Measures of Relationship Currency and Commitments in Higher Educational Institutions

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of relationship currency on organizational commitment in higher educational institutions in Lagos, Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey was adopted to gather information useful for assessing the effects of relationship currency on organizational commitment in participating higher educational institutions. The study population consisted of all staff (both academic and non-academic) of the participating state-owned higher educational institutions in Lagos. A total of 329 respondents were selected from the study population. A 6-Point Likert type scale format questionnaire was developed to capture reality in real terms. Data were analysed using a variance-based structural equation modelling with SmartPLS version 3.3.9. The findings reveal that relationship currency exerts a significant effect on organizational commitment in state-owned higher educational institutions, based on the results obtained from the hypotheses assessed. Therefore, the study recommends that management should provide an enabling environment that fosters social relationships among employees across departments and units in the institutions, as this will enhance the levels of organizational identification, thereby influencing organizational commitment. This study examines the effects of relationship currency on employee commitment in higher educational institutions, both empirically and expository-wise.

Keywords: *Employee Commitment; Higher Educational Institutions; Networking; Organizational Identification; Relationship Currency*

Introduction

The corporate world and organizations, whether public, private, non-governmental, or small and medium-sized, all have a mandate, primarily for economic reasons. Organizations need resources such as man, machine, money, and materials, otherwise known as 4Ms. However, it has been argued that of all these organizational resources, man (employees) is the most important, yet the most difficult, and complex in nature (Hosseini, *et al.*, 2020; Fauzilah *et al.*, 2011). To ensure the optimal output of all employees, every organization must ensure that certain things are in place, such as effective communication channels, motivation, training and development, focused leadership (Kelloway *et al.*, 2003; Stofkova & Sukalova, 2020), and, until recently, relationship currency (Harris, 2014; 2020).

Relationship currency is the currency generated by investments in interpersonal relationships made by people in the work environment (Harris, 2014; 2020). Relationship currency is formed when time is spent with other individuals in the organization, getting to know each other better, sharing ideas, and collaborating on internal tasks and other company projects (Harris, 2014). It provides opportunities for the formation of new relationships and credibility among members of the organization. Relationship currency aids in the modelling of employer-employee, management-employee, employee-employee, and management-environment relationships. Furthermore, it shapes interpersonal and intra-relationships within an organization. Relationship currency proves the ability to manage, influence, motivate, and organize people (Harris, 2014). Effective interpersonal relationships in work groups could be used to advance organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment is vital to the success of any organization in terms of performance, survival, sustainability, and achievement of organizational goals (Tolera, 2017). Employee commitment in today's business environment cannot be assumed as it requires continued, credible, and inclusive actions that lead to employees' trust and support (Ebikeseye & Dickson, 2018). Employees now seek management commitment on work conditions, work-life balance, and a safe working environment in modern organizations, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic changing the world order (Ozili & Arun, 2020), which has disrupted daily activities and affected employees' job security (Bergman, Lester, De Meuse, & Grahn, 2000; Machokoto, 2020; Aishwarya, 2021). Organizational commitment involves creating a value system that enables employees to partake efficiently and effectively in the creative process of work and tasks (Strojanovic *et al.*, 2013). Accordingly, employees' inputs and efforts are essential in reaching organizational goals and objectives.

Organizations in recent times have struggled to command employee loyalty and commitment to the fullest because of certain environmental and internal forces that serve as de-motivators of employees' commitment to the organizational cause (Haider *et al.*, 2019). These forces include insincerity of purpose, lack of job security, lack of credibility from leadership, and lack of a career path for employee development (Ebikeseye & Dickson, 2018). No organization in modern times can perform efficiently and effectively without committed employees. The incidents of industrial actions and high turnover rates among staff members in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria has been a major concern for management and state government (Salau et al., 2020). Therefore, this study examines the effect of relationship currency on employees' commitment to state-owned HEIs in Lagos, Nigeria.

