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The Association Between Demographic Factors and the Organizational Commitment of the Academic Staff: The Case at Bahir Dar University

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine whether age, service year, qualification level, and sex influence the three dimensions of organizational commitment among the academic staff of Bahir Dar University. To that effect, the commitment level of the academic staff, male and female discrepancies in organizational commitment, and the relationship between demographic variables and components of organizational commitment were focused. In this survey research, data gathered from 735 participants, involved through proportionate stratified random sampling technique, were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. With the exception of the continuance commitment of those of first degree holders, females and with ?21 service years the staff have less than average organizational commitment. Except females who displayed moderate superiority in continuance commitment, sex did not show significant difference in the rest two commitment dimensions. While first and third degree holders have moderate differences in their continuance commitment, qualification level did not demonstrate significant difference in the rest two dimensions. Similarly, participants with ≤5 and ≥21 year of service have strong differences in their continuance commitment but not in others. Age reflected significant difference only in continuance commitment. All demographic variables considered in this study have no significant relationship with affective commitment. With the exception of age, three demographic variables have significant relations with continuance commitment, qualification level with negative relation. Regarding normative commitment age and service year have a positive and significant relationship, the rest two with no significant correlation. Since job performance and productivity are the functions of employee commitment, consequently, organizational success in BDU requires more attention for staff commitment.

Keywords: *Organizational commitment, Affective commitment, Continuance commitment, Normative commitment, Demographic variables*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Both empirical (Dinc, 2017; Hunter and Thatcher, 2007; Pool and Pool, 2007) and anecdotal data sources inform that employee job performance is a function of Organizational Commitment (OC). The two have a positive relationship, the latter predicting the former (Jafri, 2011; Lambert and Hogain, 2009; Meyer and Allen,

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1997). According to George and Sabapathy (2011), for instance, teachers' OC significantly contributes to the learning of students and the effectiveness of schools. Many other research reports (e.g., Beck and Wilson, 2000; Dixit and Bhati, 2012; Khan *et al*., 2010; Mehmud *et al*., 2010; Qaisar *et al*., 2012; Rafiei *et al*., 2014) confirm that employee commitment plays pivotal roles in employee effectiveness and organizational performance, efficiency and competitiveness. Still others (e.g., Chughtai and Zafar, 2006; Cohen and Golan, 2007; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Dalal, 2005; Farrel and Stamm, 1988; Rafiei *et al*., 2014; Riketta, 2002) claim that OC among employees implies low turnover rates, low absenteeism, improved customer satisfaction, higher work motivation, greater organizational citizenship behavior, higher job performance whereas low commitment, in contrast, is significantly related to employee turnover, absenteeism, stress, and other work-related problems. According to Abbott *et al*. (2005), Hersovitch and Meyer (2002) as well as Lok and Crowford (2004) it all is because employees with strong OC often feel responsible and tend to take more responsibilities for enhancing organizational productivity than otherwise.

Although different scholars of the field have different models or dimensions of OC, Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model is the widely conceptualized one. In their view, Meyer and Allen identified three distinct categories of commitment: affective, continuance, and normative commitments. Affective Commitment (AC) is a commitment because of affective attachment to remain in the organization. It refers to the willingness to contribute to organizational success as well as the desire to maintain organizational membership. Allen and Meyer (1990) as cited in Noraazian and Musa (2016) claims that AC has three basic elements that keep employees in the organization: "the development of psychological affinity to a firm; association with the organization; and the wish to remain as a member of the organization." Continuance Commitment (CC) is a commitment because of an investment made (retirement money, for instance) or cost-related factors with leaving the organization. Normative Commitment (NC) is a commitment because of willingness to stay in the organization due to loyalty and duty (or moral obligation) to stay in the organization (Chen and Francesco, 2003; Obeng and Ug-boro, 2003; Wasti, 2002). Despite different dimensionally, the three components share two major views, commitment is a psychological factor that refers to employee relationships with their organization and the implications of commitment for employees to continue or discontinue in the organization (Meyer and Allen as cited in Meyer *et al.,* 1993). All three dimensions of commitment have a positive significant effect on the job performance and productivity of employees. Improving employee performance is, therefore, a function of their OC (Dinc, 2017; Dixit and Bhati, 2012; Rafiei *et al.*, 2014; Suharto *et al*., 2019). Meyer and Allen (as cited in Meyer *et al.*, 1993) asserted that "one can achieve a better understanding of an employee's relationship with an organization when all three forms of commitment are considered together".

In general, there are ample pieces of evidence that testify OC has different antecedents or variables that predict it. For the purpose of this study, the role of demographic variables that included sex, age, service year or tenure, and qualification level were emphasized. In this respect, various research reports (e.g., Agwu, 2013; Amangala, 2013; Becker *et al*., 1996; Clarence and George, 2018; Clugston, 2000; Hunter and Thatcher, 2007; Khan *et al*., 2013; Pool and Pool, 2007) inform that demographic characteristics of employees are associated with OC. Sola *et al*. (2012), for instance, claim that sex, age, and length of service have significant differences in the commitment of employees. Leetrakul and Freestad (2014), however, found a significant difference in employee commitment in terms of age but not in terms of educational level and work experience whereas Techai *et al.* (2015) showed that age, sex, and level of education have no significant impact on OC. Such inconsistent reports across research findings are many and hence the understanding of the process through which OC develops has remained inconsistent.

