Organisational Climate And Affective Commitment: Evidence From Private Tertiary Institutions

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Abstract: study analyzes the effect of organizational climate on employee’s affective commitment among lecturers in selected private tertiary institutions. The research design adopted in this study was descriptive survey research design. Data were collected on employees’ perceptions about organizational climate variables and their outcomes impact on affective commitment through structured questionnaire. A total of 164 respondents were selected using a non probability convenience sampling technique from each institution. The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire, hence Cronbach alpha were used to confirm the reliability of the instrument. Regression analysis were used for various analyzes in this study. The two organisational climate dimensions (communication and professional career development) were statistically significant, implying that they predict employee affective commitment in the tertiary institutions. Based on the findings of this study, it recommends that effective communication and establishment of better career development plans with mentorship programme is key to strong committed lecturers.

Index Terms: Organisational Climate, Affective Commitment, Organizational Support, Communication, Professional Development.

1 INTRODUCTION

Education is a vehicle for imparting facts and feelings, information, passion, understanding and appreciation to human beings; and with the development of individual character in line with national values and aspirations to make the individual useful to the society (Raza, 2010). Okoli & Monanu, (2016); & Monanu, Okoli, Ezeliora, & Okeke (2014) opined that educational institutions are the bedrock on which most prosperous nations depend and if better skills are instilled in individuals through education there will be positive contribution to the economy. The success or failure of any educational process is always attributed to the critical roles academics play in the human resource development initiative of a nation to help it achieve competitive economic standing, superior quality, and technological advancement (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006; Idris, Dollard, Coward, & Dormann, 2012). Monanu, et al (2014) posits that successful tertiary institutions rely on lecturers who are committed to university goals and values, and more ready to beyond the call of their duty to contribute to successful change. But regrettably, Okoli & Monanu (2016) stressed that the tertiary education system in Nigeria cannot achieve its goals and objectives without an efficient and committed academic staff. Hence, the issue of lecturer’s commitment in our private tertiary institutions has attracted the attention of the public, policy makers, educators, administrators and other stakeholders in educational sector.

The efficiency of any tertiary system depends, to a large extent, upon how her human resource is committed, utilized and provided with adequate and conducive environment to perform their duties (Okoli, 2018). Commitment therefore, is crucial to making lecturers to be identified, attached and be involved in organisational goals. Kanter, (1968) defines commitment as the willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations, which are seen as self-expressive. Organizational commitment is significant as devoted employees incline to be keener to make own sacrifices for the organization (Vitell & Singhapakdi, 2007). Meyer & Allen (1997) proposed a three-component model of organizational commitment according to the nature of the bond that exists between an employee and employer. The three components of organisational commitment are; affective commitment (employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization), continuance commitment (based on the costs that the employee links with leaving the organization), and normative commitment (involves the employee’s feelings of obligation to stay with the organization). These three components reflect varying degrees of an employee’s relationship with an organization but for the purpose of this study, affective commitment will be applicable. McDonald & Makin (2000) stated that affective commitment is affected by the extent to which the individual’s needs and expectations of the organisation are matched by their actual experiences, which links with the perceived reciprocal obligations of the psychological contract. They identify two distinct employee obligations, namely relational (reciprocal relationship between employer and employee) and transactional (based on economics where employees are willing to work overtime, to provide high levels of performance for contingent pay). Several factors influence lecturer’s affective commitment in the Nigerian tertiary education in general and private tertiary institutions in particular. One of such factor is organisational climate. Organizational climate refers to the shared perceptions, feelings and attitudes organizational members have about the fundamental elements of the organisation which reflect the established norms, values and attitudes of the
organization’s culture and influence individual’s behaviour either positively or negatively (Gerber, 2003; Moran & Volkwein, 1992). Brown & Leigh (1996) opined that organizational climate is becoming more important than ever before because organizations need to ensure that those individuals who add value to the bottom line should stay in the organization and continue pouring their efforts into their work to benefit the organization. Lecturers of private tertiary institutions often faces many challenges in form of job insecurity, disparity in salary and allowances, inadequate infrastructural facilities, lack of enabling research environment, uncompetitive remuneration, inconsistent policy implementation which affect lecturers levels of commitment. In fact, some of these lecturers are of the opinion that professional development, open communication and decision making problem exist in their institutions because the management take certain actions without involving lecturers which makes them less committed. Furthermore, lack of staff professional development and the long duration of time it takes for management to approve for lecturers to attend conferences, workshops or seminars is another problem that could affect affective commitment of lecturers of private institutions. The result is that these institutions that ought to be centres of intellectual and social activities have probably remained dull and uninteresting. Among management and lecturers, there could also be low level of mutual communication leading to disharmony, suspicion and distrust. Under this climate, lecturers could have feelings of insecurity, uncertainty, frustration, withdrawal and low morale. Based on this premise, this study is aimed at examining the effect of organisational climate on employee’s affective commitment.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

