

# The Impact of the Retention Factors on Organizational Commitment: A case of High -Tech Employees in the Sudanese Telecommunications Sector

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the retention factors (compensation, job characteristics, training and career opportunities, work/ life policies and supervisor support) on the organizational commitment (affective, continuous and normative) in high technology employees of the Sudanese telecommunications sector. The study adopts the quantitative approach for hypotheses verification. A questionnaire was developed and sent to 3 high tech employees in the Sudanese telecom sector. Data from 219 respondents were used to validate the measures and to test the research model. A multiple regression model was used; findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between (i) compensation and affective and continuance commitment (ii) training and career opportunities and affective and normative commitment (iii) Job characteristics and work/ life policies and normative commitment. Supervisor support had no direct impact on any of the organizational commitment components. Furthermore, the highest degree of association was found between training and career opportunities and normative commitment. The study suggests that an effective human resource management HRM system that fosters competitive compensation, fair training and career opportunities, enriched job characteristics and balanced work life policies, is likely to result in a higher organizational commitment.*

**Keywords:** organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuous commitment, normative commitment, high-tech employees.

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## INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment is considered as one of the basic concepts explaining the relationship between a worker and an organization. Employee commitment still remains one of the most researched topic and also an interesting and challenging concept in the fields of management, organizational behavior and Human Resource Management (Cohen 2003; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005). Understanding organizational commitment has attracted the interest of many scholars and practitioners (Morrow, 2011). Along with such concepts such as work commitment and job satisfaction, organizational commitment has been one of the leading research subjects for the past 3 decades (Soumyaja et al.,2011; Wołowska, 2014). The reason behind the increasing growing number of studies on this concept is to find ways to improve how employees feel about their jobs so that those employees would become more committed to their organizations and to understand and explain the intensity and stability of an employee's dedication to the organization (Lumley 2010). Another reason is the need to establish a relationship between antecedents of organizational commitment and organizational outcomes in order to create and sustain a committed workforce contributing positively towards organizational goals.

### **Problem Statement:**

In our current knowledge-based economy, people are considered as the most valuable assets in organization, especially high-technology employees represent large share of the organization's intellectual capital. Most Businesses work very hard to maintain valuable high technology employees due to the shortage of competent employees in the labor market.

Literature surveys conducted by Döckel (2003) identified the top critical factors that need to be considered in the retention of high technology employees: compensation (base salary); job characteristics (skill variety and job autonomy); training and development opportunities; supervisor support; career opportunities and work/life policies.

No one single study has investigated the impact of all of the top retention factors towards all organizational commitment components in a business sector. Most studies focused on the organizational commitment as a whole and few studies have differentiated between the organizational commitment components affective, continuance and normative when researching antecedents of organizational commitment. Döckel (2003) has investigated the impact of the six retention factors on all the components of the organizational commitment but his work was restricted to a single South African telecommunications company. The research question is about figuring out the impact of the main five variables (compensation, Job characteristics, supervisor support, work/life policies and training and career development) on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance and normative) of high-tech employees in the Sudanese context including more than one organization.

### **The Research Hypothesis**

In the light of the above, the study investigates the impact of the retention factors- as independent variables- on the organizational commitment (affective, continuance and normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector as dependent variables. Dockel (2003) has conducted a research in this concern and was specific to a South African telecom company, hence it cannot be generalized globally. Few researches have conducted on the organizational commitment in the telecom sector in Sudan, but no research had been conducted to study the effect of the retention factors on the organizational commitment. Therefore, the hypotheses developed in this paper are:

**H1:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the compensation and the (a) affective commitment (b) continuance commitment and (c) normative commitment.

**H2:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the job characteristics and the (a) affective commitment (b) continuance commitment and (c) normative commitment.

**H3:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the supervisor support and the (a) affective commitment (b) continuance commitment and (c) normative commitment.

**H4:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the Work/life policies and the (a) affective commitment (b) continuance commitment and (c) normative commitment.

**H5:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the Training and Career opportunities and the (a) affective commitment (b) continuance commitment and (c) normative commitment.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate and specify the retention factors that induce organizational commitment and can thus increase the retention of high technology employees in the Sudanese telecom sector. The derivative objectives are:

1. To examine the impact of compensation on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance & normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector.
2. To examine the impact of specific job characteristics (skill variety and job autonomy) on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance & normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector.
3. To examine the impact of supervisor support on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance & normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector.
4. To examine the impact of work/life policies on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance & normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector.
5. To examine the impact of training and career opportunities on the organizational commitment components (affective, continuance & normative) in the Sudanese telecom sector.