Messner (2013) found a decrease in the CC of employees with an increase in their work experience and age, probably because employees see less of job opportunities outside their organization when their work experience and age increases. Other different researchers (e.g. Jena, 2015; Khurshid & Parveen, 2015; Mathieu and Zajac (1990; Salami, 2008; Suliman and Lies, 2000; Yucel and Bektas, 2012) found out a positive relationship between age and OC. That is, as employees' age gets older, they prefer to stay in their job likely because of various reasons: options generally decrease for older people; older employees may have more commitment to their current organization because of possible investments they made with the organization than younger ones do, or older employees realize that staying in their employing organizations cost them less than leaving it (Mowday *et al.*, 1982; Somers, 2009). According to Karsh *et al*. (2005), consequently, older employees demonstrate a higher CC than the younger ones.

Although the above-mentioned studies indicate the existence of a positive relationship between age and employee commitment, little is known about how this personal characteristic is related to the various components of OC. Not only that, other sources of literature (such as Chugtai and Zafar, 2006; Colbert and Kwon, 2000; Iqbal, 2010; Kwon and Banks, 2004) contend that there is no relationship between age and OC. In general, despite the inconsistency in the relationships between the two variables, on the basis of the literature available, it may be concluded that, the weight of evidence in literature tends to support a positive relationship between age and OC (Kaldenberg *et al*., 1995).

Mixed findings are also observed with respect to the relationship between qualification level and OC. González *et al*. (2016), Haftkhavani *et al.* (2012) and Rastegar and Aghayan (2012), for instance, found out a negative relationship between the two. The explanation for this relationship, according to these sources, is that employees with low levels of education generally have more difficulty of changing jobs and show a greater commitment to their organizations. Consistently, other sources (e.g. , Glisson & Durick, 1988; Manríquez as cited in González et al., 2016; Meyer et al., 2002; Russo, 2013; Vorster, 1992) in one way or the other complement that there is a decrease in commitment as employees' educational level increases and the reverse is true. Joiner and Bakalis (2006), accordingly, concluded that the more the educational qualifications, the less the OC. The explanation for the finding is that while employees with higher qualification levels can find a job anywhere and have more expectation that the organizations may meet those with less qualification face difficulties in changing jobs and finding alternative job alternatives. Other study findings (such as Bakan *et al*., 2011; Jafri, 2011; Jailapdeen, 2015; Salami, 2008), in contrast, unveiled a significant and positive relationship between employees' educational qualification and OC.

Gallardo *et al.* (as cited in González *et al*., 2016) found out a mixed result. That is, employees with a bachelor's degree and lower levels of education demonstrated higher OC where as those with diplomas had much lower OC of all. On the other hand, Billingsley and Cross (1992) displayed no relationship between level of education and OC among employees.

With respect to tenure or service year in the organization, thirdly, different research results (Igbeneghu and Popoola, 2010; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1988, 1997; Sujatha *et al*., 2013) indicated that length of organizational service is positively related to OC. According to Mathieu and Zajac (1990), Meyer and Allen (1997), Meyer *et al*. (2002) as well as Suliman and Lies (2000) employees with a longer service year developed an emotional or affective attachment and more committed to their organization that makes it difficult to switch jobs. Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest that this relationship might be due to the fact that uncommitted employees leave an organization, and only those with a high commitment remain. Rastegar and Aghayan (2012), however, found out a negative relationship between the two.

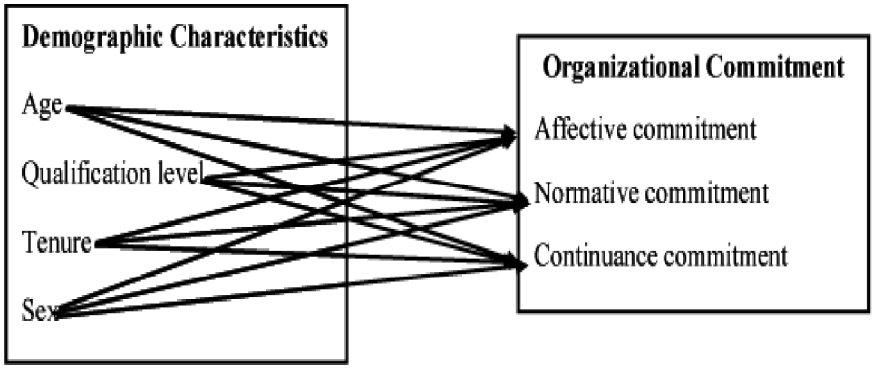

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Sex is the last demographic variable considered in this study. In this respect, too, findings are inconsistent. Akintayo (2010), Fisher *et al.* (2010) and Khalili and Asmawi (2012) revealed the existence of sex difference in OC, i.e., sex has an effect on OC. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) indicate a weak relationship between sex and OC and they suggest that sex may affect employees' perception of their workplace and attitude towards the

employing organization. Affum-Osei *et al.* (2015), Clarence and George (2018), Dalgi (2014), Salami (2008) and Hawkins (1998) found no significant difference between males and females regarding their OC. Promsri (2018) revealed a significant male-female difference regarding CC on the one hand, and no significant difference in AC and NC on the other. Still more, while numerous other studies (e.g., Farooq and Zia, 2013; Gumbang *et al.*, 2010; Jena, 2015; Marsden *et al.*, 1993) revealed that men had a stronger OC than women others (such as Aydin *et al.*, 2011; Jena, 2015; Khalili and Awmawi, 2012; Messner, 2017; Wahn, 1998) found contrasting results, specifically with respect to NC. The inconsistent research findings so far, therefore, triggered to carry out a further examination on the topic.