a) How has communication affected affective commitment in private tertiary institutions?

b) To what extent has staff professional career development affected affective commitment in private tertiary institutions?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Organisational Climate

Gerber (2003) define organizational climate as the shared perceptions, feelings and attitudes organizational members have about the fundamental elements of the organisation which reflect the established norms, values and attitudes of the organization’s culture and influence individuals’ behaviour either positively or negatively. Organizational climate is the set of measurable properties of the work environment that is either directly or indirectly perceived by the employees who work within the organizational environment that influences and motivates their behaviour (Holloway, 2012). Giles (2010) argued that organizational climate is based on the premise that the overall health of an organization can be assessed by measuring individual employee’s perceptions of their work environments. These individual observations serve as aggregate data describing how well the organization performs and how well it treats its employees. Organizational climate have been proven to influence employee’s behaviour such as participation, absenteeism, level of stress and work commitment (Gupta & Singh, 2014). Organizational climate also influence workers’ motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction (Katz & Kahn, 2004). The climate of organization may be roughly conceived as the “personality” of the organization, that is, climate is to an organization as personality is to an individual (Halpin & Croft, 1963). Tertiary institutions organizational climate is a set of lasting internal psychological features which can distinguish one tertiary institution from another (Pan & Song, 2014). According to Randhawa & Kaur (2014), organizational climate is a consequence of the interaction between individuals in an organization and their external environment. For higher growth of an organization, it is imperative to make employees feel good, as employees are the key resources of an organization. If organisations need very professional, innovative and positive team members; judging from the changing scenarios in the world economy, organisations will promote a healthy work environment and organisational climate so that the employees feels free to exhibit positive behaviours (Choudhury, 2011).

2.2 Communication as a Dimension of Organisational Climate

Communication refers to the manager’s ability to listen to staff, share information, and clarify misunderstandings (Castro, 2008). Booyens (1998) stated that management can create a positive organizational climate by establishing trust and openness between the management and the employees through communication including frequent feedback in an organization, would help in keeping morale high. The style of information flow in the organization, whether open or closed distinguishes the climate of one organization from other organizations (Dill, 1958; Huber & Daft, 1987). A strong positive correlation was found between positive feelings about communication within the organization and positive feelings regarding the organizational climate (Moynihan & Pandey, 2008). Internal communication transmits organizational culture in new members through assumptions, beliefs, and values of the organization and the way the activities are per-formed at the workplace (Quirke, 1995). Open communication develops and maintains the vision and facilitates the participation in decision making process that leads to organizational success (Leslie & Fretwell, 1996). The effectiveness of communication can be instrumental in the improvement of workgroups, group coherence, and energizes the work teams and the organizations that lack in quality of internal communication experience failure (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991).

2.3 Professional Career Development as a Dimension of Organisational Climate

Professional career development is the development of individuals by way of training them formally and /or informally which must be in line with his or her job requirement. The advancement in career has always been the dream of employees irrespective of their level in the organizational hierarchy. The workforce of today is more concerned for productivity, and awareness is increasing about the obsolescence of their knowledge and skills (Cheng & Ho, 2001). Learning on the job and off the job
creates professional development opportunities leading to job satisfaction (Koonce, 1998). The professional development opportunities have significant positive correlation with the job satisfaction (Acker, 2004). The employees satisfied with their jobs are more motivated to expend more time and effort to enhance their new skills for future professional development (Chen, Chang & Yeh, 2004). Jianwei (2010) agreed that the organisational climate in professional development of the employees is important for the employee to perform better in work as providing necessary and related trainings are required.

