

**MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF CONTINUANCE COMMITMENTS
LEVEL ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN
HIGHER INSTITUTION IN NIGERIA.**

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Abstract

The study assessed the influence of administrative staff members' continuance commitment to continuity on their performance at work in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The study was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis examined at a 0.05 significant level. With a population of 544 administrative staff members in tertiary institutions in the state of Anambra, the study used a descriptive survey research design without sampling. Data were gathered using a 10-item survey called "Influence of Affective Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff (IAC-PAS).

Two professionals in the fields of measurement and evaluation and business education assessed the instrument's face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was established through trail testing, and data analysis was conducted using Cronbach alpha reliability, yielding a coefficient value of 0.81. The respondents were given copies of the questionnaire by the researchers, whom three research assistants assisted. Of the 544 questionnaires that were administered, 528 (or 97%) were accurately completed, returned, and utilized for data analysis. In order to address the study topic and ascertain the homogeneity of the respondents' ratings, statistical mean and standard deviation were employed; a t-test was then used to test the null hypothesis. Results showed that administrative staff concur that continuance commitment affects how well they succeed in performing their functions in tertiary institutions. Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that building a working environment that promotes continuance commitments can improve the performance of administrative staff in the workplace environment to a very high level. It was recommended that administrators of tertiary institutions should provide regular organizational support programmes for administrative staff to develop their personal and career objectives and enhance their employee's Job Security and Benefits such as offering competitive compensation packages, including salary, healthcare benefits, retirement plans, and other perks should also be provided to attract and retain talented employees.

Words: Influence, Continuance Commitment, job Performance, Administrative Staff, higher institution.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the role of administrative staff in Nigerian institutions stands as a cornerstone for operational efficiency and academic success. These individuals serve as the backbone, facilitating the smooth functioning of various administrative tasks crucial to the institution's functioning. However, the extent to which they perform their duties optimally is influenced by multiple factors, among which continuance commitment emerges as a significant dimension. Organizational commitment, including continuance commitment, has long been recognized as a critical determinant of employee attitudes and behaviours within the workplace (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Continuance commitment, specifically, reflects employees' perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, such as loss of benefits, pension, or seniority. Continuance commitment, within the framework of organizational psychology, denotes the perceived obligation of individuals to remain with an organization due to perceived costs

associated with leaving. In the context of Nigerian higher institutions, administrative staff members may feel tied to their roles due to factors such as job security, economic stability, and limited alternative employment opportunities. Understanding the influence of continuance commitment on job performance becomes imperative for enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. Within the context of higher education institutions in Nigeria, effective employee engagement is also essential. And organizational management

The cornerstone of any organization is organizational commitment. It is a crucial component that affects how well any organization, particularly educational institutions, perform. It is the quality of giving oneself all to a task. Organizational commitment, according to Ezenwanne (2024) in Bhat is the degree to which a worker is enthused about the tasks they are given at work and demonstrates their level of dedication to the goals, responsibilities, and aspirations of the company. Generally speaking, companies aim for a committed workforce because long-term success depends on it.

Zayas-Ortiz et al. (2015) define organizational commitment as a tool that managers use to examine how well their employees identify with the company. It demonstrates that a worker's objective aligns with or is comparable to the organization's aim.

Similarly, workers may be prepared and willing to stick with a specific institution after considering the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. We refer to this situation as "continuance commitment." Employees may feel pressured to stay on if the loss of leaving the organization exceeds the possible benefits of moving to another employment. The purported losses may be categorized as social (loss of allies or friendships), professional (loss of seniority or role-related abilities acquired over time), or financial (loss of compensation and benefits) Davoudi and Fartash (2012) stress that personal investments such as professional advancement, retirement savings, tight working relationships with coworkers, and the acquisition of job skills unique to a particular firm can also contribute to a person's continuous commitment.

Despite the importance of continuance organization, the relationship between continuance commitment and job performance among administrative staff in Nigerian higher institutions still needs to be explored. Thus, this study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the influence of continuance commitment levels on the job performance of administrative staff members.

