Research Article

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Validation of an Instrument and Measurement of Employee Work-Life Policies, Psychological Empowerment, and Job Commitment of Academic Staff in Universities

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Abstract

This study used a structural equation modelling approach to assess the association between employee work-life policies, psychological empowerment, and academic staff job commitment in universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. Three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study following a descriptive survey research design. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted in the selection of 315 academic staff from two universities in the study area. "Work-Life Policies, Psychological Empowerment and Job Commitment Questionnaire (WPPEJCQ)" was used as the instrument for data collection. The construct validity of the instrument was ascertained through an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The Kaiser-Meyer-Ohlin of .894 and the Bartlett coefficient of 7795.820 were obtained. Several fit indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis were used to accept the model such as RMSEA=.031, TLI=.969, CFI=.971 and many others. The null hypotheses were all tested using Path analysis. Findings revealed, among others, that there is a significant effect of work-life policies on the affective (β=.774,t=21.636,p<.05), continuance (β=.450,t=8.932,p<.05), and normative (β=490,t=9.967,p<.05) dimensions of academic staff commitment; furthermore, psychological empowerment has a significant effect on the affective (β=.795,t=23.199,p<.05), continuance (β=.501,t=10.261,p<.05) and normative (β = .520, t = 10.795, p< .05) dimensions of staff commitment; and there is a significant composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment levels of academic staff in universities. Based on these findings, conclusions and recommendations were made

Keywords: *Work-life policies, Psychological empowerment, Job commitment, Academic Staff, Factor validation, Measurement, Universities, EFA, CFA*

1. Introduction

The major players and drivers of university policies are the human resources which usually constitute of academic and non-academic staff (Owan, 2018). While the academic staff are saddled with the primary responsibilities of teaching, research, and community service, the non-academic staff, on the other hand, perform complementary roles such as records keeping, providing safety, keeping the environment neat, amongst others. Apart from the mere recruitment and placement of staff into various roles, their commitment to the job is as important as their employment. It is the commitment and total devotion of workers within an organization that actually determines the extent to which the organization attain set goals and not by mere presence. An organization with highly qualified and adequate workers that are not committed is indifferent from the one that is understaffed.

Job commitment refers to the total and whole-hearted dedication of academic staff to the policies, initiative, programmes, reforms, and prospects of the university with the willingness to obey and follow all prescribed rules and regulations towards the realization of short- or long-term goals. Employees commitment may also be explained as the strong association linking workers to their organization (Nzewi, Chiekezie, Ekene, Raphael, & Ebuka, 2017; Neyshabor & Rashidi, 2013). To some scholars, organizational commitment includes the following: employee loyalty, emotional affiliation, as well as the cost of leaving an organization (Price & Mueller, 1986; Aleke, Akeke, & Awolusi, 2015).

There are three aspects used to measure the commitment of academic staff in an organization. This includes affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Affective commitment is the emotional attachment of employees to their organization. Continuance commitment is the deprivation and the cost an employee stands to lose if he/she leaves the organization. While normative commitment is the feeling of obligation to remain with the employer (Biwott & Kemboi, 2017).

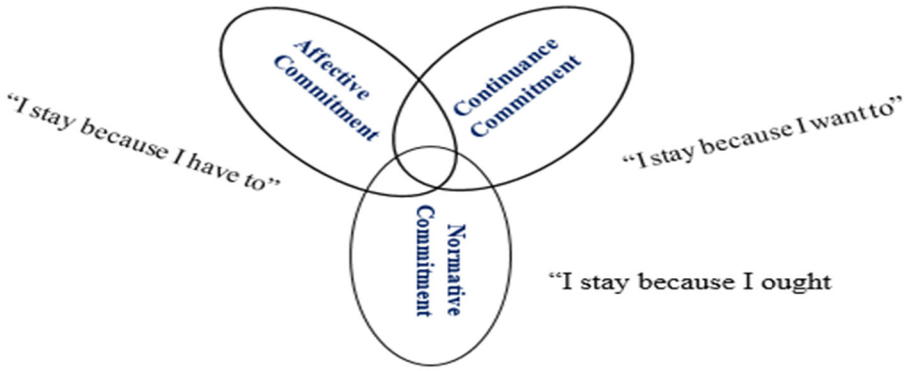

Fig. 1: Three-way model for measuring job commitment; **Source:** (Allen and Meyer cited in Biwott & Kemboi, 2017)

This study adopts the three-way Allen-Meyer's model for measuring the job commitment of workers in an organization as shown in Fig.1. The framework as presented in Fig 1 illustrates the aspects that are likely to make employees stay connected to an organization. However, the issue bordering around the commitment of academic staff suggests that many staff do not consider these aspects of affective, continuance, or normative commitment when making decisions. "The problem of staff retention is a global one which affects both developing and industrialized countries" (Biwott & Kemboi, 2017: 55). This difficulty in staff retention arise in part, due to the poaching of quality staff from other organizations which is a common practice in recent times; and in part, due to the quest of

organizational members to get better incentives.

