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Departmental Authority as a Predictor of Affective and Continuance Organizational Commitments with the Mediating Effects of Organizational Involvement

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Abstract This study aimed to contribute to the organizational commitment literature by examining how a rarely studied factor, departmental authority, shaped the authority holder's commitment. Specifically, the study investigated whether departmental authority directly predicted the authority holder's affective and continuance organizational commitments. It also assessed whether organizational involvement mediated the relationships between the predictor and outcome variables. Ordinal scales were used to measure all variables, and the construct validity of the latent variables was confirmed with both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Data were collected through a nationwide survey administered via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk; N = 2,212). The findings showed that departmental authority directly predicted affective commitment and organizational involvement but not continuance commitment. Organizational involvement also predicted both forms of commitment and strengthened the relationship between departmental authority and affective commitment. One practical implication of this study is that employers may improve employee retention by providing employees with opportunities to exercise authority within their departments and voluntarily participate in non-job-related organizational activities.

Keywords Authority, Organizational Power, Departmental Power, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Organizational Commitment

1. Introduction

Organizational commitment describes the ties that bind employees to their organizations [1] [2]. Including job satisfaction, it is one of the most consequential behaviors that have been widely studied in the organizational sciences (see [3]), with well-documented links to consequences such as low turnover, high job performance [4] [5], absenteeism [6], positive organizational citizenship behaviors, and reduced organizational counterproductive behaviors [7] [4]. The dominant framework for these studies has been the three-component model (TCM) developed by Allen and Meyer [2], Meyer and Allen [8], and Allen and Meyer [9], which distinguishes among affective, normative, and continuance commitments. Affective commitment is an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in an organization. Normative commitment describes persistence with an organization because of a perceived obligation to a target, usually someone or the organization itself, while continuance commitment reflects the perceived costs of leaving [2] [8] [10]. Hence, employees with strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they *want to*, distinguishing this form of commitment from normative (remaining because one *ought to*) and continuance commitment (remaining because one *needs to*). Employees high in affective commitment remain because they have high job satisfaction, are happy with their organization, and love it. In the opposite extreme, those who stay because of continuance do so out of compulsion, based on a cost-benefit analysis in which the cost of leaving (to the employee) outweighs the benefits [2] [8] [10].

Mercurio [11] proposed that affective commitment was the "core essence" of organizational commitment, arguing that emotional attachment was the fundamental mechanism through which commitment influenced organizational outcomes. This makes emotional attachment the most stable component and the most consistent predictor of organizational outcomes. The conceptualization of affective commitment as comprising emotional attachment, identification, and involvement has also guided much empirical work examining how organizational practices shape employee attachment [3] [12]. Mercurio [11] notes that affective commitment is the most studied of the three components and shows the strongest,

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most favorable associations with organizationally desirable outcomes, whereas continuance commitment shows the weakest, often unfavorable, associations with organizational outcomes.

This study focuses on two polar variants of organizational commitment: affective, the most studied and most associated with positive organizational consequences, and continuance, the least desirable and most associated with negative outcomes such as turnover. As Meyer et al. [13] stated, "more specifically, affective commitment is expected to have the strongest positive relation, followed by normative commitment; continuance commitment is expected to be unrelated, or related negatively, to these desirable work behaviors" (p. 21). Notwithstanding that affective commitment has gained more scholarship attention than the other two variants of commitment, ample research [14] [15] [16] [17] [8] [18] [19] [20] [21] has identified a variety of predictors of each variant. While organizational power has been shown to predict OC alongside many other predictors [22], research on how departmental or unit authority over others shapes organizational commitment remains largely absent, with the minor exception of Oyinlade [22]. If power in organizations relates to commitment, as Oyinlade [22] indicates, the general absence of departmental power as a research focus for understanding organizational commitment appears to be an oversight and an important knowledge gap.

2. Literature

Some studies have found that organizational power is linearly and hierarchically associated with organizational commitment (OC). These studies include Pahos and Galanaki [23], who surveyed 342 subordinates and 115 supervisors across 111 Greek service organizations using the three-component method (TCM). They found that job hierarchy, operationalized as an employee's level relative to the total number of organizational levels, was positively and significantly related to affective organizational commitment ($b = 0.401$, $p < .01$), marginally related to normative commitment, and unrelated to continuance commitment ($b = 0.008$, ns). This asymmetry suggests that formal power fosters the emotional, want-to form of attachment rather than cost-based lock-in.

Studies of healthcare hierarchies, where formal rank distinctions are unusually explicit, have also shown that organizational authority by rank predicts OC. Among nurses in Saudi Arabian hospitals, Al-Dossary [24] found that nurse managers exhibited higher commitment than staff nurses on all three TCM subscales. In South Korean long-term care hospitals, Jun [25] reported that nurses holding charge (supervisory) positions scored significantly higher on organizational commitment than staff nurses ($t = -4.68$, $p < .001$), although that study measured commitment with the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire rather than the TCM. Among physicians in Beijing public hospitals, holding an administrative position was significantly associated with organizational commitment in both general and specialized hospitals, though that study used a locally developed multidimensional commitment scale rather than the TCM [26].

