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Motivators of employee commitment at multinational organisations in emerging economies: Empirical evidence from Nigeria

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In the past decade, there has been an increase in the studies on employee turnover in Nigeria. The spate of studies is suggestive that employees are not very committed to their jobs in most organisations. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate poses a big constraint to the mobility of labour and thus increases the possibility of disguised commitment. To this end, this study sought to ascertain the major determinants of employee commitment in business organisations. The specific objectives were to investigate the extent to which stunted mobility, extrinsic motivators, intrinsic motivators and organisational climate influence employee commitment, as well as the extent to which respondents' perception of employees' commitment relates to socio-demographic variables like age, gender and educational qualification. The population of the study consisted of employees of seven multinational companies in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers states of Nigeria. The study employed the survey design with a questionnaire serving as the research instrument. Data were analysed using structural equation modelling. The results indicated that stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and organisational climate are significant motivators of employee commitment. Respondents' perceptions did not vary with demographic variables.

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Introduction

Employee commitment is sacrosanct to the attainment of organisational goals and by implication, organisational effectiveness; since the extent to which an organisation attains its goals is one of the yardsticks for measuring organisational effectiveness, from the viewpoint of the goal attainment model (Eydi, 2015). Employee commitment stimulates goal attainment through the enhancement of their loyalty (Ghorbanhosseini, 2012). Employee commitment to the organisation makes them strive to contribute to organisational success so that the “going concern” will not be threatened. Committed employees invest their time, energy, intellect and emotions in the organisation and exert energy as if the continued existence of the organisation depends on their input. They exhibit affective continuance and normative commitment to the well-being of the organisation and there is no difference between the degrees of each type of commitment exerted by such employees (Daciulyte and Aranauskaitė, 2012). Employee commitment can reduce withdrawal behaviours like lateness, absenteeism and turnover (Irefin and Mechanic, 2014). To this end, it has significant implications for strategic managers of corporate entities, policy-makers in government and other stakeholders

Motivation and employee commitment. Given the relevance of employee commitment to the attainment of organisational goals, it is important to know the drivers or motivators of organisational commitment. Such awareness will permit the leveraging of such knowledge to stimulate employee commitment as the need arises. Motivation plays a role in organisational commitment because employees work in expectation of rewards, which serve to meet their needs (Wolowska, 2014). Maslow (1954) identified five of those needs of employees. They are physiological *needs*, which refer to basic needs of air, water, food, clothing and shelter; regarded as the most prepotent of all the needs in the hierarchy. Others are *Safety needs*, which refer to the physical environment, emotional safety and protection such as job security, financial security, protection from animals, family security and health security; *Needs for love, affection and belongingness*, which refers to people’s desire to overcome feelings of loneliness and alienation. This has to do with giving and receiving love, affection and a sense of belonging (Nyameh, 2013). Next is *Needs for esteem*, which consists of people’s needs for self-esteem as well as the esteem they get from others; such as—a stable, firmly base, and high level of self-respect, as well as respect from others; and *the Need for self-actualisation*; which is the need for fulfilment. It is the need to do what one was born to do. It is pertinent to note that these needs are never fully satisfied, but once each lower-level need is satisfied to some reasonable degree, the next on the scale becomes the most prepotent until the fulfilment of the highest-level need (self-actualisation).

Emerging economies have peculiar challenges that make them different from advanced economies. Of particular interest is the fact that most of these emerging economies are characterised by hunger, a high rate of unemployment, underemployment, political instability and insecurity of lives and property, among others (Aysha, 2021; ILO, 2020; Turnham and Eröcal, 1990). Virtually all sub-Saharan countries, Nigeria inclusive (Kayode et al., 2014; Anayochukwu and Ifejiolor, 2014; Idoko, 2013), fall into this category. The perceived high rate of unemployment implies that some employees are constrained to show commitment to their organisations due to what this study regards as stunted mobility, even when they may not be adequately motivated. There are several empirical studies on employee motivation and employee commitment. Some of the authors that examined studies on motivation and employee commitment are