It is worth revealing that the job commitment level of many academic staff in Nigerian universities has become a major issue of concern. Many workers appear to be disconnected from their organisations and are unwilling to discharge duties in line with expected standards. Keen observations have shown that many academic staff are switching from one university to another in search for greener pastures. Some are also observed working simultaneously for more than one university. The implication of such switching and simultaneous work in different institutions is a high rate of ineffectiveness, instability, and dismal or inconsistent discharge of duties. Many of these staff are always not seen when they are needed by superiors, they are often characterised by irregularities to class attendance and poor service delivery.

Many staff has listed the poor conditions of service, as well as the poor and irregular motivational packages offered to them as one of the reasons responsible for their poor commitment and discharge of duties. The Government's failure to implement signed agreements with trades union has resulted in universities embarking on incessant strike actions as both the academic and non-academic staff strive to draw the Government's attention to their plight. As many academic staff are switching from one public university to another in search of better conditions of service, gives the impression that some public universities may be better than others in terms of welfare provision. Considering that all of these public institutions receive the same kind of treatment from the Government and are being regulated by the Nigerian Universities Commission.

Studies have made efforts to address this issue in different parts of the world including Nigeria (Abdullah, Almadhoun, & Ling, 2015; Aleke et al., 2015; Maina, 2016; Diraviam, 2016; Aliakbari & Amoli, 2016; Rao, 2017; Mukanzi & Senaji, 2017; Iman & Wayan, 2018; Arop, Ekpang, & Owan, 2018; Nguru & Gichuhi, 2018; Owan, Arop, & Agunwa, 2019). These studies have used several independent variables in an attempt to address the issue. Previous studies have focused on the job commitment of secondary school teachers (Arop, et al, 2018), while others considered teachers' satisfaction, empowerment or effectiveness to work to be synonymous with employee commitment (Boudrias, Gaudreau, Savoie & Morin, 2009; Aleke et al., 2015; Ulutas, 2018; Bassey, Owan, & Eze, 2019). This study did not treat commitment as a whole but based on the three dimensions (affective, continuance, and normative) that are in wide use in the literature (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Neyshabor & Rashidi, 2013; Farid, Izadi, Ismail & Alipour, 2014; Diraviam, 2016; Biwott & Kemboi, 2017; Mukanzi & Senaji 2017; Iman & Wayan, 2018; Osibanjo, Oyewunmi, Abiodun, & Oyewunmi, 2019). The present study was, therefore, designed to consider other variables such as work-life policies, psychological empowerment and how they associate with the job commitment of academic staff in public universities.

Work-life policies refer to the provisions made in an organization with the intention of giving all workers a balance that can enable them work effectively in the organisation while giving their personal lives some level of attention. Such policies include the schedule of work, nature of job assigned to workers, the frequency of workflow and operations allocated to employees. Within the context of a university, work-life policies are necessary to strike an equilibrium between the demands placed by the organization on workers and the consideration given to workers to live meaningful lives even as employees. Work-life policies are very important in any organization since they serve as a source of motivation to employees. Studies on work-life policies have shown with empirical evidence that it has some nexus with the commitment of employees to an organization (Hervie & Baffoe, 2016; Mwangi, Boinett, Tumwet, & Bowen, 2017; Rao, 2017). Nguru and Gichuhi (2018) found that there is a strong positive correlation between work-life balance and employee commitment in an organization with growth and development opportunities being the most important factor in determining employee commitment.

The findings of Mukanzi and Senaji (2017) supported this position by revealing that work-family conflict had a positive relationship with affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC). Other studies have also shown that there is a connection between work-life policies and employees commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative

commitment (Farid, et al., 2014; Diraviam, 2016; Mwangi et al., 2017; Arop, Owan, & Ibor, 2019). The results of Biwott and Kemboi (2017) showed that work-life policies was the strongest predictor of employee commitment (β = 0.300, t=5.670, p< 0.01), followed by employee empowerment (β = 0.154, t=2.820, p<0.01). The findings indicated also that a significant positive relationship exists between employee work-life policies and affective commitment (r=0.317, p<0.01), normative commitment (r=0.329, p<0.01), and continuance commitment (r=0.328, p<0.01). On the contrary, the findings of Darko-Asumadu, Sika-Bright, and Osei-Tutu (2018) discovered that the influence of work-life policies on employee commitment is not statistically significant in the banking sector. With career advancement and job security as sub-variables of work-life policies, the study of Osibanjo, et al. (2019) discovered that there is a negative relationship between career advancement, job security, and organizational commitment.