1.2. Problem Statement

Obviously, teachers occupy a pivotal position in the effective accomplishment of organizational goals in education. In any organization, including HEIs, on the other hand, the human resource deployed need not only be availed with the required volume and competence but with the necessary desire and commitment to share its knowledge, skills, and experience with students as well, not to describe many other essential commitments expected. In its statements of duties and responsibilities of the academic staff, in this respect, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (2019) stipulates that each academic staff is responsible for devoting his / her work time to the organization. This is an attempt to alert every academic staff shall strive to meet the necessary professional commitment.

A closer and critical observation of the OC by the academic staff at Bahir Dar University (BDU), nonetheless, informs various nonconformities. It is a day-to-day experience that most of the academic staf—be it the lecturer or the professor, the junior or senior staff, male or female—is heard complaining about his / her dissatisfaction and discomfort, lack of work morale, and absence of commitment to their job particularly due to what they called low remuneration and bad governance. Probably, due to such discomforts, it is vividly observable that most of the academic staff is characterized by low motivation, absenteeism, tardiness, low organizational citizenship behavior, low job performance, and the like. The last consecutive three years 'annual performance reports (BDU, 2019, 2020, 2021) of the university verify the problem in such a way that lack of complying the minimum performance standards and the reluctance to monitor and evaluate job performance at all levels, the academic staff, and the administrative staff is the persistent challenge the university has been entangled with. The problem is expressed in all the reports reviewed by a paragraph with four sentences and the same words, just copy paste. This by itself implies that people who organize the annual performance report are also affected by the problem of lack of OC.

In addition, the inconsistent research findings reviewed so far and the scarcity of empirical evidence regarding the relationship between demographic variables and OC (depicted by Figure 1) triggered the desire to examine the topic under presentation and determine how this relationship develops in the context of the study area. Therefore, what has to be examined is how much, why, and which category of the academic staff lacked OC. Despite the attributes of poor commitment deserving a rigorous examination, the current study sought to examine which category of the academic staff is more affected by lack of OC. To that effect, the study attempted to examine the dispersion of the commitment problem in terms of demographic factors. The purpose of the study was, therefore, to examine whether demographic factors (age, service year, qualification level, and sex) influence the OC of the academic staff at BDU. The following hypotheses are emphasized to spearhead the endeavor.

i. To what extent is the academic staff of BDU committed to its university?
ii. Is there a significant difference between male and female academics in their commitment to their university?
iii. What type of relationship between the age of the academic staff and OC?
iv. What type of relationship between academic staff's level of education and OC?
v. What type of relationship between the experience of academic staff and OC?

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study examined the relationship between two factors, demographic variables and OC of the academic staff. It, therefore, implemented the quantitative approach, from which the survey design was chosen. That is because the study tried to scrutinize the contradictory relationships among the variables as described in the

background section. The target populations of the study were all the academic staff of the university. As can be seen from Table 1, currently there is 1827 academic staff in the university (BDU, 2021). To determine the sample size that filled out questionnaires, Daniel's (as cited in Naing *et al.*, 2006) single population proportion sample size formula has been implemented:

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2}$$

where n = sample size, Z = Z statistic for the level of confidence (1.96 at 95% confidence interval), P = expected prevalence or proportion (in proportion of one; if 5%, p = 0.5), and d = precision (in proportion of one; if 5%, d = 0.05).

The sampling technique employed in this study was two-stage sampling, which demands to use of a larger sample size to achieve as much precision as possible. Daniel's formula is, however, valid only for a simple random sampling method (Daniel as cited in Naing *et al.*, 2006; Taherdoost, 2016). Under such situations, the sample size obtained by using Daniel's formula shall be multiplied by what is known as the design effect (D). *D* provides a correction for the loss of sampling efficiency resulting from the use of two-stage sampling instead of simple random sampling. According to Cochran (1977), to that effect, the calculated sample size is multiplied by *D*. That is, *N* = *D* x *n* (where *N* is the sample size for a two-stage sample, *D* is the design effect and *n* is the sample size obtained from the calculation).

Hence, the sample size obtained by using Daniel's formula (about 384 when rounded off) has to be multiplied by the stages of the sampling procedure. The stages included the selection of colleges and then departments after which individual participants are drawn directly. In other words *D* = 2). Accordingly, the actual sample size was 2 x 384 (or 768). To minimize the potential threat due to non-response, missed out items, two ticks put in a row of choices instead of only one, and / or incomplete questionnaires after return, etc., in addition, the sample size was made to increase by a non-response insurance factor (Creswell, 2014; Cohen *et al.*, 2018; Gay *et al.*, 2012), which was 10% in this study. This raised the sample size to about 845, i.e., 768 + (768 x 0.1). Accordingly, the study involved 845 academic staff to fill in the questionnaires.

Then after, participants were drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique among each department. This was intended to guarantee proportional representation of participants throughout the university. The strata of participants were framed on the basis of colleges and departments from each of which representative samples of participants were selected by using the systematic sampling method. Accordingly, 10 colleges and 2 departments were selected through simple random sampling technique out of a total of 14 colleges (faculties, institutes, schools, or academies) and 58 departments consecutively. After determining the size of sample departments, teachers were selected using qualification level and sex based proportionate stratified sampling method from each department by using Bethlehem's (2009) formula:

$$n_k = \frac{n}{N} N_k$$

where n_k = the sample size for k^{th} strata; n = the total sample size; N = the total population size; and N_k = the population size of the k^{th} strata.

Table 1: Population and Sample Sizes after Applying Stratified Proportional Method

Qualification Level	Population Size			Sample Size		
	Male	Female	Sum	Male	Female	Sum
PhD	388	28	416	179	13	192
Second degree	1065	230	1295	493	106	599
First degree	87	29	116	40	14	54
Sum	1540	287	1827	712	133	845

Source: BDU, 2021; PhD = PhD + Sub-specialist physicians; Second degree = MA/MSc + specialist physicians; First degree = BA/BSc + general practitioner physicians + Veterinary doctors.