Kim and Rowley (2005), Wolowska (2014), Jandaghi et al. (2011), Daciulyte and Aranauskaitė (2012), Gitau and Monari (2019), Qiambao and Nuqui (2017) and Apergis (2016). The spate of employee turnover by many recent studies on employee turnover in Nigeria (Oginni and Omoyele, 2018; Ugoani and John, 2016; Izidor and Iheriohanma, 2015; Essien et al., 2013; Mbah and Ikemefuna, 2012) tend to suggest that employees are not very committed to their jobs thus, necessitating investigation of determinants of organisational commitment. The high employee turnover is not an indication of low unemployment; in fact, the level of unemployment in Nigeria is high, thus restricting the mobility of labour (Ademola, 2021; Ikechukwu et al., 2016; Muhammad et al., 2015; Kayode et al., 2014). Despite the abundant literature on organisational commitment, only a few studies (Apergis, 2016; Deveceand, 2016; among others) have examined the possible relationship between unemployment and employee commitment. Furthermore, very few of the extant studies (Hämäläinen, 2002; McCormick, 1997; as well as Osberg, 1991, among others) have examined the relationship between unemployment and mobility of labour with none being in Nigeria. However, stunted mobility, which is a direct consequence of the high level of unemployment, may have an implication on the mobility of labour and hence the degree of commitment of employees. To this end, this study thus sought to bridge these gaps by identifying the factors that influence organisational commitment in emerging economies given the low capital index in these countries (Sow, 2017), which is indicative of inadequate motivation, especially the role of unemployment in employee commitment. The essence is to situate the factors that influence employee commitment in proper perspective for the Nigerian economy and other emerging economies.

Aim and objectives of the study. The study aimed to ascertain the major drivers (motivators) of employee commitment in business organisations using multinational companies in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to investigate the extent to which specific factors (stunted mobility, extrinsic motivators, intrinsic motivators and organisational climate) influence employee commitment in these organisations; as well as the extent to which respondents’ perception is related to socio-demographic variables like age, gender and educational qualification. Arising from the above, this study sought to provide adequate answers to the following questions. To what extent does stunted mobility influence employee commitment in business organisations in Nigeria? To what extent does extrinsic motivation influence employee commitment in business organisations in Nigeria? To what extent does intrinsic motivation influence employee commitment in business organisations in Nigeria? To what extent does organisational climate influence employee commitment in business organisations in Nigeria?

Literature review

Conceptual clarification. Work attitude is very important in organisational settings. Employees with a positive attitude to work tend to exhibit more attachment to the work than those who are indifferent. Employees’ attitude to work has implications on their degree of commitment. Organisational commitment is the degree of attachment that an employee has to an organisation (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Organisational commitment is also an employee’s desire to maintain affiliation with an organisation; and this reflects the willingness to exert a high level of effort to achieve organisational goals (Hanaysha, 2016). Organisational commitment leads to the valuing of the shared benefits held between an employee and his or her organisation. Akintayo

(2011) sees employee commitment as the degree to which an employee feels devoted to this organisation. It is an effective response to the entirety of an employee's organisation as well as the degree of an employee's attachment or loyalty towards the organisation (Ongori, 2007). According to Zheng (2010), employee commitment is his/her attitude to the organisation. Thus, *commitment* is the force "that binds an individual to a course of action. This force is the state of mind, which can take different forms: desire perceived cost or the duty to continue the course of action. These states of mind are reflected by distinguished components underlying the concept of commitment" (Wolowska, 2014, p. 137). The foregoing indicates that employee commitment encompasses devotion, loyalty, attachment, affiliation and affection.

Hypotheses development. Apergis (2016) investigated the relationship between unemployment and organisational commitment. He argued that unemployment increases the cost of job loss and thus increases job insecurity. Cost of job losses and job insecurity, and by implication unemployment, positively influence employee commitment to the organisation. The study employed secondary data consisting of household, income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) microdatabase. Results indicated that employees in high unemployment regions are more committed to their organisation and that unemployment influences employees' commitment more in the private sector than the public sector. Other related studies on unemployment include Organisational commitment and its effects on organisational citizenship behaviour in a high-unemployment environment (Devece et al., 2016), as well as Job insecurity and employee commitment: Managers reactions to the threat and outcomes of redundancy selection (Hallier and Lyon, 1996). Unemployment, selective employment measures and inter-regional mobility of labour (Hämäläinen, 2002), regional unemployment and labour mobility in the UK (McCormick, 1997, p. 583) as well as unemployment and inter-industry labour mobility in Canada in the 1980s (Osberg, 1991, p. 1711) are also among the extant studies that have been conducted on unemployment and employee commitment. These led to the formulation of the first null hypothesis.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between stunted mobility and employee commitment

Jandaghi et al. (2011) investigated the impact of job security on employees' commitment and job satisfaction in Qom municipalities to explore the impact of job security on employees' commitment and job satisfaction in Qom municipalities. They employed the descriptive research design and analysed data using Spearman's correlation as well as *t*-test and multivariate regression. The results showed that wage satisfaction and colleagues' satisfaction have the highest impact on organisational commitment. Furthermore, job satisfaction significantly positively relates to organisational commitment.

