THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT ON OCB: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a conceptual framework for empirically investigating how employee recognition and opportunities for competence development influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), with affective commitment serving as a mediator, within the digital era. Data from 194 employees from 30 organizations across Bangladesh were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. The findings reveal that, even amid digital transformation, both 'employee recognition' and 'opportunities for competence development' positively enhance affective commitment, and, through this, indirectly increase OCB, where affective commitment acts as a full mediator. This study enhances our understanding of how HR practices influence OCB, particularly in labor-intensive industries, underscoring the continued importance of recognition, skill development, and emotional commitment in digitally evolving workplaces. This novel framework contributes to the limited body of literature on HR dynamics and offers actionable insights for managing human resources in the least developed countries in this digital age.

Keywords : *Employee recognition, competence development opportunity, affective commitment, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)*

JEL Classification : *M12, M54, J24*

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizations operate in an environment marked by rapid and often disruptive changes (Bray, 2017; Christensen & Overdorf, 2000), primarily driven by digitization of business infrastructure and growing interconnectivity as well as interdependency among products, processes, and services (Bharadwaj, et al., 2013). The rise of artificial intelligence, automation, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, big data, and data-driven decision-making has fundamentally reshaped workplace dynamics – restructuring organizations, reconfiguring job roles, transforming key business functions and processes, and optimizing operational efficiency (Bharadwaj, et al., 2013; Chhatre & Seema, 2024; Ekuma, 2024; Hess, et al., 2016; Matt, et al., 2015; Mikalef, et al., 2023; Verhoef, et al., 2021). These technological revolutions

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compel organizations to constantly explore new 'paths to create value' (Vial, 2019) while being congruent with evolving organizational structures, dynamic employee roles, new business functions and processes, and enhanced operational capabilities.

At the heart of this transformation lies a critical paradox: while technology accelerates efficiency, innovation and strategic transformation, the achievement of organizational success ultimately depends on employees' ability to harness technological tools effectively (Devenport & Kirby, 2016). Although technology provides the foundational infrastructure for change, it is the capabilities of the workforce – knowledge, skills, digital literacy, and adaptive capacity – that ultimately determine successful implementation and utilization of technologies (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Li, 2024). For instance, while technology can collect and analyze large volumes of data, human insight is essential for interpreting and applying this information meaningfully; similarly, although technologies may be applied, their optimum use often requires employees with strong content knowledge and creativity (Li, 2024). Therefore, as the technology adoption accelerates, research suggests that 59% of employees will require upskilling and reskilling by 2030 (World Economic Forum, January 2025). Klynveld, Peat, Marwick, Goerdeler (KPMG) also suggests the same stating that 65% of job roles will undergo significant transformation by 2030, demanding substantial workforce upskilling and reskilling (KPMG, 2024).

These rapid and disruptive changes and concomitant job roles transformations underscore the growing importance of human adaptability and continuous learning (KPMG, 2024; Omol, et al., 2023) in addition to digital and other human competencies. The mere availability of technology is insufficient—organizational success depends on the systematic development of employee competencies and the creation of employee attitude and behavior supportive to tackle the hassles caused by digital disruptions which will enable and maintain the drive of individuals so as they apply their newly learned capabilities meaningfully. Thus, this new evolving landscape necessitates addressing several issues. *First*, organizations need to develop their workforce capability on a continuous basis (Doherty & Stephens, 2021). *Second*, organizations need to recognize employees for their contributions to reinforce desired behaviors (Workhuman, 2021). *Third*, organizations need to cultivate affective commitment so that employee do not leave organizations facing turbulent situations (Lundmark et al., 2020). *Fourth*, organizations need to nurture OCBs so that employees be willing to help others in learning new skills and maintaining morale at the time of uncertainties and complexities caused by digital disruptions (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999; Kusuma, et al., 2024).

Existing literature suggests that in the context of rapid digital transformation, employee adaptability, continuous learning, and technological proficiency are indispensable in leveraging the benefits of digital transformation. Organizations need to support the development of employee competencies (Doherty & Stephens, 2021). These skills and adaptability completement the use of digital technology as well as contribute to sustainable competitive advantages (Shakina, et al., 2021) helping to leverage

the benefit of digitization. Therefore, organizations need to *open opportunities for competence development* for their employees. Employee competencies, once developed, will enable organizations to navigate a complex digital environment effectively (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016).

These employees who will be given *opportunities for competence development*, such as access to reskilling or upskilling programs or learning resources, are expected to build competencies (Vidal-Salazar, et al., 2012) to work on digital infrastructure with digital tools, and turn into assets for their organizations, especially in technology driven environments where employers expect to broaden the digital literacy of at least 60 percent of their employees to transform their business by 2030 (World Economic Forum, January 2025). These employers need to recognize their employees appropriately once they start adding value to organizations. *Employee recognition* works as a validation for their enhanced ability (Workhuman, 2021) and is a crucial driver of motivation, performance, and retention (Aman-Ullah, et al., 2022; Ampofo, et al., 2023; Tarigan, et al., 2022; Tirta & Enrika, 2020; Umrani, et al., 2019). They may feel undervalued in the absence of it and seek opportunities elsewhere, contributing to increased turnover intentions (Workhuman, 2021). Employee turnover causes financial loss, harms organizational knowledge, decreases morale among remaining employees (Ndiango, et al., 2024).

However, employees may not always be able to leave organizations even though they want to because of unavailability of alternative employment (Hulin, et al., 1985). In such cases, employees may remain within organization while feeling demotivated. When employees are not motivated due to lack of recognition, their performance may suffer even though they possess the capacity because they feel that their psychological outcome is not maximized (Tsui, et al., 1997) and creativity is also likely to reduce as employees are less likely to take creative risks or share novel ideas (Eisenberger & Linda, 2001; Hastwell, 2025). Besides, absence of recognition may erode trust and collaboration and breed resentments undermining collective goals (Hastwell, 2025).

Employee recognition, through non-monetary rewards, fosters a norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and encourages employees to sustain desired behaviors and enhance performance (Benson, 2006; Long & Shields, 2010; Wayne, et al., 2002). This discussion suggests that recognition must go hand in hand with competence development to ensure organizations not only retain talent but also fully benefit from their digital capabilities.