Psychological empowerment is another critical aspect of this study which refers to the techniques used in the organization to boost the morale of workers and promote the chances of them discharging their duties whole-heartedly and happily. Psychological empowerment is intrinsically driven and affects the emotional disposition of workers once they are stimulated. A lot of activities, devices, and resources could be used to empower the academic staff psychologically including rewards, promotion, praises, proper placement, recognition, and remuneration. The confidence and competence of employees is boosted once they are empowered, making them able to influence their job and work environment in a meaningful way, they are likely to be proactive and innovative. Hunjra, UlHaq, Akbar, and Yousaf (2011) opined that one of the most important instruments for the successful growth, productivity, and achievement of any organisation is the psychological empowerment of employees. Often regarded as a motivational practice that aims to increase the performance, psychological empowerment of workers increases the participative opportunities and involvement of workers in decision-making and task performance.

Studies involving psychological empowerment of workers and its relationship to the affective, continuance, and normative commitment have revealed mixed results. Biwott and Kemboi (2017) established that there is a significant positive correlation between employee empowerment and affective commitment (r=0.186, p<0.01); normative commitment (r=0.194, p<0.01); and continuance commitment (r=0.188, p<0.01). Using employee participation and job satisfaction as a proxy for psychological empowerment, Osibanjo et al. (2019) found a positive relationship between employee participation, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment.

Hanaysha (2016) found a significant positive effect of workers empowerment on organizational commitment. Using a structural equation approach, the results of Aliakbari and Amoli (2016) revealed that teacher empowerment was found to be important in the classroom and instructional decisions that enhance organizational effectiveness and improve student performance. The stepwise regression results of Toremen, Karakus and Savas (2011) showed that personnel empowerment significantly predicts both the total score of organizational commitment and the dimensions of "affective and normative commitment". This finding is also in the same direction as those of other studies (Abdullah et al., 2015; Iman & Wayan, 2018; Ulutas, 2018).

From the foregoing, there is clear evidence that several scholars have attempted to address the menace of poor job commitment of employees. Studies have been carried using the banking sector as well as other Government parastatals, in different parts of the world. It is quite shocking and unfortunate to observe that there is still a paucity of research evidence in the Nigerian perspective. In Cross River State, there appears to be a very scanty literature on the subject of academic staff job commitment. The few studies observed in the State focused on teachers' effectiveness at the secondary school level. All these are the gaps that gave the impetus for carrying out this study.

1.1 Statement of hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to direct the study:

i. There is no significant effect of work-life policies on the affective, continuance, and

normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

ii. Psychological empowerment has no significant effect on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

iii. There is no significant composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

2. Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey focuses on the use of questionnaires to obtain information about phenomena of interest with the objective of describing or reporting the manifestations of the events as they occur in the population through the sample. This design was considered very suitable to the study since the study presented evidence concerning the work-life policies of academic staff in universities using data collected through questionnaires about phenomena playing out in the population.

The population of this study comprised all the academic staff in public universities sited in Cross River State. There are two public universities in Cross River State, namely, the University of Calabar, Calabar (UNICAL) and the Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH). Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted by the researchers in selecting the sample of the study. In achieving this, in each of the two universities, 40% of the available faculties were selected. The University of Calabar has 16 faculties (six were selected) while CRUTECH has eight faculties (3 faculties were selected). From each selected faculty, four departments were randomly selected using simple random sampling technique, and in each selected department, only the academic staff that were intact in their offices during the data collection process were selected studied. Thus, a total of 315 academic staff were studied based on their availability as distributed in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample distribution of the study showing the number of academic staff that were selected based on intact presence during the process of data collection.

School	Faculties selected	Departments selected	No. of Intact academic staff
	Arts	4	38
	Education	4	64
UNICAL	Medicine	4	25
	Physical Sciences	4	37
	Social Sciences	4	48
	Engineering	4	33
CRUTECH	Environmental Sciences	4	29
	Sciences	4	41
	Total	32	315

Source: Field survey (2019).

The instruments used for data collection was a questionnaire tagged "Work-Life Policies, Psychological Empowerment and Job Commitment Questionnaire (WPPEJCQ)". This instrument was designed by the researchers and arranged on the revised four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree to Strongly Disagree. The WPPEJCQ was divided into five sections with each section having eight items. Section 1 was designed to measure academic staff work-life policies, Section 2 was used to measure the psychological empowerment of academic staff. Section 3, 4, and 5 of the WPPEJCQ measured the affective, continuance, and normative job commitment of academic staff respectively. The instrument received face and content validity from five experts in test and measurement who vetted the items and made suggestions for improvement. Copies of the instrument were administered to the 315-academic staff in their offices since they were intact during the data

collection process. All the administered instruments were retrieved from the respondents immediately after completion, hence there was no loss.

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were employed in establishing the construct validity of the instrument, while reliability was established using the Cronbach alpha technique. Path analysis which is a type of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used in testing the three null hypotheses formulated with the aid of SPSS v23 and Amos v23 programs. This multivariate statistical technique was employed due to its robusticity in modelling the effects of several independent factors as predicators on a particular or a set of response variables. The statistical technique was also employed in building the structural equation models of this study. The results of the analyses are presented in the next section.