Bonau (2018) investigated "drivers of employee commitment: Evidence from the 2011 workplace employment relations survey of employees". The study specifically explores determinants of three measures of employee commitment; *shared values with the organisation*, *loyalty*, and *pride in working for the organisation*. The design was a cross-sectional survey of data from the 2011 UK Workplace Employment Relations Survey of Employees. The employees' attitudes towards the job, the workplace and working at the workplace were the variables used. The results reveal two types of influence, which are aspects that encourage employee involvement and those that foster the development of the employee's skills. However, pay satisfaction negatively correlates to commitment.

Rameshkumar (2020) examined "employee engagement has been the most widely researched area of human resource in recent times because of its practical importance in business organisations today." The paper sought to identify the factors that influence employee engagement as well as the extent to which employee engagement influences the affective, continuance and normative modules of organisational commitment among Indian ship officers. Specifically, the paper sought to explore the correlation, if any, between work and organisational engagement variables with three aspects of organisational commitment. Employee engagement exhibited a positive relationship with affective and normative components whereas; engagement is not significantly associated with the continuance component of organisational commitment. The results are inconsistent with extant studies where continuance commitment has reported a significant negative relationship with engagement. However, the engagement and commitment levels of officers working with the deck and engine department did not contrast significantly.

Qiambao and Nuqui (2017) investigated the determinants of organisational commitment among the faculty members of private tertiary institutions based on personal, professional and job factors. They employed a survey design and used a sample of 89 respondents. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient served to analyse data. The results showed that personal factors (age, civil status and gender), as well as professional factors (length of teaching service and salary), have no significant relationship with organisational commitment. However, educational attainment, incentives and job satisfaction have a significant influence on the commitment of teachers. These led to the formulation of the second null hypothesis

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and employee commitment

Ezenwakwelu (2017) investigated "the determinants of employee motivation for organisational commitment" to ascertain the dimensions of motivation for employee commitment. He employed a mixed-method design, which consisted of a survey of senior administrative and academic staff in the University of Nigeria, Enugu campus as well as secondary data, which were analysed using Spearman's rho bivariate correlation technique. Results indicated that job design and autonomy are significant dimensions of motivation for employee commitment while salary and working conditions influence employee productivity. Lastly, responsibility and personal growth significantly influence employee commitment positively

Pham (2017) investigated the "determinants of job satisfaction and organisational commitment of employees within the telecommuting environment in Vietnam" to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment in the environment of telecommuting. The results reveal motivation as a major factor that influences job satisfaction and affective commitment. The above led to the formulation of the third null hypothesis

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and employee commitment;

Kim and Rowley (2005) reviewed the background determinants of employee commitment. They focused mainly on the commitment to organisations and trade unions. They explored approaches taken as well as problems encountered with each type of commitment. They observed the need for more precise operationalization and theoretical underpinning in designing research to investigate the relationship between employee commitment and its determinants.

Wolowska (2014) investigated the determinants of organisational commitment. They employed the Meyer and Allen three-component model of organisational commitment. The data were elicited from 198 classic employees and 132 temporary employees

(total, 330) from a state company (205) and a private company (125). Results showed that work locus of control, breach of psychological contract and psychological climate had a significant influence on organisational commitment.

Daciulyte and Aranauskaitė (2012) investigated “temporary employees’ of a temporary employment agency” to determine the determinants of commitment and determine how to make improvements. They employed a survey design. Results indicated that there was no dominant type of commitment among affective, continuance and normative types.

Gitau and Monari (2019) investigated the determinants of employee commitment in constitutional commissions in Kenya to identify the determinants of employee commitment in constitutional commissions in Kenya. They employed the cross-sectional survey design on a target population of 4771 employees. Multistage sampling consisting of simple random sampling and stratified sampling served to select 380 respondents. The information elicited from the sampled respondents constituted the research data. Inferential tests served to analyse the data. Results showed that compensation, reward and work environment had a significant effect on employee commitment. The foregoing necessitated the formulation of the fourth null hypothesis:

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between organisational climate and employee commitment;

The study tested additional null hypotheses to examine the influence of respondents’ biodata on their perception of organisational commitment:

(v) Respondents’ perception of employee commitment does not vary with age;

(vi) Respondents’ perception of employee commitment does not vary with gender;

(vii) Respondents’ perception of employee commitment does not vary with educational attainment; and

(viii) Respondents’ perception of employee commitment does not vary with the type of organisation

Conceptual framework. Based on the empirical review, it is evident that the major determinants of employee commitment include factors of motivation (extrinsic and intrinsic factors), rate of unemployment and job security, among others. Extrinsic motivation and leadership influence organisational climate. Specifically, age, experience and area of specialisation constrain the mobility of labour. Furthermore, stunted mobility leads to fear of unavailability of alternative Job/comparable incentives; this leads to contentment, and thus, influences job satisfaction and employee commitment. The organisational climate also influences job satisfaction; which, in turn, influences employee commitment. To this end, these factors constitute the framework of the study (see Fig. 1).