In addition to developing a capable workforce and recognizing employees for their contributions, organizations must also prioritize the cultivation of affective commitment and OCB among employees to foster a supportive and resilient internal environment. Because the process of change typically involves structural realignment, job-roles reconfiguration, employee upskilling and reskilling initiatives etc. which require employees to adjust. With a regular workload, these may come as an extra layer of stress for employees (Deloitte, 2025) and this workload may also hurt their work-life balance (Yusriza, 2025). For instance, the demand for reskilling

and upskilling may impose additional cognitive load (Sweller, 2011) and emotional burden (Grandey, 2000) on employees because there is always something new to learn (Yusriza, 2025), compelling them to reassess their willingness to remain within the organization amidst heightened job complexity and role ambiguity (Becton, et al., 2017).

In such contexts, employees with a high level of affective commitment—defined as those who experience a strong affective or emotional attachment to their organizations, and also identify with, involve in and also enjoy the membership of organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Geibel, 2022; Loor-Zambrano, et al., 2022)—are more likely to endure transitional challenges. Their emotional attachment to and identification with their organizations, functions as a psychological bridge between digital transformation and human adaptability (Li, et al., 2021; Morin & Lachapelle, 2025). Employees having this kind of strong emotional bond with their organizations are more likely to trust organizations' strategic direction (Akhtar, et al., 2019; Meyer & Allen, 1991), align their personal goals with organizational objectives (Alqudah, 2022; Park & Rainey, 2007), and engage proactively with change initiatives (Ly, 2024). Such commitment reduces resistance to digital adoption and fosters a willingness to invest in personal development, particularly in reskilling and upskilling efforts aimed at mastering emerging tools and workflows (Rhoades & Eisenberberger, 2002).

In addition, organizations also need employees who exhibit will Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs) defined as voluntary and extra-role behaviors that support the effective functioning of organizations (Organ, 1997). Because not only organizations need employees who will be digitally literate but also will be willing to assist peers in adapting to new technologies, offering creative problem-solving approaches, and sustaining morale during system disruptions through which contribute significantly to organizational adaptability and resilience in times of technological change, which are only available among employees with OCBs (Organ, 1988; Organ, et al., 2006). Employees with OCBs play an increasingly strategic role in navigating the uncertainties and complexities of digital transformation (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999; Kusuma, et al., 2024).

While organizations can implement human resource (HR) practices—such as providing opportunities for competence development to facilitate employee reskilling and upskilling, and offering recognition to foster a sense of reward—affective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) cannot be directly instructed or enforced. Instead, these employee outcomes must be nurtured through carefully designed and strategically aligned HR interventions (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, et al., 2000).

This study proposes that two specific HR practices—opportunities for competence development and employee recognition—play a vital role in cultivating affective commitment, which subsequently mediates the development of OCB. By equipping employees with new skills and capabilities, organizations empower them to contribute more innovatively and effectively. Simultaneously, recognition practices

strengthen employees' emotional attachment to the organization, thereby motivating extra-role behaviors such as assisting colleagues or adhering to organizational norms even in the absence of supervision. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), these HR practices signal organizational support, prompting employees to reciprocate with stronger affective commitment and discretionary effort. The present study seeks to examine this ecosystem aiming to uncover how these HR practices shape positive employee attitudes and behaviors that enhance organizational effectiveness.

This investigation is particularly important due to the fragmented nature of earlier research in this domain. Previous studies have largely examined these variables in isolation: the link between organizational commitment and OCB (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Podsakoff, et al., 2000; Whitener, 1997); the relationship between competence development and affective commitment (Benson, 2006; Moreira, et al., 2018); competence development and OCB (Jehanzeb, 2022; Teow, et al., 2024) and employee recognition and both affective commitment and OCB (Sharma & Dhar, 2016; Montani, et al., 2017). Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of these interrelationships remains underdeveloped.

A notable exception is the study by (Paré, et al., 2001), which, conducted among Canadian IT professionals, found that employee recognition positively influenced both affective commitment and OCB. However, opportunities for competence development had no direct effect, and assumed the presence of mediating factors such as procedural justice and affective commitment. Nevertheless, the generalizability of this study is limited due to its context—a developed economy and a specific professional group. Such limitations underscore the necessity of broader research across more diverse socio-economic and cultural settings (Bruton & Lau, 2008; Budhwar & Debrah, 2009).

South Asia, marked by rapid economic development and cultural dynamism, offers a compelling context for such inquiry (Khilji, 2012). Bangladesh, in particular, stands out due to its labor-intensive economy and a growing youth workforce. Since achieving lower-middle-income status in 2014, the country has faced the challenge of integrating approximately 2.1 million youths annually into its job market (The World Bank, 2017). In this employer-dominated market, the strategic importance of human resources in driving competitive advantage is often overlooked. Given the labor-intensive nature of its industrial sectors, organizations in Bangladesh must prioritize employee development and recognition to enhance productivity and organizational sustainability.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore how competence development and recognition influence affective commitment and OCB within the Bangladeshi context. By doing so, it aims to offer contextually grounded insights that can inform the development of effective and locally relevant HR policies and practices (Absar, et al., 2012; Budhwar & Debrah, 2004) which will be an extension to the extant knowledge on these.

Furthermore, this study reinforces the continuing importance of affective commitment and OCB in the era of digital transformation. Also, the knowledge of how these constructs are influenced by HR practices remains essential for improving employee engagement and achieving sustainable organizational performance.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB)

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as the willingness of an employee to go above and beyond the formal roles assigned by the organization (Novianti, 2021; Organ, 1990a). It includes the willingness to help others who face work-related problems, to take initiatives to prevent problems with other workers, and to adhere organizational rules, regulations and procedures even when no one is watching (Organ, 1990a; Organ, 1997). These behaviors are neither formally rewarded nor expected as formal roles or job requirements, nor can organizations compel employees to exhibit them. Nevertheless, it is an important antecedent to organizational effectiveness (Katz, 1964; Kim, et al., 2020; MacKenzie, et al., 1993; Raziq, et al., 2025; Suparmi, et al., 2024).