### **Sudanese Telecommunications Sector Profile**

Communications in Sudan, first started by the telegraph in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in Eastern Sudan. First central office was built in the North before opening another one in Khartoum 1903. Post, Telephone & Telegraph Corporation was established in 1910 and disbanded in 1971 to two corporations: one for Post & Telegraph

and another one for Wire & Wireless Communications. Although the telecom industry is old in Sudan, but it has not developed well to meet the international standards. Up to early 1990s all the organizations established to deliver telecom services were government-owned. The liberalization and privatization of the telecom sector, the policies, the regulations and plans adopted by the Government of the Sudan have created a capital-attracting, pro-competitive policy environment that have fostered the build-up of a modern, fully-digital infrastructure in the country and furnished a climate suited to enhance information and communications technology (ITC) development nationwide. The transformation and achievements witnessed in the Sudanese Telecommunication sector coupled with the growing and diversified use of the ITC services including those of the Internet and its applications, have made Sudan to be widely held among the most developed in Africa, if not in the Middle East (International Business Publication 2016).

### **High Technology and Identifying Retention Factors**

Merriam –Webster dictionary defined high technology as: scientific technology involving the production or use of advanced or sophisticated devices especially in the fields of electronics and computers. Döckel (2003) listed all the different high technology industries from where literature was collected and analyzed in his study as follows:

<b>Subject terms</b>
Computer industry
Computer network equipment industry
Computer services industry Computer
Software Industry Data Processing
Electronics industry
High technology equipment industry
High technology industry
High technology services industry
Information systems industry
Information technology industry
Internet industry
Management information systems industry
Online services industry
Telecommunication equipment industry
Telecommunication industry
Telecommunication services industry

Döckel (2003) in his work, reviewed surveys, studies and articles from 1995 to 2002, identified the critical factors in high technology employees' retention. This period was chosen because the demand for high technology employees increased rapidly, turnover increased, job hopping became the norm and the shortage of qualified candidates existed in the high technology industry as stated by McNee et al. (1998).

### **Theoretical Background:**

Organizational commitment is considered as one of the basic concepts explaining the relationship between a worker and an organization. Employee commitment still remains one of the most researched topic as well as interesting and challenging concept in the fields of management, organizational behavior and Human Resource Management (Cohen 2003; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005). Understanding organizational commitment has attracted the interest of many scholars and practitioners (Morrow, 2011). Along with such concepts such as work commitment and job satisfaction, organizational commitment has been one of the leading research subjects for the past 3 decades (Soumyaja et al., 2011; Wołowska, 2014). The reason behind the increasing growing number of studies on this concept is to find ways to improve the employees feeling about their jobs so that those employees would become more committed to their organizations (Lumley 2010). Another reason is the need to establish a relationship between antecedents of organizational commitment and organizational outcomes in order to create and sustain a committed workforce contributing positively towards organizational goals.

The answer to the question; what benefits are connected with having “committed” workforce is essential to any organization. Several researchers (Natarajan, 2011; Payne and Huffman, 2005) have stated that organizational commitment can have a significant impact on organizations through contributing to: lower turnover intention, increased productivity, increased organizational performance, opportunities for staff satisfaction and lower absenteeism.

Mathieu and Zodiac (1990) confirmed that the consequences of organizational commitment are important to organizations. Lower rates of job movement and higher national productivity or work quality are important consequences of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment also has been found to be significantly associated with varied employee behavior like punctuality at work, citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, etc. (Bogler, 2005; Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky, 2002) and fostering employees’ organizational commitment is considered to be the major concern for present-day organizations to retain talented employees in a knowledge-driven economy (Neinger et al., 2010; Reiche, 2008). Also, it has been found that compensation, performance evaluation and promotion practices significantly influence employees' organizational commitment (Khan and Istvan 2023).

As a conclusion many positive outcomes for individual as well as for the organization itself might be acquired when the employee is committed to an organization.

Organizational Commitment “is a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization” (Mowday, R.T., Steers, R.M., & Porter, L.W. (1983). It consists of three factors:

1. A strong desire to remain a member of the organization.
2. A strong belief in, and acceptance of, the values and goals of the organization.
3. A readiness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization.

Employees are committed to their organizations in different ways and for different reasons. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggest three components of commitments; affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Numerous of articles were written to address the research question, i.e. “What are the specific retention factors that induce organizational commitment and can thus increase the retention of high technology employees?” Döckel (2003) identified the critical factors that need to be considered in the retention of high technology employees. The top six critical factors are:

- Compensation (base salary)
- Job characteristics (skill variety and job autonomy)
- Training and development opportunities
- Supervisor support
- Career opportunities
- Work/life policies.

