts, which could negatively influence employees' well-being and highlight a need to build social interaction networks as support means at work.

Employees experience social interactions with colleagues as part of the nature of working conditions. Satisfactory interpersonal networks may be experienced by employees who identify with organizational values and feel part of the organization's future. The volume of emotional resources invested in work experiences affects employees and the extent of feeling part of the overall positive organization's well-being (Bakker et al., 2023; Cao & Hamori, 2020; Ehrhardt & Ragins, 2019; Heaphy & Dutton, 2008; Manyisa & van

Aswegen, 2017; Methot et al., 2020). High job demands will likely require extended social and emotional effort from employees expected to perform job tasks optimally while dealing with limited access to support in resource-constrained institutions. Employees may carry high workloads due to a shortage of employees, face increased pressures to deliver work tasks on time, and oversee extended responsibilities while reducing time for social interactions at work. Excessive physical job demands can further drain employee energy, heighten internal psychological strain, and increase job burnout.

Employees perform job duties under physical working conditions that may be sufficient to meet workplace outcomes. In well-resourced physical working conditions, employees demonstrate enhanced performance of job tasks, strong commitment to the organization, and higher motivation to remain employed. Taken together, studies have found that employees require appropriate job resources to perform job tasks effectively (Albrecht & Matry, 2017; Amis et al., 2020; Hirschi & Spurk, 2021; Meyer et al., 2018) under conducive conditions for heightened employee commitment. Poor physical working conditions negatively affect public service organizations such as public hospitals. The lack of access to appropriate facilities for health services, a shortage of requisite patient equipment, and a lack of resourceful leaders may reduce employee commitment and establish a need for regular social interactions between colleagues, especially in under-resourced conditions of the developing world.

The type of leader influences employee commitment and affects emotional connections between peers at work. To exemplify, weak leaders have reduced the high affective commitment of employees to the organization (Bunjak et al., 2023; McCormick & Donohue, 2019; Robert & Vandenberghe, 2021). The observation is not surprising considering that leaders hold the power to influence decisions about fostering social and physical working conditions conducive to highly committed employees who perform job tasks effectively. Weak leaders lack the fortitude to galvanize the required resources to build a social and physical working environment for employees to remain committed to an organization. Hence, employees require strong leaders who inspire emotional connections and provide direction for employees to be highly committed to the organization.

Undoubtedly, leaders prefer employees who are highly committed to the organization and contribute to desirable workplace outcomes. Highly committed employees demonstrate strong behaviors that contribute to better organizational performance and initiate conducive conditions for positive workplace experiences (Meyer et al., 2018; Sungu et al., 2020; van Rossenberg et al., 2022). Without commitment at work, employees may be encouraged to leave a resource-constrained organization for better opportunities, stronger social bonds, and improved physical working conditions. Hence, leaders might consider ways to strengthen employee commitment despite institutional voids in sectors such as public higher education in the developing world.

The institutional voids are often associated with the developing world, such as South Africa, which necessitates leaders to deploy limited resources to heighten employee commitment and reduce labor turnover, particularly in historically disadvantaged public higher education institutions. In resource-constrained contexts, academic employees explore alternative mechanisms to mitigate insufficient job equipment and facilities to remain committed to the institution (Bothello et al., 2019). In South Africa, the public higher education sector needs more competent academic employees to teach large numbers of students post-apartheid. There are limited appropriate facilities and classrooms to accommodate academic employees and the rising student population. The state is reducing funding of public higher education institutions, resulting in fewer teaching and research resources to deliver quality education.

In South Africa, higher education institutions have encountered student protests for more student funding, which pressure academic employees and leaders to resolve protests and deliver quality education. The disruptions further strained financial resources to replace vandalized institutional property. Academic employees contend with backlogs in resource requests such as appropriate teaching equipment and suitable

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42

learning materials, shorter assessment completion schedules, and expectations to publish research papers regularly (Council for Higher Education, 2022). In resource-constrained contexts, academic employees navigate internal and external stakeholder pressures to maintain a commitment to the organization, which may require social interactions between employees as a form of support.

There is a lack of regular social interaction opportunities between academic employees, which can promote high employee commitment amid inadequate physical working conditions in South Africa's public higher education institutions. Social interactions to maintain high employee commitment in physically challenged working conditions are under-researched. The study aims to examine whether academic employee commitment is affected by strong social interactions amid a poor state of physical working conditions in under-resourced public higher education institutions. The study hypothesizes that

H1: Employees are more likely to show a high level of commitment if social interactions are strong even though physical working conditions are poor.