Research suggests that the behavioral support of employees is essential for enabling digital transformation (Li & Jiang, 2025). We assume that such employee behavior can play a strategic role in navigating the uncertainties and complexities caused by digital transformation. This is because all employees are not likely to embrace the stress and extra work necessary for effective digital transformation even though it is necessary (Bausch, et al., 2024). The extra workload and the stress of getting out of their comfort zone may encourage them to resist. Therefore, organizations need employees who exhibit extra-role behaviors such as assisting colleagues who face work-related problems (Novianti, 2021; Organ, 1990a), helping colleagues to learn new digital tools, adopting new technologies, offering creative problem-solving approaches, and aiding to sustain morale during periods of system disruption. In doing so, they make a significant contribution to organizational adaptability and resilience in times of technological change.

Katz (1964) identified three basic types of employee behaviors that are critical for the overall effectiveness of any organization. *First*, employees should be encouraged to remain within the system. *Second*, they should perform their roles in a dependable manner. *Third*, there should be innovative and spontaneous activities aimed at achieving organizational objectives that go beyond formal role specifications. Organ (1988) describes the second and third behaviors as examples of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Shore, et al., (1995) as well as Chen, et al., (1998) argue that where a high level of OCB exists, employees are genuinely willing to be involved in the organization. Conversely, a lack of OCB may indicate an employee's intention to psychologically or behaviorally withdraw from the organization.

Examining how OCB has been conceptualized over time may give us a deeper insight of its scope. Over the years, OCB has been conceptualized in a number of ways

(Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Organ, 1990a; Smith, et al., 1983; Van Dyne, et al., 1994; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Among them, the most widely recognized and influential conceptualization was developed by Organ (1988, 1990a). Initially, Organ (1988) proposed a five-dimensional model of OCB, comprising altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. He later expanded the model by adding two more dimensions – peacekeeping and cheerleading (Organ, 1990a). Organ (1990b, p. 96) stated that (a) altruism refers to voluntary actions by an employee to assist a colleague facing work-related difficulties; (b) courtesy includes all foresightful gestures that aim to help someone else so that he can prevent a problem; (c) peacekeeping refers to actions that help to prevent, resolve, or mitigate unconstructive interpersonal conflict; (d) cheerleading refers to words and gestures of encouragement that recognize and reinforce co-workers' accomplishments and professional development; (e) conscientiousness refers to the behavior of employees through which they accept and adhere to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the organization; (f) civic virtue refers to employees' behavior which reflects their interest and active involvement in the life of the organization; and (g) sportsmanship refers to the employees' willingness to endure inevitable inconveniences and burdens of work without complaint. All of them have been found to positively affect digital transformation (Kusuma, et al., 2024)

However, among these, altruism, courtesy, peacekeeping, and cheerleading are classified as components of helping behavior. According to Podsakoff, et al., (1997), these dimensions 'clearly involve helping others with or preventing the occurrence of work-related problems'. They further said that these four behaviors, conceptually, make a second-order latent construct, which they named as helping behavior. Empirical researches have also confirmed that all of these various forms of helping behavior load on a single factor (e.g. MacKenzie, et al., 1993; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994; Podsakoff, et al., 1997). In a recent meta-analysis, Podsakoff, et al., (2000) demonstrated that helping behaviors enhances morale, group cohesiveness, and the sense of belonging within a team, all of which may enhance performance and help organizations to retain better employees. As Paré & Tremblay (2007, p. 333) succinctly put it, "Helping behavior involves voluntarily helping others with, or preventing the occurrence of, work-related problems." In this study, the author focuses specifically on this form of OCB.

2.2 Affective Commitment

Organizational commitment is an important topic of research with both theoretical and practice implications (Labatmediene, et al., 2007). Organizations seek highly committed employees because research consistetntly indicates that organization commitment is significantly related to some important organizational outcomes. These inlcude attendance and organizational citizenship behaviors (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; (Meyer, et al., 2002); job performance (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, et al., 2002; Riketta, 2002); turnover intentions and withdrawal cognitions (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran,

2005; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Paré & Tremblay, 2007; Tett & Meyer, 1993); and employee turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Griffeth, et al., 2000).

Initially, the concept of organizational commitment was developed as a uni-dimensional construct. It was first conceptualized by Kanter (1968) and later by Buchanan (1974) as commitment. Kanter (1968, p. 507) described it as 'the attachment of an individual's fund of affectivity and emotion to the group' and Buchanan (1974, p. 533) defined it as 'partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values of the organization, to one's role in relation to the goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth'. Later, Mowday, et al., (1979, p. 226) termed this construct as 'organizational commitment' and defined it as 'the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization'. Subsequent research by Meyer & Allen (1984) revealed that organizational commitment has multiple dimensions: continuance commitment which is based on perceived cost, normative commitment which is based on obligation and affective commitment which is based on affective attachment. Based on the above works and the works of (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, et al., 2002), affective commitment can be defined as an affective or emotional attachment of employees to their organization, such that they are deeply committed to their organization and identify with, are involved in, and enjoy the membership of their organizations (Mercurio, 2015).

Prior research has identified that affective commitment is a critical enabler of success for effective digital transformation within organizations (Ly, 2024). Digital transformation often requires the adoption of disruptive technologies, the reengineering of business processes, and a significant shift in organizational culture and employee roles. These changes may casue uncertainty and complexity, leading to anxiety among employees and potentially triggering resistance to change (Braojos, et al., 2024). Thus, we accept that digital transformation is complex (Hanelt, et al., 2021; Wessel, et al., 2021) and it requaires proper alignment between employee commitment and organizational mindfulness for digital agility (Li, et al., 2021). We assume that employees having strong affective commitment remain emotionally bonded to their organizations, identify with its values and vision, and are involved in and enjoy their membership within it (Allen & Meyer, 1990), making them more receptive to technological changes and more motivated to support transformation initiatives. Their deep-rooted identification with the organization encourages proactive learning, innovation, and collaboration—all of which are essential for navigating digital transitions effectively and requirements for organizational adaptability, agility, and long-term success in the digital era.

Emotional attachment and identification of employees with the organization often result in a strong belief in the goals and values of the organization. Several empirical studies have explored the link between affective commitment and OCB. Allen & Smith (1987), Meyer & Allen (1991) and Chen, et al., (1998) found that affective

commitment is correlated positively with self-reported measures of OCB. Further, studies by Rioux & Penner (2001) and Van Dyne & Pierce (2004) identified statistically significant relationship between affective commitment and peer-rated OCB.