These factors have been adopted in this study. However, two factors were joined together: training and development opportunities and career opportunities under Training and career opportunities.

Irshad et.al. (2012) reviewed the literature and found the factors that affect the employees’ retention are:

- Organization culture
- Family support and flex time culture
- Compensation, reward and recognition
- Training and career development
- Employee career advance aspect or promotion opportunities
- Work environment
- Organizational justice

Affective commitment refers to employees’ emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991) where employees with strong affective commitment stay with the organization because they want to do so.

Past research have generally agreed that the construct of affective commitment can be described as the emotional attachment to an organization as demonstrated by an individual’s identification with, and involvement in, that organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 2002).

An affective commitment happens when employees commit because they want to, not because they have to (Kimura, 2013). This type of commitment is important for creating a successful and sustainable organization (Jussila et al., 2012). According to (Mercurio,2015): affective commitment, or the emotional attachment to the organization, is an important core essence of organizational commitment.

Leroy et. al (2012) defines affective commitment as the emotional attachment of individuals to their employing organizations. Similar definition developed by Balassiano & Salles (2012) affective commitment is the extent to which employees feel emotionally linked, identified, and involved with the organization and employees want to stay at the organization.

It has been documented that the primary antecedents of affective commitment are demographic variables, individual differences, work experiences, and investments (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Riketta, 2005). However, studies have shown that the most strongly correlated antecedent of affective commitment continues to be work experience variables, but the relations between demographic variable and affective commitment are neither strong nor consistent (Meyer et al., 2002).

From the different antecedents proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991) for each component of organizational commitment, work experiences and organizational structure were found to have much stronger relationships, particularly with affective commitment (Ghosh, 2014). Dunham et al. (1994) identified job characteristics such as task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety, and supervisory feedback as antecedents of affective commitment.

Much of the research, has found that affective commitment has the strongest predictive relationship with outcomes such as turnover and absenteeism (Meyer et al., 2002). Ghosh (2014) found that affective commitment has the strongest correlation with other work behaviors (i.e., attendance, job performance, OCB). Solinger et al. (2008) confirmed previous meta-analyses' findings (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Meyer et al., (2002) that found affective commitment correlated more strongly with absence, performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Sow (2015) found that affective commitment was significant predictor of turnover intention.

Mercurio (2015) determined the primary consequences of affective commitment as: Turnover, absenteeism, organizational citizenship behaviors and stress. Human resource practices were found to influence affective organizational commitment but the relationship was mediated by job satisfaction (Aggarwal et al 2020). Continuance commitment is the degree to which individuals stay in the organization because of recognition of the costs related to leaving the organization. Other reasons are lack of another job to replace the one that they have left, or feeling the personal losses that come with leaving are considerably high. Taing et al. (2011) say that employees may commit to their employing organizations because of lack of better alternatives or consequences related to failing to commit.

Continuance commitment may develop as a result of an action or event which increases the costs connected with abandoning the organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) describe these actions and events as investments and alternatives. Investments can be treated as "personal sacrifice" (e.g. sacrificing seniority or allowance benefits) associated with terminating employment. Employees may invest in the organization in various ways, including e.g. costs connected with moving their families to a place of

current employment or devoting time to acquire specific organizational skills. Alternatives, on the other hand, can be described as “limited possibilities” of finding another job. Strong continuance commitment will develop in these employees who believe that they have few such possibilities. The investments and alternatives listed above affect the development of continuance organizational commitment only when the employee is aware both of their presence and their consequences (Wołowska 2014). Several studies conducted by (Balassiano & Salles, 2012; Faloye, 2014; Taing et al., 2011; Vandenberghe, Panaccio, & Ayed, 2011) found that continuance commitment is significantly related with turnover intention. Jaros et al. (1993) reported that affective and continuance commitment were related to turnover intentions. However, Sow (2015) found that continuance commitment was not significant and did not have a positive effect on turnover intention.

Normative commitment refers to employees' perceptions of their obligation to their organization. Weiner (1982) discusses normative commitment as being a “general value of loyalty and duty”. Normative commitment is the individual’s typical feelings of obligation to stay with an organization (Meyer et al., 2002). Normative commitment is based upon ideology or a sense of obligation from the employee’s side to stay within the organization as a moral duty. Balassiano & Salles (2012) provided a similar definition: normative commitment is the extent to which employees have a moral obligation to stay in the organization and employees feel that they must stay in the organization, In the context of normative commitment, employees are committed because of some moral obligations. Normative commitment occurs when an individual feels the need to reciprocate after receiving some benefits from an organization (Gelaidan & Ahmad, 2013).