Consistent with Gao et al.'s findings, in Myanmar general hospitals, position was one of a small set of predictors, alongside experience, perceived organizational support, and work-life balance, that together explained 38.0 percent of the variance in affective commitment and 28.3 percent in continuance commitment [27]. However, such association is not universal. Callado et al. [28] found no significant differences in commitment among Portuguese primary healthcare nurses across professional categories, including nurse managers. Likewise, in a study of prison staff, personal characteristics including supervisory status explained only about 10 percent of the variance in commitment, whereas workplace variables such as job variety, role clarity, and input into decision-making explained roughly 59 percent [17]. These findings caution that rank per se may matter less than the work experiences that typically accompany it.

Most recently, Oyinlade [22], in a model that included organization-wide power, departmental power, and job responsibilities as predictors, found both organization-wide power ($\beta = .10$) and job responsibilities ($\beta = .064$) to be significant but weak direct predictors of affective organizational commitment. The total effect of organization-wide power ($\beta = .261$) in predicting affective commitment was low to moderate, and job responsibilities ($\beta = .081$) was low. In his model, departmental power ($\beta = .025$, $p > .05$) failed to predict affective commitment.

One may ask why holding power over others cultivates affective commitment. Social exchange theory provides the dominant explanation. Perceived organizational support (POS), the belief that one gets adequate support because the organization values one's contributions and cares about one's well-being, is among the strongest known correlates of affective commitment ($r = .69$) [29]. Perceived organizational support (POS) also mediates the effects of organizational rewards, procedural justice, and supervisor support on commitment, while affective commitment, in turn, explains POS's effect on reduced turnover [29]. Because higher positions typically carry greater rewards, discretion, and organizational investment, power-holders plausibly experience elevated POS and reciprocate with affective attachment. Stinglhamber et al. [12] supported a complementary identity -based pathway, showing that organizational identification temporally preceded affective commitment and partially transmitted the effects of POS, leader-member exchange, and job autonomy. On this account, occupying a powerful position signaled to the power holder that the organization valued him or her, and that signal first converted into identification and then into emotional attachment [12].

Research on power itself reinforces the exchange account. Jalilvand and Nasrolahi-Vosta [30] found that managers' expert, legitimate, reward, and referent power were each positively related to employees' affective organizational commitment, whereas coercive power was not. This reminds

us that attachment stems from the legitimate and resource-based faces of power, not domination [30]. Also, Chénard-Poirier et al. [31] did similar work, validating a measure of perceived supervisor social power across four samples in three countries and found it positively related to affective organizational commitment. Supervisor power also strengthened employees' commitment to the supervisor and the organization [31]. Empowerment research points in the same direction. Empowering leader behaviors predicted employees' subsequent affective commitment, which in turn predicted lower absenteeism and turnover intentions [16]. It also predicted that psychological empowerment, through self-efficacy and affective commitment, improves performance [32]. Collectively, these studies suggest that hierarchical position confers resources, autonomy, and status, which employees repay with affective commitment.

Evidence connecting hierarchical power to continuance commitment appears to be weaker and more indirect. Continuance commitment stems from accumulated side bets and investments and comprises two subdimensions: perceived sacrifice of leaving and perceived lack of alternatives [33]. In principle, promotion should increase perceived sacrifice, since rank brings pay, status, and organization-specific advantages that would be forfeited upon exit. Yet Pahos and Galanaki [23] found no relationship between hierarchical level and continuance commitment, and Vandenberghe and Panaccio [33] showed that psychological empowerment, a correlate of holding power, relates differentially to the two subdimensions, while an external locus of control predicted the lack-of-alternatives component.

A recent review of the commitment literature in nursing similarly characterizes continuance commitment as embeddedness produced by investments that accumulate over time, reporting a direct relationship with age that is contingent on labor-market opportunities [34]. Consistent with this structural account, continuance commitment appears more responsive to job security and the availability of alternatives than to rank. For example, public-sector employees in Serbia reported higher continuance commitment than private-sector employees, who instead reported higher affective and normative commitment [35]. The emerging picture is that continuance commitment tracks tenure, age, and labor-market constraints rather than formal power itself.

3. Objective

This study aims to contribute to knowledge of organizational commitment. As discussed in the literature review (above), organizational power, especially rank-based power, has been linked to organizational commitment. As mentioned earlier, except for Oyinlade [22], who included departmental authority as a predictive factor in his analytical model of affective organizational commitment, the literature lacks research on the role of departmental authority in understanding organizational commitment, and this study aims to help fill this gap.

The emphasis on departmental authority rests on the premise that it is a structurally important factor in the decision to commit to an organization. Arguably, an employee is most important in an organization in the department in which he or she works. While employees' job goals contribute to overall organizational success through the links between unit goals and organizational mission in strategic planning, the immediate activities and contributions of each employee are directed to the unit. The department or unit is also where employees interact directly with one another, collaborating, cooperating, exchanging ideas, competing, and conflicting. This reality logically makes the unit the most significant structural environment for any employee. It is the location in which employees are most directly connected to their organizations.