Recent studies have also found that the affective commitment is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (Grego-Planer, 2019; Zhao, et al., 2022). Meta-analyses and systematic reviews confirm that employees with higher affective commitment are more likely to engage in OCB, benefiting both individuals and organizations (Machokoto, 2020; Zhao, et al., 2022). Two meta-analyses conducted by Organ & Ryan (1995) and Podsakoff, et al., (2000) also confirmed the relationship between affective commitment and OCB. Additonal research has supported the claim that affective commitment influences self-rated OCB (Belschak & Hartog, 2010; Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Yang, 2012). Paré & Tremblay (2007) conducted a study over IT professionals in Canada and found that affective commitment positively influenced OCB. Haque & Azim (2009) coducted a study in Bangladesh and found that affective commitment positively influences OCB. Thus, the following hypothesis is assumed:

H1: Affective commitment of employees to organization doesn't have any influence on OCB.

2.3 Human Resource Practices

This study examines two specific human resource practices that organizations can employ to enhance affective commitment and induce extra-role behaviors: employee recognition and opportunity for competence development. While there are several other innovative HR practices have been proposed to improve organizational effectiveness and retain the capable employees in the long run (Arnett & Obert, 1995; Dessler, 1999; Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999), this study considers only these two HR practices.

Many foundational studies (Herzberg, et al., 1959; McGregor, 1960; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Vroom, 1964) as well as some relatively recent studies (Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000; Dutton, 1998; Grawitch, et al., 2006; Saunderson, 2004) consistently identified that employee recognition is a cruicial component of motivation. Once employees will go through reskilling and/or upskilling prorams to learn digital tools and afterward will start adding value to the organization using those digital tools, they will start expecting recognition. They will seek this as a validation for their enhanced ability (Workhuman, 2021) which is an important driver for their motivation, performance, and retention (Aman-Ullah, et al., 2022; Ampofo, et al., 2023; Tarigan, et al., 2022; Tirta & Enrika, 2020; Umrani, et al., 2019). We assume that this recognition of employees will enhance their motivation, leading to their increased affective commitment because earlier studies have identified that recognition from leaders has a significant positive effect on affective commitment (Hassi, 2019; Shalini, 2020; Tayyab & Saira, 2021). In fact, an earlier study on IT professionals in Canada revealed that employee recognition has a statistically significant positive effect on affective commitment (Paré & Tremblay, 2007).

In this study, we only consider non-monetary means of employee recognition e.g. verbal congratulations from supervisor, admiration from coworkers. These gestures tangibly demonstrate an organisation's appreciation for high-quality work and accomplishments. This practice also includes giving thoughtful review to employee suggestions and providing them with regular, constructive feedback.

Earlier studies have also found that employee recognition has positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior (Hassi, 2019). Other studies have found that employee recognition positively affects organization citizenship behavior (Yang, et al., 2022; Zhao, et al., 2022). However, some earlier studies did not find any direct relationship between employee recognition and OCB (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). Rather these researchers assumed that the effect of employee recognition on OCB may be indirect and mediated by affective commitment. This assumption was supported by the finding of another study which was conducted in Bangladesh (Haque & Azim, 2009) – a completely different country setting. However, Rodwell, et al., (1998) and Chen, et al., (1998) have found that employee recognition have direct effects on affective commitment and OCB in their empirical studies. So, the authors assumes the following hypotheses:

H2: Employee recognition does not have any influence on affective commitment.

H3: Employee recognition does not have any influence on OCB.

Opportunity for competence development is another crucial HR practice, as it supports both the continuous enhancement of employees' ability to add value and the cultivation of the right attitudes and behaviors. Li (2024) highlights the growing importance of providing such opportunities, especially in the context of ongoing digital disruptions that challenge and reshape organizational dynamics. These opportunities are expected to enhance the competencies of employees (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012) enabling them to work on digital infrastructure using digital tools and transforming them into valuable assets for their organizations.

Prior studies identified that opportunity for competence development have direct effects on both affective commitment and OCB (Chen, et al., 1998; Rodwell, et al., 1998). More recent studies have further confirmed that providing employees with opportunities for competence development strengthens their commitment and OCBs to the organization (Achim, et al., 2020; Jose Chambel & Sobral, 2011). Other studies like Moreira, et al., (2024) and (Palma-Moreira, et al., (2024) argue that opportunities for competence development (e.g. training, on-the-job learning, support, etc.) help employees feel valued and supported, which is because employees perceive that organizations invest for building their skills and career which leads to emotional bond with the organization (i.e. affective commitment).

It may be due to implicit message conveyed by the competence development initiatives like job rotation programs, mentoring, and training – that the organization considers human resource as its competitive advantage (Schwochau, et al., 1997) and

is seeking to establish a long-term relationship with employees (Tsui, et al., 1995; Guptill, 1998; Agarwal & Ferratt, 1999).

Paré & Tremblay (2007) found that opportunities for competence development have significant positive effect on affective commitment but no direct effect on OCB. They assumed that procedural fairness may mediate the relationship. However, more recent studies (Jehanzeb, 2022; Lavanya, et al., 2020) found direct relationship between opportunity for competence development and OCBs. This finding suggests that employees might feel appreciative of getting the opportunity to improve their competencies. It may be that receiving benefits from organization creates a sense of obligation for them to give a return. This aligns with the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that when employees perceive support and investment from their organisation, they develop a sense of reciprocal obligation (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), motivating them to exhibit OCBs (Caesens, et al., 2016; Kizilos, et al., 2018; Ocampo, et al., 2018). Thus, we assume that –

H4: Opportunity for Competence development does not have any influence on affective commitment.

H5: Opportunity for Competence development does not have any influence on OCB.

3. RESEARCH MODEL

Based on the literature review presented above, the research model depicted in Figure I has been developed by the researchers. The model includes two key Human Resource (HR) practices—employee recognition (REC) and opportunity for competence development (CD)—as well as one attitude and one behavioral outcome: affective commitment (AC) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In this model, employee recognition and opportunity for competence development are treated as exogenous variables. Affective commitment functions as both an endogenous and exogenous variable, while OCB is positioned as a purely endogenous variable. The model also explores whether affective commitment mediates the relationship between the two HR practices (employee recognition and opportunity for competence development) and OCB, thereby influencing the strength and direction of OCB outcomes.