The study conducted by Döckel et al. (2006) had focused on a single South African owned telecom company. Bashir and Ramay (2008) examined the relationship between three factors career opportunities, work life policies, job characteristics and organizational commitment of information technology (IT) professionals in Pakistan. Naqvi et al. (2015) studied the Pakistani IT sector high technology employees but limited to three factors: compensation, training and development and supervisor support. Also Hanifah and Syaebani (2016) studied the effects of compensation, training and development, and supervisor support toward organizational commitment of multigenerational employees in a public sector organization in Indonesia. This study attempts to fill the gap in the literature related to retention factors and their relationships with the organizational commitment within the Sudanese context, by addressing the retention factors, knowing that these factors have never been studied in the Sudanese settings in such a way which facilitates and enhances the understanding of many business issues pertaining to the organizational commitment.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

This study is a cross-sectional one focuses on the perceptions and attitudes of High tech employees in the telecom sector. An integrated questionnaire combining two measuring instruments:



The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer et al., 1993) and the retention factor measurement scale developed by Döckel (2003) was used in this study. A demographics survey was used to collect personal data from the participants.

### ***Organizational Commitment:***

The affective, continuance and normative organizational commitment scales each include six items using Meyer et al. (1993) who reported internal consistency reliability estimates (Cronbach's alphas) for affective commitment (0.82), continuance commitment (0.74) and normative commitment (0.83).

### ***The Retention Factor Measurement Scale***

The questionnaire contained 26 items and was presented in the form of a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Dockel (2003) developed the questionnaire by using items that originated from questionnaires that were designed to measure the retention factors as follows:

Compensation: Six items were selected from Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Heneman & Schwab (1985). Job Characteristics: Two items were selected from the Job Diagnostic Survey developed by Hackman & Oldham (1975; 1976) covering skill variety and job autonomy. Fried and Farris's (1987) reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient in the range of 0.20 to 0.94.

Work/life policies: Four items were selected from the scale designed by Paré et al.'s (2001). A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.87 was reported for the scale. Training and Career opportunities: Six items were selected from the training and development scale designed by Andrew and Sofian (2011) and two items were selected from the career opportunities scale designed by Landau & Hammer's (1986)

Supervisor support: Six items were selected from the survey developed by Rhoades et al (2001) A factor analysis was conducted to confirm the validity of the retention factors scales. The independent variables for this study are the respondents' compensation, job characteristics, training and career opportunities, supervisor support, and work/life policies whereas the dependent variable is the organizational commitment. The control variables are age, gender, marital status, organizational tenure, job tenure, qualification position level, and job classification. The questionnaire was addressed to these groups in each telecom company (Sudatel, Zain, MTN & Canar). According to the Telecom and Post Regulatory Authority (TPRA), the total no number of the telecom sector employees is 3451 out of which 875 are high tech employees. A purposive sample of 310 was adopted.

This study employs the factor analysis and multiple regression, to estimates the relationship between the retention factors and the organizational commitment.

## **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

This section involved testing the research hypotheses. Multiple linear regression is widely used for predicting the value of one dependent variable from the value of one of two or more independent variables.

Regression analysis was used in this study because there is more than one explanatory variable for each hypothesis.

### **Pre-Screening**

Data analysis and hypothesis testing for this study utilized ordinary least squares (OLS). The technique of OLS is based on some statistical assumptions. To address these assumptions, several steps were taken to guarantee the data is ready for analysis. Firstly, the model was screened for the absence of outliers. Secondly, multicollinearity was assessed to ensure the residuals are not correlated with one another over time. Thirdly, linearity was determined by examining patterns in the data. Fourthly, homoscedasticity was assessed to ensure that the residuals (errors) reflects a constant variance.

### **Affective Commitment**

Multiple regression analysis was performed between the affective commitment (dependent variable) and the retention factors (independent variables). Table 1 summarize the results of the multiple regression analysis. The retention factors explain 23.6 % of the variance in the affective commitment, which was statistically significant ( $F_{5, 213} = 13.125, p < .01$ ). Compensation had a positive significant and direct effect on affective commitment ( $p < .05$ ). whereas training and career opportunities had a positive significant and direct effect on affective commitment ( $p < .01$ ). The remaining independent variables, namely supervisor support, job characteristics and work/life policies had no significant direct impact on affective commitment.