2. METHODS

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from academic employees who worked for a selected public higher education institution in developing South Africa (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). The historically disadvantaged public higher education institution has faced resource constraints to meet academic employee needs. There has been a shortage of competent academic employees to fulfill the rising demand for research knowledge production and teaching of large class sizes (Council for Higher Education, 2022). The selected public higher education institution has primarily focused on vocational training and recently introduced research, which further demands academic employees to publish research articles and teach underprepared students. The study's analysis level was the selected public higher education institution located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

The target population comprised 722 academic employees who were junior lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors, associate directors, directors, and full professors. A systematic random sample of every fifth email address was selected from an email list of combined board members across six faculties at the selected public higher education institution. The institutional faculties were management sciences, health science, arts and design, applied sciences, engineering, and built environment, as well as accounting and informatics. The unit of analysis of the study was the individual academic employee. From the 722 target population size of academic employees across six faculties, a sample of recommended (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019) 150 respondents was drawn from the email lists.

Existing measures were adapted to collect data from the 150 sampled respondents. Meyer and Allen's (1990) seven-statement questionnaire was used to collect data about the concept of employee commitment. The employee commitment questionnaire statements included "I am proud to tell people that I am part of this institution," "I speak highly of my institution to my friends," and "I do not care about the fate of this institution." In a bid to measure the working conditions concept, the employee satisfaction scale was used (Harter et al., 2002) with questionnaire items such as "The physical surroundings of my workplace are good," "My workplace is isolated from colleagues," and "I have good facilities to work with on my job." The questionnaire was assessed for social desirability bias by readjusting questionnaire statements (Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Podsakoff et al., 2003) and introducing control variables (Z) of respondents' personal information.

The systematically random sampled respondents (150) were invited to participate in the study by completing an online questionnaire if they so wished to comply with research ethical protocols. An online survey was conducted using Google Forms over several weeks and sending regular invitation reminders to sampled respondents (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Evans & Marthur, 2018; Honig et al., 2017) to voluntarily participate anonymously. After conducting the online survey, 63 completed questionnaires were re-

turned by the potential respondents of the study. Based on the randomly sampled responses (150), the survey response rate (42%) was higher than the 10% to 20% response rate usually associated with online surveys in anticipation of data analysis procedures.

The data were analyzed to obtain descriptive results of frequencies (F) and percentages (%) to describe the demographic profile of respondents, such as gender, using the SPSS computer software. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis was conducted using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk tests to obtain the mean $\left(\overrightarrow{X}\right)$ and standard deviation (SD) scores and check for the skewness of the dataset for organizational commitment and working conditions constructs. The confirmatory factor scores were obtained to assess the validity (σ) of organizational commitment and working conditions constructs and checked whether measure items had loading higher than .70 as recommended by Hair et al. (2020). The factors for organizational commitment and working conditions construct, with an eigenvalue greater than one, were computed from principal component analysis using the rotation method varimax with Kaiser normalization on SPSS software.

After measures were adapted, piloted, and checked for common method bias resulting in minor changes of language editing, the reliability scores were drawn by conducting a Cronbach's Alpha (α) test for organizational commitment and working conditions constructs on SPSS. For the robustness of the reliability results, the collinearity tests were performed to determine the convergence and discriminate validity scores of organizational commitment and working conditions constructs. The correlation (r) test scores were drawn to determine associations between the state of working conditions and the level of employee commitment based on the dataset. A linear regression statistical analysis was conducted to determine the direction of the hypothesis of the study on organizational commitment and working conditions. The percentage (%) scores for working conditions were further analyzed to obtain scores for physical and social dimensions in pursuit of the robustness of the study.

3. RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

Variables	Frequency (*F*) [n = 63]	Percentage (%) [100]
Gender		
Male	27	42.9
Female	36	57.1
Age group		
18-35	9	14.3
36-49	23	36.5
50-65	31	49.2
Employment type		
Permanent	60	95.2
Temporary	3	4.8
Faculty		
Management Science	16	25.4
Health Science	14	22.2
Arts and Design	11	17.5
Applied Sciences	2	3.2
Engineering and Built Environment	6	9.5
Accounting and Informatics	14	22.2

The data were analyzed to describe the demographic profile of respondents as a unit of analysis, as illustrated in Table 1. The demographic results of the dataset showed that there were more females (F = 86, n = 63, 57.1%) than males (F = 27, n = 63, 42.9%), with most respondents aged (F = 31, n = 63, 49.2%) between 50 to 65 years. Older employees may have more nuanced insights into working conditions and maintenance of commitment at work than younger employees from a different generation and time in South Africa's history of apartheid and democracy. Gender differences between respondents may highlight variations in responses to the need for frequent social interactions and the state of physical aspects of working conditions concerning the level of commitment at work.