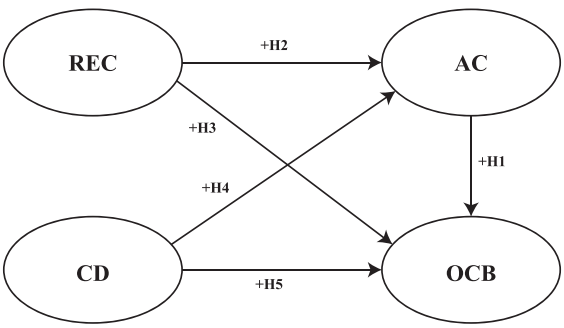

Figure 1 : The Research Model

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sampling Strategy

Data was collected from financial and non-financial organizations. Sample includes male and female as well as married and unmarried employees. A total of 400 structured questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Participants were drawn from 30 distinct organizations, selected through a random sampling process and comprised of 19 financial and 11 non-financial organizations. Each participant was given a three-week time to fill-up the questionnaires and return. After three weeks, respondents were contacted to collect responses. Most of the respondents did not fill-up the questionnaire within specified time. They were given another two weeks. After one week, they were given a reminder. Some respondents couldn't even fill-up the questionnaires within extra time. They were given another week as the response rate wasn't up to the expected level. After six weeks, a total of 194 responses (48.5%) were collected.

A detailed breakdown of the respondent demographics and organizational affiliations is presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Respondent Demographics and Organizational Affiliations

Gender	**Number (%)**	**Responses from**	**Number (%)**
Male	143 (73.7%)	Financial Organizations	122 (62.9%)
Female	51 (26.3%)	Non-Financial Organizations	72 (32.5%)
Marital Status		**Organizational Type**	
Married	110 (56.7%)	Financial	19 (63.3%)
Unmarried	84 (43.3%)	Non-Financial	11 (36.7%)
Age Group			
20 yrs to less than 30 yrs	103 (53.1%)		
30 yrs to less than 40 yrs	63 (32.5%)		
40 yrs to less than 50 yrs	22 (11.3%)		
50 yrs and above	6 (3.1%)		

4.2 Questionnaire

Affective Commitment (AC) was assessed using a 5-item questionnaire developed by Meyer & Allen (1991), as cited in Paré & Tremblay (2007). Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was measured with a 5-item questionnaire adopted by Paré, et al., (2001) from the works of Podsakoff, et al., (1990) and Williams & Anderson (1991). Competence Development Opportunity (CD) was evaluated using a 6-item questionnaire, and Employee Recognition (REC) was assessed with a 6-item questionnaire, both of which were adopted from Tremblay, et al., (2000). Table 2

shows that the mean and standard deviation along with the skewness and kurtosis for every scale item used for measuring different constructs. The values of skewness and kurtosis are within the recommended ranges. Thus, it is evident that that the scale items of the sample of the study are normally distributed.

Table 2: Sample Description

Code	Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
ocb1	I help colleagues who have been absent from work.	4.34	1.001	–1.758	2.809
ocb2	I help colleagues who have heavy workloads.	4.38	0.868	–1.388	1.416
ocb3	I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people's job.	4.57	0.658	–1.594	2.566
ocb4	I go out of the way to help new employees.	4.31	0.975	–1.401	1.175
ocb5	I take a personal interest in my colleagues' job.	3.28	1.501	–0.244	–1.391
ac1	I really feel as if my organization's problems are my own.	4.18	1.043	–1.326	1.315
ac2	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (reverse).	4.19	1.001	–1.289	1.401
ac3	My organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	3.97	1.105	–0.822	–0.067
ac4	I feel emotionally attached to the strategic choices of my organization.	3.63	1.145	–0.417	–0.531
ac5	The values advocated by top management are aligned with my own.	3.56	1.119	–0.302	–0.569
rec1	Employees' suggestions are seriously taken into consideration.	3.53	1.111	–0.535	–0.200
rec2	In my work unit, follow-ups are regularly given to employees concerning prior suggestions they made.	3.56	1.151	–0.462	–0.468
rec3	When an employee does good quality work, his colleagues regularly show him their appreciation.	4.01	1.094	–1.114	0.612
rec4	In my work unit, supervisors use different ways to recognize in a tangible way the employees' efforts (e.g., tickets for cultural or sports events; free diners at restaurants).	2.25	1.320	0.546	–1.125

Table 2 (Contd.)

Code	Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
rec5	In my work unit, employees receive recognition in writing from their supervisors (e.g., memos).	2.84	1.385	0.006	–1.256
rec6	In my work unit, supervisors regularly congratulate employees in recognition of their efforts.	3.95	1.246	–1.055	0.120
cd1	Employees have the possibility to develop their skills in order to increase their chances of being promoted.	3.96	1.232	–0.990	–0.065
cd2	Employees have the possibility to rotate jobs to develop their skills.	3.56	1.396	–0.557	–0.981
cd3	Several professional development activities (e.g., coaching. training) are offered to employees to improve their skills and knowledge.	3.72	1.473	–0.786	–0.852
cd4	Managers encourage employees to apply their new abilities and skills in the context of their daily work.	4.09	1.092	–1.174	0.753
cd5	Proficiency courses such as specialized technical courses and professional certifications are encouraged by management.	3.70	1.341	–0.705	–0.641
cd6	I am able to apply my new skills in my work.	4.14	1.038	–1.164	0.735

4.3 Construct Validity of the Questionnaire

Prior to evaluating the substantive relationships posited in the proposed model, a rigorous assessment of fit of the data to the measurement model was conducted. This Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) aimed to validate the scales employed in the study. The proposed four-factor model, encompassing all relevant items, has been loaded in AMOS 20.0 software. Initial results indicated suboptimal fit to the data in absolute sense. The results are: $\chi^2 = 762.51$ (df = 203), $\chi^2/df = 3.76$, GFI = 0.73, AGFI = 0.67, IFI = 0.67, TLI = 0.65, CFI = 0.75, RMSEA = 0.12 (Henry & Stone, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Construct Reliabilities (CR) were computed and found as follows: employee recognition = 0.70, competence development opportunity = 0.83, affective commitment = 0.83, and organizational citizenship behavior = 0.78, all exceeding the recommended threshold. However, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were calculated and values were: employee recognition = 0.34, competence development opportunity = 0.45, affective commitment = 0.50, and organizational citizenship behavior = 0.43, with most falling below the acceptable threshold (Bagozzi, 1988; Hair Jr., et al., 2006).