Gaps in literature. There is no gainsaying that abundant empirical literature abounds on organisational commitment and motivation. They include determinants of job satisfaction and organisational commitment of employees (Pham, 2017), and background determinants of employee commitment (Kim and Rowley, 2005; Wolowska, 2014). The others are the relationship between unemployment and organisational commitment (Apergis, 2016), the impact of job security on employees’ commitment and job satisfaction (Jandaghi et al., 2011), as well as the commitment of temporary employees to a temporary employment agency (Daciulyte and Aranauskaitė, 2012). The determinants of employee commitment in constitutional commissions in Kenya (Gitau and Monari, 2019), determinants of organisational commitment among the faculty members of private tertiary

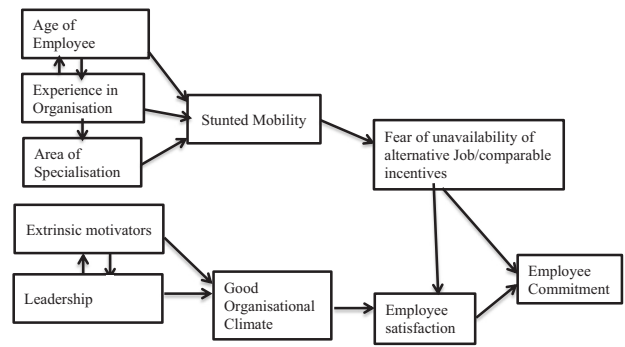


Fig. 1 A model of factors that motivate employee commitment in organisations. Source: Author’s conceptual framework of the study (2021).

institutions (Qiambao and Nuqui, 2017) and determinants of employee motivation for organisational commitment (Ezenwakwelu, 2017). Devece et al. (2016) investigated “Organisational commitment and its effects on organisational citizenship behaviour in a high-unemployment environment” while Hallier and Lyon (1996) examined job insecurity and employee commitment: Managers reactions to the threat and outcomes of redundancy selection. Others are unemployment, selective employment measures and inter-regional mobility of labour (Hämäläinen, 2002), “regional unemployment and labour mobility in the UK (McCormick, 1997) as well as “unemployment and inter-industry labour mobility in Canada in the 1980s (Osberg, 1991).

Despite the abundant literature on organisational commitment, only a few examined the possible relationship between unemployment and employee commitment. Besides, it is doubtful whether any study has investigated the implications of the high unemployment rate on the mobility of labour, which may thus have implications for employee commitment in Nigeria. This study thus sought to bridge these gaps given the high employee turnover vis-à-vis the level of unemployment, which suggests that employee commitment is low in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework. This study adopts Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three components model of organisational commitment and Mullins’ (1996) needs and expectations of employee’s model as well as the social exchange theory (SET) and the leadership-member exchange theory (LMET) as its framework. While Meyer and Allen’s Three-Component Model focuses mainly on organisational commitment, the Mullins’ needs and expectations model regards intrinsic and extrinsic factors as well as social factors as the determinants of organisational commitment. The SET and LMET see social interaction as the bedrock of employee commitment

Meyer and Allen’s (1991). The three major components of organisational commitment in the model are *affective* commitment, *normative* commitment and *continuance* commitment.

The *affective component* refers to the emotional commitment of an employee to the organisation and identification with it. Employees with strong affective commitment remain in the organisation because of the affection they have for the organisation. The need for self-actualisation also influences affective commitment. *Continuance commitment* is due to the employee’s awareness of costs connected with abandoning the organisation. A strong desire to avoid these costs propels the employee to remain committed to the organisation. Employees’ continuance component causes their basic attachment with the organisation to remain within it because they need to do so (Wolowska, 2014). *Normative commitment* is consistent with

ethical consideration by the employee. It refers to the sense of moral duty to stay in the organisation. Persons with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to do so.

Mullins' needs and expectations model. Mullins (1996) classified employees' expectations at work into three—*extrinsic motivation*, *intrinsic motivation* and *social relationship*

Extrinsic motivation refers to tangible rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, materials goods, contract of services, the work environment and conditions of work.

Intrinsic motivation is the psychological reward associated with the job. They include responsibility, challenging work, achievement, recognition, and treatment in a caring and considerate manner. These rewards are dependent on the actions of individual managers. *Social relationship*—This refers to interactions that occur within the organisation. They include friendships, working group and the desire for affiliation, status and dependency. This is a relational orientation to work and concern with other employees in the organisation (Sev et al., 2016). The comparative strength of employees' expectations concerning extrinsic and intrinsic factors as well as social relationships has significant implications for employee motivation, job satisfaction, work performance and, ultimately, employee commitment (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004).