Theoretical Foundation

The theories that form the foundation of the variables under consideration are Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1961; Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1962; 1972a; 1972b in Blau, 2017), and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979 in Harwood, 2020). Theoretically, the association that exists between relationship currency and employee commitment can be argued from the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (Davlembayeva, et al., (2020) and Social Identity Theory (Harwood, 2020). Social

Exchange entails voluntary and non-mandatory actions that individuals engage in, in a relational context with the anticipation of future rewards (Blau, 1964). Blau noted that, in social exchange, there is no advance stipulation of the nature and scope of each party's participation in the exchange relationship, but these are "left to the discretion of the one who makes it" (Blau, 1964, p. 54). Cole, Schaninger, and Harris (2002) also argued that "each participant in the social exchange process offers others certain currencies, benefits, or outcomes." Blau (2017) opines that the social exchange process is of major importance to social life, underlining the relationship between individuals as well as between groups. The focus is the mutual exchange of extrinsic benefits from relationships and the growing social class structures emanating from social interactions. According to Blau (1964), "social exchange" refers to "non-mandatory behaviors of individuals motivated by the rewards that they are anticipated to bring and that they normally receive from others" (p. 53). When distinguishing between social and economic interactions, the nature of the responsibility involved in social exchange is more likely to remain implicit, at least initially, than in commercial exchange (Cropanzano, et al., 2017). Social exchange encompasses the idea that an individual gives favors to another individual, and, although there is a common expectation of some future returns, which is not specified in advance (Blau, 1986 in Blau, 2017).

Social Identity Theory (SIT) explains the collaboration between individuals and the identities associated with their social group. SIT proposes specifying and predicting the conditions under which individuals think of themselves as individuals or members of a group (Harwood, 2020). This theory also considers the costs associated with personal and social identities based on individual feelings and group behaviors. Thus, SIT stems from the concept that group membership can help individuals establish meaning in social situations by defining their identity and deciding how they interact with others. With its broad focus on inter-group conflict and inter-group relationships, SIT was initially set up as an integrative theory aimed at integrating mental processes and behavioral motivation. This resulted in the notion known as the social identity theory of inter-group relations (Tajfel, 1978; Harwood, 2020). Further elaboration on the mental factors relevant to social identification by John Turner and his colleagues (Tajfel's students) detailed how individuals infer their position in various social contexts and the effects on their opinion of others (stereotyping), as well as individuals' behavior in groups (social influence). These elaborations are known as the self-categorization theory (group social identity theory), sometimes known as the social identity approach. Social categorization theory explains why people tend to see themselves and others through the lens of specific recognizable social categories, such as relatively interchangeable group members, rather than distinct and unique individuals (Thibaut & Kelley, 2017). SIT was founded on the premise that people construct their individual identities in relation to social groups and that such identifications try to safeguard and strengthen their self-identity. The social identity approach is based on the idea that organizational identification influences employees' preferred currency of trade, resulting in a wide range of behavioral tactics. Hekman *et al.* (2009) and Thibaut and Kelley, (2017) contend that social identity influences the degree to which employees' relationships with organizations are shaped through social exchange processes. Thus, SIT is more relevant to this study because it examines the degree of employees' relationships with the organization and how it has helped the employees identify with individuals and groups within the organization.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The empirical findings from previous studies on the variables of interest, namely, relationship currency and organizational commitment, are scant and inconclusive. Organizational identification and networking are the measures of relationship currency. Organizational commitment is measured using affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment are dependent variables investigated in this study.

Relationship Currency

Conceptually, Harris (2014) argued that relationship currency has its roots in people within an organization spending time together, thereby getting to know each other, sharing ideas together, and working together in teams or projects designated by the organization. It aids in the creation of networks of individuals within an organization, thereby developing a broad pool of people with a collective vision whose relationships and credibility help shape the future of the organization. Harris (2020) defines relationship currency from the viewpoint of organizational identification, wherein employees self-define as members of an organization. According to this definition, the ideology of belonging to and togetherness with the organization in which employees find themselves is critical. Furthermore, employees identify with the organization as the organizational membership with common values. Hence, the ideology of the organization, its mission, core values, strategies, structure, and the organization's accustomed operational processes become the norm (van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). Research shows that not much has been done on relationship currency as a variable, which is a fundamental gap this study intends to fill. Findings from this study, however, point to a positive significant effect of the sub-variables of the independent variable (relationship currency, that is, networking and organizational identification) and the dependent variable (employee commitment, that is, affective commitment and normative commitment).

