




Affective Commitment Among University Faculty Members in Nepal: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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ABSTRACT

Although organizational commitment has received a substantial research attention, it has not been well examined in the higher education sector; in particular, the university faculty members' affective commitment has not been extensively investigated yet. Thus, this study investigated an association between affective commitment and predictors: recognition, resources, training and development, perceived union support and pay satisfaction in the context of higher education system of Nepal. Data were collected through a survey from 312 management faculty members of Nepali universities and analyzed by using structural equation modeling. The findings confirmed that resources, training and development, and recognition were positively related, and perceived union support was negatively associated to affective commitment. Contrary to the expectation, pay satisfaction was not significant. The findings of this study also provide a salient reference background for the university management and policy makers to understand the importance of training and development, reward and compensation, resources, and union activities and their relevance for affective organizational commitment and job performance.

KEYWORDS: Affective commitment, training and development, resources, pay satisfaction, perceived union support

INTRODUCTION

The university faculty members are the key contributors for the higher education system (Nagar, 2012); thus, their commitment to the university must be the highest priority. In the context of Nepal, the higher education system is one of the youngest education systems in the world (Mathema, 2007), which has encountered several problems. Politically divided professional teacher and student unions' activities (i.e., union meetings, union programs, conflict between the union and university management)

within the universities have disturbed the regular teaching and learning process (Mathema, 2007). As a result, there is a substantial degree of quality erosion, low student enrollment (Khanal et al., 2021) and turnover of high-quality academicians (Mainali, 2019). In a larger context of post-secondary education system, quality of students' learning and turnover intentions are significant outcomes of faculty members' commitment (Shrand & Ronnie, 2021). Since the faculty members are the operational core of the universities, highly committed faculty members within universities may help to improve the quality of education (Nagar, 2012) and reduce turnover intention (Shrand & Ronnie, 2021). In addition, their commitment to the universities where they work is crucial in producing high-quality education and research (Neumann & Finaly-Neumann, 1990). The faculty members' high-quality research and other academic work can also enhance the universities' ability to attract research funding and high caliber students.

An attachment of the employees to their organizations is defined as organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Organizational commitment has three subcategories; affective, continuance and normative commitments (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Nagar, 2012). Affective commitment is a psychological attachment (Mowday et al., 1979) and the employees' positive affection toward their organizations. Employees commitment to stay at the organization due to economic incentive is continuance commitment; individuals' moral obligation to stay in the organizations is normative commitment (Chordiya, 2017; Meyer et al., 1993; Nagar, 2012). In recent decades normative and continuance commitment have been criticized because of its inconsistencies with affective commitment. Individual continuing to remain at the organization for economic benefit may not necessarily have higher affection and loyalty toward the organization (Chordiya, 2017). In addition, the relationship of affective commitment with organizational outcome variables (such as job performance, turnover intention, attendance, etc.) has highlighted its importance for an organizational success (Aboramadan et al., 2020). In the context of Nepali employees, affective commitment and job outcome variables are positively related, while normative and continuance commitment are not significant (Gautam et al., 2001). Thus, this study primarily focused on affective commitment of faculty members of universities in Nepal.

In the global context, several studies have investigated organizational commitment of the employees of various organizations excluding universities (for example, Aladwan et al., 2015; Giffords, 2009; Sariwulan et al., 2019). However, it is worthy to note that the universities have unique features which differentiate them from other organizations (Lovokov, 2016). A fundamental objective of universities is to convey knowledge for the contemporary society in addition to their research, teaching, and community service missions (Kerr, 1995); thus, studies conducted outside of the university setting may not necessarily applicable in the context of university settings. Thus, there is a need to investigate the university faculty members' affective commitment. In addition, of the scant studies on organizational commitment that has been conducted in a university setting (for example, Aboramadan et al., 2020; Nagar, 2012), only a few studies (Timalsina et al., 2018) have evaluated organizational commitment in the context of a Nepali university, but affective commitment was not a primary focus in either study.