Given that the department is the arena of employees' relations within their organizations, it follows logically that their experiences within the department will shape their likelihood of committing themselves to the organization more than experiences outside the department. And, by logical extension, authority over others within the department signals the authority holder's importance to departmental coworkers, raising the question of whether such authority, and the importance it bestows on the authority holder, predict the authority holder's AOC and COC.

Furthermore, since organizational involvement has been linked to AOC [22] [36], this study additionally investigates whether departmental authority predicts the authority holder's involvement in nonwork-related organization-wide activities (such as volunteering for community project activities, social event planning and attendance, organization's committees, and donating to the organization's charity causes), and whether such involvements mediate the relationship between having departmental authority and OC.

Based on previous studies summarized in the literature review, the specified objective, and the logical assumptions outlined above, this study investigated the following specific questions.

1. *Does perceived departmental authority directly predict AOC?*
2. *Does perceived departmental authority directly predict COC?*
3. *Does perceived departmental authority directly predict involvement in nonjob-related activities?*
4. *Does involvement in nonjob-related activities predict AOC?*
5. *Does involvement in nonjob-related activities predict COC?*
6. *What is the indirect (mediated) effect of departmental authority on AOC?*
7. *What is the indirect (mediated) effect of departmental authority on COC?*
8. *What is the total effect of departmental authority on AOC?*
9. *What is the total effect of departmental authority on COC?*

Unlike previous studies of organizational power and commitment that used rank to indicate power, this study directly measured and analyzed perceived authority. This is because it is assumed that rank may not necessarily translate into authority over others. This is often true in professional departments (such as academia) where unit supervisors are elected among colleagues. While a supervisor may have some official authority, he or she may not occupy the position as a rank promotion. In such environments, supervisory authority is limited, often challenged, and may be overruled by a majority vote. It may also be the case in professional technical units (such as scientists and medical practitioners) that some employees hold managerial ranks and titles but have no subordinates, suggesting that rank may not be a good measure of departmental authority. For example, the rank of senior scientist does not imply supervision of junior scientists; the senior banker title does not imply management of other bankers; and the professor rank does not indicate supervision of associate and assistant professors.

By measuring perceived authority rather than using rank as a proxy, this study includes anyone who perceives having authority over others in the department, regardless of supervisory rank. Sources of such authority may include being a committee chairperson, a program coordinator, a member of important committees that make binding decisions for the department or absorbing uncertainties for coworkers or the unit. This expands the number of people with perceived authority beyond those in supervisory roles, allowing a broader assessment of how authority shapes organizational commitment.

Lastly, this study is unique in its contribution to knowledge of affective and continuance commitments. It is the only study known to the author that focuses exclusively on organizational authority as a predictor of affective and continuance organizational commitment, despite an extensive literature search with the aid of artificial intelligence tools (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and DeepSeek). While Oyinlade [22] included departmental power as one of the factors analyzed in a model that included other predictive factors and only affective organizational commitment as the outcome variable, the model in this study placed exclusive focus on departmental authority as the predictor of two forms of commitment, albeit also using organizational involvement, as in Oyinlade [22], as a mediator.

4. Method

Instrument

The author designed a questionnaire to collect primary data for a large project on employee experiences. This study used data from the larger project. The questionnaire included scale items measuring each variable in this research. The predictor variable, departmental authority, was measured as an observed variable with one item asking respondents to rate their perceived authority over coworkers in their department on a scale with response options ranging from 1 (low) to 10 (high). The other research variables were measured as latent constructs using Likert-type, multi-item scales. The organizational involvement scale (involvement in nonjob-related activities) included five author-constructed items with response options ranging from 6 (high) to 1 (low). Each scale of affective organizational commitment (AOC) and continuance organizational commitment (COC) used four items with response options ranging from 6 (high) to 1 (low). Each scale was adapted from Meyer and Allen's [37] eight-item scales. Due to poor factor loadings, four items were dropped from each scale, leaving four strongly loaded items (standardized alpha greater than .60) retained for each variable in this study. Table 1 displays all the variables, their sources, and their definitions for this study.

Data Collection

A nationwide survey was conducted on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk), a crowdsourcing platform that allows the public to participate in research for nominal fees. The author set participation parameters to restrict participants to a selected population, so participants were restricted to U.S. residents, and each was paid $1. Studies have shown that the compensation given to participants does not affect the quality of their responses compared to non-paid participants [38] and that the quality of data obtained through M-Turk are highly reliable [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] [46]. Overall, about 2,500 US residents participated in this study, and 2,212 completed the questionnaire sufficiently to be included in the study data.