3. Results

3.1 Factorial/Construct validity of the instrument

The data collected for this study were subjected to an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) as the extraction technique, with a varimax rotation based on Eigen-values greater than one. The Kaiser-Meyer-Ohlin (KMO) value of sampling adequacy revealed a coefficient of .894 and Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a coefficient of 7795.820 ($df = 780$, $p < .05$) providing sufficient evidence to perform factor analysis. A KMO value from .06 and above indicates that the sample size is large enough (adequate) to perform factor analysis with values closer to one being more preferred. For Bartlett's test of sphericity, the results must be significant ($p < .05$) for the data to be considered as being factorizable. The results of the KMO and Bartlett test in this study all met these assumptions hence, EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis) and CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) were performed.

The results of the EFA yielded a five-factor solution which explained a total of 62.262% of the total variance in the instrument. The five factors were labelled work-life policies, psychological empowerment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment based on the factor loadings on a particular construct. Out of the total variance explained by the five factors, work-life policies accounted for 9.361%, while psychological empowerment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment contributed 16.050%, 12.305%, 14.301%, and 10.246% respectively. Cronbach alpha was further employed in testing for the reliability of the respective constructs as well as the overall internal consistency of the instrument. The following reliability coefficients of .867, .861, .915, .941, .939, and .811 were obtained for work-life policies, psychological empowerment, affective, continuance, normative commitment, and the overall instrument respectively. The results of the analysis as interpreted above, are presented in Table 2.

It can be seen from the results in Table 2 that all the items had high factor loadings on the constructs they all measured. Hence, all the eight items designed to measure each construct were retained for measurement. The confirmatory factor analysis was performed as a means of verifying the results of the EFA. It is a good practice to perform a CFA after an EFA whether or not there was a prior model. The results of the CFA are also contained in Table 2, with Figure 2 used to provide a clearer picture of the model. The values in Fig. 2 shows also that the items all loaded highly on their respective constructs. Seven fit indices were used in evaluating the fitness of the confirmatory factor model including the Chi-square, Normed Fit Index (NFI), Relative Fit Index, Incremental Fit Index, Tucker-Lewis Index, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation as shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis of the instrument measuring work-life policies, psychological empowerment, and the affective, continuance, and normative job commitment of academic staff.

S/N	Variables/Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Factor load EFA	Factor load CFA	% S^2	α
A	**Work-life Policies**					9.36	.867
1	I receive support from the workplace when I am in need.	2.59	1.09	.774	1.17		
2	The work schedule is in conflict my personal life	2.59	1.07	.751	1.11		
3	I am allowed to leave work and take care of family matters	2.49	1.13	.751	1.10		
4	There are flexible work schedules in my department	2.63	1.10	.729	1.08		
5	There are no provisions for workers welfare in my Org.	2.49	1.10	.710	1.00		
6	Childcare assistance programmes are offered to employees.	2.60	1.09	.673	.950		
7	Childbirth leave is often offered to staff in my Org.	2.49	1.11	.670	.925		
8	Employees feel that work is not too much on them.	2.54	1.10	.631	.883		
B	**Psychological Empowerment**					16.05	.861
1	There is freedom to decide how best to do my job.	2.52	1.12	.889	.990		
2	The work makes good use of employees' skill and duties	2.58	1.10	.883	1.00		
3	Workers are inconsistently promoted in my organization	2.64	1.11	.881	1.00		
4	Workers are given incentives to develop their careers	2.66	1.09	.879	1.00		
5	Workers' ideas are often implemented in my organization	2.67	1.10	.858	.934		
6	Workers are regularly paid salaries in my organization.	2.63	1.11	.853	.907		
7	Staff with outstanding performance are often rewarded	2.59	1.11	.843	.915		
8	Employees are allowed to make decisions about new ideas	2.65	1.10	.590	.568		
C	**Affective commitment**					12.31	.915
1	I do not have any emotional attachment to this organization	2.53	1.16	.833	1.00		
2	Spending the rest of my career in this organization is good	2.46	1.15	.821	1.00		
3	This organization has a great personal meaning to me	2.51	1.16	.818	.962		
4	I have a strong sense of belonging with this organization	2.50	1.17	.811	.997		
5	I cannot pledge my allegiance to work in this organization	2.45	1.16	.811	.971		
6	I do feel like I am a part of a family at my organization	2.55	1.16	.798	.939		
7	I plan to work at my present job for as long as possible	2.53	1.15	.735	.878		
8	I consider the problems of this organization as my own	2.52	1.14	.699	.798		
D	**Continuance Commitment**					14.30	.941
1	Much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my Org.	2.52	1.17	.879	1.01		
2	It would be very hard to leave my Org. even if I wanted to.	2.51	1.17	.866	1.01		
3	Staying with my org. is a matter of necessity and a desire.	2.43	1.12	.858	1.00		
4	It is difficult to leave my org. for something even better	2.49	1.19	.855	.985		
5	I feel like my life is tied to my organization	2.53	1.14	.849	1.01		
6	I will have a few options to consider leaving this Org.	2.52	1.20	.800	.912		
7	I might consider working elsewhere if given the privilege	2.51	1.18	.792	.885		
8	If I were to leave this organization, I will not feel guilty	2.52	1.18	.784	.892		
E	**Normative commitment**					10.25	.939
1	I have an obligation to the people in this organization	2.50	1.15	.821	1.00		
2	This organization deserves my loyalty.	2.59	1.15	.809	.991		
3	Working tenaciously in the Org. is of necessity to me.	2.54	1.13	.802	.982		
4	I do not feel it would be the right time to leave this Org.	2.57	1.16	.745	.942		
5	I do not consider spending my whole career in this Org.	2.55	1.14	.726	.875		
6	I owe a great deal to my organization.	2.63	1.14	.701	.823		
7	I feel an obligation to remain with my current employer	2.57	1.17	.641	.727		
8	I cannot remain in this Org. should I find a better place.	2.59	1.16	.476	.514		
	Instrument Total					62.26	.811
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.894			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity			7795.820; df = 780; p = .000			