Social exchange theory. The social exchange theory (SET) seeks to explain the factors that influence social behaviour. Homans sees social behaviour as an exchange of both material goods and non-material ones. The major thrust of the SET is that persons that give much to others try to get much from them, and persons that get much from others are under pressure to give much to them and “this process of influence tends to work out at equilibrium to balance the exchanges” (Bakkabulindi and Bisaso 2015, p. 19). Exchange processes are the micro-foundation of macro-sociological phenomena; mutual bonds emerge in social interaction as persons who incur obligations reciprocate. SET “proposes that HRM practices initiate a positive exchange relationship to which employees reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviour towards the organisation and/ or job” (Marescaux et al. 2013, p. 18). HRM captures the exchange relationship in social exchange theory. In this regard, employees expect organisations to satisfy human resource practices and thus view the same as an organisation's commitment towards them. On their part, employees reciprocate such organisational commitment through their commitment (Geetha and Mampilly, 2012). The implication is that employees are more likely to exchange their commitment for resources and benefits provided by their organisation.

Leader-member exchange theory (LMXT). Developed by Dansereau et al. (1975) the LMXT describes the dyadic process that develops roles and expectations for a leader with each subordinate. According to the authors, approaching leadership as an exchange relationship leads to high exchange relationships and this exchange relationship develops within the vertical dyad overtime during role making activities. Accordingly, “in the relationship, the degree of latitude a superior grants to a member to negotiate his/ her role is predictive of subsequent behaviour on the part of both superior and member. They expounded that in LMXT, superiors employ both leadership and supervision techniques within their units” (Mugizi et al., 2015, p. 23). Superiors develop leadership exchanges with a select subset of their members, whereby they influence without authority and with others, develop only supervision relationships by influencing primarily through authority. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMXI) propounds that “high-exchange relationships characterise high-level of trust, liking, and respect (employer-employee

relationships) and involve expectations of mutual exchange” (Yukl et al., 2009, p. 295). Exchange relationships develop gradually over time; reinforced by the behaviour of the leader and the subordinates. The major thrust of the LMXY is that organisational characteristics relate to employee commitment. Thus, employee commitment is critical to the sharpening of the organisation in general.

Research methods

The study uses a quantitative methodology while the design is a cross-sectional survey of the employees of multinational companies operating in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated four states of Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States out of the six states of the Niger Delta region. The choice of a survey was to elicit respondents' opinions on their experience in the organisations in respect of the research problem.

The population from which the sample for this study was drawn consists of the employees of seven randomly selected multinational companies; Coca-cola Plc., 7Up Plc., Guinness Plc. Nigerian breweries Plc., MTN, Airtel, and Ecobank Plc in Edo state, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States of Nigeria. The choice of multinational companies was informed by the perceived level of employee engagement in these organisations vis-à-vis the level of extrinsic motivations obtainable in these organisations. Staff categories; using management staff, senior staff, and junior staff formed the stratification of the population. Based on an estimated population size of 1267, the proportional allocation technique served to determine the samples for each organisation, having used the Taro Yamane formula to determine a sample size of 380. However, out of the 380 sampled respondents, 223 participated successfully in the study. Simple random sampling (lottery method) served to select respondents from each stratum. Consequently, the sampling technique was stratified random sampling consistent with Inegbedion and Obadiaru (2018), Inegbedion (2018) and Inegbedion et al. (2016).

Research instrument. The study employed a structured questionnaire in data collection. It was made up of two parts—the biodata of the respondents and a second part which examined questions related to the core subject matter of the study; “motivators of employees' commitment”. The question-response format in the core-subject matter was of the Likert type (five-point scale). The author designed the instrument (see Appendix 1).

Validity. Some experts in management helped to scrutinise the instrument. Subsequently, the researcher computed content validity indexes (item and scale levels) for each of the constructs and the entire instrument. The values obtained for the item level content validity indexes (I-CVI) were 0.72, 0.87, 0.74, 0.78 and 0.79 for stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, and organisational climate respectively, while the value obtained for the entire instrument, scale-validity index (S-CVI) was 0.79. Given that all the values are significantly higher than 0.78 and consistent with Zamanzadeh et al. (2015) threshold of 0.78, the instrument is assumed to satisfy the validity test (see Table 1).