Amazon paid only the 2,212 participants. Data from those who were not paid because they did not fully complete the questionnaire were permanently discarded. The 2,212 participants were mostly full-time employees (79%), women (63%, men =37%), non-managers (75%, Managers = 25%), had worked in their organizations for an average of 5.06 years, had an average age of approximately 33 years, and were employed across all ten (10) industries in the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) manual of the US Department of Labor.

Construct Validity and Reliability

Each latent variable scale was tested for construct validity using a structural equation model. First, the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted for each scale. The EFA results for organizational involvement (see Table 2) show that all items loaded on the factor component (Component 1) with standardized beta weights ranging from 6.90 to 9.42. Model fit statistics for the default model (CMIN =5.12, DF = 4, p = .275; Fit Index Values: RMR = .020, GFI = .992, AGFI = .969; Baseline Comparisons: NFI = .995, RFI = .988, IFI = .999, TLI = .997, CFI = .999; RMSEA = .034) indicated a strong convergence of all items measuring the latent factor and that the model fits with no discrepancies between the sample and fitted covariance matrices (see [48] [49] [50] [51] [52] [53]).

Table 1. Research variable definitions and Sources

1. **Departmental Authority**: Perceived amount of authority one has over others in one's department. Measured as an observed variable in ordinal rank, single-item question, 10 = High Departmental Authority, 1 = Low [Self-created]
2. **Organizational involvement:** Perception of the extent of voluntary participation in non-job-related social activities in one's organization. Measured as a latent variable in ordinal ranks, multiple items, 6= high organizational involvement, 1= Low organizational involvement. See Table 2 for items and factor statistics. [Self-created]
3. **Affective Organizational Commitment:** The likelihood that one would remain with an organization due to one's love and general positive feeling for the current organization. Measured in ordinal ranks, 6= high affective commitment, 1= Low affective commitment [Adapted from [37] in [47], pages 51-53. Meyer and Allen's scale had 8 items; reported alphas ranged from .77 to .88. The adaptation for this study used 4 of the eight items based on poor factor loading of one item]. See Table 2 for adapted items and factor statistics.
4. **Continuance organizational commitment:** Persistence (i.e., commitment) to remain with the current organization because of fear of not being able to get into a better organization or the high cost one may bear for leaving. Measured in ordinal ranks, 6= high continuance commitment, 1= Low continuance commitment. [Adapted from [37] in [47], pages 51-53. Meyer and Allen's scale had 8 items; reported alphas ranged from .69 to .84. The adaptation for this study used 4 of the eight items based on poor factor loading of one item]. See Table 2 for adapted items and factor statistics.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis Using SEM of Latent Variables

ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT	**β**				
-In your workplace, how much do you enjoy voluntarily participating in activities not related to your job?	.828				
-How much do you enjoy participating in social events in your organization?	.690				
-How much do you enjoy voluntarily donating your time to various activities for your organization?	.918				
-How much do you enjoy being voluntarily around people in your organization?	.942				
-How much do you enjoy spending extra time on activities not related to your job, for the benefit of your organization?	.808				
Model Fit Summary					
CMIN					
Model	**NPAR**	**CMIN**	**DF**	**P**	**CMIN/DF**
Default model	11	5.123	4	.275	1.281
Saturated model	15	.000	0		
Independence model	5	1033.005	10	.000	103.300
RMR, GFI					
Model	**RMR**	**GFI**	**AGFI**	**PGFI**	
Default model	.020	.992	.969	.264	
Saturated model	.000	1.000			
Independence model	1.161	.326	-.011	.217	
Baseline Comparisons **Model**	**NFI Delta1**	**RFI rho1**	**IFI Delta2**	**TLI rho2**	**CFI**
Default model	.995	.988	.999	.997	.999
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
RMSEA					
Model	**RMSEA**	**LO 90**	**HI 90**	**PCLOSE**	
Default model	.034	.000	.106	.553	
Independence model	.641	.608	.674	.000	

Table 3. Exploratory Factor Analysis Using SEM of Latent Variables

AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT SCALE	**β**				
-Your feeling of a strong sense of belonging to your organization	.909				
-Your feeling that your organization has a personal meaning for you	.949				
-Your feeling that you are emotionally attached to your organization	.906				
-Your feeling that you are a "part of the family" in your organization	.901				
Model Fit Summary					
CMIN					
Model	**NPAR**	**CMIN**	**DF**	**P**	**CMIN/DF**
Default model	9	2.438	1	.118	2.438
Saturated model	10	.000	0		
Independence model	4	1036.701	6	.000	172.783
RMR, GFI					
Model	**RMR**	**GFI**	**AGFI**	**PGFI**	
Default model	.014	.995	.952	.100	
Saturated model	.000	1.000			
Independence model	1.349	.331	-.116	.198	
Baseline Comparisons					
Model	**NFI Delta1**	**RFI rho1**	**IFI Delta2**	**TLI rho2**	**CFI**
Default model	.998	.986	.999	.992	.999
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
RMSEA					
Model	**RMSEA**	**LO 90**	**HI 90**	**PCLOSE**	
Default model	.076	.000	.203	.229	
Independence model	.831	.788	.874	.000	