Table 3: Fit indices of the structural equation model in Fig. 2

Fit indices	Chi-Square	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Value	943.497, df = 730, p = .000	.884	.877	.971	.969	.971	.031

The fit indices presented in Table 3 indicates that the Chi-square value was significant (p<.05), which in an ordinary sense, implies that the model has no goodness of fit. However, due to the large sample size of this study (n = 315) it is not strange that the results appeared significant. This is because, it has been discovered that the Chi-square index has a weakness with large sample sizes (Wheaton, 1987; Brown, 2015; Kline, 2016; Bassey, Owan, & Agunwa, 2019; Koyuncu, & Kılıç, 2019; Bassey, Owan, & Eze, 2019). However, the values of all other fit indices such as TLI =.969, NFI= .884, IFI= .971, CLI= .971, and RFI= .877, are all very close to 1 indicating that the model in Fig 2 is an acceptable model. Values for these statistics are between 0.0 and 1.0 with values closer to 1.0 indicating good fit (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). For the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), a model fit of .80 and above have been recommended as a good model fit (Hooper, et al, 2008). However, Hu and Bentler (1999) maintained that TLI values ≥ .95 indicates a good model fit.

The RMSEA value of 0.031 as presented in Table 3 further indicates that the model has an acceptable goodness of fit. Brown (2015) maintained that any model with an RMSEA value of .06 or less has an acceptable model fit. The RMSEA explains how well a model, with an unknown but optimally chosen parameter estimates, would fit the population's covariance matrix (Byrne, 1998). The RMSEA ranges from 0 to 1, with smaller values indicating better model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Bassey, Owan, & Eze, 2019). Brown (2015) disclosed that an RMSEA value of .06 or less is indicative of an acceptable model fit. Up until the early nineties, an RMSEA in the range of 0.05 to 0.10 was considered an indication of fair fit and values above 0.10 indicated poor fit (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). It was then thought that an RMSEA of between 0.08 to 0.10 provides a mediocre fit and below 0.08 shows a good fit (MacCallum et al, 1996).

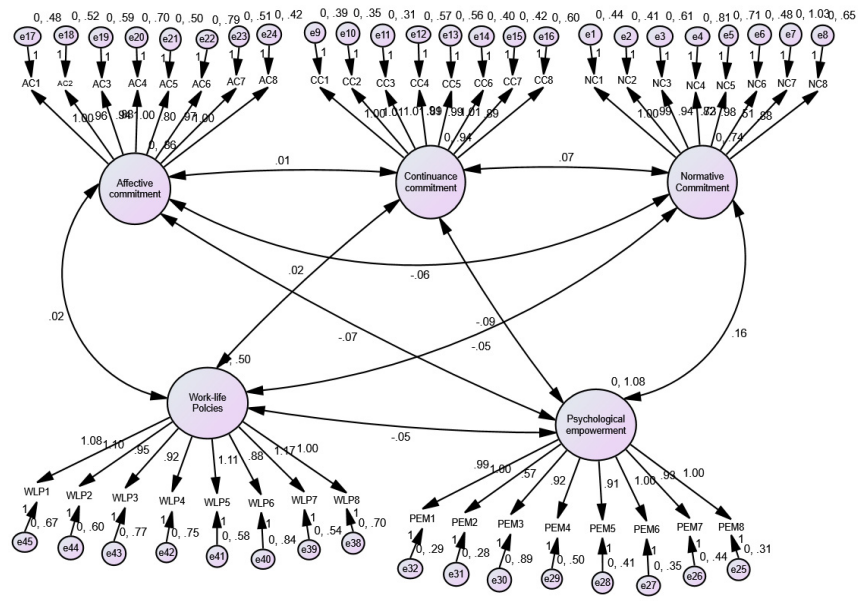

Fig. 2: Confirmatory Factor model of the instrument validated by the EFA.