Studies conducted in other parts of the world have proven that the university faculty members' affective commitment is important for the successful education system (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Nagar, 2012). The role of university faculty members is broad and important; thus, their commitment is salient to shape the quality of higher education systems (Aboramadan et al., 2020). To prolong the faculty members' work and commitment, it is also important to identify the salient antecedents of affective

commitment. Studies conducted in academic as well as non-academic settings found that training and development (Johari & Nazir, 2015), resources (Aladwan et al., 2015), pay satisfaction (Sariwulan et al., 2019), work recognition (Giffords, 2009; Jawaad et al., 2019), and perceived union support (Asamani & Menash, 2013) are primary antecedents of organizational commitment. Lack of resources, mass entry of under prepared faculty members because of union pressures, high union activities, low pay scales, and lack of fair recognition are some of the current problems faced by Nepalese higher education (Mathema, 2007, Upadhyay, 2018). The faculty members are the key players of higher education systems; therefore, it is important for university management to better understand the faculty members' feelings about resources, salary and compensation, recognition, union activities, and training and development. Despite the importance of pay satisfaction, perceived union support, resources, recognition, and training and development for the success of the higher education (through achieving higher affective commitment), the Nepali context has not been considered yet. In addition, studies conducted in other parts of the world might have the problem of external validity due to cultural differences. Therefore, there is a need of research studies to advance an understanding of association between affective commitment and its antecedents in the context of higher education system in Nepal. Thus, objective of this study is to investigate the association between affective commitment and predictors: training and development, resources, pay satisfaction, perceived union support and recognition in the context of post-secondary education system of Nepal. The policy makers of higher education system of Nepal could benefit from an extended research base related to the university faculty member's affective commitment.

REVIEW of LITERATURE

Organizational Commitment

Porter et al., (1974; as cited in Nager, 2012) originally conceptualized organizational commitment as "The strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization, characterized by a strong belief in an acceptance of an organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization" (p. 47). It is a psychological bonding, loyalty, and level of engagement of employees to their organization and job. Porter's unidimensional concept of organizational commitment was extended to the multidimensional concept by Allen and Meyer (1990). The multidimensional concept of organizational commitment has three categories: normative, affective, and continuance, which have received consensus from other researchers (for example, Nager, 2012). All three components were discussed in the introduction section.

Among three components of organizational commitments, affective commitment is one of the strongest predictors of organizational outcome variables (Aboramadan et al., 2020), such as intention to leave, burnout (Nagar, 2012) and job performance (Chordiya et, al. 2017). As compared to normative and continuance commitment, a stronger association of affective commitment with the cognition of job performance, withdrawal and organizational citizenship behavior proven importance of affective commitment for an organizational success. Affective commitment also brings changes in the employees' mind-set by reflecting a desire to achieve the goals of the organization (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Therefore, affective commitment gains popularity as compared to the other two.

Antecedents of Affective Commitment

Recognition

Recognition refers to complements and rewards received by employees from their organization. The psychodynamic theory described recognition as a reward expected by the employee (Brun & Dugas, 2008). It has two components such as “acknowledgement” and “recognition of reality of employees’ contribution to the organization” (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 721). It is also personal development as well as attachment of the employee with the organization (Brun & Dugas, 2008). One of the largest factors of psychological stress is lack of recognition (Brun & Dugas, 2008), which also negatively affects job performance and affective commitment (Jawaad et al., 2019). It is one of the most important dimensions of organizational practices (Brun & Dugas, 2008) and an influencing factor (Jawaad et al., 2019). Several studies in the past have found a significant positive association between affective commitment and recognition (see Giffords, 2009; Jawaad et al., 2019). According to Hassi (2018), the employees who have a belief of receiving recognition and appreciation from their organizations show a higher level of affection and commitment toward their organization. A well-designed recognition and reward system of the organization is crucial to achieve better performance and commitment of their employees (Aboramadan et al., 2020). When the employees are certain about getting recognition for their work in the form of reward, they are committed to their job (Jawaad et al., 2019). The faculty members of community college of Nepal also consider recognition and reward as one of the important motivating factors (Gaihre, 2021).

Resources

The external resources such as organizational resources, social resources and task related resources are known as job resources (Bakker & Denerouti, 2017). In the context of post-secondary education setting, teaching resources, peer support and administrative support are referred as job resources (Chang et al., 2010). In the context of post-secondary education, job resources have a significant positive relationship with job engagement (Han et al., 2020) and are also positively related to affective commitment (Aboramadan et al., 2020). When organizations provide sufficient job-related resources, the employee may feel that they are receiving diligent care from their organizations; as a result, they feel morally obligated to return to their organization, which ultimately signifies their job performance and attachment with their organizations (Ampofo, 2020). Some other studies have also highlighted a positive association between the job-related resources and affective commitment through job engagement (see, Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In the context of schoolteachers, adequate amounts of teaching related resources through which schoolteachers accomplish their work, and the physical condition of the school (Firestone & Pennell, 1993) are the important motivating factors to make faculty members to stay committed to their work. According to Hansen and Corcoran (1989, as cited in Firestone & Pennell, 1993), having adequate office supplies would reduce teachers’ distraction and work frustration. In the context of higher education in Nepal, lack of resources is one of the challenges faced by the faculty members (Upadhyay, 2018).