Continuance commitment

Over 40 years ago, researchers from the public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors have investigated an aspect of organizational commitment named continuance commitment (Gilbert & Konya, 2020). The term "continuance commitment" describes the understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of staying with the organization. Strongly committed employees stick with the organization because they have no choice but to stick to it. It is the extent to which an employee thinks it would be expensive to leave the company. Continuous commitment is described by Gilbert and Konya (2020) in Meyer and Allen as knowledge of the consequences involved with quitting the company. Because of how the employee perceives or weighs the costs and dangers of leaving the existing organization, it is calculative. Gilbert and Konya maintained that employees whose

principal connection to the organization is based on continuity commitment continue because they feel satisfied. It illustrates how persistence and affective commitment differ. The latter requires that employees continue working for the company out of personal motivation.

Similarly, Organizational members become committed to a company because of the favourable extrinsic benefits acquired through the effort bargain, even though they may not share their objectives or share its beliefs. The term "continuance commitment" reflects a recognition of the expenses involved in quitting the organization. The risk of wasting the time and effort invested in learning non-transferable skills, losing alluring rewards, reneging on seniority-based advantages, or being forced to move family and ruin personal ties are just a few of the potential consequences of leaving an organization. A lack of other work prospects will result in continued commitment in addition to the fees associated with quitting the company. Employees who primarily depend on the organization for their livelihood do so out of necessity, according to (Gilbert & Konya 2020).

The advantages and losses that could happen if an employee stays or leaves a firm are known as side bets or investments. Subhashini and Ramani Gopal (2014) maintained that due to the perceived high cost of leaving the group, a person may decide to join it (Becker's 1960 "side bet theory"). Economic costs (such as pension accruals) and social costs (friendship ties with co-workers) are the costs of losing organizational membership. However, an individual needs to see the positive costs as enough to stay with an organization. In that case, they must also take into account the availability of alternatives disrupts personal relationships, and other "side bets" that would be incurred from leaving their organization. The problem with this is that these "side bets" do not occur at once but they "accumulate with age and tenure. If one has a high level of continuance commitment, one will stay with an organization because one feels the need to stay.

Employees' assessments of whether the costs of remaining there would be higher than the costs of leaving are referred to as continuity commitment. Employees who believe leaving the company will cost them more than staying will continue to do so out of necessity (Gilbert & Konya, 2020). It is the philosophy of investments that provides the foundation for continuing commitment (Rafiei et al., 2014). It is described as a commitment tied to costs that employees believe are connected to leaving the institution. This kind of commitment is based on how much money people invest (or "side bet") in their current organizations and the lack of employment opportunities. A worker's commitment to staying with an organization is based on the gains they have earned there (Folorunso et al., 2014). An employee from the staff can remain in the organization due to the venture that includes friendly relationships with other employees, benefits, personal cash, and acquired job skills that are unique to a given institution. For example, an employee may feel that quitting a job may lead to an unacceptable length of unemployment. On the other hand, the employee may feel a sense of losing a certain degree of status if he or she leaves a well-respected organization such as a top law firm or research company.

Employees typically continue working for the same employer for both financial and non-financial reasons, according to Sharma and Sinha (2015). Pensions can have financial implications, as well as having positive relationships with co-employees. Because of these expenses, the employee is, therefore, unable to leave the organization. The length of time employees have worked there gives them the impression that they will lose the

advantages they have accrued as a result of their time there and that there are other employment alternatives. According to Gilbert and Konya (2020), employees are consistently committed when they are aware of the advantages of working for the organization.

Additionally, before leaving the organization, a worker with a continuous commitment should be aware of the true expenses. Ideally, employees who are very committed to the organization will put in much effort to see that its goals and objectives are met. They consider themselves to be a crucial component of the company. By enhancing their work performance, they become more invested in attaining the organizational aims and visions (Irefin& Mechanic, 2014).