2.2. Instruments of Data Collection

As have been raised in the background and the hypotheses sections, the variables emphasized in this study were demographic factors and dimensions of employees' OC. To measure those variables the academic staff involved in the study were requested to indicate the following: their sex; qualification level in terms of the highest degree attained so far; their total service year in the university; and their age. The items were set close-ended for the former two and open-ended for the latter two respectively. To measure the OC of the academic staff, on the other hand, Meyer and Allen's (1997) three-component OC scale was applied. Accordingly, 18 items that were categorized into six items and three subscales—affective, normative, and continuance—were utilized. Each item was presented to participants with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. After data were collected and encoded composite scores were calculated to represent the scores obtained from each of the six items for each sub-scale. As can be seen from Table 2, the reliability coefficients of the three dimensions of commitment in the current study were not far apart from those of Meyer and Allen (1997).

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients of Academic Staff OC

S. No.	Variables	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient Alpha	
			Meyer and Allen's	Current Study
1.	AC	6	0.85	0.89
2.	NC	6	0.73	0.78
3.	CC	6	0.79	0.70

In addition to reliability, normality and equality of variance tests have also been examined. To that effect, skewness and kurtosis value and Levene's test of equality of variance were measured for all the items of the three dimensions to test normality and variance. The skewness scores of the items ranged from -0.319 to 0.891 whereas those of kurtosis values ranged from 0.048 to -1.198. Both scores demonstrated that all the items set to measure the three dimensions of OC in the current study have no problems with normality because scholars of the field (such as Cohen-Swerdlik, 2009; De Vaus, 2002; Weinberg and Abramowitz as cited in Larson-Hall, 2010) claim that there is no significant departure from normality as far as the absolute value of skewness and kurtosis indices range between ±2, which according to other more liberal interpretations is not violated as far as their absolute value is below ± 3 (Blaikie, 2003; Kline, 2005).

2.3. Methods of Data Analysis

Data gathered through a questionnaire were screened and encoded using SPSS-23. Then after, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for analyses. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and one sample *t*-test) were computed to understand the demographic characteristics of participants, their current status on the components of OC, and their level of commitment to their university. Inferential statistics were utilized for different purposes on the basis of the suggestions by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013): independent samples *t*-test to test mean score differences in OC among the academic staff in terms of sex; ANOVA to examine whether there were significant differences among in their perceptions for OC due to their service year, age and qualification level; point-biserial correlation analysis to examine the relationship between demographic (categorical) variables and OC dimensions (continuous variables); and multiple linear regression analysis in order to determine the explanatory power of the independent variables (IVs) over the DVs, i.e., the three components of OC (Creswell, 2014; Field, 2009). In addition, Hochberg's GT2 *post hoc* test was employed to know which groups actually differ in the case of ANOVA. The current test was selected because it is used widely in testing pairwise comparisons and is preferable among dozens of others when sample sizes are unequal as well (Field, 2009; Larson-Hall, 2010).

Although 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) is a standard level of significance in the field of educational and behavioral studies (Cohen *et al*., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Gay *et al*., 2012), in addition, an effect size test was employed. That is because, these days, dependence on significance level is decried for lack of effectively informing the strength of relationships due to the fact that it is largely determined by sample size (Cohen *et al*., 2018; Muijs, 2004; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). In other words, the effect size is found more useful and informative about the

magnitude or strength of differences that significance testing alone cannot do. Hence, information about the effect size test is utilized in this study to determine the level of a significance test. Accordingly, a partial eta squared (η^2) effect size index was implemented to measure effect sizes in this study.

3. Results

Out of a total of 845 questionnaires distributed 762 (90.2%) were filled out and returned. However, data analysis has been conducted after excluding 27 cases using case wise deletion approach of those not properly filled in. In other words, 735 (96.5%) were found plausible for analysis. The return rate is high enough because, as a rule of thumb, as low as a 50% response rate is tolerable for survey studies to be able to generalize about the population from which samples have been drawn (Cohn *et al*., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Gay *et al*., 2012).

Table 3: Demographic Data

Variable		#	%	Variable		#	%
Sex	Male	628	85.4	Qualification level	BA / BSc	46	6.3
	Female	107	14.6		MA / MSc	548	74.5
	Total	**735**	**100**		**PhD**	**141**	**19.2**
Service year	≤5	76	10.3		Total	735	100
	6-10	351	47.8	Age	≤30	148	20.1
	11-15	165	22.4		31-35	216	29.4
	16-20	79	10.8		36-40	225	30.6
	≥21	64	8.7		≥41	146	19.9
	Total	**735**	**100**		**Total**	**735**	**100**

3.1. Level of OC Among the Academic Staff

To gauge the level of the academic staff's commitment to their university in view of their demographic characteristics the three components of OC were treated turn by turn. As can be seen from Table 4, participants demonstrated mixed results in this respect. To begin with, all age categories have a comparable level of AC, but all with below-average levels. Regarding CC, similarly, all age categories have demonstrated less than the average and equivalent level of commitment, those with ≤30 years of age with lower scores than the other age categories. The same pattern holds true with respect to NC. With respect to all demographic characteristics, in general, participants demonstrated relatively better CC followed by affective and normative commitments.