Training and Development

Training and development are opportunities provided to employees to strengthen and enhance their knowledge and skills. It is a tool to fulfill the goals of organizations through enhancing skills and abilities of their employees (Bashir & long 2015). Studies

also suggested that employee development (Ahmad et al., 2017) and training (Aladwan et al., 2015) are significant influencing factors of affective organizational commitment (Johari & Nazir, 2015). In addition, training and development are considered an investment to enhance overall job performance and satisfaction of employees (Aladwan et al., 2015). A positive association of training and development with organizational commitment and a negative relationship with an intention of turnover (Aladwan et al., 2015) also highlighted its importance for affective commitment.

While in the context of the university setting, the faculty development programs such as research activities, seminars, and trainings could increase faculty members' affective commitment (Aboramadan et al., 2020). The faculty members who are receiving trainings show elevated levels of commitment and affection for their organization (Aboramadan et al., 2020). In the context of higher education, training and development are also salient antecedents of affective commitment.

Pay Satisfaction

Pay satisfaction is the employees' positive feeling about their pay structure and other compensations (Khalid, 2020). It is a salient antecedent factor of both organizational success and affective commitment (Khalid, 2020; Porter et al., 1974). Those employees for whom economy is important and who are dissatisfied with their salary tend to express less commitment toward their jobs (Porter et al., 1974) in contrast with individuals who are satisfied with their pay satisfaction and show higher levels of affective commitment (Sariwulan et al., 2019). The study conducted in the context of knowledge workers found that the competitive pay package is one of the important strategies to retain their employees (Horwitz et al., 2003). In addition, Horwitz et al. (2003) reported that most of the knowledge workers left their organizations because of unsatisfactory pay scale and compensations. In the context of higher education settings, faculty members who feel that they are receiving a fair salary and compensation are likely to show higher level affection toward their organizations (Aboramadan et al., 2020). A study conducted in community colleges in Nepal also found salary to be an important factor of faculty members' motivation (Gaihre, 2021), which is an antecedent of affective commitment and job performance (Aboramadan et al., 2020). In addition, several studies conducted in other parts of the world also found a positive association between pay satisfaction and commitment in academic as well as nonacademic contexts (Sariwulan et al., 2019; Scheller & Harrison, 2018).

Perceived Union Support

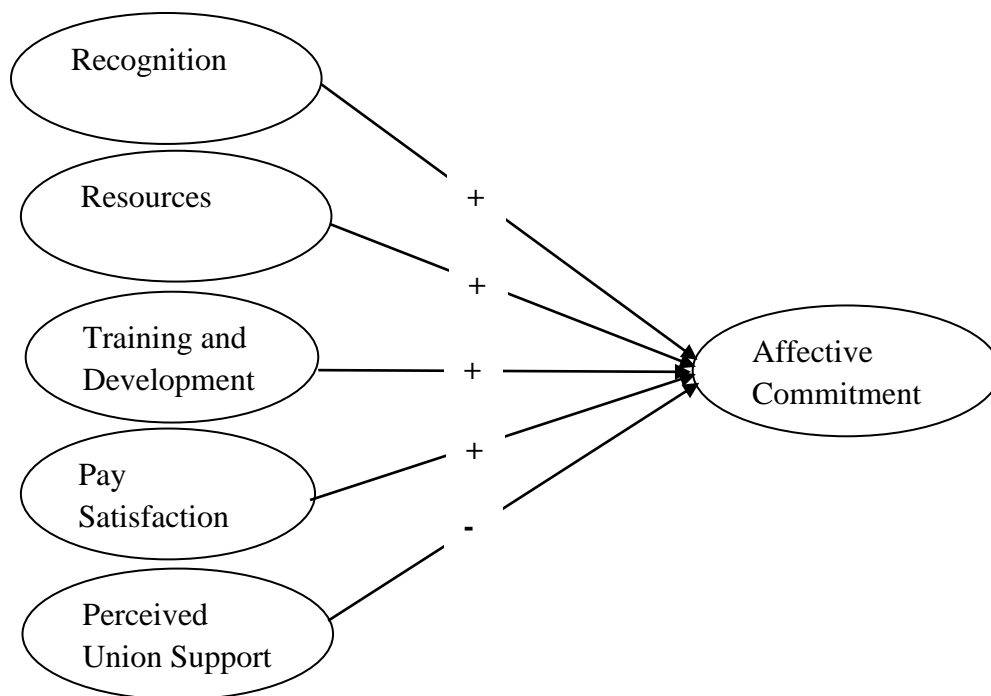
Perceived union support refers to the employees' feeling about the union activities and support received by the unions. The union activities are common in academic as well as non-academic organizations all over the world. In the context of higher education, teachers have been unionizing since the early 20th century. For example, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was founded in 1915 in the United States of America. The University and College Unions (UCU) is the largest higher education union in the world, founded in 2007 in the United Kingdom. The Nepal University Teachers' Association (NUTA) was founded in 1963. There are some similarities in the mission statements of most teachers' associations. One of the most common elements of these missions has been to work for the betterment of higher education and to raise their voice for the professional freedom of teachers and the betterment of their profession. The university faculty members in Nepal have been practicing the union activities within their colleges and universities for approximately fifty years, although some faculty members and other stakeholders have criticized the