The key benefit of being part of the organization as considered by Gilbert and Konya (2020), is continuance commitment. The decision to continue is based on the advantages and disadvantages that are readily visible. It encourages the employee to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of quitting the company. As a result, continuance commitment is viewed as calculative. It takes into account the advantages of staying and the disadvantages of leaving an organization. Khan et al. (2016) claimed that employees who exhibit a high level of long-term commitment will stay with the organization. People with continuity commitment stay with a particular organization due to the financial and other investments they have made as employees, as a result of the time spent there, not because they agree with its tenets. Tutei et al. (2017) asserted that continuance commitment is essential for raising employee performance. Continuance commitment relates to staying with or leaving an organization. Suppose workers decide to stay rather than leave an organization after realizing that the costs of doing so outweigh the benefits of doing so. In that case, they will be committed to performing their duties. It can be concluded that one of the most important concepts determining administrative workers' interest towards the organization in which they work is the level of organizational commitment.

Kasogela (2019) observation from past studies that highlighted how continuance commitment will result in behavioural results such as lower turnover and high performance and that strong intention to continue should exist in highly dedicated workers. Kasogela, concluded that there was a negative correlation between dedication to sticking with something and turnover intentions. Kasogela (2019) in Konovsky and Cropanzano found that a connection between job performance and continuing commitment was favourable. Kasogela maintained that employees who are dedicated to the organization are more likely to stay longer and put more effort into ensuring its success, which increases the likelihood that they will perform better than uncommitted employees. Kasogela (2019) in Mowday further stressed that organizations can profit from devoted personnel in a variety of ways as it can increase performance. High organizational commitment personnel offer a safe and reliable workforce, giving the organization a competitive edge. Personnel who are dedicated to staying with an organization are more innovative and less likely to leave than uncommitted employees. Through the development of competent, qualified, and knowledgeable workers, continuance commitment enhances human capital. The human capital of employees, such as faith and credibility, collaboration, and cooperation, is also enhanced through continuance commitment.

The adverse effects of ongoing dedication on workers' well-being, with a particular emphasis on the fact that increased dedication results in higher levels of stress,

work-family conflict, and worse life satisfaction (Yalcin et al., 2021). A high level of continual commitment may have detrimental effects on both employees and the organization. Yalcin et al. asserted that instead of effective job performance, the employee may become frustrated, react poorly, withhold their effort, or even loathe work when they have few options and fear losing their jobs. As a result, they might quickly become emotionally spent and feel less productive at work. An employee with no other options is externally governed and should not be expected to participate in the change process, so a high level of ongoing commitment likely leads to rigidity and resistance to change.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the impact of continuance commitment on job performance across various industries and nations. Regarding the nature of the relationship, the investigations came to various findings. While other research revealed no significant or positive association, some reported a considerably beneficial relationship between continuance commitment and job performance. Studies by Rustamadji and Omar (2019), Krishnanathan and Mangaleswaran (2018), Bonds (2017), and Folorunso, Adewale, and Abodunde (2014), among others, have all found a strong impact of continuance commitment on job performance. However, research by Hazriyanto et al. (2019), Srivastava and Pathak (2019), and Oyeneyi et al. (2017) found no evidence of a significant relationship between continuance commitment and job performance. In a similar vein, research by Metin and Asli (2018) and Dinc (2017) found no relationship between continuance commitment and job performance. These contradictions in the findings of these researches implied that future investigations need to be undertaken to explain more and better the nature of the influence of continuance commitment on job performance. This study identifies this gap in the literature. First, there is a need to empirically examine the relationship between continuance commitment and job performance among administrative staff in Nigerian higher institutions. While theoretical frameworks provide insights into the potential mechanisms underlying this relationship, empirical evidence still needs to be provided.

Second, research is needed to understand the contextual factors that influence continuance commitment and job performance within the Nigerian higher education sector. Factors such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and institutional support may play a significant role in shaping employees' attitudes and behaviours.