3.2 *Hypothesis testing and measurement*

3.2.1 *Hypothesis one*

There is no significant effect of work-life policies on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities. This null hypothesis was tested using Path analysis which is another aspect of structural equation modelling. The result of the analysis is presented in Figure 3. The results in Fig 3 shows that work-life policies have a strong positive relationship with affective commitment; and a weak positive relationship with continuance commitment (r = and normative commitment respectively. Work-life policies accounted for 60%, 20%, and 24% of the total variance in affective, continuance, and normative commitment respectively. With the remaining 40%, 80%, and 76% explained by other independent variables. In determining whether the observed paths were statistically significant, the result in Table 3 was used.

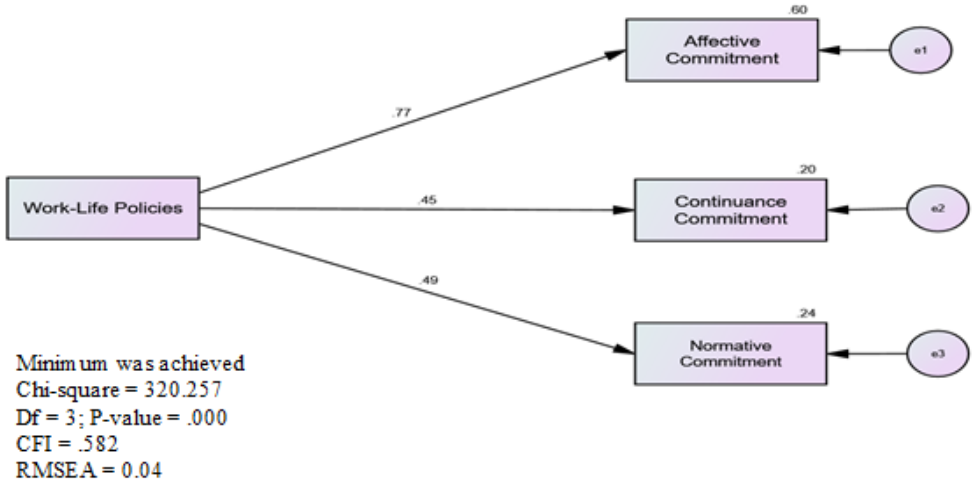

Fig. 3: Structural equation model showing the effect of work-life policies on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

Table 3: Summary of SEM results of the effect of work-policies on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

Variables/paths			B	S.E.	C.R.	P
Affective commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.774	.035	21.636	***
Continuance commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.450	.051	8.932	***
Normative commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.490	.046	9.967	***

The results presented in Table 3 indicates that all the paths connecting work-life policies to the respective dimensions of academic staff commitment are significant (***). With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was retained. This implies that there is a significant effect of work-life policies on the affective commitment (β= .774, t = 21.636, p < .05), continuance commitment (β=.450, t = 8.932, p<.05), and normative commitment (β=490, t = 9.967, p<.05) of academic staff in universities in Cross River State.

3.2.2 *Hypothesis Two*

Psychological empowerment has no significant effect on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities. This hypothesis was tested using Path analysis and the result is presented in Figure 4. The results in Fig 4 disclosed that the psychological empowerment has a strong positive relationship with the affective commitment of academic staff and a weak positive relationship respectively, with the continuance and normative commitment. Psychological empowerment explained 63%, 25%, and 27% of the total variance in affective, continuance, and normative commitment. By implication, the remaining 37%, 75%, and 73% of the total variance are explained by other extraneous variables that were not included in the model. In determining the significant paths as expressed in Fig 4, the result in Table 4 was used.

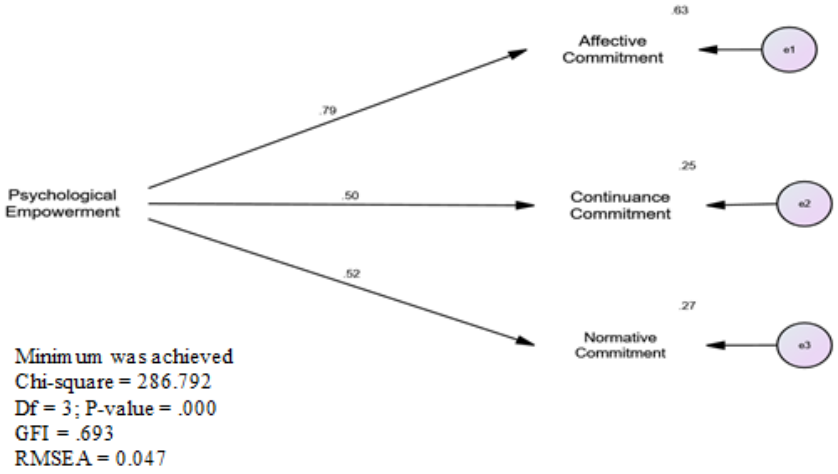

Fig. 4: Structural Equation Model showing the effect of psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

Table 4: Summary of SEM results of the effect of psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

Variables/Paths			β	S.E.	C.R.	P
Affective commitment	<---	Psych. Empowerment	.795	.032	23.199	***
Continuance commitment	<---	Psych. Empowerment	.501	.046	10.261	***
Normative commitment	<---	Psych. Empowerment	.520	.042	10.795	***

As shown in Table 4, the results of the analysis indicate that the paths linking psychological empowerment to affective, continuance, and normative commitment are all significant (***). Based on this result, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that psychological empowerment has a significant effect on the affective ($\beta = .795$, $t = 23.199$, $p < .05$), continuance ($\beta = .501$, $t = 10.261$, $p < .05$) and normative commitment ($\beta = .520$, $t = 10.795$, $p < .05$) of academic staff in universities.