The EFA results for both affective organizational commitment (AOC) and continuance organizational commitment (COC) also indicated convergent item loadings on each factor (Component 1). The beta coefficients for AOC ranged from .901 to .949, while those for COC ranged from .761 to .942. The model fit statistics for AOC showed that: CMIN = 2.438, DF = 1, p = .1118; Fit Index Values: RMR = .014, GFI = .995, AGFI = .952; Baseline Comparisons: NFI = .998, RFI = .986, IFI = .999, TLI = .992, CFI = .999; RMSEA = .076 (acceptable up to .80, see Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023). For COC, EFA statistics indicated that: CMIN = .761, DF = 1, p = .331; Fit Index Values: RMR = .015, GF = .998, AGFI = .981; Baseline Comparisons: NFI = .998, RFI = .990, IFI = 1.000, TLI = 1.000, CFI = 1.000; RMSEA = .000. These values indicated model fit for each variable. There were no discrepancies between the sample and fitted covariance matrices for each variable (See Tables 3 and 4).

Lastly, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted (see Table 5). All the items of the three latent factors (OI, AOC, and COC) were entered into the SEM model. Results indicated standardized bivariate correlations among the latent factors (AOC and OI: r^2 = .68; AOC and COC: r^2 = .14; OI and COC: r^2 = .07). The observed items for each latent factor loaded perfectly on their respective components. Continuance organizational commitment items loaded on Component 1 with standardized beta weights ranging from .732 to .900, while OI items loaded on Component 2 with standardized beta weights ranging from .794 to .916. Affective organizational commitment items loaded on Component 3 with standardized beta weights ranging from .903 to .918. Model fit statistics also indicated that CMIN = 252.32, DF = 56, and p = .000. For good model fit, the Chi-square probability coefficient should be greater than .05, but in cases of large sample size, $p < .05$ often occurs, necessitating the decision for model fit to rely mostly on other coefficients such as the baseline comparison statistics and RMSEA (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The baseline comparison statistics for the CFA show that NFI = .990, RFI = .986, IFI = .992, TLI = .989, and CFI = .992. Also, RMSEA was .040. These values indicated good model fit and supported the construct validity of each scale, indicating that each scale measured its respective latent factor with no cross-loadings (see Figure 1).

Table 4. Exploratory Factor Analysis Using SEM of Latent Variables

CONTINUANCE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT SCALE (COC)	**β**				
-How high is your feeling that it will be too costly to you to leave your organization now?	.830				
-How high is your feeling that your life will be disrupted too much if you left your organization now?	.942				
-How high is your difficulty of leaving your job now, even if you wanted to do so?	.761				
-How high is your fear of what may happen to you if you quit your job without having another job lined up first?	.765				
Model Fit Summary					
CMIN					
Model	**NPAR**	**CMIN**	**DF**	**P**	**CMIN/DF**
Default model	9	.945	1	.331	.945
Saturated model	10	.000	0		
Independence model	4	574.791	6	.000	95.798
RMR, GFI					
Model	**RMR**	**GFI**	**AGFI**	**PGFI**	
Default model	.015	.998	.981	.100	
Saturated model	.000	1.000			
Independence model	.943	.437	.062	.262	
Baseline Comparisons					
Model	**NFI Delta1**	**RFI rho1**	**IFI Delta2**	**TLI rho2**	**CFI**
Default model	.998	.990	1.000	1.001	1.000
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
RMSEA					
Model	**RMSEA**	**LO 90**	**HI 90**	**PCLOSE**	
Default model	.000	.000	.166	.466	
Independence model	.617	.575	.660	.000	

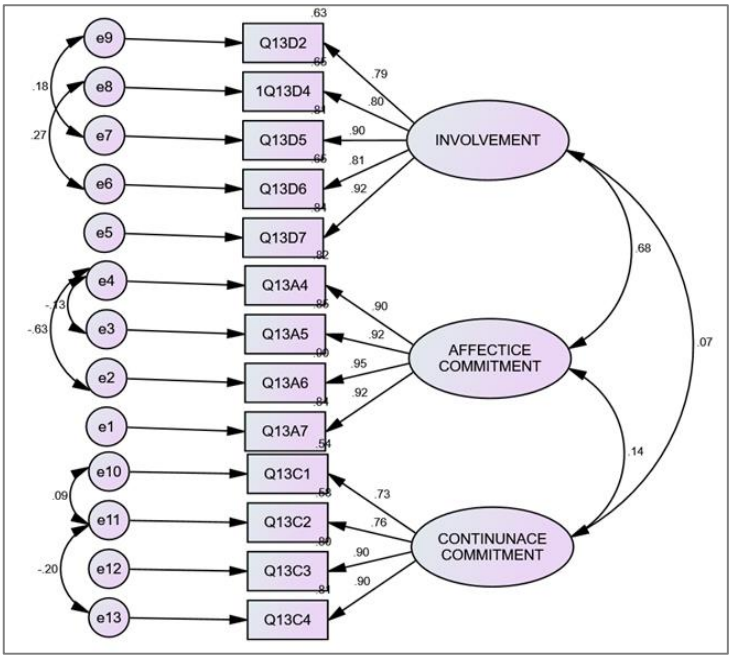

Figure 1. Standardized beta weights for SEM of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of all latent variables