The majority of respondents (F = 60, n = 63, 95.2%) were employed permanently and worked for the largest faculty of management sciences (F = 16, n = 63, 25.4%), with few respondents emanating from the faculty of engineering and built environment (F = 6, n = 63, 9.5%) as shown in Table 1. Permanent employees can have unique perspectives on resourcing of working conditions and level of commitment compared to temporary employees who would leave the institution when contracts are terminated. Some faculties, such as engineering,

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42

are more resource-intensive due to the equipment needed to teach and conduct research than management sciences, which are less resource-intensive and may provide insightful responses from academic employees. Overall, the demographic results in Table 1 indicated a varied profile of respondents at a selected South African public higher education institution. The gender, age, employment type, and faculty aspects were added as control variables (Z) in all statistical tests on SPSS and found to not affect the results of the study, in preparation for factor analysis procedures.

To test the validity (σ) of the organizational commitment construct, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on SPSS as depicted in Table 2. The confirmatory factor analysis result score (.78) was satisfactory, as recommended to be about .70 by Hair et al. (2020). The organizational commitment mean score $\left(\vec{X}\right)$ was 2.46, with a satisfactory standard deviation (*SD*) score of 1.05, and a collinearity score of 0.94. Based on the results, the standard deviation *(SD)* was fairly close to the mean score $\left(\vec{X}\right)$ with a high collinearity score showing convergent and discriminant validity of organizational commitment. The Cronbach's alpha (α) reliability score was 0.88, which indicated a high internal consistency of organizational commitment questionnaire items loadings. In analyzing variance in the dataset (ANOVA) using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk, the data were fairly evenly distributed on SPSS. Based on the test results, the organizational commitment construct measure was reliable and valid.

To test the validity (σ) of the working conditions construct, the confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on SPSS as shown in Table 2. The working conditions validity (σ) result score (.81) was satisfactory. The working conditions mean score $\left(\vec{X}\right)$ was 2.98, with standard deviations *(SD)* at a satisfactory 1.27, which was fairly close to the mean $\left(\vec{X}\right)$ and a high collinearity score of 0.94, which showed convergent and discriminant validity. The Cronbach's alpha reliability (α) score was 0.88, showing high internal consistency of questionnaire items of the working conditions construct. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk tests demonstrated a fairly evenly distribution of data for the working conditions construct on SPSS. Based on the test results, the working conditions measure of the study was found to be valid and reliable in anticipation of correlation statistical tests.

The study conducted a two-tailed correlation (*r*) statistical test to analyze the association between organizational commitment (X) and working conditions (Y) constructs based on the dataset as illustrated in Table 3. The correlation (*r*) results showed a strong correlation (r = –.464**, p = < .001) between organizational commitment (X) and working conditions (Y) constructs, based on 63 respondents and a p-value of .001 at 95% of significance, with a 5% margin of error on SPSS. The negative correlation score (r = –.464) further demonstrated that high employee commitment (X) was connected to poor working conditions (Y) in the study. The correlation (*r*) results underscore that inadequate physical facilities and materials were unlikely to decrease the high employee commitment in resource-constrained contexts.

The study hypothesizes that employees are more likely to show a high level of commitment to an organization if social interactions are strong amid

Table 2. Organizational commitment and working conditions validity and reliability

Variable	Factor score	Mean $\left(\vec{X}\right)$	Standard deviation	Collinearity (σ)	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Organizational Commitment	.78	2.46	1.05	0.94	0.88
Working Conditions	.81	2.98	1.27	0.94	0.88

Table 3. Association between organizational commitment and working conditions

Variables	Organizational commitment	Working conditions
Organizational commitment	Pearson correlation	–.464**
Working conditions	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001

Note: p < .001.

Table 4. High organizational commitment and poor working conditions

Hypothesis	Dependent variable	Independent variable	Standardized coefficient	S.E.	Critical ration	P	Result
H1	Organizational commitment	Working conditions	–0.52	0.07	–3.21	0.001	Supported

Note: p < .001.