Reliability test. The study used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data collected and used Cronbach alpha to test for reliability of the instrument. The computed Cronbach alpha for all the items (collectively) was 0.89. The values for stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and organisational commitment items were 0.83, 0.65, 0.72 and 0.76, respectively (see Table 2), thus indicating that the items used in measuring the entire instrument, stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation are internally consistent. These

Table 1 Validity tests.

Construct	S-CVI	I-CVI	Number of Items
Entire instrument	0.79		14
Economic activities		0.72	4
Economic activities and circular flow of Income		0.87	4
Economic growth		0.74	4
Organisational climate		0.73	2
Employee commitment		0.71	3

Source: Author's computation (2021).

Table 2 Reliability statistics.

Construct	Cronbach Alpha
Entire instrument	0.89
Stunted mobility	0.83
Extrinsic motivation	0.65
Intrinsic motivation	0.72
Organisational climate	0.76
Employee commitment	0.74

Source: Author's computation (2021).

Table 3 Structural equations modell.

Robust standardised coef.	Std. err.	z	P > z	[95% Conf. Interval]	Structural	EC < -
SM	0.3657655	0.0195314	18.73	0.000	0.3274847	0.4040463
EM	0.313203	0.0129778	24.13	0.000	0.2877669	0.338639
IM	0.2933983	0.0244953	11.98	0.000	0.2453884	0.3414081
OC	0.1703789	0.0087428	19.49	0.000	0.1532434	0.1875144
_cons	-0.0132666	0.0394647	-0.34	0.737	-0.0906161	0.0640829

Source: Author's computation (2021).
Structural equation model: Number of obs. = 223. Estimation method = ml. Log pseudolikelihood = -269.16418.

values indicate that the items in the questionnaire are internally consistent and thus, show that the instrument is highly reliable. This is consistent with Hair et al. (2006).

Measurement of variables. The dependent variable of the study is employee commitment while the independent variable is motivators of employees' commitment. Three Likert items measured employees' commitment. Four constructs operationalised the independent variable (Motivators of employee commitment). The constructs are stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and organisational climate. Four Likert scale items served to measure each stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation while two Likert scale items served to measure the last construct of the independent variable (Organisational climate).

Data analysis. The study used the Multicollinearity test to address the problem of common method variance owing to the use of a self-reporting instrument. The results of the test show that the highest VIF is 6.915 and which corresponds to occupational mobility. This value is not greater than 10, therefore is within tolerance. The corresponding tolerance limit for this variance inflation factor (VIF) is 0.145, which is not less than 0.1, thus implying that it is within tolerance. Lastly, the average VIF also indicates that the coefficient is within tolerance. Thus, there is no significant evidence of multicollinearity. The implication is that the data are not significantly subject to common method variance. Subsequently, the research data were analysed using the structural equations modelling technique; specifically, it employed the path diagram analysis while the *F* test served to test for differences in perception by socio-demographic variables.

Results

After administering the questionnaires, 223 (76.64%) respondents completed and returned their questionnaires out of the 280 served.

The results of the structural equations model for motivators of employee commitment indicate that the constant and coefficients

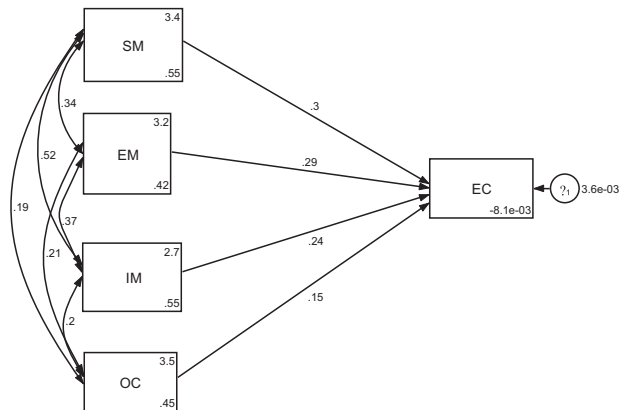


Fig. 2 Path diagram (motivators of employee commitment). Source: Author's computation (2021).

of stunted mobility (SM), extrinsic factors (EM), intrinsic factors (IM), and organisational climate (OC) were -0.013, 0.37, 0.31, 0.29, and 0.17. Thus, the research model is

$$EC = -0.013 + 0.37 SM + 0.31 EM + 0.29 IM + 0.17 OC$$

The model implies that a unit change in stunted mobility will lead to a 37% change in employee commitment. Furthermore, a unit change in extrinsic motivation will lead to a 31% change in employee commitment, a unit change in intrinsic motivation will lead to a 29% change in employee commitment and a unit change in organisational climate will cause a 17% change in employee commitment. The results further show that the calculated *Z* and associated significant probabilities for the motivators of employee commitment were 18.73 ($P < 0.001$), 24.13 ($P < 0.001$), 11.98 ($P < 0.001$), 15.49 ($P < 0.001$) and -0.34 ($P < 0.737$) for the stunted mobility (sm), extrinsic motivation (em), intrinsic motivation (im), organisational climate (oc) and constant, respectively (see Table 3 and Fig. 2). The implication is that all the explanatory variables (sm, em, im and oc) are significant predictors of

Table 4 Equation-level goodness of fit.