Table 5. SEM Standardized beta weights showing absence of cross-factor loading among the latent factors, N = 2212

Observed variables	Component 1 Continual commitment	Component 2 Organization Involvement	Component 3 Affective Commitment
- How high is your feeling that it will be too costly to you to leave your organization now?	.900		
- How high is your feeling that your life will be disrupted too much if you left your organization now?	.897		
- How high is your difficulty of leaving your job now, even if you wanted to do so?	.759		
- How high is your fear of what may happen to you if you quit your job without having another job lined up first?	.732		
- In your workplace, how much do you enjoy voluntarily participating in activities not related to your job?		.794	
- How much do you enjoy participating in social events in your organization?		.805	
- How much do you enjoy voluntarily donating your time to various activities for your organization?		.902	
- How much do you enjoy being voluntarily around people in your organization?		.806	
- How much do you enjoy spending extra time on activities not related to your job, for the benefit of your organization?		.916	
- Your feeling that you are a "part of the family" in your organization			.903
- Your feeling that you are emotionally attached to your organization			.923
- Your feeling that your organization has a personal meaning for you			.950
- Your feeling of a strong sense of belonging to your organization			.918

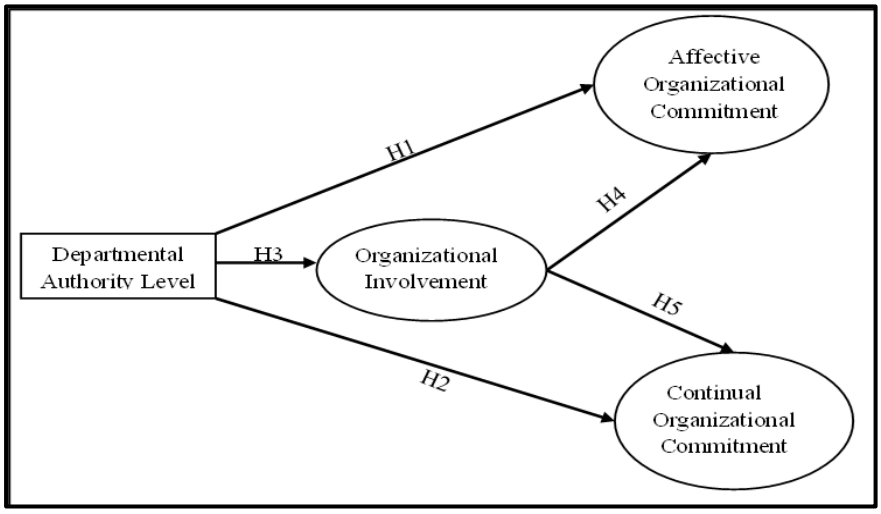

Figure 2. Hypothesized paths between departmental authority level and organizational commitment types

5. Analysis and Results

The structural equation model was used to analyze the data, answer the research questions, and meet the study's objective. This resulted in an analytical model that incorporated all research variables and their hypothesized predictive paths (Figure 2). The model contained two direct hypothesized paths (H_1 and H_2) from the predictor, departmental authority, to the outcome variables, AOC and COC. Other stipulated direct paths were from departmental authority to organizational involvement (H_3), from organizational involvement to AOC (H_4), and from organizational involvement to COC (H_5). In

addition, the model contained two indirect (i.e., mediated) paths between departmental authority and AOC ($H_3 \rightarrow H_4$ and $H_3 \rightarrow H_5$).

The model-fit analysis indicated a good model-data fit (Table 6). That is, the model-implied and observed covariance matrices were close. The model matched the data, so the model was not mis-specified. This assessment was made from the baseline comparison model, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) rather than from the chi-square test of fit (CMIN = 299.8, p =.000, CMIN/DF = 4.47) with a probability lower than .05, although the relative chi-square was within an acceptable range (CMIN/DF < 5) (see Hu & Bentler [50], for acceptable SEM chi-square value ranges). As mentioned earlier, because chi-square is sensitive to sample size, as in this study, a low chi-square probability is typical; therefore, other fit indicators for the default model, such as relative chi-square, comparative fit, and absolute fit indices, were used to determine model fit. The results (comparative fit: CFI = .991, TLI = .998, IFI = .991, RFI = .984, and NFI = .988; absolute fit: RMSEA = .040) were all within acceptable fit ranges, indicating good model-data fit (Table 6). This global fit supported the analyses of the model's path specifications between the predictor and outcome variables.