Table 5. Social interactions of working conditions descriptive results

Questionnaire statement	SA, %	A, %	NS, %	D, %	SD, %
My workplace is isolated from colleagues	1.6	17.5	4.8	63.5	12.6
I am isolated from the workgroup of my job	3.2	14.3	6.3	63.5	12.7
I work with and around colleagues on my job	14.3	65.1	4.8	12.7	3.1

Note: SA = strongly agree; A = Agree; NS = Not sure; D= Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree.

poor physical working conditions, as illustrated in Table 4. A linear regression statistical analysis was conducted to test this hypothesis on SPSS. The regression result (r = –0.52, CR = –3.21, SE = 0.07, p = 0.001) showed that high organizational commitment was strongly associated with poor working conditions with a high p-value at < 0.01 and 95% level of significance with a 5% margin of error. The regression results demonstrated that employees were highly committed to an organization in the wake of inadequate physical working conditions and limited access to facilities and equipment. Therefore, the regression results supported the hypothesis of the study.

For robustness of the regression results, the data were analyzed to obtain the descriptive frequencies (F) and percentages (%) of responses on social interactions between peers as part of working conditions as illustrated in Table 5. In the descriptive results of social interactions, most respondents disagreed (63.5%) with questionnaire statements "My workplace is isolated from colleagues" and "I am isolated from the workgroup of my job" as well as agreed (65.1%) with "I work with and around colleagues on my job." The descriptive results showed that social interaction was a mechanism for maintaining a high level of commitment among employees in resource-constrained contexts.

4. DISCUSSION

The study examined whether academic employee commitment was affected by strong social interactions and poor physical working conditions in under-resourced public higher education institutions. The study found that strong social interactions between academic employees maintain a high level of employee commitment in resource-constrained workplaces. By highlighting social interactions (Ehrhardt & Ragins, 2019) as a mechanism to increase employee commitment in resource-constrained contexts, the study extends the affective perspective (Allen & Meyer, 1990) of organizational commitment scholarship. The deepening of conceptualization and application of high employee commitment by offering a social interactions dimension ought to assist academic leaders in influencing academic employees to remain highly committed in the workplace. In turn, academic employees can better deliver teaching and research to underprepared students in public higher education in the developing world.

Since social interactions between employees maintain high employee commitment, employees probably draw emotional support from peers and reduce the likelihood of employees resigning. The claim is consistent with Kim and Beehr (2020), who found that affectionately connected employees were unlikely to leave the organization. The suggestion is that, instead of promoting the individual academic work of employees as a standard of performance, the collaboration approach is better suited to promoting emotional support between peers for personal and team benefit. In this regard, academic leaders ought to allocate spaces and times for employees to socialize regularly, such as common areas, institutional days for team attendance, and public celebrations of teamwork to foster stronger social connections and sustain high employee commitment, especially in resource-constrained conditions.

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42

While leaders have limited access to resources for investments in physical work environment improvement, building social relations between colleagues is necessary to sustaining employee commitment in resource-constrained contexts such as the public higher education sector (Bothello et al., 2019). The shortage of funding from the state which has to navigate multiple employees needs curb corrupt means of using state taxes to support academic employees, and better reporting of usage of institutional funds requires internal controls and partnerships to promote stronger social interactions between peers. Recognition and support of academic employees can be based on the extent of promotion of social interactions to keep academic employees highly committed to teaching, research, and fundraising at work.

Academic employees contend with backlogs and delays in improving facilities and equipment required to teach and conduct research, which negatively affects the quality of education in public higher education institutions. The observation suggests that resource constraints affect the provision of quality transformative education for previously disadvantaged students in public higher education in the developing world (Council for Higher Education, 2022). Leaders ought to implement unique strategies to keep academic employees highly committed and retained to provide quality education and research in public higher education institutions. Leaders should build employee social networks to improve employee commitment, even though physical working conditions are inadequate in resource-constrained contexts.