Organizational Identification

Organizational identification ties individual employees' perception of themselves to their organizational membership, which makes it less likely for individuals to consider leaving the organization for another (Conroy *et al.,* 2017). Thus, every individual employee desire internal consistency and continuity over an extended period in any endeavor, which can be seen in how they perceive and conceive themselves within a system. Organizational identity influence employees' feelings and enable them to conduct themselves in ways that are harmonious with their personal self-defined image, which is attained from organizational membership (Eneh, 2018; van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2002). People who favorably identify with an organization are unlikely to leave because doing so would result in cognitive loss (Harris, 2020; Schein, 2015). Tavares *et al*. (2017) conducted a cross-sectional survey of 1000 employees in a service firm. The authors found that organizational identification shifts from withdrawals to extra-role demand behaviors in the organization.

The advent of globalization and technological advancement has increased the span of control in modern organisations (Avolio, Kahai, & Dodge, 2001; Gravina & Lanzafame, 2021). Modern organizational leaders are often tasked with leading numerous employees, with many organizations having employees who work from remote locations, thus making it difficult to have regular face-to-face encounters with everyone in the organization (Burrel, 2020; Ford, Piccolo, & Ford, 2017). This has made modern day leaders, managers, and management of organizations rely on technology-based communication systems such as emails and teleconferencing/video calls as a means of identifying with and passing information to subordinates.

Networking

Networking entails a situation in which people within an organization seek cooperation through exogenous interdependence and an endogenous connection-embeddedness mechanism to build a partnership. Networking, as a concept, is seen from the perspective that no economic actions take place in an unproductive social context but thrives within a social network of relationships. This social network denotes a set of nodes (persons, groups of people, and organizations) that are linked together by a set of social relationships (friendships, membership overlap) of a definite type (Gulati *et al.*, 2002; Cheok et al., 2017). Networking behaviors are characterized as actions that are designed to shape unofficial interpersonal ties with various individuals within and beyond the organization (Gibson, Hardy, &

Buckley, 2014). Networking behaviors could be used to build and maintain networks among employees through phone calls and visits, socializing before and after formal gatherings, social activity attendance, favors, informal discussions, mentorship, and gossiping. In contrast, networking is mostly utilitarian in nature and is primarily used for external connections (Gibson *et al.,* 2014). Hence, networking can be referred to as the process used to develop and preserve a network of familiar and obliging relationships with people other than the individual's immediate superiors and subordinates, in the hope that such relationships will help the individual perform his or her job better.

Networking includes the exchange of affection (likeness and friendship), advantages, information, and power. It is an individual's effort to establish and maintain relationships with those who have the potential to help their careers and/or professions. Therefore, networking can be a means of advancing one's career (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Gibson *et al.,* 2014). Furthermore, it contributes to organizational effectiveness by facilitating better communication within the organization and easy access to resources (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Hamali & Mahdaoui, 2015). Previous studies (e. g. Torres, 2005; Larsen, 2014). have revealed that the value of a person's network has a greater impact on their job success than their knowledge, abilities, and competence. This idea is supported by the common adage, "It's not what you know, it's who you know." Andrew (2017) found that AC has a significantly positive influence on organizational performance because of the presence of strong employee relationships (networking).

Kelloway et al. (2003) found a significant positive influence of remote transformational leadership on task- and attitude-related outcomes due to the high presence of effective networking channels (emails, phone calls, webchats, and teleconferencing) between leaders and subordinates as well as among subordinates. In Neufeld, Wan, and Fang (2010), a positive relationship was established between remote leadership and performance. Accordingly, effective networking channels, such as emails, webchats, and video or teleconference calls, moderated this relationship.