Table 4: Mean Scores in Terms of Demographic Variables (n = 735)

Demographic Variable		Commitment Dimension					
Variable	Indicator	Affective		Continuance		Normative	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	≤30	15.01	6.110	15.83	5.001	12.41	3.210
	31-35	15.02	5.610	16.81	5.002	14.11	3.601
	36-40	15.04	5.524	16.61	5.001	14.28	3.660
	≥41	15.01	6.413	16.71	4.810	14.20	3.750
Qualification level	BA / BSc	14.43	6.112	19.03	5.415	12.80	3.301
	MA / MSc	15.02	5.603	16.01	4.560	13.20	3.430
	PhD	16.00	7.004	13.55	5.014	13.60	4.212

Table 4 (Cont.)

Demographic Variable		Commitment Dimension					
Variable	Indicator	Affective		Continuance		Normative	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Sex	Male	14.74	6.012	15.81	4.803	13.10	3.543
	Female	15.55	5.213	21.80	2.620	14.11	3.301
Service Year	≤5	14.51	5.321	14.85	4.622	11.97	3.211
	6-10	16.10	6.701	15.83	5.302	13.31	3.510
	11-15	13.32	9.010	16.95	5.041	13.53	3.813
	16-20	15.31	6.702	17.91	5.002	15.69	4.012
	≥21	13.91	5.101	18.96	4.001	14.23	3.642

With respect to qualification level, too, a clear pattern was found. That is, the higher we climb in the ladder of the qualification level the higher the AC and NC but the lower the CC among the staff. All age groups of the staff, however, demonstrated below average in all the three commitment components. With respect to sex, females have higher mean scores in three of the OC dimensions than their male counterparts. With respect to service years, finally, staff members with service years between 6 and 10 years revealed higher mean scores on their AC than others, followed by those between 16 and 20 years of service. With respect to CC, on the other hand, commitment increased with an increase in a service year. And yet it is only those with ≥21 years of service who have a more than average CC. With respect to NC, it is those with service years between 16 and 20 years that have the higher mean score, followed by those with service years of ≥21 despite all the scores being below average.

As can be seen from Table 5, all composite mean scores are less than average or the test score (3.0) with all *p*-values below 0.001. In other words, all the three OC components of the academic staff in BDU are significantly different from the average ($t = 30.310$, df = 734, $p < 0.001$; $t = 29.397$, df = 734, $p < 0.001$; and $t = 27.963$, df = 734, $p < 0.001$ consecutively), which implies that the commitment of the staff for their university is low.

Table 5: One-Sample *t*-test Regarding Level of Staff Commitment (n = 735)

Variable Dimension	Test Value = 3.00				
	Mean	SD	t	df	*p*
AC	2. 502	6.310	30.310	734	0.000
CC	2. 664	5.004	29.397	734	0.000
NC	2.188	3.498	27.963	734	0.000

3.1.1. Organizational Commitment and Sex

Once the essential outputs are secured from the descriptive statistics, inferential statistics were run to understand whether there is a statistically significant variation among participants regarding their levels of OC due to their demographic characteristics. Primarily, independent samples *t*-test was employed to gauge mean score differences across sex. As displayed in Table 6, although data in Table 4 demonstrated that the mean scores of females are higher than those of males in all the three dimensions of OC, the t-test result showed a moderate difference between male and female staff members only with regard to CC ($t = -10.998$, df = 51672, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.514$). It implies that while females' attachment to their university is stronger than their male counterparts no significant difference was observed between the two groups with respect to the rest two components.

Table 6: Male-Female Independent-Samples *t*-test on OC Dimensions

Variable	Assumptions	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t*-test for Equality of Means			Cohn's d
		F	Sig.	*t*	df	Sig (2-tailed)	
AC	Equal variances assumed	1.299	0.250	-0.698	733	0.501	
CC	Equal variances not assumed	15.010	0.000	-10.998	51672	0.000	0.514
NC	Equal variances assumed	1.208	0.598	-1.299	733	0.200	

3.1.2. Organizational Commitment and Qualification Level

Primarily, ANOVA was employed to examine whether there is a significant difference among the academic staff regarding their AC in terms of qualification level. As can be learned from Table 7, accordingly, the ANOVA result shows that participants have no significant difference in their AC in terms of qualification level ($F = 0.801$; df = 2, 732; $p > 0.05$).

Table 7: ANOVA Results about AC of the Academic Staff in Terms of Qualification Level

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	54.022	2	27.011	0.801	0.501
Within Groups	24879.948	732	33.989		
Total	**24933.970**	**734**			

With respect to the CC of the staff, ANOVA output depicted by Table 8 demonstrated a moderate mean score difference among qualification levels ($F = 9.002$; df = 2, 732; $p < 0.001$; $ç^2 = 0.516$). This implies that the staff has no that much difference across levels of education in its CC.

Table 8: ANOVA Results about CC of the Academic Staff in Terms of Qualification Level

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	ç2
Between Groups	405.956	2	202.978	9.002	.000	0.516
Within Groups	16762.068	732	22.899			
Total	**17168.024**	**734**				

A *post hoc* test conducted to identify the location of the significant difference between a pair of qualification levels demonstrated that the difference lies between first-degree holders and PhD holders (where $p < 0.001$). This implies that the academic staffs with first degrees have more CC than those with PhDs, which can also be confirmed in Table 4.

Table 9: Post-Hoc Test Results on CC Across Qualification Levels

Qualification Level	Qualification Level	Mean Difference (1-2)	Sig.
BA / BSc	MA / MSc	3.02	0.458
	PhD	5.48	0.000
MA / MSc	PhD	2.46	0.217

The third dimension examined in terms of qualification levels is NA. In this respect, see Table 10, it was found out that there are no statistically significant differences across categories of qualification levels ($F = 0.711$; df = 2, 732; $p > 0.05$).