Variance depvars	Ftted predicted	Residual	R-squared	mc	mc ²	Observed
EC	0.3694376	0.3658633	0.0035743	0.990325	0.9951508	0.990325
Overall	0.990325					

Source: Author's computation (2021).
 mc = correlation between depvar and its prediction. mc² = mc² is the Bentler-Raykov squared multiple correlation coefficient.

Table 5 Stability analysis of simultaneous equation systems.

Eigenvalue stability condition	
Eigenvalue	Modulus
0	0
0	0
0	0

Source: Author's computation (2021).
 Stability index = 0. All the eigenvalues lie inside the unit circle. SEM satisfies stability condition.

Table 6 Respondents' perception and demographic variables.

Socio-demographic variable	F	Sig.
Age	1.94	0.11
Gender	0.88	0.35
Educational qualification	1.21	0.31
Organisation	0.78	0.59

Source: Author's computation (2021).

employee commitment at the one per cent level. Furthermore, all the relationships were positive. To this end, we can conclude, at the 99% confidence level, that stunted mobility (sm), extrinsic motivation (em), intrinsic motivation (im), and organisational climate (oc) significantly influence employee commitment in organisations (see Table 3).

The equation-level goodness-of-fit test indicated that the overall goodness of fit is 0.99, thus indicating that variations in the explanatory variables (stunted mobility, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and organisational climate) explain 99% of the variation in employee commitment (see Table 4). The results of the stability analysis of simultaneous equations indicate that observed values are all zero. This is indicative of a good fit as all the eigenvalues lie within the unit circle. This is consistent with the equation level goodness of fit (see Table 5).

Discussion of findings. The formulation of the first hypothesis was to examine the extent to which stunted mobility influences employee commitment. Results indicate that employees' perception of job immobility has a positive relationship with employee commitment and the positive relationship is statistically significant at the one per cent level. This tends to suggest that employees' perception of job mobility significantly influences their level of commitment to the current organisation. The results are inconsistent with Apergis (2016), Hämäläinen (2002), McCormick (1997) as well as Osberg (1991). The test of the second hypothesis was to find out the extent to which extrinsic motivation influences employee commitment. Results of the structural equations model indicate that extrinsic motivation significantly influences employee commitment. The results are consistent with Gitau and Monari (2019), Jandaghi et al. (2011) and partially consistent with Qiambao and Nuqui (2017).

Testing the third hypothesis was to investigate the extent to which intrinsic motivation affects employee commitment. The results of the structural equations model show that intrinsic motivation has a statistically significant positive impact on employee commitment. The results are consistent with Ezenwakwelu (2017) as well as Pham (2017). The study tested the fourth hypothesis to investigate the extent to which organisational climate influences employee commitment. Results of the structural equations model show that there was a significant

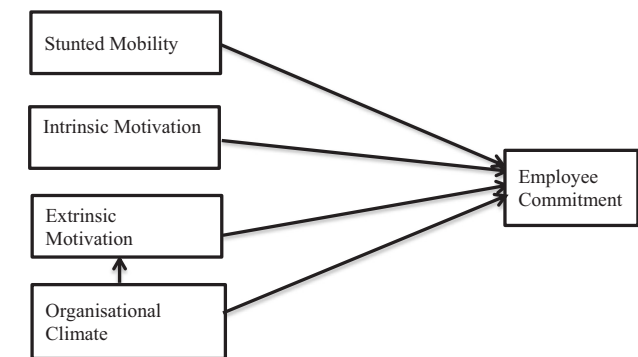


Fig. 3 Proposed model of determinants of employee commitment. Source: Author's proposed model of the study (2021).

positive relationship between organisational climate and employee commitment. The results are consistent with Kim and Rowley (2005), Wolowska (2014) and Gitau and Monari (2019).

The fifth, sixth and seventh hypotheses sought to find out whether there is any significant relationship between employees' perception and demographic variables. The ANOVA tests involving the perception of employee commitment and socio-demographic variables showed that the computed F and associated significant probabilities were 1.94 (0.11), 0.88 (0.35), 1.21 (0.31) and 0.78 (0.59) for age, gender, educational qualification and organisation, thus implying that none of the tests was significant. The implication is that employee commitment is invariant with demographic variables (see Table 6). The results are consistent with Qiambao and Nuqui (2017).