union activities, arguing that such activities disturb academic activities (Mathema, 2007). Many studies have explored the factors explaining organizational commitment, but only a few of them (Asamani & Menash, 2013) have included the perceived union support in their studies. Studies that considered perceived union support as an antecedent factor of organizational commitment found negative associations between them (see Asamani & Menash, 2013). As per the best knowledge of the author, none of the studies included perceived union support as an antecedent factor of affective commitment. The perceived union support should be an important antecedent factor of affective commitment at least in the context of Nepali higher education where mass entry of university faculty members has been granted due to union pressures.

Based on the above discussion, Figure 1 displays the hypothesized paths linking each of the explanatory factors with affective organizational commitment.

Figure 1

Hypothetical Path Diagram of Affective Commitment and Its Antecedents



Based on the above discussion and conceptual framework, following hypotheses were formulated:

- Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between recognition and affective commitment.
- Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between resources and affective commitment.
- Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between training and development and affective commitment.
- Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between pay satisfaction and affective commitment.
- Hypothesis 5: There is a negative relationship between perceived union support and affective commitment.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Data for the study were based on the secondary sources that were obtained for the small research development and innovation grant (RDI) project. A combination of convenience sampling (non-probability) and simple random sampling (probability) was used to select the respondents from three universities: Tribhuvan University, Pokhara University, and Kathmandu University of Nepal. A total of 312 respondents returned their completed questionnaires out of 450 distributed questionnaires, with a response rate of approximately 70%. If there is no problem in the data (missing values and non-normality), a sample of 200 respondents is adequate for structural equation modeling (Weston & Gore, 2006). Therefore, for this study, a sample of 312 respondents was considered adequate. The demographic profiles of the respondents are presented in the following Table.

Table 1
Participants' Profile

Type of College	Constituent	26.50%	
	Affiliated	73.50%	
University	Pokhara	58.70%	
	Tribhuvan	37.80%	
	Kathmandu	3.50%	
Union Membership	Yes	34%	
	No	66%	
Location	Capital City	52.80%	
	Outside	47.20%	
Union Membership by College Type	Constituent	<i>Yes</i>	51.90%
		<i>No</i>	48.10%
	Affiliated	<i>Yes</i>	28.40%
		<i>No</i>	71.60%
Faculty Positions	Lecturer	83.70%	
	Reader	11.50%	
	Professor	4.80%	

Source: Field survey [2017]

Measurement and Instrument

There are two parts in the questionnaire. The first part contains the Likert scale items, and second part contains the demographic questions such as age, gender, ethnicity, etc. 22 items that measure affective organizational commitment, resources, recognition, training and development, pay satisfaction, and perceived union support were used for this study. Participants indicated their level of agreement by choosing from a range of 1 to 5 (1 = “strongly agree” to 5 = “strongly disagree”) on all the items except items related to pay satisfaction. For each statement of pay satisfaction, the participants needed to decide how satisfied they are with various aspects of their pay and compensation where 1 = very satisfied and 5 = very dissatisfied.