Organizational Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1997) in Al-Jabari and Ghazzawi (2019) defined organizational commitment as an emotional state that exemplifies an employee's affiliation with the organization, which has an influence on the employees' decision to remain members of the organization. Similarly, Miao et al. (2014) viewed employee commitment as an energy that holds a person to an objective (social target or non-social target) and to a course of action of significance to that objective (Fard & Karimi, 2015; Meyer *et al.*, 2006). There are numerous ways of experiencing this binding force, which can be conveyed by different approaches, including affective closeness and envelopment with the objective known as Affective Commitment (AC), felt responsibility to the objective known as Normative Commitment (NC), and consciousness of the cost related to discontinuing envelopment with the objective known as Continuance Commitment (CC).

Affective Commitment

Affective Commitment (AC) symbolizes an individual's enthusiastic connections with the organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) defined AC as an employee's emotional connection to the organization, with a feeling of identification and total participation in the organization. Members of an organization who are committed to the organization with an affective base continue to work tirelessly because of their emotional attachment to it. The affective commitment levels of staff members influence their willingness to stay with the organization because they perceive their individual employment relationship as an agreement with the goals and values of the organization (Beck & Wilson, 2000). Affective commitment is impacted by factors such as role clarity, job challenges, goal clarity and difficulty, peer cohesion, accessibility by management, personal importance, equity, feedback, dependability, and participation (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Affective commitment advancement comprises

identification and internalization (Lee & Chen, 2013). The issues of industrial actions and high turnover rates among staff members in HEIs in the Southwest Nigeria (Salau et al., 2020) be addressed through affective commitment. Based on the literature and theoretical review, this study hypothesizes the following.

H1: Organizational identification exerts a significant effect on employees' affective commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

H2: Networking exert a significant effect on employees' affective commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

Continuance Commitment

Continuance Commitment (CC) is a sense of awareness of the cost implications associated with leaving an organization (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Ebikeseye & Dickson, 2018; Meyer & Allen, 1997). This is calculative in nature because of an individual's awareness or evaluation of the costs and risks associated with exiting the current organization (Ebikeseye & Dickson, 2018). The mindset of such an individual is centered on the possible costs of exiting the organization. These include the threat of time and effort wasted on the acquisition of non-transferrable skills, waiver of privileges that are brought about by long years of service, loss of attractive benefits, and collapse of family and personal relationships. CC can also develop in the absence of substitute employment opportunities. With high rates of unemployment in the country, employees are left with little or no options other than to remain in their organizations. While studying organizational commitment, Radosavljevic *et al.* (2017) found a negative relationship between CC and employee performance. Beck and Wilson (2000) argued that CC can be considered an instrumental attachment to the organization, where the employee's relationship with the organization is based on the evaluation of available socio-economic gains. Members of an organization develop a commitment to the organization owing to the availability of positive extrinsic rewards that they will obtain through the effort-bargain process without identifying with the organization's values. Therefore, this study hypothesizes the following.

H3: Organizational identification exert a significant effect on employees' continuance commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

H4: Networking has a significant effect on employees' continuance commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is centered on an employee's feeling obligated to an organization (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Attributed normative beliefs of obligation and duty make an individual indebted to remaining members of the organization. Singh and Gupta (2015) asserted that employees with normative commitment feel that they need to continue with the organization. From a normative perspective, employees stay because they feel that they ought to or because it is appropriate for them to stay. Lee and Chen (2013) discovered that when employees have positive feelings toward the organization and the acknowledgement of such positive emotions increases employee commitment. Consequently, individual, and organizational productivity will grow as a result of being recognized as members of an organization's success story. Normative commitment implies that employees' commitment only increases when they feel affiliated with the organization, irrespective of their location; they sense this more when there is regular recognition, especially from the organization's leadership or top management, through regular communication. Based on the literature and theoretical review, this study hypothesizes the following.