Table 10: ANOVA Results about NC in Terms of Qualification Level of the Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	22.002	2	11.001	0.711	.387
Within Groups	9077.532	732	12.401		
Total	**9099.534**	**734**			

3.1.3. OC and Service Year

A service year is the third demographic variable considered in this study in an attempt to examine whether it has its own role on the OC of the academic staff at BDU. In this regard, Table 11 reveals that the academic staff has no statistically significant difference in terms of service year on AC ($F = 0.995$; df = 4, 731; $p > 0.05$).

Table 11: ANOVA Results about AC in Terms of Service Year of the Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	203.924	4	50.981	0.995	0.201
Within Groups	24891.281	731	34. 051		
Total	**25095.205**	**734**			

In an attempt to gauge the role of service year on the CC of the academic staff, however, Table 12 revealed a statistically strong mean score difference ($F = 4.112$; df = 4, 731; $p < 0.01$; $ç^2 = 0.509$). Once the mean score difference was identified, a further analysis was also conducted to identify the exact location of the difference by using Hochberg's GT2 *post hoc* test. The test disclosed that the significant difference among the staff regarding CC was found to be between ≤5 and ≥21 years of services—an age category with a *p*-value less than 0.05 and a mean score difference of -4.11 (see Table 5 for mean difference). This informs that academic staffs with higher service years have stronger CC than most junior age categories.

Table 12: ANOVA Results about CC in Terms of Service Year of the Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	ç2
Between Groups	339.968	4	84.992	4.112	0.002	0.509
Within Groups	16799.111	731	22. 981			
Total	**17139.079**	**734**				

With respect to NC the ANOVA results displayed by Table 13 shows statistically insignificant difference among groups in terms of service year ($F = 4.021$; df = 4, 734; $p < 0.01$; $ç^2 = 0.051$). A further analysis conducted using the *post hoc* test to know where that weak difference is found informed that the weak difference was observed between service year categories of 1-5 and 16-20. The negative mean score difference (-3.72) between these categories (see Table 4) implies that the senior staff has a relatively better NC than the junior staff specified.

Table 13: ANOVA Results about NC in Terms of Service Year of the Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	ç²
Between Groups	188.008	4	47.002	4.021	0.002	0.051
Within Groups	8803.433	731	12. 043			
Total	**8991.441**	**734**				

3.1.4.Organizational Commitment and Age

The ANOVA output depicted in Table 14 shows that there is no statistically significant difference among the staff in terms of their age categories regarding their AC ($F = 0.487$; df = 4, 734; $p > 0.05$). This implies that age does not contribute to generating differences in AC among the staff of BDU.

Table 14: ANOVA Results about AC in Terms of the Age of Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	53.946	3	17.982	0.487	0.597
Within Groups	24813.336	732	33. 898		
Total	**24867.282**	**734**			

However, a statistically significant mean score difference was found out (Table 15) in terms of age regarding their CC among the academic BDU staff (F = 1.031; df = 4, 734; $p < 0.05$).

Table 15: ANOVA Results about CC in Terms of the Age of Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	68.988	3	22.996	1.031	0.409
Within Groups	17494.068	732	23. 899		
Total	**17563.056**	**734**			

With respect to NC, in the same vein, the mean score difference among BDU staff was found out insignificant ($F = 3.986$; df = 3, 732; $p < 0.01$; $\eta^2 = 0.041$) (Table 16). Coupled with the result depicted in Table 5, the current finding implies that the willingness or moral obligation (loyalty and duty) of BDU staff to stay in the university is unanimously poor, although the negative mean score differences computed from Table 4 inform that senior age categories have a relatively higher NC to their university than their juniors.

Table 16: ANOVA Results about NC in Terms of the Age of Academic Staff

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	η^2
Between Groups	153.036	3	51.012	3.986	0.004	0.041
Within Groups	8766.432	732	11. 976			
Total	8919.468	734				

3.2. The Influence of Demographic Factors on the OC of the Staff

A point-biserial correlation analysis output (see Table 17) revealed mixed results regarding the relationship between demographic factors and OC. To begin with, sex has a positive significant relationship only with CC

(r = 0.320; $p < 0.01$), although its relation with the rest two OC components is also positive, whereby Table 4 depicted that females have more CC than males. While it has a positive relationship with CC and NC, the latter with a statistically significant relation (r = 0.121; $p < 0.01$), age has a negative relationship with AC. Thirdly, qualification level has a positive relation with AC and NC while it has a significant but negative relationship with CC (r = -0.114; $p < 0.01$). Lastly, while it has a positive and significant relationship with CC and NC (r = 0.139; p < 0.01 and r = 0.139; $p < 0.161$ respectively) service year has a negative relationship with AC. It is also worth mentioning that AC has no significant relationship with any of the demographic variables and is negatively related to age and service year.

Table 17: Correlation Between Demographic Variables and OC Components (n = 735)

Variables	AC	CC	NC
Sex	0.051	0.302**	0.111
Age	-0.338	0.102	0.121**
Qualification level	0.035	-0.114**	0.041
Service year	-0.210	0.139**	0.161**

Note: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

Besides correlation, a linear multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine the effect of IVs on the DVs. Since all *p*-values are greater than 0.05, in this respect, all demographic variables have no statistically significant power to explain the emotional attachment (AC) of the academic staff for their universities (see Table 18). This implies that the demographic factors are not predictors of the AC of the academic staff in BDU. If any, R^2 value informs that the demographic variables specified explain only 1.2% of the variance in AC.