Affective Commitment

Items for this variable were taken from Meyer and Allen's (1997) scale of organizational commitment. Four items that measured affective commitment were relevant. Items of this variable measure the self-reported level of faculty members' affective organizational commitment. The sample items include "I care about success of this organization."

Recognition

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1967) was used to construct the items of recognition, resources, and training and development and was modified into the context of academic settings. Three items of this variable measure the self-reported level of faculty members' perceived recognition for their accomplished work. The sample items include "I get credit for the work I do" and "Employee recognition is fair in my institution."

Resources

Three items of this variable measure the self-reported level of faculty members' agreement on the availability of work-related resources in their academic institutions. One of the items includes "My institution provides necessary materials and equipment which are essential in teaching and learning process".

Training and Development

Four items of this variable measure the self-reported level of agreement on the opportunity of training and development within their institution. One of the items includes "There is chance to participate in faculty development program in my organization."

Perceived Union Support

All the subscales of this construct were self-administered. Three items of this variable measure the self-reported level of perception about the union activities within their institutions. Here, one of the items include "I feel secure because union can support me."

Pay Satisfaction

Items for this construct were taken from a pay satisfaction questionnaire (Heneman & Schwab, 1985). This variable was measured with four 5-point rating scale questions. They include "My compensation package" and "My current salary."

Cronbach's alpha of all the variables were higher than 0.70. Overall, Cronbach's alpha was 0.897. Thus, the items used for this study are consistent and reliable. Further reliability and validity analysis was discussed in the following sections.

Statistical Analysis Procedure

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were produced prior to answering the research questions. To determine the distributional nature of the variables, skewness and kurtosis were examined. Structural equation modeling weighted least square mean and variance was applied to investigate the association between affective commitment and the factors of recognition, resources, faculty development, perceived union support and salary satisfaction. Separate sub-models comprised of the observed items with the latent construct were tested before running the full structural model. The weighted least square mean and variance (WLSMV) estimator was applied to

estimate the model parameters. Structural equation modeling WLSMV was specially designed for the ordinal data and has no distributional assumptions about the observed variables (Li, 2016). In addition, the WLSMV has been found to be less biased and more accurate than maximum likelihood estimation in estimating parameters based on the ordinal variables (Li, 2016). Ratio of χ^2 to degrees of freedom, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were examined to test the goodness of fit of the model. Jöreskog and Sörbom (1989) suggested the cutoff point of ratio of χ^2 to degree of freedom to be set at 3:1. Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested the cutoff value of close to .95 for the TLI and CFI to indicate an acceptable model fit since it results in a lower type II error rate with an acceptable cost to type I error. Hu and Bentler (1999) further suggested the cutoff values of .06 and .08 for the RMSEA and SRMR, respectively, as indicative of an acceptable model. Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria for model evaluation were adopted for this study. All data analysis was performed by using IBM SPSS 21, Excel 2016, and R 3.5.2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Data analysis started with the examination of missing data using a matrix plot, which clearly showed no systematic pattern in the missing data. Therefore, it was reasonable to believe that the missing data were randomly distributed. In addition, the percentage of missing data frequency was only 0.15%. Furthermore, there was no indication of skewness or kurtosis problems in the indicator items.

Table 2

Factor Loadings Based on Measurement Model

Latent Variables	Indicator Items	Factor loadings (λ)	CR	AVE
Affective Commitment (AC)	OC2	0.609	0.947	0.627
	OC3	0.849		
	OC4	0.903		
	OC5	0.788		
Resources (RC)	RC2	0.691	0.914	0.631
	RC3	0.777		
	RC5	0.903		
Recognition (RE)	RE5	0.610	0.920	0.593
	RE6	0.873		
	RE7	0.802		
Training and Development (TD)	TD3	0.837	0.891	0.605
	TD4	0.706		
	TD5	0.800		
	TD6	0.765		
Perceived Union Support (PUS)	PUS1	0.704	0.860	0.512
	PUS2	0.674		
	PUS4	0.767		
Pay Satisfaction (PS)	PS1	0.644	0.938	0.624

PS2	0.765
PS3	0.927
PS4	0.830

All the factor loadings based on the measurement model, reliability and validity coefficients are presented in Table 2. They are greater than 0.6. It shows that the measurement items are perfectly loaded. The convergent validity and reliability of the constructs were examined by using AVE and composite reliability, respectively. The amount of variance captured by the construct was examined by average variance extracted (AVE). The composite reliability measures the internal item consistency. The composite reliability higher than 0.6 and AVE > 0.5 is considered a reliable and valid construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). AVE of all the constructs were >0.5 and, CR estimates were > 0.6. All the criteria of convergent validity and composite reliability were met.