H5: Organizational identification has a significant effect on employees' normative commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

H6: Networking exerts a significant effect on employees' normative commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

Methods

This study adopted a quantitative approach following a cross-sectional survey. A closed-ended structured questionnaire was designed using a 6-point Likert type rating style. The scale for measuring the constructs ranged from (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) partially disagree, (4) partially agree, (5) agree, to (6) strongly agree. The target population consisted of 2,234 employees (both academic and non-academic) of participating state-owned HEI in Lagos. The researchers used the Taro Yamane (1967) formula to draw a sample size of 329 staff members and then used a stratified random sampling procedure for questionnaire administration. 329 questionnaires were administered to the respondents, and 261 were returned for analysis, amounting to 79.3 response rate, showcasing a valid percentage from which to draw conclusions.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations in social science research were adhered to in this study. The confidentiality and anonymity of respondents and the participating higher educational institutions were ensured. An ethical clearance certificate was obtained from one of the participating institutions before administering the research instrument. To ensure informed consent, the purpose of the study, as well as the rights of the respondents were explained prior to soliciting written informed consent statements.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected in this study was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. For preliminary analyses, the data was saved as a CSV (comma-delimited) file. The CSV file was imported into the SmartPLS version 3.3.9 (Ringle et al., 2015) for descriptive statistical analyses (mean scores and standard deviation), psychometric property of the research instrument, and inferential statistics such as partial least squares structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2017) for path analysis shown in Figure 2. The psychometric property of the research instrument and/or measurement model in this study was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), square root of AVE, and Fornell-Larcker Criterion to establish the reliability and validity of the research instrument.

Results and Discussion

The measurement model was assessed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (EFA and CFA) reported in Tables 1 and 2. The validity of latent variables (constructs) in this study was ascertained statistically using convergent and discriminant validity. During EFA and CFA, to ensure convergent and discriminant validity, the following items were expunged consecutively (OL3, Net3, and CC3). Tables 1 and 2 show the factor loadings for the 6 latent variables as well as the reliability and validity of the scales measuring relationship currency and employees' commitments in higher educational institutions in Lagos.

Table 1: Reliability and convergent validity of the reflect latent variables

Latent Variable	Indicator	Loading	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Organizational identity	OI1	0.880	0.881	0.019	0.630	0.795	0.662
	OI2	0.740	0.743	0.043			
Networking	Net1	0.787	0.787	0.044	0.619	0.749	0.599
	Net2	0.760	0.759	0.047			
Affective commitment	AC1	0.853	0.854	0.021	0.624	0.779	0.548
	AC2	0.794	0.792	0.028			
	AC3	0.536	0.538	0.069			
Continuous commitment	CC1	0.869	0.845	0.107	0.602	0.659	0.491
	CC2	0.476	0.477	0.180			
Normative commitment	NC1	0.841	0.842	0.020	0.728	0.846	0.647
	NC2	0.772	0.776	0.030			
	NC3	0.799	0.799	0.028			

Source: Survey (2022)

As indicated in Table 1, the factor loadings for reflective latent variables ranged from 0.536 to 0.880. The evaluation of these loadings revealed that all factors loaded well, which is also impacted on average variance extracted (AVE) values. The values of AVE reported in Table 1 ranged from 0.491 to 0.647. To ensure convergent validity, the AVE value for each construct or latent variable must be equal to or greater than 0.5. (Hair et al., 2019). Statistically, the AVE values reported in this study are greater than the threshold of 0.5, except for continuance commitment (0.491). Therefore, convergent validity of the key constructs investigated in this study was established using AVE and confirmed judging from composite reliability values ranging from 0.659 to 0.846. Internal consistency of the measurement scales adapted in this study was ascertained using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which ranged from 0.602 to 0.728. Empirically, the scales measuring all latent variables in this study were dependable since their Cronbach's alpha coefficients were greater than 0.6 (Pallant, 2020). Discriminant validity for the reflective latent variables investigated in this study are reported in Table 2.

Table 2: Discriminant validity of latent variables

S/N	Latent variable	1	2	3	4	5
1	Organizational identity	**0.813**				
2	Networking	0.363	**0.774**			
3	Affective commitment	0.628	0.524	**0.741**		
4	Continuance commitment	0.334	0.298	0.408	**0.701**	
5	Normative commitment	0.556	0.547	0.67	0.427	**0.805**

Note: Diagonals are the square roots of AVE.