The study has combined stable social interactions as an internal driver to external driver of poor physical conditions of facilities and equipment to maintain high employee commitment in resource-constrained contexts. Academic employees pursue strong social bonds with peers to address poor access to appropriate teaching and research equipment. By socializing with colleagues at work through shared teaching and research material, employees promote a culture that fosters high employee commitment despite inadequate physical resource conditions in the public higher education sector in the developing world.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate if strong social bonds between academic employees influenced a high level of commitment amid inferior physical working conditions in under-resourced public higher education institutions. The results showed that employees built strong social interactions with peers to remain highly committed despite poor physical working conditions. Leaders should deploy social interactions between colleagues to mitigate poor physical working conditions in resource-constrained contexts. The study extends the affective perspective by integrating the internal driver of social interactions with the external driver of poor physical working conditions by means of promoting high employee commitment in resource-constrained contexts.

As the study examined social and physical aspects of working conditions at the individual unit and singular organization levels, future studies can evaluate the social interactions dimension in and between teams and organizations across sectors. Beyond the affective perspective of organizational commitment, the study proposes that normative and continuance perspectives should be harnessed to examine social interaction dimensions and employee commitment. Since the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, future studies can collect data longitudinally using multiple data sources to investigate whether gradual changes to social interactions impact employee commitment differently.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Baphiwe Daweti.
Data curation: Baphiwe Daweti.
Formal analysis: Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha.
Funding acquisition: Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha.

Investigation: Baphiwe Daweti, Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha.
Methodology: Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha.
Resources: Njabulo Khumalo.
Visualization: Njabulo Khumalo.
Writing – original draft: Baphiwe Daweti, Njabulo Khumalo.
Writing – review & editing: Njabulo Khumalo, Pauline Edwige Ngo-Henha.

REFERENCES

1. Albrecht, S. L., & Matry, A. (2017). Personality, self-efficacy, and job resources and their associations with employee engagement, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(5), 657-681. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1362660
2. Allen, N.J., & Meyer, J.P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 63*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x
3. Amis, J.M., Mair, J., & Munir, K.A. (2020). The organizational reproduction of inequality. *Academy of Management Annals, 14*(1), 195-230. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2017.0033
4. Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. (2023). Job demands-resource theory: Ten years later. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 10,* 25-53. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-120920-053933
5. Becker, H.S. (1960). Notes on the concept of commitment. *American Journal of Sociology, 66*(1), 32-40. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2773219
6. Bothello, J., Nason, R. S., & Schnyder, G. (2019). Institutional voids and organization studies: Towards an epistemological rupture. *Organization Studies, 40*(10), 1499-1512. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840618819037
7. Bunjak, A., Černe, M., Nagy, N., & Bruch, H. (2023). Job demands and burnout: The multilevel boundary conditions of collective trust and competitive pressure. *Human Relations, 76*(5), 657-688. https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267211059826
8. Cao, J., & Hamori, M. (2020). How can employers benefit most from developmental job experiences? The needs-supplies fit perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 105*(4), 422-432. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000449
9. Cohen, A. (2007). Commitment before and after: An evaluation and reconceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 17*(3), 336-354. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2007.05.001
10. Colquitt, J. A., Scott, B. A., Rodell, J. B., Long, D. M., Zapata, C. P., Conlon, D. E., & Wesson, M. J. (2013). Justice at the millennium, a decade later: A meta-analytic test of social exchange and affect-based perspectives. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 98*(2), 199-236. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031757
11. Council for Higher Education. (2022). *National Review of South African Doctoral Qualifications.* South Africa: Council for Higher Education.
12. Cunliffe, A. L., & Alcadipani, R. (2016). The politics of access in fieldwork: Immersion, backstage drama, and deception. *Organizational Research Methods, 19*(4), 535-561. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428116639134
13. Ehrhardt, K., & Ragins, B. R. (2019). Relational attachment at work: A complementary fit perspective on the role of relationships in organizational life. *Academy of Management Journal, 62*(1), 248-282. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.0245
14. Evans, J. R., & Marthur, A. (2018). The value of online surveys: A look back and a look ahead. *Internet Research, 28*(4), 854-887. https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-03-2018-0089
15. Hair Jr., J. F., Howard, M. C., & Nitzl, C. (2020). Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis. *Journal of Business Research, 109,* 101-110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.069
16. Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(2), 268-279. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.2.268
17. Heaphy, E. D., & Dutton, J. (2008). Positive social interactions and the human body at work: Linking organizations and physiology. *Academy of Management Review, 33*(1), 137-162. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2008.27749365
18. Hirschi, A., & Spurk, D. (2021). Ambitious employees: Why and when ambition relates to performance and organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 127*, 103576. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103576
19. Honig, B., Lampel, J., Siegel, D., & Drnevich, P. (2017). Special section on ethics in management research: Norms, identity, and community in the 21st century. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 16*(1), 84-93. https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0023
20. Kim, M., & Beehr, T. A. (2020). Empowering leadership: Leading people to be present through affective organizational commit-

http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(1).2024.42

ment. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(16), 2017-2044. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1424017