A discriminant validity measure is presented in Table 3. An assessment of discriminant validity was conducted by comparing the square root of AVE with an inter-construct correlation. The $\sqrt{AVE} >$ inter-construct correlation was considered discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All the inter construct correlations were statistically significant at a 5% level of significance. All the \sqrt{AVE} were greater than inter construct correlation; thus, discriminant validity was also met by the measurement model. Therefore, the items in the measurement model were reliable and valid.

Table 3.
Validity Analysis

Construct	AC	RC	RE	TD	PUS	PS
AC	0.792					
RC	0.509	0.794				
RE	0.539	0.551	0.770			
TD	0.507	0.564	0.608	0.778		
PUS	0.150	0.390	0.276	0.500	0.716	
PS	0.352	0.260	0.412	0.455	0.270	0.790

Note. Square roots of AVE are presented in main diagonal in bold face and rest are inter construct correlation.

Moreover, the χ^2 /degree of freedom of measurement model was 1.83. All the fit indices (*RMSEA*=.053, *SRMR*=.062, *CFI*=.989, *TLI*=.987) of measurement model were within the acceptable cut off threshold.

Table 4 shows the indicator items with their standardized and unstandardized path coefficients, tests of significance and coefficient of determination. The associations between the affective commitment and factors recognition, resources, training and development, pay satisfaction and perceived union support are presented in Figure 2 and Table 4. All the standardized and unstandardized path coefficients were statistically significant at 1% level of significance (see Table 4). All the standardized path coefficients of the observed items were more than 0.5. R^2 of all the items were higher than 0.35.

Table 4
Standardized and Unstandardized Path Coefficient with Coefficient of Determination

Latent Construct	Observed	B	β	SE	Z-value	p-value	R ²
	items						
Affective commitment (AC)	OC2	1	0.604				0.365
	OC3	1.404	0.848	0.092	15.18	<.001	0.719
	OC4	1.491	0.901	0.106	14.06	<.001	0.812
	OC5	1.296	0.783	0.090	14.40	<.001	0.613
Recognition (RC)	RC2	1	0.690				0.477
	RC3	1.124	0.776	0.085	13.30	<.001	0.603
	RC5	1.309	0.904	0.087	15.12	<.001	0.816
Resources (RE)	RE5	1	0.611				0.373
	RE6	1.433	0.875	0.121	11.85	<.001	0.766
	RE7	1.313	0.802	0.115	11.42	<.001	0.643
Training and Development (TD)	TD3	1	0.837				0.700
	TD4	.843	0.705	0.053	15.91	<.001	0.498
	TD5	.956	0.800	0.042	22.56	<.001	0.640
	TD6	.913	0.764	0.045	20.16	<.001	0.584
Perceived Union Support (PUS)	PUS1	1	0.709				0.503
	PUS2	.945	0.670	0.095	9.99	<.001	0.449
	PUS4	1.078	0.764	0.095	11.31	<.001	0.584
Pay Satisfaction (PS)	PS1	1	0.652				0.425
	PS2	1.185	0.773	0.093	12.78	<.001	0.597
	PS3	1.391	0.907	0.105	13.24	<.001	0.823
	PS4	1.228	0.807	0.091	13.63	<.001	0.652

Source: The author

Path coefficient presented in Table 5 shows that recognition ($\beta = 0.282, p < .001$), resources ($\beta = 0.238, p < 0.01$), and training and development ($\beta = 0.236, p < 0.05$) are significantly positively related to affective commitment in contrast to perceived union support ($\beta = -0.180, p < 0.05$), which is negatively associated with affective commitment. Based on this finding, faculty members' affective commitment can be enhanced by providing recognition of the work performed by the faculty members, adequate teaching and learning resources, office and classroom resources, and faculty development and training programs along with minimizing the union activities within the universities. Contrary to the expectations of positive association between salary and affective commitment, pay satisfaction was not significant ($\beta = 0.123, p > 0.05$). The coefficient of determination of the model (R²) was 40.5%.