Finally, there is a need for research that adopts a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between continuance commitment and job performance. By combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, researchers can gain insights into both the magnitude and the underlying reasons for the observed relationship.

In summary, the literature review highlights the importance of investigating the influence of continuance commitment on the job performance of administrative staff in Nigerian higher institutions. By addressing the gaps identified in the existing literature, this study aims to contribute to both theoretical advancements and practical implications for organizational management and employee engagement in the Nigerian higher education sector.

Method

The research design adopted in this study was survey design. The study was conducted in Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 544 administrative staff in four public tertiary institutions in Anambra State (Source: Academic Planning Units of the various public tertiary institutions in Anambra State as of 10th December 2023). There was no sampling since the population was manageable and accessible to the researchers. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of continuance Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff (ICC-PAS)", and has two sections: A and B. Section A contained one item on demographic information of the respondents, such as age while section B contained 10 items which sought information on the influence of affective commitment on the performance of administrative staff. The (ICC-PAS) was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD).

The face and content validity of the instrument were determined by three experts in the field of Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation. The internal consistency of the instrument was established through trial testing, and data obtained from their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.81. The researchers, with the help of three research assistants, administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Out of the 544 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 528(97%) copies were correctly filled and returned and used for data analysis. Statistical mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions and establish the homogeneity of the respondents' ratings. A t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at a .05 level of significance. In testing the null hypotheses, when the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. Otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Data analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

Results

Research Question

What is the influence of continuance commitment on the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?

Table 2: Respondents’ Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on the Influence of Continuance Commitment on Performance of Administrative Staff

S/N	Items statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
11	Low employee dedication with the working environment prevents employees from meeting work deadlines	3.6	0.59	Strongly Agree
12	Being committed to the institution’s goals impact on the quality of work employees performs	3.45	0.50	Agree
13	Sticking with this institution because I have no choice has made me take my office work very seriously	3.38	0.54	Agree
14	The feeling that it would be too expensive to leave the current job leads to employee excellent work ethics	3.40	0.50	Agree
15	The knowledge of the consequences involved with quitting the current job leads employees to produce error free job	3.50	0.49	Strongly Agree
16	Employees’ weighing of the costs of leaving the existing job influence how appropriately they deal with institution’s sensitive situations	3.50	0.51	Strongly Agree
17	The risk of wasting the time invested in acquiring non-transferable skills influence employees’ determination to actively participate in institution’s work meetings	3.45	.50	Agree
18	The fear of losing alluring rewards influence employees’ decision to look for ways to improve their performance at work	3.48	.51	Agree
19	The financial cost of moving their family from current location to a new job location makes employees to take up a new project (job task) in the office	3.43	.50	Agree
20	Lack of other work prospects leads to employee taking extra responsibilities in the office	3.75	.50	Strongly Agree
Cluster Mean		3.50		Strongly Agree

The table shows that four of the 10 items on continuance commitment listed have mean scores ranging from 3.50 to 3.75, which means that respondents strongly agree that they influence the performance of administrative staff. The remaining six items have mean

scores ranging from 3.38 to 3.45, showing that the respondents agree that items influence the performance of administrative staff. The cluster mean score of 3.50 indicates that the respondents strongly agree that continuance commitment influences the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Standard deviations for all the items are within the same range, showing that the respondents are close in their rating opinions.

Summary of t-test Analysis of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Administrative Staff on the Influence of Continuance Commitment on their Performance Based on Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Decision
PhD/M.Sc./M.Ed.	208	3.53	.56	526	.17	.010	Significant
B.Sc./B.Ed./HND/NCE/OND	320	3.47	.62				

Table 7 indicates that the t - value is .17 with 526 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .010, which is less than a .05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than the significance value ($P\text{-value} = .01 < .05$), the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. It means that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff on the influence of continuance commitment on the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on educational attainment.