3.2.3 *Hypothesis three*

There is no significant composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities. This hypothesis

was tested using SEM approach (Path analysis) and the result is presented in Figure 5.

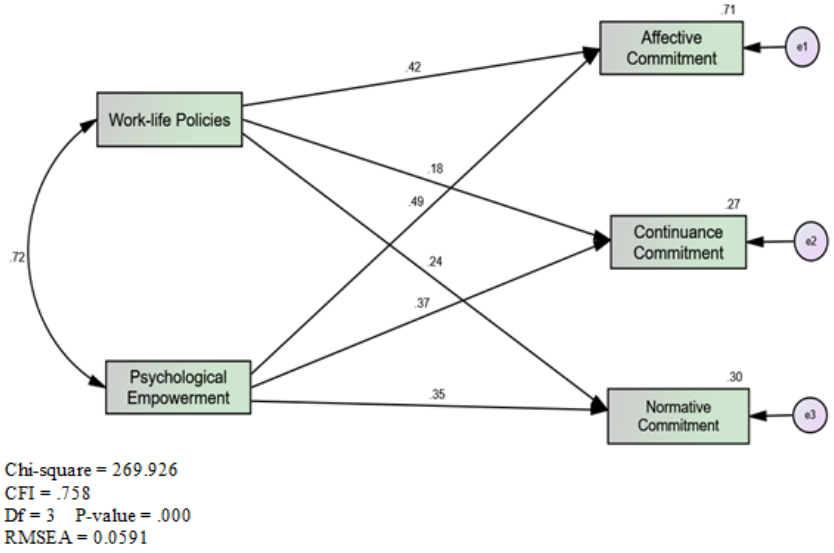

Fig. 5: Structural Equation Model showing the composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

The results in Fig 5 revealed that work-life policies and psychological empowerment jointly accounted for 71% of the total variance in the affective commitment of academic staff. The two independent variables (work-life policies and psychological empowerment) jointly contributed a total of 27% and 30% respectively, to the total variance in the continuance and normative commitment of academic staff in universities. The implication of this result is that the remaining 29%, 73%, and 70% of the total variance in the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff respectively, could be explained by other independent variables not included in this study. The results in Fig 5 also showed that there is a strong positive relationship (r = .725) between work-life policies and psychological empowerment. In determining the relative and unique contribution of each variable, and to ascertain the paths that were significant, the result presented in Table 5 was used.

Table 5: Summary of SEM results showing the joint and relative contributions of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities.

Variables/Paths			B	S.E.	C.R.	P
Affective commitment	<---	Psych Empower.	.493	.041	11.255	***
Continuance commitment	<---	Psych Empower.	.368	.067	5.254	***
Continuance commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.183	.071	2.613	.009
Normative commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.238	.064	3.475	***
Normative commitment	<---	Psych Empower.	.347	.060	5.063	***
Affective commitment	<---	Work-life policies	.416	.043	9.509	***

The result presented in Table 5 disclosed that all the paths linking the independent variables to the dependent variables are significant since their respective p-values are below the .05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities is retained. Relatively, psychological empowerment was the strongest predictor of affective commitment (β = .493, t = 11.255, p< .05), continuance commitment (β = .368, t =5.254, p< .05), and normative commitment (β= .347, t= 5.063, p< .05). Work-life policies was the weakest predictor of affective commitment (β = .416, t= 9.509, p<.05), continuance commitment (β = .183, t = 2.613, p< .05), and normative commitment (β = .238, t= 3.475, p<.05).

4. Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study established that there is a significant effect of work-life policies on the affective commitment (β= .774, t = 21.636, p < .05), continuance commitment (β=.450, t = 8.932, p<.05), and normative commitment (β=490, t = 9.967, p<.05) of academic staff in universities in Cross River State. With work-life policies accounting for 60%, 20%, and 24% of the total variance in affective, continuance, and normative commitment respectively. This finding is very apt since it is the work-life policies in an organization that provides the opportunity for academic staff to maintain a balance by adding meaning to their individual lives while working as staff in the universities. Employees who enjoy such work-life balance will be poised to take the matters of the organization seriously since, in the first place, the organization sees them as valuable resources. Such perception in the minds of staff will serve as a boost in promoting their job commitment levels.