21. Lindell, M.K., & Whitney, D.J. (2001). Accounting for common method variance in cross-sectional research designs. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(1), 114-121. Retrieved from https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.114
22. Manyisa, Z. M., & van Aswegen, E. J. (2017). Factors affecting working conditions in a public hospital: A literature review. *International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences, 6,* 28-38. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijans.2017.02.002
23. McCormick, L., & Donohue, R. (2019). Antecedents of affective and normative commitment of organizational volunteers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 30*(18), 2581-2604. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1166388
24. Methot, J. R., Rosado-Solomon, E. H., Downes, P. E., & Gabriel, A. S. (2020). Office chit-chat as a social ritual: The uplifting yet distracting effects of daily small talk at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 64*(5), 3-55. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.1474
25. Meyer, J. P., & Maltin, E. R. (2010). Employee commitment and well-being: A critical review, theoretical framework, and research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*(2), 323-337. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.04.007
26. Meyer, J. P., Morin, A. J. S., & Wasti, A. (2018). Employee commitment before and after an economic crisis: A stringent test of profile similarity. *Human Relations, 71*(9), 1204-1233. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726717739097
27. Mihalache, M., & Mihalache, O.R. (2022). How workplace support for the COVID-19 pandemic and personality traits affect changes in employees' affective commitment to the organization and job-related well-being. *Human Resource Management, 61*(3), 295-314. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22082
28. Mwesigwa, R., Tusiime, I., & Ssekiziyivu, B. (2020). Leadership styles, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among academic staff in public universities. *Journal of Management Development, 39*(2), 253-268. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-02-2018-0055
29. Ngo-Henha, P. E., & Khumalo, N. (2022). Strategies to deter turnover intentions amongst expatriate academics in the institutions of higher learning in South Africa. *International Journal of Higher Education, 11*(7). Retrieved from https://ideas.repec.org/a/jfr/ijhe11/v11y2022i7p1.html
30. Podsakoff, P. M., Mackenzie, S. B., Lee, J., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research. A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879-903. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879
31. Ren, S., Tang, G., & Zhang, S. (2023). Small actions can make a big difference: Voluntary employee green behavior at work and affective commitment to the organization. *British Journal of Management, 34*(1), 72-90. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12597
32. Rindfleisch, A., Malter, A. J., Ganesan, S., & Moorman, C. (2008). Cross-Sectional versus Longitudinal Survey Research: Concepts, Findings, and Guidelines. *Journal of Marketing Research, 45*(3), 261-279. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.45.3.261
33. Robert, V., & Vandenberghe, C. (2021). Laissez-fair leadership and affective commitment: The role of leader-member exchange and subordinate relational self-concept. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 36*, 533-551. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-020-09700-9
34. Schwarz, G., Newman, A., Yu, J., & Varina, M. (2023). Psychological entitlement and organizational citizen behaviors: the roles of employee involvement climate and affective organizational commitment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 34*(1), 197-222. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2021.1962388
35. Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2019). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (8th ed.). Wiley Publishers.
36. Shepherd, D. A., & Suddaby, R. (2017). Theory building. A review and integration. *Journal of Management, 43*(1), 59-86. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316647102
37. Soundararajan, V., Wilhelm, M. M., & Crane, A. (2021). Humanizing research on working conditions in supply chains: Building a path to decent work. *Journal of Supply Chain Management, 57*(2), 3-13. https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12260
38. Sungu, L. J., Weng, Q., Hu, E., Kitule, J. A., & Fang, Q. (2020). How does organizational commitment relate to job performance? A conservation of resource perspective. *Human Performance, 33*(1), 52-69. https://doi.org/10.1080/08959285.2019.1699562
39. Tang, W., & Vandenberghe, C. (2020). Is affective commitment always good? A look at within-person effects on needs satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 119,* 103411. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103411.
40. van Rossenberg, Y.G.T., Cross, D., & Swart, J. (2022). An HRM perspective on workplace commitment: Reconnecting in concept, measurement, and methodology. *Human Resource Management Review, 32*(4), 100891. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2021.100891