2.4 Affective Commitment
According to Meyer & Allen (1991) affective commitment refers to the employee’s emotional attachment to identification with, and involvement in the organization based on positive feelings, or emotions, toward the organization. Meyer & Allen (1997) suggested that employees with strong affective commitment to an organization work harder at their jobs and perform them better than those with weak commitment. In addition, a significant positive relationship has been reported between employees’ affective commitment and their supervisors’ ratings of their potential for promotion, along with their overall performance on the job (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991). The antecedent for affective commitment include perceived job characteristic where there is task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety and supervisory feedback, organizational dependability that mean extent to which employees feel the organization can be counted on to look after their interest, and perceived participatory management that they can influence decisions on the work environment and other uses of concern to them. Meyer & Herscovitch (2001) argued that the primary bases for the development of affective commitment are personal involvement and identification with the relevant target. As a result of the above view of Meyer & Herscovitch (2001), which states that when there is a high level of affective commitment, employees will be willing to remain in that organization, otherwise the reverse will be displayed.

![Fig. 1: Conceptual Model of Organizational Climate and Affective Commitment.](Image)

2.5 Theoretical Framework
This study is anchored on organisational support theory (OST). Organizational support theory according to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa (1986) holds that in order to meet socio-emotional needs and to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Such perceived organizational support (POS) would increase employees’ felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded. Behavioural outcomes of perceived organizational support would include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in stress and withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism and turnover. In the context of this study, when the organization gives resources to employees in a voluntary manner rather than under circumstances beyond their control, employees will view such aid as being genuinely valued and respected by the organization. Based on this principle, POS will be more effectively enhanced if employees view organizational rewards and favourable job conditions such as pay, promotions, job enrichment, and influence over organizational policies as voluntary behaviours of organizations (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