Source: Survey (2022)

Discriminant validity of the latent variables was statistically ascertained by comparing the square roots of AVE values to the inter-construct correlations. The square roots of AVE for each latent variable must be greater than inter-construct correlations to establish discriminant validity (Fornell &Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, the results reported in Table 2 showed that discriminant validity of the key constructs investigated in this was established. Judging from the empirical evidence presented in Tables 1 and 2, it can be deduced that the measurement scales adapted to measure relationship currency and employees' commitments in higher educational institutions were valid and dependable. Results of the partial least squares structural equation modelling are illustrated in Figure 1.
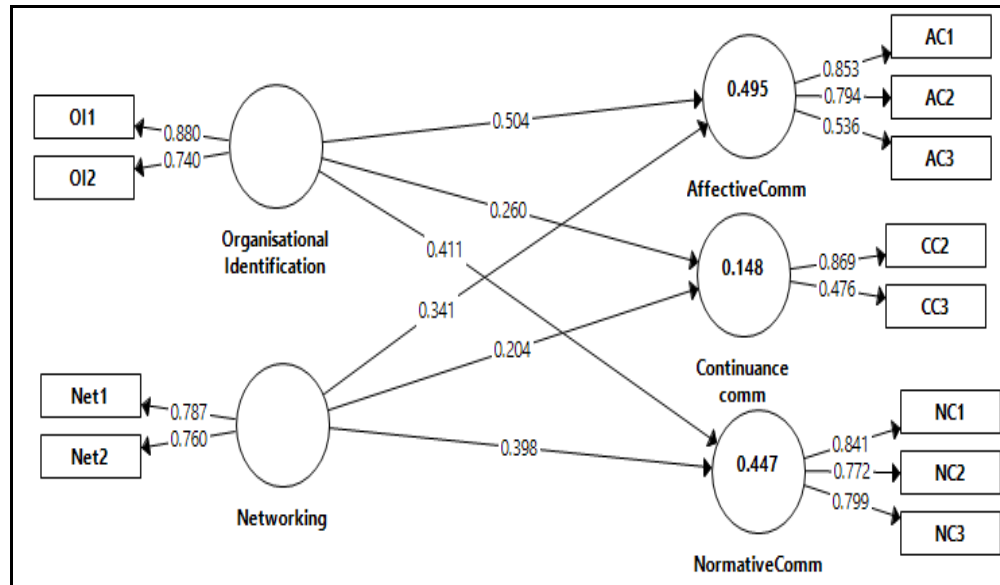

Figure 1: Measures of relationship currency and commitments

Source: Emerged from statistical analysis (2022).

The empirical evidence presented in Figure 2 and Table 3 revealed that organizational identification exerts significant effects on affective commitment (r = 0.504, p < 0.001, n = 261), continuance commitment (r = 0.260, p < 0.001, n = 261), and normative commitment (r = 0.411, p < 0.001, n = 261). The results showed that organizational identity as a measure of relationship currency exerts a prominent role on affective commitment of employees in the participating higher educational institutions. Networking on the other hand, has significant direct effects on affective commitment (r = 0.341, p < 0.001, n = 261), continuance commitment (r = 0.204, p < 0.01, n = 261), and normative commitment (r = 0.398, p < 0.001, n = 261). Comparing the path coefficients from networking to employees' commitments, one can infer that networking demonstrates more influence on normative commitment in the participating higher educational institutions.

Measures of Relationship Currency and Affective Commitment

The analysis of organizational identity and networking as predictors of employees' commitments in HEIs, the results showed that the variables explained 49.5% of the variations in affective commitment (R^2 = 0.496, F (2.326) = 141.244, p < .001) of employees in the institutions. The majority of the variations in affective commitment was explained by organizational identity. The results showed that organizational identity has a significant positive impact on affective commitment. Networking, as the second predictor, also has a significant impact on affective commitment of employees in the state-owned HEIs in Lagos. Judging from the standardized beta loadings, organizational identification played a

prominent role in explaining most of the variations in affective commitment. Therefore, organizational identification and networking exert significant effects on the affective commitment of employees in state-owned HEIs in Lagos.