Discussion of Findings

Influence of Continuance Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff

The findings of the study indicated that administrative staff strongly agree that continuance commitment influences their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Ezenwanne (2024) and Kasogela (2019), who found that continuing commitment influenced the performance of employees. Ezenwanne further revealed that employees who are dedicated to the organization stay longer and put more effort into ensuring its success, which increases their performance compared to uncommitted employees. Similarly, Rustamadji and Omar (2019) and Krishnanathan and Mangaleswaran (2018) reported that continuance commitment had a strong influence on the job performance of employees. However, researchers such as Hazriyanto et al. (2019) and Srivastava and Pathak (2019) found no evidence of the influence of continuance commitment on the performance of employees. Additionally, Yalcin et al. (2021) observed that a high level of continuance commitment could have detrimental effects on employees' performance because, according to Yalcin et al., instead of increased performance, continuance commitment makes employees become frustrated, react poorly, and withhold effort, or even loaf at work when they have few options and fear losing their jobs.

The findings that revealed that administrative staff rated all the items strongly agree and agree could stem from the fact that they are aware of the benefits of continuance commitment to their performance. It could be that the administrative staff in tertiary institutions covered in the study see the friendly relationships they have built with the institution and other colleagues, the financial and other investments they have made in the

institution, and the unique job skills they have acquired as a result of training programmes provided by their institutions to enable them to update their skills and performance.

Gilbert and Konya (2020), employees' recognition of the benefits or advantages of working for an organization makes them consistently committed and put in much effort to see that the organizational goals and objectives are met. Tutei et al. (2017) noted that continuance commitment is essential for raising employees' performance. Tutei et al. posited that when the staff of an educational institution decide to stay rather than leave the institution after realizing that the costs of doing so outweigh the benefits of doing so, the staff become committed to performing their duties.

Furthermore, the findings of the hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff on the influence of continuance commitment on the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on educational attainment. It means that educational attainment is an important factor in administrative staff rating of the influence of continuance commitment on performance. The finding of this study is in line with that of Ikolo (2018), which showed that a positive link existed between educational attainment and organizational commitment.

Conclusion

The findings of the study have revealed a positive relationship between continuance commitment levels and job performance among administrative staff. Higher levels of continuance commitment were associated with more positive perceptions of job performance, indicating the importance of organizational commitment in shaping employee behaviour and outcomes.

In summary, by implementing these practical recommendations, Nigerian higher institutions can create a positive work environment that promotes continuance commitment, enhances job performance, and supports the professional growth and well-being of administrative staff. These efforts contribute to organizational effectiveness, employee engagement, and the overall success of the institution in achieving its mission and goals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are made. These recommendations aim to enhance continuance commitment, improve job performance, and foster a supportive work environment for administrative staff:

1. Enhance Job Security and Benefits:

- Provide clear policies and procedures regarding job security, benefits, and career advancement opportunities for administrative staff.
- To attract and keep skilled workers, provide competitive compensation packages that include salary, health benefits, retirement plans, and other advantages.
- Implement transparent promotion and advancement processes that recognize and reward employees' contributions and achievements.

2. Promote Organizational Support:

- Foster a supportive work culture where administrative staff feel valued, respected, and appreciated for their contributions.
- Provide opportunities for professional development, training, and skills enhancement to empower administrative staff to perform their roles effectively.
- Establish open channels of communication between management and staff to address concerns, provide feedback, and promote a sense of belonging within the organization.

3. Encourage Employee Engagement:

- Create opportunities for administrative staff to participate in decision-making processes and contribute their ideas for improving organizational practices and policies.
- Foster a sense of ownership and accountability among administrative staff by involving them in goal-setting, planning, and problem-solving initiatives.
- Recognize and reward employees for their achievements, contributions, and commitment to the organization through formal and informal recognition programs.

4. Monitor and Evaluate Performance:

- Implement performance management systems that provide regular feedback, coaching, and mentoring to administrative staff to support their professional growth and development.
- Establish clear performance metrics and benchmarks to assess job performance objectively and identify areas for improvement or recognition.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and goal-setting sessions to align individual Performance with organizational objectives and priorities.

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