To improve the model-fit, standardized loading estimates, standardized residuals, and modification indices (MI) were examined. Two items from the employee recognition construct, rec4 and rec5, exhibited lower standardized loadings (rec4 = 0.13, rec5 = 0.12) than required and were statistically insignificant (Brown, 2006, p. 129). Additionally, rec4 displayed 11 and rec5 had 5 large residuals with other items, exceeding acceptable limits. Consequently, both items were removed. The revised model yielded improved but still inadequate fit: $\chi^2 = 577.72$ (df = 164), $\chi^2/df = 3.52$, GFI = 0.76, AGFI = 0.69, IFI = 0.76, TLI = 0.72, CFI = 0.75, RMSEA = 0.114.

To improve, the model was further refined. This refinement involved re-evaluating standardized loadings, residuals, and modification indices (MIs). All loadings were statistically significant and at least 0.5 (Hair Jr., et al., 2006). However, item cd6 from the competence development opportunity construct exhibited three large residuals with other items (ocb1 = 3.89, ocb2 = 3.83, ac2 = 3.05) making it a candidate for removal from the model. It also cross-loaded onto organizational citizenship behavior (MI = 23.53) and affective commitment (MI = 12.13). Its error term also showed significant Mis with organizational citizenship behavior (MI = 12.18), affective commitment (MI = 6.44), and competence development opportunity (MI = 5.10). To mitigate cross-loading, cd6 was removed. The measurement model was re-run but the re-estimated model continued to show poor fit: $\chi^2 = 489.44$ (df = 146), $\chi^2/df = 3.35$, GFI = 0.79, AGFI = 0.72, IFI = 0.78, TLI = 0.74, CFI = 0.78, RMSEA = 0.11.

Subsequent 'Standardized Residuals Analysis' revealed that item cd4 had three large residuals with rec3 (4.43), ac1 (3.43) and ac3 (5.64) and cross-loaded onto recognition (MI = 34.46), affective commitment (MI = 30.94), and organizational citizenship behavior (MI = 7.17). 'Modification Indices of Covariance' show that the error term of cd4 has significant MIs with competence development opportunity [MI = 17.66], recognition [MI = 18.74] and affective commitment [MI = 19.94]. Accordingly, cd4 was removed. The measurement model was re-run, and the re-estimated model showed marginal improvement: $\chi^2 = 382.58$ (df = 129), $\chi^2/df = 2.97$, GFI = 0.82, AGFI = 0.76, IFI = 0.82, TLI = 0.79, CFI = 0.82, RMSEA = 0.101.

Further assessment of standardized residuals identified that item rec6 has 5 large residuals with other items [with cd1 (3.02), with cd3 (3.36), with cd5 (3.12), with ac3 (2.83) and with ac5 (2.89)]. The item also cross-loaded on competence development opportunity [MI = 21.23] and affective commitment [MI = 5.81]. The error term of rec6 also shows having high MIs in covariance table with competence development opportunity [MI = 19.05] and recognition [MI = 6.00]. Thus, rec6 was removed. The resulting model fit remained suboptimal: $\chi^2 = 311.15$ (df = 113), $\chi^2/df = 2.75$, GFI = 0.84, AGFI = 0.79, IFI = 0.85, TLI = 0.82, CFI = 0.85, RMSEA = 0.095.

To address persistent poor fit, 'Modification Indices of Covariance' suggested that model fit could be improved if error term of cd5 and error term of cd2 covariate [MI = 19.01]. After freeing the error terms, the model was run again; the model fit improved but GOFs remain inadequate: $\chi^2 = 283.53$ (*df* = 112); $\chi^2/df = 2.53$; GFI = 0.86; AGFI = 0.80; IFI = 0.87; TLI = 0.84; CFI = 0.87; RMSEA = 0.089).

Further analysis revealed that item ocb4 had two large residuals, one with ocb5 (2.68) and another with rec2 (2.64). 'Modification Indices of Covariance' further suggest that error terms of ocb4 and ocb5 should covariate to improve the model fit [MI = 18.57]. 'Modification Indices of Regression' showed that ocb4 cross-loaded on ocb5 [MI =11.15, EPC = 0.328] and ocb5 cross-loaded on ocb4 [MI = 13.06, EPC = 0.143]. Besides, rec2 [MI = 16.99], rec1 [MI = 7.53], cd5 [MI = 5.27], ac3 [MI = 11.58], ac2 [MI = 6.12] also cross-loaded on ocb4. To preserve content validity of the organizational citizenship behavior construct, the error terms of ocb4 and ocb5 were covaried. However, this reduced the factor loading of ocb5 to 0.457, below the cut-off point, and increased its unstandardized error variance to 1.78. Consequently, ocb4 was removed. The resulting fit indices were: $\chi^2 = 215.84$ (*df* = 97), $\chi^2/df = 2.23$, GFI = 0.88, AGFI = 0.83, IFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.88, CFI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.08.

To further optimize the model-fit , modification indices were consulted. 'Modification Indices of Covariance' suggested that error terms of ac5 and ac2 [MI = 5.75, EPC = – 0.115], error terms of ac5 and ac1 [MI = 4.06, EPC = – 0.102] and error terms of ocb1 and ocb3 [MI = 4.12, EPC = –0.063] should covariate. These adjustments were implemented. The model was run again. However, the factor loading of ocb5 on organizational citizenship behavior was 0.45, with an unstandardized error variance of 1.78 (Wang & Ahmed, 2004) which is rather high, prompting its removal. The final model yielded satisfactory fit: $\chi^2 = 169.92$ (*df* = 80), $\chi^2/df = 2.12$, GFI = 0.90, AGFI = 0.85, IFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.90, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.076.