Table 6. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Three Latent Factors: Organizational Involvement, Affective Organizational Commitment, and continuance organizational commitment, N =2212

Model Fit Summary **CMIN**					
Model	**NPAR**	**CMIN**	**DF**	**P**	**CMIN/DF**
Default model	48	252.316	56	.000	4.506
Saturated model	104	.000	0		
Independence model	26	25334.945	78	.000	324.807
Baseline Comparisons					
Model	**NFI** **Delta1**	**RFI** **rho1**	**IFI** **Delta2**	**TLI** **rho2**	**CFI**
Default model	.990	.986	.992	.989	.992
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Parsimony-Adjusted Measures					
Model	**PRATIO**	**PNFI**	**PCFI**		
Default model	.718	.711	.712		
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000		
Independence model	1.000	.000	.000		
RMSEA					
Model	**RMSEA**	**LO 90**	**HI 90**	**PCLOSE**	
Default model	.040	.035	.045	1.000	
Independence model	.383	.379	.387	.000	

Table 7. SEM Standardized and unstandardized maximum likelihood beta weights for hypothesized paths between departmental authority and organizational commitment

			b	**S.E.**	**C.R**	**β**	**P**
DIRECT EFFECTS							
H_1: Affective Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.07	.01	8.01	.14	***
H_2: Continuance Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.01	.01	1.63	.04	.103
H_3: Organization Involvement	←	Departmental Authority	.15	.01	14.60	.31	***
H_4: Affective Commitment	←	Organization Involvement	.67	.02	33.01	.64	***
H_5: Continuance Commitment	←	Organization Involvement	.05	.01	2.95	.07	.003
INDIRECT EFFECTS							
H_6: Affective Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.10			.20	
H_7: Continuance Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.01			.02	
TOTAL EFFECTS							
Affective Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.17			.34	
Organization Involvement	←	Departmental Authority	.15			.31	
Continuance Commitment	←	Departmental Authority	.02			.06	

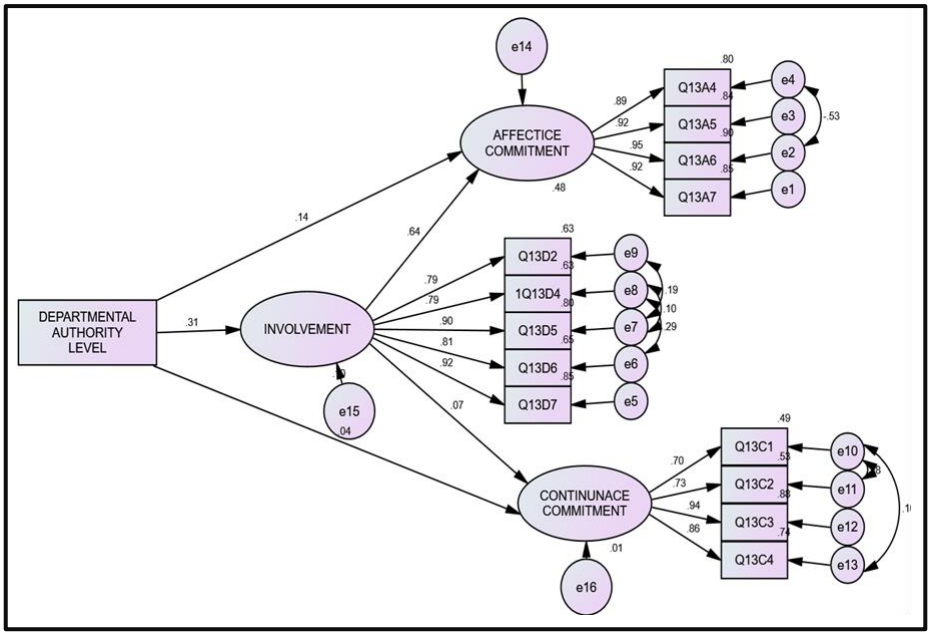

Figure 3. SEM direct and indirect predictive path analysis between departmental power and organizational commitment variants

Path Analysis: Direct Effects

The null for each direct hypothesized path was tested. Results (Figure 3 and Table 7) showed that, except for the expected relationship between departmental authority and COC, which the data did not support (H_2: β = .04, p = .103), all other hypotheses were supported. Hence, as hypothesized, departmental authority predicted AOC (β = .14, p = .000) and organizational involvement (β = .31, p = .000). Also, Organizational involvement predicted AOC (β = .64, p = .000) and COC (β = .07, p = .003). Hence, the direct hypotheses (H_1, H_3, H_4, and H_5) were respectively supported by the data.

Path Analysis: Indirect and Total Effects

The indirect (i.e., mediated) effects, measured through organizational involvement (i.e., employee involvement in nonwork-related organizational activities), showed that departmental authority indirectly predicted AOC ($H_2 \rightarrow H_4$: β = .20) and only slightly predicted COC ($H_2 \rightarrow H_5$: β = .02, but not significant). Also, the total effects analyses showed that departmental authority had the strongest effect in predicting AOC (β = .34), followed by its total effects in predicting organizational involvement (β = .31), and was weak in predicting COC (β = .06). This indicates that the mediator improved the strength of departmental authority in predicting AOC (+β = .06) and in total effect (+ β = .20) over the direct effect. Lastly, the analytical model explained more variance in AOC (R^2 = .481) than in organizational involvement (R^2 = .096) and the least in COC (R^2 = .008).