Table 18: Multiple Regression Output for AC

Demographic Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*F*
Sex	0.062	0.012	0.011	0.898
Age	0.074			
Qualification level	0.099			
Service year	0.012			

Note: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

The attempt made to examine the association between demographic variables and CC, on the other hand, exhibited mixed results. In this respect, Table 19 revealed that while sex and service year predicted CC significantly ($\beta = 0.301$, $p < 0.001$ and $\beta = 0.210$, $p < 0.01$, consecutively) age did not explain it at all ($\beta = 0.198$, $p > 0.05$). In contrast, qualification level predicted AC significantly but negatively ($\beta = -0.130$, $p < 0.05$), which

Table 19: Multiple Regression Output for CC

Demographic Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*F*
Sex	0.301***	0.155	0.155	15.991***
Age	0.198			
Qualification level	-0.130*			
Service year	0.210**			

Note: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

implies that the academic staff with high qualification levels have lower CC than those academic staff with lower qualification levels. In other words, when the qualification level goes up by one unit the CC of the staff goes down by 0.13 units. In aggregate the four demographic variables described in the table explain only 15.5% of the CC of the staff.

NC is the last dimension of OC emphasized in this study. Among the four demographic variables, in this respect, only service year explained NC ($\beta = 0.169$, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, the four demographic variables described in Table 20 explain only an insignificant proportion (1.8%) of NC of BDU staff.

Table 20: Multiple Regression Output for NC

Demographic Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*F*
Sex	0.049	0.018	0.018	4.111**
Age	0.021			
Qualification level	0.031			
Service year	0.169**			

Note: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

4. Discussion

A closer examination of all the mean scores informs that the academic staff of BDU has a low OC, in all three commitment dimensions. This is an attention-seeking finding because different sources of literature (Dinc, 2017; George & Sabapathy, 2011; Hunter & Thatcher, 2007; Jafri, 2011; Lambert and Hogain, 2009; Pool and Pool, 2007) contend that the success of HEIs in general and the learning of students, in particular, depends on the performance of its staff that, in turn, is a function of OC. The one-sample t-test output that compared and contrasted the composite mean score of each commitment dimension showed not only lower than average mean scores but also statistically significant differences from the test score, although staff members with first degrees, with service years $\geq$21 and females have more than average CC (see mean scores in Table 4). The finding also pinpoints the underlying problem that endangers the survival of the university because related sources of literature (such as Dixit and Bhati, 2012; Khan *et al.*, 2010; Mehmud *et al.*, 2010; Qaisar *et al.*, 2012; Rafiei *et al.*, 2014) advocate that staff commitment plays an indispensable role for the effectiveness, efficiency and competitiveness of an organization.

In line with earlier findings (Abbott *et al.*, 2005; Beck and Wilson, 2000; Hersovitch and Meyer, 2002; Lok and Crowford, 2004), otherwise, a staff with weak OC is reluctant to shoulder organizational responsibilities. In other words, the low OC found by the current study signifies the prevalence of low motivation, poor organizational citizenship behavior, poor job performance, high turnover, absenteeism, and stress (e.g. Chughtai and Zafar, 2006; Cohen and Golan, 2007; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Dalal, 2005; Farrel and Stamm, 1988; Rafiei *et al.*, 2014; Riketta, 2002) all of which are the hurdles against the effectiveness and competitiveness of organizations coupled with deteriorating customer satisfaction (Dinc, 2017; Dixit and Bhati, 2012; Rafiei *et al.*, 2014; Suharto *et al.*, 2019).

As a whole, participants of the study demonstrated higher CC followed by affective and normative commitments. This finding complements Allen and Meyer's (1990) as well as Gelade *et al.*'s (2006) findings who argue that most employees calculate the costs of leaving an organization or making decisions on whether to leave their current job. The possible explanation for high CC in the context of the current study is likely the perception of the academic staff about the availability of alternative job opportunities. That is since there is a widespread and steadily growing unemployment problem among all Ethiopian school leavers in general and the graduates of HEIs in particular, on the one hand, and the limitation of the number of HEIs and the dwindling job opportunities they create capacities are limited, on the other, these days the work environment in HEIs more likely requires employees to comply and stay in their current job. That means the academic staff of BDU is well-acquainted with the consequences of leaving their jobs in such an unemployment-ravaged market environment and hence preferred to tolerate the unpleasant working conditions.

Nonetheless, the findings of the current study showed varying outputs with respect to the relationship between demographic variables and the three dimensions of commitment. With respect to sex, to begin with, it

was found that females are better than their male counterparts in all three dimensions of commitment although both demonstrated average levels of commitment regarding AC and NC. This coincides with many research findings (e.g. Akintayo, 2010; Aydin *et al*., 2011; Fisher *et al*., 2010; Jena, 2015; Khalili and Asmawi, 2012; Messner, 2017; Wahn, 1998) on the one hand and mismatches with the findings of Mathieu and Zajac (1990) who unveiled the weak relationship between sex and OC as well as other many (such as Affum-Osei *et al*., 2015; Clarence and George, 2018; Dalgi, 2014; Salami, 2008; Hawkins, 1998) who found out no significant difference between the two at all, on the other. Above all, the current finding contradicts many other reports (e.g., Farooq and Zia, 2013; Gumbang *et al.,* 2010; Jena, 2015; Marsden *et al*., 1993) that consistently informed men had a stronger OC than women. CC is a commitment dimension where females have displayed not only more than average mean score but also have a moderate mean score difference from males, after running an independent samples *t*-test, was in their CC. In the same line, sex was not only correlated significantly but predicted CC significantly as well, although its relationship with the other two OC components is positive. This is consistent to the findings of Promsri (2018) but contrasts Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) finding. In general, findings are inconsistent regarding the relationship between sex and OC.