Proposed model. Based on the findings, the study proposes a model of motivators of employee commitment in emerging economies (see Fig. 3). The proposed model shows that stunted mobility, extrinsic factors and intrinsic factors, as well as organisational climate, significantly influence employee commitment to their organisations. Recall, that stunted mobility indicates that employees will be afraid that there are no alternative employments for them outside the current organisation. It further

assumes that even if the jobs are there they are so few that employees may not stand a chance of being successful if they choose to leave their current organisation. To this end, they choose to remain committed to the current organisation to be able to secure the current job where they earn their living.

Conclusion

The argument at the beginning of this article was that this study attempts to model the motivators of employee commitment in Nigeria. The findings presented suggest that stunted mobility, extrinsic factors, intrinsic factors and organisational climate significantly influence employee commitment in organisations. This is important for strategic managers and policymakers in Nigeria because insights about the motivators of employee commitment will prove useful in repositioning business organisations for enhanced productivity. To date, the literature/policymakers/the profession has barely provided any comprehensive study that incorporates the variables used by the author in Nigeria, but this study offers a novel adjustment to previous studies through the introduction of “stunted mobility” as a major determinant of employee commitment, thus indicating disguised commitment owing to their inability to find alternative employment.

While this study does not offer a conclusive answer to the question of motivators of employee commitment, it does provide insights that might form an objective basis for strategic managers and policymakers to plan for the effective management of employee commitments in organisations. The research raises important questions about employee commitment in Nigeria owing to the high coefficient of stunted mobility. Based on the research findings, this study proposes that strategic managers should be more committed to strategies to elicit employees’ involvement in organisations. This will enable them to achieve their objective of enhancing employee commitment and the attendant increase in productivity.

The research concludes that stunted mobility, organisational climate, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation all have a positive and significant impact on employee commitment in organisations. Lastly, respondents’ perception is invariant with demographic variables. This study has made a significant contribution to knowledge in human resources and management science research. First, it has verified the relevance of the organisational climate to employee motivation and commitment in Nigerian organisations. Secondly, it has confirmed the importance of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to employee commitment in organisations. While there is empirical evidence that extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation (motivators) influence employee commitment in organisations, the point of departure of this study from previous studies is the introduction of “stunted mobility” as a significant predictor of employee commitment in organisations in Nigeria. Thus, this study’s major contribution to knowledge is its indication that stunted mobility is a predictor of organisational commitment in Nigerian organisations. The importance of this is that employees in Nigerian organisations appreciate and decide to be loyal to their current organisations because they find it difficult or that they perceive that it is difficult or almost impossible to get alternative employment. In addition, the framework of motivators of employee commitment used in this study is unique and probably unprecedented in previous studies (see Fig. 3).

A major limitation of this study is the inability of the author to include organisations outside Nigeria. This would have been very appropriate since the study sought to make inferences on motivators of employee commitment in emerging economies. Nevertheless, the author mitigated this limitation by using only multinational companies. This was to give the targeted workforce an international

outlook. Another limitation concerns the selection of explanatory variables. While the major factors likely to influence employee commitment may have been included, we cannot rule out the fact that some factors that may have a significant influence on employee commitment may be excluded. The exclusion of such factors also constitutes limitations to the inference of this study.

Recommendations. Employee commitment is vital to the attainment of organisational goals. The study found that stunted mobility, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation as well as organisational climate are vital to employee commitment. While the provision of extrinsic motivation and a good organisational climate is within the control of management, predictors of stunted mobility and intrinsic motivation are not within their control. Frankly speaking, factors of stunted mobility relate to the perception of the employees and intrinsic motivation relates to the employees too. Consequently, the study suggests the following recommendations: strategic managers should do all they can to provide a good working environment through the provision of good leadership, adequate incentives for employees to meet their basic needs as well as a supportive environment for employee interaction that will foster teamwork and a feeling of belongingness among the employees. Such an environment will help to ensure that employees see the organisation as a home away from home and thus enhance their commitment to the attainment of its goals. There should be an adequate feedback mechanism to ensure that there is no communication breakdown at any point in time.

Data availability

All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article [and its supplementary information files

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None

Competing interests

The author declares no competing interests

Ethical approval

The author sought and got ethical approval from his institution's Research Ethical Board and the study complied with ethical standards. There was no number attached to the approval.

Informed consent

The researcher sought and got the consent of the participants to participate in the study. Out of the 380 sampled participants, 223 of them accepted and voluntarily participated in the study after the researcher assured them of anonymity and that their responses were solely for academic purposes. The remaining 157 declined.

Additional information

Supplementary information The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01169-6>.

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