2.6 Empirical Review
Tamunomiebi (2019) examined the relationship between organizational climate and employee commitment in telecommunications companies in Port Harcourt. Autonomy was conceptualized as the dimension of organizational climate -the predictor variable while, affective and normative commitment as measures of employee commitment - criterion variable. The study adopted a cross-sectional research survey design in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through structured, self-administered questionnaire. The target population was 437 employees of the four General System of Mobile telecommunication (GSM) firms in Port Harcourt. The study sample was 208 employees calculated using the Taro Yamane’s formula for sample size determination. The hypothesis were tested using the Spearman rank order correlation Coefficient. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. Empirical findings revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational climate and employee commitment in telecommunications companies in Port Harcourt. The study concludes that organizational climate significantly influences employee commitment in telecommunications companies in Port Harcourt. One of the study recommendations was that management at workplace should respect employees and treat them fairly by appreciating their input to ensure they feel valued by the organizations which they serve. Okoli (2018) investigates the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction among academic staff in selected private universities in Southeast, Nigeria. A survey design was employed using academic staff in the selected private universities. Data were collected using self administered questionnaire from the random sample of 182 academic staff of the selected private universities in Southeast Nigeria. The sample size was determined using convenience sampling technique. In this study, data were analyzed with Pearson correlation co-efficient. The results revealed there is a positive significant correlation between...
organizational climate and job satisfaction. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the organizational climate dimensions (leadership style and academic freedom) and job satisfaction dimensions (satisfaction with administrative support and satisfaction with working conditions). This implies that dissatisfaction among academic staff will not only affect the quality of their work but also on the organizational climate. The study recommended that university management should ensure that all academics receive the necessary orientation and administrative support once they join the university. In the spirit of equality and fairness, university management should enhance the existing working conditions of academic staff to avoid having feelings of inequity, withdrawal and low morale. Tadesse (2018) examined the role of selected organisational climate dimensions in determining academicians’ organisational loyalty in the case of DebreBerhan and Wollo University during the year of 2015/16. A total of 216 respondents were selected using a stratified probability sampling technique from each school found in the university. The researchers used two separate instruments organisational Climate Questionnaire and Affective Organisational Commitment Questionnaire to measure organisational climate and academicians’ organisational loyalty respectively. Finally, the responses of the respondents were analysed using SPSS (version 20.0). The findings of the study revealed that there is significant positive relationship between four dimensions of organisational climate and affective dimension of academicians’ organisational commitment, i.e. management and leadership style (B=−.235, p<.001), Suitable career ladder (B=.195, p<.05), personnel policies (B=.177, p<.05) and fringe benefit and salary package (B=.154, p<.05). And also it has been proved that the organisational climate has a significant role in determining academicians organisational loyalty (R2=.257) which is significant at p=.001. So, the institution’s leaders should improve the level of employees’ commitment, especially effective commitment (organisational loyalty) dimension, and retain them through facilitating those dimensions of organisational climate along with the rest dimensions to properly retain and enhance academicians’ affection towards their institution. Li & Mahadevan (2017) analyze the impact of organisational climate on employee performance in a Malaysian Consultancy firm. A questionnaire was developed based on previous literature and analysis was done to determine the normality, reliability and validity of the scale. The independent variables in organisational climate in this research include role clarity, communication, career and development, reward system, relationship, teamwork and support and direction, while the dependent factor is the employee performance. The research design adopted in this study was combination of explanatory and descriptive with the method of cross sectional survey by distributing survey questionnaires, consisting 48 questions with Likert Scale (Strongly Agree -1 and 7 for Strongly Disagree). The sample size of the study was 45 which were collected using Random Probability sampling method. SPSS 2.0 was used in analyzing the collected data by using descriptive means and regression. This study found that all the selected organisational climate dimensions in this research have a positive and significant impact on employee performance from the regression test in SPSS 2.0. The beta coefficients for all the dimensions of organisational climate in this study are positive and high indicating the strong impact on employee performance. Okoli & Monanu (2016) explores job insecurity as a correlate of affective commitment among academic and non-academic staff of Madonna University Okija Nigeria. The study population consisted of all academic and non-academic staff of the university. In order to collect the study data, a questionnaire was designed. A correlation cross-sectional design was carried out using all staff both in the field and within various departments. A convenience sample was employed during the administration of questionnaire. The result indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between job insecurity and organizational affective commitment. The research finding conclude that staff who perceive their job as being secure are expected to exhibit high institutional affective commitment. Ahmad, Ali & Ahmad (2012) investigate the perceptions of middle managers about the organizational climate at their workplaces. Organizational climate is measured on the basis of seven component factors: internal communication, organizational structure, political climate, professional development opportunities, evaluation, promotion and regard for personal concerns. The data are collected from 246 middle managers, predominantly male and working in local organizations, on cluster sampling basis. The perceptions are measured through a 5-point Likert-type scale. The results show internal communication as open, organizational structure highly structured, political climate is not highly politicized, highly encouraged professional development opportunities, evaluation is for improvement, and highly encouraged internal promotion. Managers perceived that organizational managements are not sensitive in relation to the regard for personal concerns of employees. The middle managers differed significantly in respect of political climate, professional development opportunities and regard for personal concerns, when comparison was made between local and multinational organizations as perceived by them.

3 METHODS
A descriptive survey research design was adopted by this study given that data for the study was collected through questionnaire from sampled respondents. The study population from which the sample was drawn for the study consists of four private tertiary institutions in the Anambra State, Nigeria namely (Madonna University Okija, Tansian University Oba, Paul University Awka and Legacy University Okija). Respondents were selected using the non-probability convenience sampling technique. The convenience sampling technique was used because it was difficult to access all the respondents at the selected companies at the same time. An initial sample size of n=200 respondents was set, using the available historical information. However, 164 usable questionnaires were eventually collected and used in the data analysis, which gave an acceptable response rate of nearly 82%. The questionnaire was the major tool for data collection. A five point Likert-type rating scale with scale points: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (DA) and strongly disagree (SD), was developed, validated and used with scores of 5 to 1, respectively. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity to ensure that it
measured what was intended. The pilot testing is made and Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The modified version of Organisational Climate Questionnaire (Communication and Professional Career Development) yielded reliability coefficients of 0.786 and 0.764 respectively; and that of Affective Commitment Questionnaire yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.826. Since these alpha values were all above the minimum acceptable level of 0.70, it can be concluded then that the measurement scales used in the study were internally consistent or reliable, as recommended by Malhotra (2010).

3.1 Statistical Test and Results
This research uses simple linear regression analysis. In regression analysis we fit a model to our data and use it to forecast the value of the dependent variable from the one or more independent variables. The regression analysis was first conducted between the independent variables (Communication and Professional Career Development) and with the dependent variable (Affective Commitment). The table below summarizes the results obtained from the regression analysis indicating proposed model is suitable or not. The table presents the significance of the model as a whole as well as the relative contribution of each variable individually. The table shows the regression analysis of communication and professional career development on affective commitment.