Measures of Relationship Currency and Continuance Commitment

The measures of relationship currency explained 14.8% of the variations in continuance commitment ($R^2 = 0.148$, F (2.326) = 18.667, $p < .001$) of employees in the participating institutions. Therefore, the measures of relationship currency exert a slight influence on continuance commitment of employees in the participating HEIs, judging from the R-squared value (which explained 14.8%), standardized coefficients of the explanatory variables, and their corresponding p-values. This means that about 85.2% of the variance in the continuance commitment of employees could be explained by other variables not accounted for in the current study. Based on the outcomes of this study, the predictive influence of relationship currency on continuance commitment in HEIs is incredibly low. The results support our hypotheses, on the ground that organizational identification and networking exert significant effects on the continuance commitment of employees in state-owned HEIs in Lagos. These results support the findings of Meyer and Allen (1984), Allen and Smith (1987), and Andrew (2017), where measures of work behavior were positively correlated with affective and normative commitment, but not with continuance commitment.

Measures of Relationship Currency and Normative Commitment

Figure 1 indicates the effects of organizational identity and networking on the normative commitment of employees in the state-owned HEIs in Lagos. The R^2 value of 0.447 with F (2.326) = 112.806, $p < .001$, revealed that organizational identification and networking explained 44.7% of the variance in normative commitment. The results revealed that organizational identification has a significant effect on normative commitment (r = 0.411, $p < 0.001$, n = 261). Networking, on the other hand, has a significant effect on normative commitment (r = 0.398, $p < 0.001$, n = 261) of employees in state-owned HEI in Lagos. Hence, organizational identification and networking exert significant effects on normative commitment of employees in state-owned HEIs in Lagos. The decisions reached on the research hypotheses and the corresponding p values are recorded in Table 3.

Table 3: Direct effects of exogenous latent variables on commitments

Hyp	Direct effect	M	SD	Coef f.	T Stat	P Values	Decision
H1	Organizational identification -> Affective commitment	0.511	0.057	0.504	8.890	0.000	Supported
H2	Networking -> Affective commitment	0.341	0.053	0.341	6.380	0.000	Supported
H3	Organizational identification -> Continuance commitment	0.261	0.062	0.260	4.222	0.000	Supported
H4	Networking -> Continuance commitment	0.206	0.067	0.204	3.053	0.002	Supported
H5	organizational identification -> Normative commitment	0.414	0.052	0.411	7.912	0.000	Supported
H6	Networking -> Normative commitment	0.400	0.049	0.398	8.205	0.000	Supported

Source: Survey (2022).

The results are consistent with the findings of Radosavljevic et al. (2017), where the accumulation of time and relationships with colleagues accounted for a high positive influence on normative commitment. The measures of relationship currency in this study accounted for 44.7% of the variance in normative commitments of employees.

Conclusion and Implications

The study concludes based on the above findings, taking into consideration the sub-variables of relationship currency as the independent variables (organizational identification and networking) and organizational commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment) as the dependent variables. Relationship currency has a positive effect on organizational commitment in state-owned HEIs in Lagos, Nigeria. The study also concludes that organizational identification and networking are predictors of affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment of employees in state-owned HEIs in Lagos, Nigeria.

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this study, which will assist management in enhancing organizational commitment through relationship currencies in HEIs. Organizations should create an environment that encourages social relationships and networking among their employees, as this will foster togetherness and create a family that is bonded to the job.

Management should ensure that employees have reason to identify with their organizations. When employees have organizational identification, they are committed to the organization and strive towards the attainment of its goals, mission, and corporate objectives. Organizations and management should encourage employee interaction across all departments and units through inter-departmental transfers, as this will further create a system of togetherness.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was conducted by investigating the measures of relationship currency and employee commitment in selected state-owned HEIs in the city of Lagos using a cross-sectional survey. The study was restricted to HEIs in Lagos. Hence, the empirical evidence of this study cannot be used as a basis for generalization across countries. Therefore, future research should examine relationship currency as a strategic internal core competence of an organization and its effects on career advancement and organizational commitment in HEIs in Nigeria using a longitudinal approach.

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