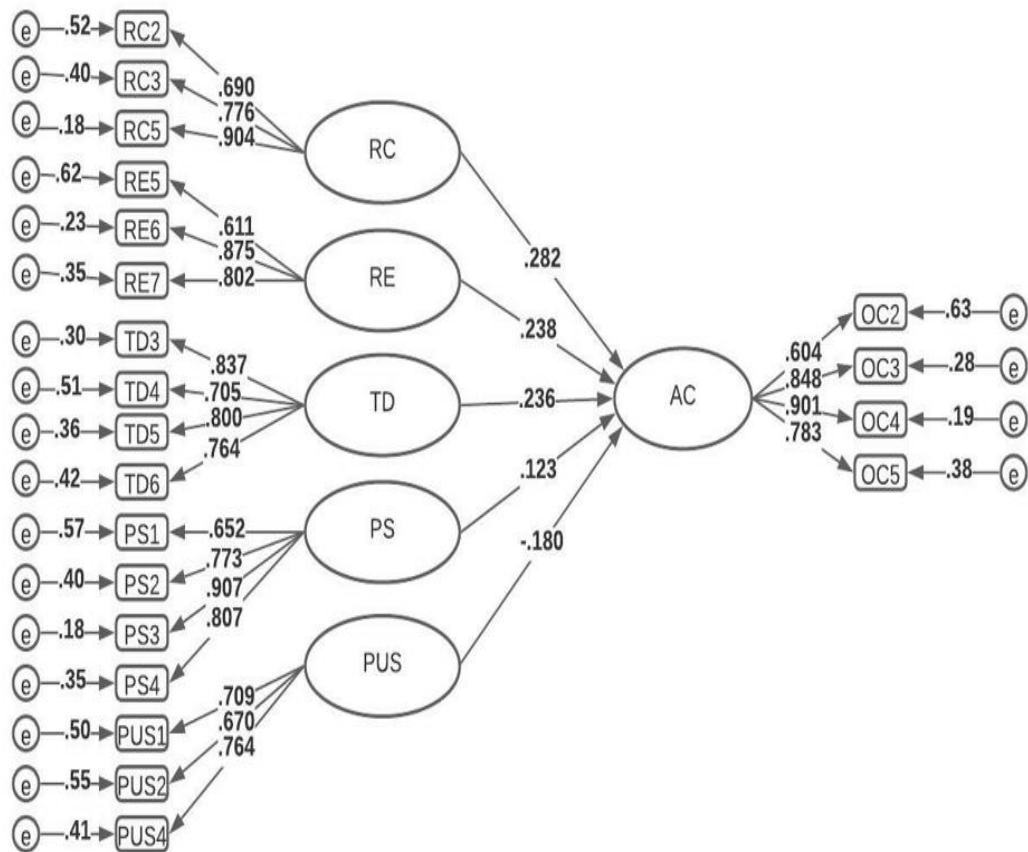
Table 5
Standardized and Unstandardized Path Coefficient of Structural Model

Path	B	β	SE	Z-value	p
Recognition → AC	0.247	0.282	0.068	3.657	0.000
Resources → AC	0.235	0.238	0.083	2.844	0.004
Training and development → AC	0.171	0.236	0.069	2.459	0.014
Perceived union support → AC	-0.151	0.18	0.059	-2.595	0.009

Pay satisfaction → AC	0.114	0.123	0.063	1.801	0.072
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The path diagram in Figure 2 presents the path coefficients of indicator items and standardized coefficients of the association between proposed exogenous variables and an endogenous variable. In addition, the error variances of each indicator item were also presented in the path diagram. All hypothetical paths presented in Figure 1 were confirmed except the path between pay satisfaction and affective commitment. The χ^2 /degree of freedom was 1.83. All the fit indices were the same as the measurement model and were within the acceptable cutoff value.

Figure 2
Confirmed Path Diagram



Discussion

The findings of this study aligned with previous researchers who consistently found a significant positive effect of recognition (Giffords, 2009), resources (Aboramadan et al., 2020), training and development (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2017), and the significant negative effect of perceived union support (Asamani & Menash, 2013) on affective commitment. Although, the previous researchers have also been agreed on the positive relationship between pay satisfaction and affective commitment (Sariwulan et al., 2019; Scheller & Harrison, 2018), the significant impact of pay satisfaction on affective commitment is not substantiated.

A study found resources as one of the salient antecedents of affective commitment. Adequate teaching resources along with comfortable office and classroom settings could motivate teachers toward their work (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Job

resources have a positive association with job engagement, and job engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) also has a significant positive association with organizational commitment. Adequate amounts of teaching resources, professionally managed infrastructure, including classrooms and offices, and necessary technological resources would motivate the university faculty members toward their work; consequently, it would enhance their affective commitment.