3.2 Regression Model
Hypothesis One: Communication has a significant effect on affective commitment

The result of the linear regression in table 3 and 4 shows that professional career development has a strong positive effect on affective commitment (R- coefficient = .774). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 59.8% of the variation in affective commitment can be explained by professional career development with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (.522) is less than 2. With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .38809. The extent to which professional career development affect affective commitment with .774 value indicates a positive coefficient between professional career development and affective commitment which is statistically significant (with t = 19.714) and p = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted accordingly.

Hypothesis Two: Professional Career Development has a significant effect on affective commitment.

The regression analysis conducted to ascertain the effect of communication on affective commitment. Table 1 & 2 shows that communication has a strong positive effect on affective commitment (R-coefficient = .868). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 75.3% of the variation in affective commitment can be explained by communication with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (.530) is less than 2. With the simple regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .50600. The extent to which communication affect affective commitment with .868 value indicates a positive coefficient between communication and affective commitment which is statistically significant (with t = 28.147) and p = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted accordingly.

**Table 1: Model Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>.868a</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>.50600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication
b. Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

**Table 2: Coefficients a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
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<td>.061</td>
<td>.668</td>
<td>3.444</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.868</td>
<td>28.147</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

The regression analysis conducted to ascertain the effect of communication on affective commitment. Table 1 & 2 shows that communication has a strong positive effect on affective commitment (R-coefficient = .868). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 75.3% of the variation in affective commitment can be explained by communication with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (.530) is less than 2. With the simple regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .50600. The extent to which communication affect affective commitment with .868 value indicates a positive coefficient between communication and affective commitment which is statistically significant (with t = 28.147) and p = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted accordingly.

**Table 3: Model Summary b**

<table>
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<th>Model</th>
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<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
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<td>.599</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>.38809</td>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Professional Career Development
b. Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

**Table 4: Coefficients**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
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<th>Sig.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
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<td>1 (Constant)</td>
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<td>.022</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>19.714</td>
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</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

The result of the linear regression in table 3 and 4 shows that professional career development has a strong positive effect on affective commitment (R- coefficient = .774). The R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 59.8% of the variation in affective commitment can be explained by professional career development with no autocorrelation as Durbin-Watson (.522) is less than 2. With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .38809. The extent to which professional career development affect affective commitment with .774 value indicates a positive coefficient between professional career development and affective commitment which is statistically significant (with t = 19.714) and p = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted accordingly.

4 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDING
Hypothesis H1 found support in this study and was therefore accepted since the regression model revealed that communication affects affective commitment and was statistically significant (β = .868; t = 28.147; p < 0.000). The result demonstrates that communication is important to the organisation as managers of tertiary institutions need it to keep employees committed on the jobs. This finding is consistent with the findings of studies conducted by Dill (1958); Huber & Daft, (1987); and Moynihan & Pandey, (2008) which states that strong positive relationship was found. Hypothesis H2 revealed that professional career development has a strong positive effect on affective commitment at (β = .774; t = 19.714; p < 0.000). The result indicates that professional career development opportunities are highly encouraged in tertiary institutions as perceived by respondents of the study. Its alternative hypothesis that professional career development has a
significant effect on affective commitment is supported by the data. The relation supports (Koonce, 1998; Acker, 2004; Jianwei, 2010) when argued that affective commitment depends upon the professional career development opportunities offered by the institutions.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The objective of this study was to examine the existence of two organisational climate variables (communication and professional career development) as a predictor of affective commitment in tertiary institutions. It emerged that the two variables were statistically significant, which implies that they are predictors of affective commitment. It is appropriate therefore to conclude that affective commitment in the tertiary institutions is dependent on the state of the relationship between communication and the professional career development. Hence, proper communication system affects the organisational climate. If the communication system is not proper the employees will feel frustrated. If individuals feel free to try out new ideas without fear, it will create a conducive atmosphere to innovative ideas. In the vein, professional career development which involves learning on and off the job will give competitive advantage and job satisfaction: A conceptual synthesis. Community Mental Health Journal 40(1):65-74.

6 REFERENCES
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