After satisfactory levels of GOFs were found, Construct Reliabilities (CR) were calculated and are found as follows: employee recognition (REC) = 0.797, competence development opportunity (CD) = 0.841, affective commitment (AC) = 0.85 and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) = 0.783, all exceeding the cut-off point. Also, Convergent Validity was calculated though Average Variance Extracted (AVEs) and they are as follows: employee recognition = 0.57, competence development opportunity = 0.57, affective commitment = 0.532 and organizational citizenship behavior = 0.553, all surpassing the recommended cut-off point (Bagozzi, 1988; Hair Jr., et al., 2006; Joreskog & Sorbon, 1989). In addition, discriminant validity was confirmed, as the square root of each AVE exceeded all inter-factor correlations, as evidenced in the accompanying correlation Table 3 (showed in bold figures).

Table 3: CRs, AVEs, Square Root of AVEs (in bold form) and Inter-Factor Correlations

	CR	**AVE**	**REC**	**AC**	**OCB**	**CD**
REC	0.797	0.570	**0.755**			
AC	0.850	0.532	0.441	**0.729**		
OCB	0.783	0.553	0.243	0.482	**0.744**	
CD	0.841	0.570	0.306	0.415	0.123	**0.755**

5. MODEL TESTING

5.1 The Structural Model

All the hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Model (SEM) implemented in AMOS 20.0 software. The initial model yielded the following goodness-of-fit indices: $\chi^2 = 220.91$ (*df* = 84); $\chi^2/df = 2.63$; GFI = 0.87; AGFI = 0.81; NFI = 0.82; IFI = 0.88; TLI = 0.85; CFI = 0.88; RMSEA = 0.092 (Henry & Stone, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The result suggested a poor fit between the model and the observed data. To improve the model fit, 'Modification Indices of Covariance' were examined which indicated that the model fit could be improved if error terms of cd2 and cd5 are allowed to covary [MI = 19.01, EPC = –0.366]. After implementing this modification by freeing the error terms, the model was run again which improved fit but still the GOF indices remained adequate: $\chi^2 = 193.10$ (*df* = 83); $\chi^2/df = 2.33$; GFI = 0.89; AGFI = 0.84; IFI = 0.91; TLI = 0.88; CFI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.083).

Further examination of 'Modification Indices of Covariance' suggested that if error terms of ac1 and ac2 were allowed to covary [MI = 13.83, EPC = 0.15], the model fit could be improved. After incorporating this by freeing the error terms, the model was run again and GOFs were found as follows: $\chi^2 = 174.28$ (*df* = 82); $\chi^2/df = 2.13$; GFI = 0.90; AGFI = 0.85; IFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.076) (Henry & Stone, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Although the chi-square value was found statistically significant, indicating a 'badness of fit', this metric is known to be sensitive to sample size. As the chi-square formula contains sample size, its value inflates with large sample size and is almost always statistically significant (Hair Jr., et al., 2006). Consequently, it is always important to look at other fit indices to assess model accuracy. The results indicate a good fit to the data in absolute sense. Only Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) seems to be marginal (Henry & Stone, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

As illustrated in Figure II, hypotheses H1, H2 and H4 were not supported, whereas hypotheses H3 and H5 were supported.

Table 4: Standardized Regression Weights

Dependent Var.		Independent Var.	Standardized β	P
AC	←	REC	0.414	0.000
AC	←	CD	0.337	0.000
OCB	←	AC	0.472	0.000
OCB	←	CD	– 0.113	0.217
OCB	←	REC	0.032	0.753

Table 4 presents the results of the hypothesis tests. Employee recognition was found to have a positive and statistically significant effect on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.414$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, opportunities for competence development exhibited a positive and statistically significant influence on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.001$).

Additionally, affective commitment positively influenced organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) ($\beta = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$). However, neither employee recognition nor opportunities for competence development showed a statistically significant effect on OCB ($\beta = -0.113$, $p = 0.217$ and $\beta = 0.032$, $p = 0.753$, respectively).

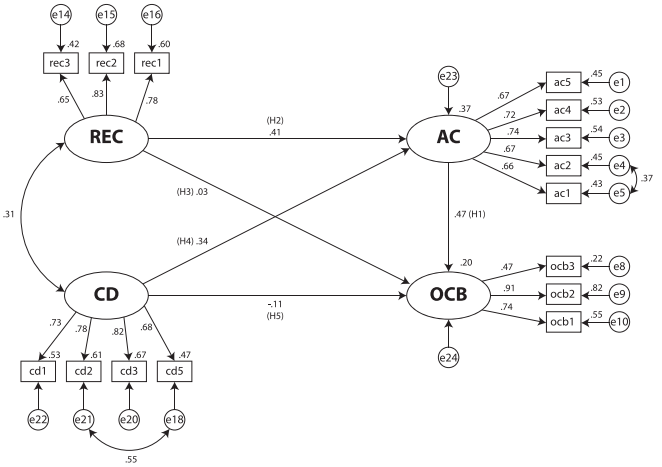

Figure 2 : The Final Model

5.2 Mediating Effects of Affective Commitment

Given the absence of statistically significant direct effects of employee recognition and opportunities for competence development on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as tested in Section 5.1, this section investigates potential indirect effects through affective commitment as a mediator. To test this mediation, a bootstrapping approach was employed using AMOS 20.0 software, following established procedures for assessing indirect effects.

The bootstrapping method was configured with 2000 bootstrap samples and to derive Bias-Corrected Confidence Interval (BCCI) at 95% confidence level to check the possible indirect effects of competence development opportunity and employee recognition over organizational citizenship behavior on OCB via affective commitment. The results of the bootstrapping analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Standardized Indirect Effects on Affective Commitment and OCB

	CD	REC	AC
AC	0.000*	0.000*	
OCB	0.098 (0.003) BCCI = 0.025 to 0.253	0.153 (0.002) BCCI = 0.051 to 0.339	0.000*

Note: Values in parentheses show level of significance. BCCI = 95% Bias-Corrected Confidence Interval.

* No Indirect Effect is measured.

The results in Table 5 indicate that the indirect effect of employee recognition on OCB through affective commitment is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $p = 0.002$, BCCI: [0.051, 0.339]). Similarly, the indirect effect of competence development opportunities on OCB via affective commitment is also statistically significant ($\beta = 0.098$, $p = 0.003$, BCCI: [0.025, 0.253]). In both cases, the BCCIs do not include zero, confirming that the indirect effects are significantly different from zero (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). These findings suggest that affective commitment fully mediates the relationship between competence development opportunities and OCB as well as employee recognition and OCB, as no direct effects were observed (see Section 5.1). Based on the results from Figure II and Table 5, it can be concluded that competence development opportunities and employee recognition exert significant indirect effects on OCB through the mediating role of affective commitment.