Training and development is an important antecedent of organizational commitment (Aladwan et al., 2015), but in the context of university faculty members, frequent faculty development programs (such as opportunity to participate in seminars, conferences and workshops) are required. When the university management provides training and development to the faculty members, they show a higher level of affection toward their job and organization (Aboramadan et al., 2020). A study found a significant positive association between training and development and affective organizational commitment, which is consistent with the findings of Aboramadan et al. (2020). A substantial degree of quality erosion and entry of low-quality students in Nepali universities are most serious challenges faced by the university management (Khanal et al., 2021). Thus, to deal with low quality students and enhance the quality of university education, the university and college management should provide opportunities to participate in training and development programs to their faculty members to enhance their affective commitment.

The findings of this study are also aligned with the previous studies (Giffords, 2009; Jawaad et al., 2019), confirming a positive association between work recognition and affective commitment. The reward and recognition system of the organization makes the employees more dedicated and committed to their work (Jawaad et al., 2019). The study conducted in community colleges in Nepal also found that if the faculty members receive credit for their work, they would be motivated and more dedicated to their work (Gaihre et al., 2021). This suggests the university management should have an effective recognition and reward system to enhance the faculty members' quality of work and affection toward their organization.

The previous studies have consistently found a positive association between salary and organizational commitment (Porter et al., 1974; Scheller & Harrison, 2018; Sariwulan et al., 2019) in contrast to this study, which did not find a significant pay satisfaction effect. In the context of higher education system in Nepal, Kheral (2018) also did not find statistically significant association between pay satisfaction and affective commitment. The finding of this study is aligned with the findings of Kheral (2018). It is possible that the uniformly low salaries across the colleges and universities in Nepal is one of the reasons for the non-significant relationship between salary and organizational commitment in this study.

The unions generally promote the union activities as constructive, being used to raise voices for the betterment of universities and colleges, supporting the university faculties and working for their benefit, but the results of this study disconfirmed the unions' belief. Despite the bargaining power of unions to improve the pay scale of teachers (Hoxby, 1996), the presence of increased union activity might reduce the faculty members' productivity (Hoxby, 1996) and negatively affect the students' performance (Hoxby, 1996). In the Nepal's context, the politicization of the university system is one of the obstacles of growth of the universities (Mathema, 2007). Asamani and Manash (2013) also highlighted that the increased union activities within the institutions negatively affect the affection of employees toward their work and organization. A negative association of perceived union support and affective commitment of this study also corroborated Mathema, (2007), Hoxby (1996), and Asamani and Manash's (2013)

claims. The faculty members who heavily believe in union support may be more inclined to the unions rather than their organization; thus, they would be less committed toward their work and organizations.

Affective commitment is essential to offer quality university education, attracting the potential students and faculty members, since the committed faculty members show their affection toward their institution, make considerable effort to achieve the goals of their organization and share the positive word of mouth with their friends and society (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Nagar, 2012). The faculty members with their high commitment are independent and enthusiastic about their work (Nagar, 2012). Conversely, if they are unhappy with their jobs, their unhappiness can lead them to be less committed to their work (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Aboramadan et al. (2020) have similar findings as Nagar (2012) and Allen and Meyer (1996). If the universities and colleges do not care about their faculty members' affective commitment, they will tend to leave their organizations since less commitment leads to an employee turnover (Aboramadan et al., 2020). This study provides an empirical support for the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational practices such as recognition, resources, training, and development, pay satisfaction, and perceived union support in the context of university education in Nepal. The findings of this study also open a door for theoretical and practical implications.

CONCLUSION

Affective commitment is crucial for the organizational success; thus, the university management and policy makers should acknowledge the importance of training and development, reward and compensation, resources, and union activities and their relevance for affective commitment and job performance. The faculty members are the key players of academic institutions; thus, it is important to enhance their affective commitment. Providing adequate amounts of work-related resources, establishing a fair rewarding system, providing opportunities to participate in trainings and faculty development programs, and minimizing the union activities within the universities can improve the faculty members' affective commitment. In addition, remunerating and rewarding the high-quality work also motivates the faculty members toward their job and enhances affective commitment. Affective commitment is the emotional and psychological characteristics of the employee. Behavioral and psychological changes may not be achieved overnight. Thus, university management should set up a long-term plan in the path of achieving the psychological and emotional attachment of their faculty members.

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