Replacing in the regression equation for AC model

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \chi_1 + \beta_2 \chi_2 + \dots + \beta_k \chi_k + \varepsilon$$

$$AC = 1.36 + 0.213(\text{Comp}) + 0.250(\text{TCO}) + \varepsilon$$

### **Continuance Commitment**

Multiple regression analysis was performed between the continuance commitment (dependent variable) and the retention factors (independent variables). Table 1 summarize the results of the multiple regression analysis. The retention factors explain 11.8 % of the variance in the continuance commitment, which was statistically significant ( $F_{5, 213} = 5.683, p < .01$ ). Compensation is the only predictors that have a positive significant and direct effect on continuance commitment ( $p < .05$ ). The remaining independent variables, namely training and career opportunities, supervisor support, job characteristics and work/life policies had no significant direct effect on continuance commitment. Replacing in the regression equation for CC model

$$CC = 2.367 + 0.238(\text{Comp}) + \varepsilon$$

Table (1) Multiple Regression Analysis for Organizational Commitment

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error				
Affective Commitment	(Constant)	1.360	0.337		4.037	0.000	<b>R<sup>2</sup>= 0.236</b> <b>F=13.125</b> <b>N=219</b>
	COMP	0.213	0.072	0.214	2.958	0.003	
	JC	0.126	0.076	0.108	1.667	0.097	
	WLP	0.099	0.052	0.114	1.893	0.060	
	TCO	0.250	0.074	0.253	3.387	0.001	
	SUPV	0.047	0.070	0.043	0.668	0.505	
Continuance Commitment	(Constant)	2.367	0.351		6.733	0.000	<b>R<sup>2</sup>=0.118</b> <b>F= 5.683</b> <b>N=219</b>
	COMP	0.238	0.075	0.246	3.165	0.002	
	JC	-0.141	0.079	-0.124	-1.791	0.075	
	WLP	-0.087	0.055	-0.104	-1.597	0.112	
	TCO	0.061	0.077	0.063	0.785	0.433	
	SUPV	0.119	0.073	0.114	1.642	0.102	
Normative Commitment	(Constant)	0.865	0.315		2.746	0.007	<b>R<sup>2</sup>=0.298</b> <b>F=18.071</b> <b>N=219</b>
	COMP	0.093	0.067	0.096	1.380	0.169	
	JC	0.179	0.071	0.157	2.530	0.012	
	WLP	0.142	0.049	0.168	2.904	0.004	
	TCO	0.326	0.069	0.338	4.726	0.000	
	SUPV	0.097	0.065	0.092	1.485	0.139	
Organizational Commitment	(Constant)	1.479	0.239		6.178	0.000	<b>R<sup>2</sup>=0.305</b> <b>F=18.674</b> <b>N=219</b>
	COMP	0.174	0.051	0.235	3.409	0.001	
	JC	0.064	0.054	0.073	1.193	0.234	
	WLP	0.058	0.037	0.090	1.567	0.119	
	TCO	0.221	0.052	0.300	4.212	0.000	
	SUPV	0.088	0.050	0.110	1.782	0.076	

### Normative Commitment

Multiple regression analysis was performed between the normative commitment (dependent variable) and the retention factors (independent variables). Table 1 summarize the results of the multiple regression analysis. The retention factors explain 29.8% of the variance in the normative commitment, which was statistically significant (F5, 213 = 18.071, p <.01). Job characteristics (p <.05), work life policies (p <.05) and training and career opportunities (p <.01) are the only predictors that have a positive significant and direct effect on normative commitment.

The remaining independent variables, namely compensation and supervisor support had no significant direct effect on normative commitment.

Replacing in the regression equation for NC model

$$NC=0.865 +0.179 (JC) +0.142(WLP) +0.326 (TCO) + \epsilon$$

## Organizational Commitment

Multiple regression analysis was performed between the organizational commitment (dependent variable) and the retention factors (independent variables). Table 1 summarize the results of the multiple regression analysis. The retention factors explain 30.5% of the variance in the organizational commitment, which was statistically significant ( $F_{5, 213} = 18.674, p < .01$ ). Of the independent variables, compensation ( $p < .01$ ) and training and career opportunities ( $p < .01$ ) are the only predictors that have a significant and positive effect on organizational commitment. The remaining independent variables, namely, supervisor support, job characteristics and work/life policies, had no significant direct effect on organizational commitment.

Replacing in the regression equation for OC model:

$$OC = 1.479 + 0.174(\text{Comp}) + 0.221(\text{TCO}) + \epsilon$$

### The Impact of Compensation on the Organizational Commitment

To answer the first question: Does compensation impact the organizational commitment components: (a) affective, (b) continuance and (c) normative in the Sudanese telecom sector? The study tested three hypotheses: H1a, H1b & H1c, using multiple regression to understand the impact of compensation on organizational commitment components.