Therefore, in a nutshell, H1, which proposes no effect of affective commitment on OCB, H2, which proposes no effect of employee recognition on affective commitment and H4, which proposes no effect of opportunity for competence development on affective commitment are not supported. Statistical results show that affective commitment directly influences OCB. Also, they show that employee recognition and competence development opportunities directly affect affective commitment. However, Hypotheses H3 and H5, which propose no effects of employee recognition and competence development opportunities on OCB are also not supported. Because statistical results show that employee recognition and competence development opportunities indirectly affect OCB through affective commitment. These findings highlight the critical role of affective commitment in translating employee recognition and competence development opportunities into enhanced OCB, underscoring the importance of fostering affective commitment within organizations to promote discretionary behaviors.

6. DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of two human resource (HR) practices—opportunity for competence development and employee recognition—on affective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as well as the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationships between these HR practices and OCB. The findings provide important insights into the mechanisms through which HR practices foster positive employee outcomes.

The findings, as presented in Tables 4 and 5, have revealed valuable insights into the mechanisms through which HR practices foster positive employee outcomes. The results indicate that employee recognition has a significant positive direct effect on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.414$, $p < 0.001$), which is consistent with prior studies (Chen, et al., 1998; Haque & Azim, 2009; Paré & Tremblay, 2007; Rodwell, et al., 1998). However, no direct effect of employee recognition on OCB was observed which seems to be in line with the finding of Paré & Tremblay (2007) but contrasting with the works of Chen, et. al., (1998) and Rodwell, et al., (1998) who reported significant direct effects.

Despite the absence of direct effect, this study identified a significant indirect effect of employee recognition on OCB through affective commitment ($\beta = 0.153$, $p = 0.002$, BCCI: [0.051, 0.339]), which echoes the prior findings (Haque & Azim, 2009; Paré & Tremblay, 2007) and highlights the affective commitemnt as a critical pathway. This suggests that recognizing employees' contributions enhances their emotional attachment to the organization, which in turn motivates discretionary behaviors such as OCB. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with Social Exchange Theory, where recognition fosters a sense of obligation and reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), leading to increased organizational commitment and extra-role behaviors. Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) also offers insight, suggesting that recognition acts as a positive workplace event that generates affective responses, which in turn foster commitment and OCB. The reason may also be attributed to contextual factors, such as organizational culture. Bangladesh is a collectivistic and hierarchical society (Scroope, 2017), and a collectivist culture or hierarchical context nurtures loyalty and increase emotional attachment (Triguero-Sanchez, et al., 2022). It may be that the deeper affective bonds with the organization due to collectivism-based culture mediate the relationship between recognition and OCB (Zhao, et al., 2022)

Practically, organizations should foster a culture of recognition by actively considering employee contribution. When employees learn new skills and use them for adding value to organization, they expect their managers to notice and acknowledge it. They also want their managers to provide them with constructive feedback. Public acknowledgment of achievements, whether through formal awards or peer recognition, can enhance employees' sense of value and belonging, thereby strengthening affective commitment (Shalini, 2020; Tayyab & Saira, 2021). Such practices may encourage employees to engage in innovative and creative behaviors, dedicating additional effort to organizational goals (Mdhlalose, 2024). Organizations should also ensure that recognition is consistent, fair, and aligned with employees' contributions to maximize its impact on affective commitment and, indirectly, OCB.

Similarly, opportunities for competence development were found to have a significant positive direct effect on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.001$), consistent with prior research (Chen, et al., 1998; Paré & Tremblay, 2007; Rodwell, et al., 1998). However, no direct effect on OCB was observed, aligning with the finding of Paré & Tremblay (2007) but contrasting with the works of Chen, et al., (1998) and Rodwell, et al., (1998).

However, the significant indirect effect of competence development opportunities on OCB through affective commitment ($\beta = 0.098$, $p = 0.003$, BCCI: [0.025, 0.253]) supports the mediating role of affective commitment. These findings suggest that providing employees with opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge enhances their emotional attachment to the organization, which subsequently promotes OCB. This is consistent with Human Capital Theory, which posits that investments in employee development signal organizational support, which fosters

commitment and discretionary behaviors (Chang & Chen, 2011). Organizations should prioritize creating environments that facilitate continuous learning and skill development. Strategies such as on-job-training programs (general and/or specific; technical and/or professional) can be arranged (Becker, 1993) and allow employees opportunities to apply the newly acquired skills in organizational setting which can enhance affective commitment. Importantly, organizations should foster a supportive climate that tolerates learning-related mistakes, as this encourages employees to experiment and innovate, further strengthening their emotional bond with the organization and promoting OCB.

7. LIMITATIONS

Despite the above insights, the study has limitations. The reliance on a single country context may limit generalizability, and future research should explore these relationships across many more industries and cultural settings. Additionally, the marginal RMSEA value (0.076) suggests potential model misspecification, which could be addressed by incorporating additional variables, such as perceived organizational support or job satisfaction, as mediators or moderators. Longitudinal studies could also clarify the causal directionality of these relationships.

8. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that employee recognition and opportunities for competence development significantly influence OCB indirectly through affective commitment, highlighting the pivotal role of emotional attachment in translating HR practices into discretionary behaviors. While no direct effects of these HR practices on OCB were observed, their indirect effects via affective commitment underscore the importance of fostering a supportive and developmental organizational environment. These findings suggest that organizations can enhance OCB by implementing HR practices that strengthen employees' emotional attachment, such as consistent recognition and robust skill development programs. Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by reinforcing the mediating role of affective commitment within the framework of social exchange and human capital theories. Practically, organizations should integrate recognition and competence development into their HR strategies to cultivate a committed workforce that willingly engages in extra-role behaviors, such as helping colleagues, preventing workplace issues, and adhering to organizational rules.

9. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research should explore additional mediators, such as psychological empowerment, and employ longitudinal designs to establish causality. Moreover, examining these relationships in diverse country as well as industrial contexts could enhance the generalizability of the findings. By prioritizing HR practices that foster affective commitment, organizations can build a resilient and engaged workforce, ultimately enhancing organizational performance.

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