The OC of the staff in view of the level of qualification, secondly, demonstrated mixed patterns. That is, staff members with higher qualification levels demonstrated higher AC and NC on the one hand and lower CC on the other. ANOVA outputs, similarly, signified mixed results. That is, with respect to AC and NC there is no significant difference among the staff in terms of the level of education whereas a moderate difference was found out between staff members who have first degrees and PhDs with respect to CC. Qualification level has a negative significant relationship with CC and predicted it significantly. That is, academic staff with a higher level of qualification has a lower level of CC when compared with lower levels of qualification. In other words, a unit increase in qualification level among the staff increases CC only by 0.13 units. These mixed findings matched with the findings of different empirical evidence that found a negative relationship between the two (e.g., Glisson and Durick, 1988; González *et al*., 2016; Haftkhavani *et al.,* 2012; Joiner and Bakalis, 2006; Manríquez as cited in González *et al*., 2016; Meyer *et al.,* 2002; Rastegar and Aghayan, 2012; Russo, 2013; Vorster, 1992) and others who, in contrast, found positive significant relationship (such as Bakan *et al*., 2011; Jafri, 2011; Jailapdeen, 2015; Salami, 2008). The justification for the negative and positive relationship is that staff members with low qualification levels of education show a greater CC to their organizations because they have more difficulty coping with the changing job environment and finding job alternatives, unlike others. The reverse also likely holds true.

In relation to age, thirdly, the status of all dimensions of the OC of the academic staff was found below average across all age categories, despite their CC being relatively better than the other two dimensions. In this respect, ANOVA outputs also uncovered no or insignificant differences across all age categories of the staff on all three components of OC. Age has a positive relationship with CC and NC but a negative relationship with AC. Its relation is, however, statistically significant only with NC. The findings that the staffs prefer to stay in their job as age gets older complement earlier research reports (such as by Jena, 2015; Karsh *et al*., 2005; Khurshid and Parveen, 2015; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Salami, 2008; Somers, 2009; Suliman and Lies, 2000; Yucel and Bektas, 2012). The explanations for these findings go to be either of the following reasons: a decrease of alternatives for older staff; the investments older staff made in their organizations than do younger ones that may put up on more commitment on the formers' current organization that implies staying in their current organizations costs them less than leaving it. Although Kaldenberg *et al*. (1995) argue that evidence tends to support a positive relationship between the two, there are many sources of literature (e.g. Chugtai and Zafar, 2006; Colbert and Kwon, 2000; Iqbal, 2010; Kwon and Banks, 2004) that argue the absence of correlation between age and OC.

With respect to service year, fourthly, those with 6-10 years of service have higher AC than others, followed by those with 16-20 years, despite there is no statistically significant differences among them. On the other hand, CC increased with an increase in a service year, although it is only those who have $\geq$ 21 years of service that demonstrated a more than average score. A strong difference was observed between $\leq$5 and $\geq$21 service years. Consistent with various research findings (e.g., Allen and Meyer, 1990; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1997; Meyer *et al*., 2002; Suliman and Lies, 2000) in the current study staff members with higher service years demonstrated higher CCs (emotional attachment) than their juniors that made it difficult to switch jobs. Despite the staff of all categories of service years having below average commitment, with respect to NC, those with 16-20 years of service showed higher mean scores of NC than others, followed by those $\geq$21

years of service. And yet the mean score difference was found to be insignificant. It was also observed that the service year has not only a positive and significant relationship with but also predicted CC and NC significantly. A service year is also the only demographic variable that explained NC.

On the other hand, the service year has a negative but not significant relationship with AC. The finding is consistent with different empirical findings (Igbeneghu and Popoola, 2010; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1988; Sujatha, 2013) that argued in favor of a positive correlation between length of organizational service and OC. In line with Meyer and Allen (1997) the justification behind the finding is possible because only staff members with a high commitment remain while the uncommitted ones leave the university.

Overall, there are important patterns worth mentioning in this study. None of the demographic variables have a significant relationship with AC. In other words, all demographic variables did not significantly explain (if any only 1.2%) the emotional attachment of the academic staff to their university. Though not significant, after all, AC has a sort of negative correlation with age and service year. Similarly, all four demographic variables in aggregate explained only an insignificant proportion (1.8%) of NC. On the other hand, CC is explained by three demographic variables other than age. The three variables altogether explained 15.5% of CC. This finding is inconsistent with a wide range of previous research reports (e.g. Amangala, 2013; Becker *et al*., 1996; Clarence and George, 2018; Clugston, 2000; Hunter and Thatcher, 2007; Khan *et al*., 2013; Ng *et al*., 2006; Pool and Pool, 2007) all of which advocate a strong association between the demographic characteristics and the components of OC.

5. Conclusion

Among the three dimensions of OC emphasized CC was found to be the only commitment dimension that the academic staff of BDU displayed. Those staff members with ≥21 years of service, with first degrees and females, are, indeed, the only academic staff who displayed higher CC means scores than average. In other words, except for CC, all the dimensions of commitment among most staff members are found to be significantly lower than the average score. Consequently, neither the moral obligation nor the AC of the staff to the university but the investment made (such as retirement contribution and cost-related factors) kept most BDU staff in their current job. Since a wide range of anecdotal and empirical evidence confirm that employee commitment has a positive and significant effect on the job performance and productivity of employees, BDU seems to be challenged with problems of staff commitment and effectiveness.

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