**H1a, H1b:** As shown in table 1 the first finding of this study indicated that compensation does positively predict affective commitment and continuance commitment. This indicates that high technology employees in the Sudanese telecom sector want fair benefits, and equitable administration of a competitive compensation plans. This will have a direct link to affective and continuance commitment.

Compensation plays an important role in employee's retention for at least two reasons:

Firstly, due to the hard Sudanese economic situation and the increased inflation rates, the financial obligations couldn't be covered by uncompetitive compensation. Secondly, because of the cultural dimension humane orientation, Sudanese employees found themselves responsible for taking care of an extended family. A study in Pakistan educational sector have revealed a direct link between compensation on organizational commitment components affective, continuance and normative (Nawab & Bhatti, 2011). Döckel (2003) found that compensation has a strong, significant relation to the affective organizational commitment. Wadhawan C., Mishra M., Garg K. (2017.)' study also has revealed the highest degree of association between compensation and affective commitment. This result was also supported by Khailey and Ibrahim (2023) who revealed a positive and significant effect of compensation on employee commitment Hormuud Telecom Mogadishu.

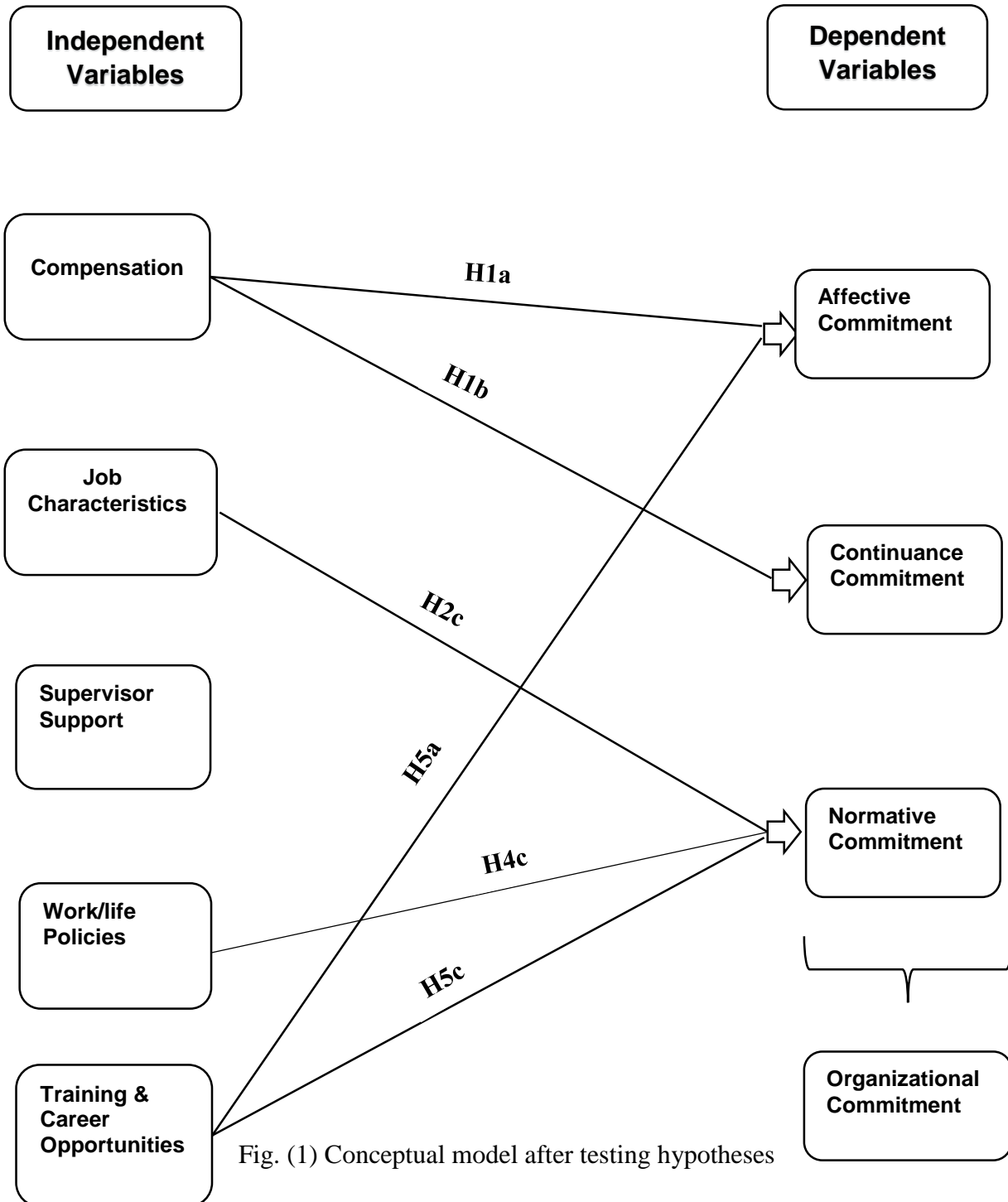


Fig. (1) Conceptual model after testing hypotheses

**H1c:** In contrast to past research, this study finding indicates that compensation is not related to normative commitment. This means high tech telecom staff don't consider compensation as a factor that develops normative commitment. The feelings of obligation and duty to stay in an organization, which are characteristic of normative commitment, result from normative pressures that have been internalized by socialization processes. So, individuals who have internalized and accepted group-related customs of loyalty, duty and reciprocity are likely to experience higher levels of normative commitment. Collectivistic cultures emphasize loyalty to the group and there is a relation between collectivism and normative commitment. (Felfe et al. 2008). Osemeké (2016) argued that cultures which emphasize the importance of group values and more extended relatives between a worker and an employer will add value to a stronger development of normative commitment. Adam (2016) measured the collectivism cultural dimension in the Sudanese societal life and reported that there is a high attitude toward large group loyalty even at expense of individuals' interests. So telecom staff may experience feelings of obligation to stay with the organization because of the society values.

### **The Impact of Job Characteristics on the Organizational Commitment**

To answer the second question: Does compensation impact the job characteristics components: (a) affective, (b) continuance and (c) normative in the Sudanese Telecom sector? The study tested three hypotheses: H2a, H2b & H2c using multiple regression to understand the impact of job characteristics on organizational commitment components.