This finding is consistent with findings of Hervie and Baffoe (2016), Mwangi, et al (2017), Rao (2017), and Nguru and Gichuhi (2018) which all discovered that there is a strong positive correlation between work-life balance and employee commitment in an organization. The findings of Mukanzi and Senaji (2017) supported this position by revealing that work-family conflict had a positive relationship with affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC); Other studies have also shown that there is a connection between work-life policies and employees commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Farid et al., 2014; Diraviam, 2016; Mwangi et al., 2017; Arop, et al, 2019). However, this finding disagrees with the results of Darko-Asumadu, et al (2018) and Osibanjo et al. (2019) which discovered that there is a negative relationship between career advancement, job security, and organizational commitment

It was established through the second finding of this study that psychological empowerment has a significant effect on the affective (β = .795, t = 23.199, p< .05), continuance (β = .501, t = 10.261, p < .05) and normative commitment (β = .520, t = 10.795, p< .05) of academic staff in universities. The independent variable explained 63%, 25%, and 27% of the total variance in affective, continuance, and normative commitment respectively. Empowering the academic staff by taking into consideration their emotional and psychological needs is a very important factor in any organisation striving towards goals realization. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the finding of this study yielded such results. This finding corroborates the findings of Hanaysha (2016) Aliakbari and Amoli (2016) Osibanjo et al. (2019) found a significant positive effect of workers empowerment on organizational commitment. The finding of Biwott and Kemboi (2017) also established that there is a significant positive correlation between employee empowerment and affective commitment (r=0.186, p<0.01); normative commitment (r=0.194, p<0.01); and continuance commitment (r=0.188, p<0.01). This finding is also in the same direction as those of other studies (Abdullah et al., 2015; Iman & Wayan, 2018; Ulutas, 2018).

The third major finding of this study discovered that there is a significant composite effect of work-life policies and psychological empowerment on the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities is retained. Both variables (work-life policies and

psychological empowerment) jointly accounted for 71%, 27%, and 30% of the total variance in the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of academic staff in universities. Between the two independent variables, psychological empowerment is the strongest predictor of academic staff job commitment in three dimensions assessed (affective, continuance commitment and normative commitment). The finding in this section provides implication for managers of universities to understand the combined role work-life policies and psychological empowerment plays in the job commitment of academic staff. When academic staff are adequately catered for through sound work-life policies and psychological empowerment, it boosts to a significant extent, their affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the university. This will lead to quality service delivery, improved student performance, and consequently, economic productivity of the nation.

This finding aligns with the results of Biwott and Kemboi (2017) which indicated also that there is a significant positive relationship exist between employee work-life policies and affective commitment ($r=0.317$, $p<0.01$), normative commitment ($r=0.329$, $p<0.01$), and continuance commitment ($r=0.328$, $p<0.01$); and there is a significant positive correlation between employee empowerment and affective commitment ($r=0.186$, $p<0.01$); normative commitment ($r=0.194$, $p<0.01$); and continuance commitment ($r=0.188$, $p<0.01$). In the study of Biwott and Kemboi (2017), it was shown that work-life policies was the strongest predictor of employee commitment ($\beta = 0.300$, $t=5.670$, $p< 0.01$), followed by employee empowerment ($\beta = 0.154$, $t=2.820$, $p<0.01$). It was however shown in the present study that psychological empowerment was the strongest predictor of academic staff commitment, followed by work-life policies. The little variation in the findings of Biwott and Kemboi and that of the present study may be attributed to the differences in the characteristics of the respondents.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded generally that, employee work-life policies and psychological empowerment are very important stimuli that can be used to promote the affective, continuance, and normative commitment levels of academic staff in universities in Cross River State. An improvement in the quality of work-life policies available to academic staff in universities will lead to a significant improvement in their job commitment levels in the various dimensions. Similarly, the psychological empowerment of academic staff affects the way they are committed towards carrying the organisation forward. Lastly, efforts made towards strengthening the work-policies as well as the psychological empowerment of academic staff will create a better organisation of highly committed staff than would have been had only one aspect been improved. This study has implication to both educational counsellors, psychologist, and managers. These group of professionals must collaborate and unify their efforts towards developing policies that create a balance for workers and empower them psychologically for effective service delivery.

6. Recommendations

Based on the conclusion reached in this study, the following recommendations were made:

i. Sound policies that specify how workers will be treated when academic work clashes with their personal activities of high relevance, should be formulated. This will create an effective work-life balance in universities.
ii. Departmental heads, faculty deans, and other universities administrators should ensure that the welfare of academic staff within their jurisdiction are given top-most priority. The presence of the academic environment should be felt in staff personal events like marriages, burial of loved ones, and others.
iii. Academic staff should be regularly promoted and consistently remunerated in order to promote the level of their commitment to work.
iv. Birth and sabbatical leaves should be granted to deserving staff from time to time, while

staff with outstanding contribution to the organization should be recognised and rewarded for further positive impact.

v. Academic staff who are psychologically depressed should be given opportunities to rehabilitate. This will help boost the enthusiasm and morale of staff for effective work performance and job commitment.
vi. The services of professional counsellors and psycho-therapist should also be employed to address the emotional yearnings of highly depressed workers who are not able to rehabilitate on their own.

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