6. Conclusions and Discussion

This study examined whether perceived departmental authority predicted affective and continuance organizational commitments and whether organizational involvement mediated these relationships. Unlike other studies that measured organizational power by rank, this study measured power as perceived authority, regardless of rank, because authority can come from sources other than rank. The study found departmental authority to directly predict affective organizational commitment (β = .14) and organizational involvement (β = .31) but did not directly predict continuance organizational commitment (β = .04, p > .05). Organizational involvement strongly predicted affective commitment (β = .64) and had a weak, but significant, relationship with continuance commitment (β = .07). Departmental authority also had an indirect (mediated) effect on affective commitment through organizational involvement (β = .20), producing a total effect of β = .34. Its indirect and total effects on continuance commitment were comparatively small (β = .02 and β = .06, respectively).

A comparison of the relationships between departmental power and AOC in Oyinlade [22] and this study shows that the predictor factor weakly predicts AOC, as evidenced by the direct standardized beta coefficients in both studies, although the beta coefficients in this study are higher than those in Oyinlade [22]. The difference in the outcomes of the two studies may stem from the inclusion of organization-wide power and job responsibilities as additional predictors, which, in Oyinlade [22], might have reduced the effect of departmental power. The absence of those factors in this study is assumed to have improved the predictive power of departmental power. Also, although the beta values are relatively low in both studies, they show that departmental authority is associated primarily with employees' emotional attachment to their organizations rather than their perceived costs of leaving. This pattern aligns with prior research showing that hierarchical position and organizational power are more strongly associated with affective commitment than with continuance commitment [23]. Departmental authority may communicate organizational trust, recognition, status,

and importance to authority holders. These experiences can strengthen employees' identification with the organization and encourage them to reciprocate with greater emotional attachment, as social exchange and organizational identification perspectives suggest [12] [29].

A salient observation in this study, and in Oyinlade [11], is that organizational involvement in nonjob-related activities is an important pathway linking departmental authority to affective commitment. Employees who perceive greater authority may have more opportunities, motivation, or invitations to participate in voluntary, nonjob-related organizational activities. Such participation may broaden their organizational relationships, strengthen their sense of belonging, and increase their identification with the organization. Additionally, it is consistent that departmental authority directly predicts affective commitment, and organizational involvement significantly strengthens that relationship. In contrast, departmental authority was weakly related to continuance commitment. This result supports the argument that accumulated investments, perceived sacrifices, limited employment alternatives, job security, tenure, and labor-market conditions shape continuance commitment more than authority itself [33] [34]. Although organizational involvement predicted continuance commitment, the magnitude of this relationship was small, as was the indirect effect of departmental authority. Therefore, authority and voluntary involvement appear unlikely to create substantial cost-based attachment to an organization. This may mean that the value of departmental authority is not high enough to bind the authority holder to an organization until a better job option is obtained, or even to be used as a bargaining chip for better compensation by a future employer.

7. Practical Implications

The findings of this study suggest some practical implications for organizational management. Organizations may create structures to strengthen affective commitment. Such structures may include giving employees meaningful opportunities to exercise authority, contribute to departmental decisions, lead projects or committees, and voluntarily participate in organization-wide activities. Such opportunities should involve genuine discretion and influence rather than titles without meaningful authority. Organizations should also ensure that access to authority and involvement is transparent and equitable. These practices may promote employee retention by developing emotional attachment rather than dependence, based primarily on the perceived costs of leaving.

8. Recommendations for Future Research

Like most, if not all, other studies on commitment, this study focused on predictors of commitment rather than causes. Also, the cross-sectional design of this study cannot determine whether authority increases commitment or whether more committed and involved employees are more likely to receive or perceive authority. Therefore, future research should examine the causes of commitment. Longitudinal or experimental designs may be used to establish the temporal and causal relationships among departmental authority, organizational involvement, and organizational commitment.

Additional research may also develop and validate a multi-item measure of departmental authority. Because authority was measured with a single self-reported item, future studies are encouraged to distinguish among formal supervisory authority, informal influence, decision-making authority, control over resources, committee leadership, and professional expertise. Researchers could also compare perceived authority with actual organizational records, job classifications, and assessments provided by supervisors or coworkers.

Finally, future studies may examine the two recognized dimensions of continuance commitment: perceived sacrifice and lack of alternatives, separately. Departmental authority may increase the perceived sacrifice associated with leaving without necessarily reducing perceived employment alternatives. Separating these dimensions may reveal relationships that are obscured when continuance commitment is treated as a single construct. Replication with probability-based and international samples would also help determine whether the present findings generalize beyond the U.S.-based participants recruited through M-Turk.

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