**H2a & H2b:** As shown in table 1, the results of this study found that job characteristics isn't related to the affective commitment and continuance commitment in the Sudanese telecom sector. This means high tech telecom staff don't consider job characteristics as a factor that develops affective and continuance commitment. A possible explanation to this is, some organizations in the Sudanese telecom sector follow a centralized authority structure and jobs are designed with least autonomy, significance and feedback. Ünüvar (2006) didn't find any significant relation between job variety and autonomy the in Turkish companies. Also Bashir& Ramay (2008) found that job characteristics do not determine organizational commitment of IT professionals in Pakistan.

**H2c:** jobs enrichment results in an increased motivation. The degree of freedom and independence enjoyed by employees and their participation in planning and organizing their work has an influence on organizational commitment. The findings of this study revealed that job characteristics does positively predict normative commitment. Many empirical studies [e.g., Mathieu and Zajac, 1990, Feather and Rauter, 2004. Cluse-Tolar, 2004] provided evidence of strong correlations between dimensions of job characteristics and organizational commitment.

### **The Impact of Supervisor Support on the Organizational Commitment**

To answer the third question: Does supervisor support impact the organizational commitment components: (a) affective, (b) continuance and (c) normative in the Sudanese Telecom sector? The study

tested three hypotheses: H3a, H3b & H3c, using multiple regression to understand the impact of supervisor support on organizational commitment components.

**H3a, H3b & H3c:** As shown in table 1, the results of this study found that supervisor support had no direct effect on organizational commitment components (affective, continuance and normative commitments). This result is consistent with Soulen (2003) who stated that previous research has not addressed a possible relationship between supervisor support and continuance commitment. Also Dockel (2003) found that supervisor support had no direct effect on normative commitment.

### **The Impact of Work-Life Policies on the Organizational Commitment**

To answer the fourth question: Do the work/life policies impact the organizational commitment components: (a) affective, (b) continuance and (c) normative in the Sudanese Telecom sector? The study tested three hypotheses: H4a, H4b & H4c, using multiple regression to understand the impact of work life policies on organizational commitment components.

**H4a, H4b:** As shown in table1, no significant relationship was found between work life policies and affective and continuance commitments.

This result is consistent with Paré et al. (2001) who found that work-life policies are unrelated to affective commitment. Dockel (2003) found that work/life policies had no significant direct effect on continuance commitment.

**H4c:** The relation between work/life policies and normative commitment was found significant. Work life balance practices are organizational changes designed to reduce work family conflict. These work life balance practices enable employees to be effective in both work and personal roles. Onu, et al. (2018) found that leave policy significantly affects normative commitment of employees. Rani et al (2023) found that the impact of work life balance on turnover intention of nurses in private healthcare sector can be predicted only if organizational commitment was employed as a mediator.

### **The Impact of Training and Career Opportunities on the Organizational Commitment**

To answer the fifth question: (d) Do the training and career opportunities impact the organizational commitment components: (a) affective, (b) continuance and (c) normative in the Sudanese telecom sector? The study tested three hypotheses: H5a, H5b & H5c, using multiple regression to understand the impact of training and career opportunities with organizational commitment components.

**H5a & H5c:** As shown in table1, significant relationship was found between training and career opportunities and affective commitment and normative commitment. Regarding affective commitment: high tech telecom staff who felt that there is sufficient access to training or there is a chance of attending training are more likely to be emotionally attached to the organization. This result is in line with the literature. According to Brum (2007), training will increase employees' commitment. The more training

given to employees, the more committed they will be to the organization. Anne et al (1997) reported similar results that training signals commitment from the organization to the employees, which will result in employees reciprocating such behavior by demonstrating a stronger affective organizational commitment, which is quite productive and can affect performance. Muleya, Ngirande and Terera (2022) have reached a similar finding when they stated that “significant positive correlations were found between training, career development opportunities, and affective commitment”. Their research was limited to South Africa’s higher education sector.

Regarding normative commitment: telecom staff who felt that there is sufficient access to training or there is a chance of attending training are more likely to be morally obliged to remain with the organization. The employee will help the organization, because the organization helped the employee (Brum, 2007). Thus, when an organization meets such expectation, employees are most likely to reciprocate. Bashir, and Long (2015) found that training is significantly related to normative commitment. Sudanese culture studies showed that most of the employees always ask the management about training. But the big concern is how training chances are distributed among employees. The relationship between superior and subordinate is a detrimental factor in allocating training chance (El Jack, Fadlalla & Idris, 2012).

**H5b:** significant relationship was not found between training and career opportunities and continuance commitment indicating that telecom staff do not view training as an important benefit they would have to consider when leaving the organization. Employees may stay in an organization due to the investments they have made or the costs/benefits associated with leaving. Such costs could be fear of losing benefits, or even relationships they have developed with their co-workers. Dockel et al. (2006) stated that career opportunities didn’t show a significant relation to continuance commitment. Similar results were reported by Bashir and Long (2015) who found that training is not significantly related to continuance commitment. Table 2, provides a summary version of the regression analysis presented earlier where only the coefficients of the various independent variables and their level of significance (indicated by \*) are presented.



Table (2) Summary of hypotheses testing results for the impact of the retention factors on organizational commitment

Hypotheses	Hypothesized Path	Coefficient	Remarks
<b>H1a</b>	<b>COMP. →AC</b>	<b>0.213*</b>	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H1b</b>	<b>COMP. →CC</b>	<b>0.238*</b>	<b>Supported</b>
H1c	COMP. →NC	0.093	Not Supported
<hr/>			
H2a	JC →AC	0.126	Not Supported
H2b	JC →CC	-0.141	Not Supported
<b>H2c</b>	<b>JC →NC</b>	<b>0.179*</b>	<b>Supported</b>
<hr/>			
H3a	SUPV. →AC	0.047	Not Supported
H3b	SUPV. →CC	0.119	Not Supported
H3c	SUPV. →NC	0.097	Not Supported
<hr/>			
H4a	WLP →AC	0.099	Not Supported
H4b	WLP →CC	-0.087	Not Supported
<b>H4c</b>	<b>WLP →NC</b>	<b>0.142*</b>	<b>Supported</b>
<hr/>			
<b>H5a</b>	<b>TCO →AC</b>	<b>0.250**</b>	<b>Supported</b>
H5b	TCO →CC	0.061	Not Supported
<b>H5c</b>	<b>TCO →NC</b>	<b>0.326**</b>	<b>Supported</b>

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of the retention factors on the organizational commitment components: affective, continuance and normative among the high-tech staff in the Sudanese telecom sector. Upon completion of the multiple linear regression analysis, several findings were revealed

The internal consistency of the measurement scales was calculated and all Cronbach's alphas of the constructs involved in this study were above the recommended threshold for the fulfilment of construct reliability with the exception of JC (0.614), showing that the measures used for collecting data were internally consistent and reliable.

A correlation coefficient matrix was presented and all the retention factors had a positive and significant relation to affective commitment and normative commitment. Job characteristics and work/life policies

were not significantly related to continuance commitment. From table (1) the overall fit of the various models indicated by the  $R^2$ .

The best results were obtained for normative commitment (0.298) and the lowest for continuance commitment (0.118), while the affective commitment was in medium ( $R^2=0.236$ ). The low  $R^2$  are in line with results obtained in similar studies e.g. Dockel (2003). The most relevant explanatory factors were compensation, training and career opportunities, work/life policies and job characteristics had a significant influence on the development of organizational commitment in high technology employees in the Sudanese telecom sector.

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