The Role of Organisational Commitment in the Organisational Citizenship Behaviour and Employee Intention to Stay Relationship: The Case of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Organisational commitment has become a matter of priority in many Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).While organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour and employee intention to stay have intrigued academics and is widely researched in large organisations, it has not received the same amount of attention in Small and Medium Enterprise and in developing countries. Given that SMEs are regarded as the engine for economic growth and a vehicle for employment generation in both developed and developing countries, the mediating effects of organisational commitment on organisational citizenship behaviour and employee intention to stay is important in the management of SMEs. This study seeks to investigate the mediating role of organisational commitment on organisational citizenship behaviour and employee intention to stayin Zimbabwean SMEs. The study is located within a quantitative research paradigm. The study proposed two hypotheses that were validated using a sample of 464 non-managerial employees in the five cities in Zimbabwe. Through structural equation modelling and path analysis the results indicated that there are positive relationships between the posited research variables (organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational commitment and employee intention to stay). Managerial implications of the findings are discussed and limitations and future research directions are alluded to.

1. Introduction

Researchers have emphasized that there has been increasing awareness by governments in the developing world, of the role played by SMEs and their contribution to the economy (Chang, Chang, Ho, Yen & Chiang 2011; Durmusoglu, Apfelthaler, Nayir, Alvarez &Mughan 2012). The importance of the small business sector is also recognised internationally in terms of its contribution to employment creation, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and innovation. In Zimbabwe, the development of the small business sector is regarded as crucial for the achievement of broader development objectives (Chipika& Wilson 2006; Gono 2009; Chinomona 2012). These objectives include poverty alleviation, spreading employment to rural areas, improving the situation of women and increasing indigenous ownership of investment in the economy (Nyoni 2002; Nichter&Goldmark 2009). Organisational commitment (OC) has captured the hearts and minds of researchers and practitioners alike and research outcomes have revealed that high levels of OC often results in higher job satisfaction, decreased absenteeism, retention and organisational citizenship behaviours (Grawe, Daugherty &MacElroy 2012; Yamaguchi 2013). This is despite the fact that some organisations opt for short term contracts which no longer guarantees long term employment, largely as a result of global and economic uncertainties (Carmeli 2005). In many ways, organisational commitment has been referred to as a "mature construct" as it has been tested in many organisations (Morrow 2011:19). Organisational commitment remains an important behavioural construct that fosters organisational citizenship behaviour and efficacy and ultimately, intention to stay on the job.

2. Literature Review

Several theories borrowed from other social disciplines such as psychology, sociology and economics have been used in organizational behaviour research. Among these theories one of the most widely usedis the Social Exchange Theory (SET). Various other theories have been developed from this theory such as the relational exchange theory, affect theory, power-dependence theory, relational cohesion theory and Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory. In this study, SET provides the theoretical ground for the conceptualized model that is chosen and used because of their strengths and relevance to the current study.

2.1.Social Exchange Theory

The fundamental premise of SET is that, parties involved in exchanges voluntarily provide benefits, invoking obligation from the other party to reciprocate and providing some benefitsin return (Yoon & Lawler 2005). The reciprocated benefits can be in the form of economic rewards or social benefits (Yoon & Suh 2003). Social exchange is defined as "voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others" (Blau 1964). The underlying principle of SET demonstrates that reciprocated benefactions create social bonds among exchange actors (Kacmar, Bachrach, Harris& Noble 2012:44). This is because social exchanges builds up feelings of personal obligation, gratitude and trust among partners, all of which lay a foundation of social solidarity and micro social order even without binding contracts (Yoon & Suh 2003:600).

The basic assumption of exchange theory is that individuals establish and continue social relations on the basis of their expectations that such relations will be mutually advantageous. The initial impetus for social interaction is provided by the exchange of benefits, intrinsic and extrinsic, independently of normative obligations (Blau 1964). SET has served as the theoretical principle underpinning of the citizenship literature (Kacmar*et al*., 2012). When one party to the exchange does something for the other, or provides benefits for the other, there is an expectation of some form of valued, future return that is both non-specific and not tied to an explicit market value (Morgeson, Reider& Campion 2005; Rubin, Bommer & Bachrach 2010). Applied to organisational settings, leaders, co-workers and even the organisation may offer employees a range of benefits that induce feelings of indebtedness (Deckop, Cirka& Anderson 2003; Flynn 2003). With regard to understanding followers' citizenship behaviours, Organ (1988; 1997)argued that when employees experience positive treatment from key organisational representatives, social exchanges and reciprocity norms influence incumbents to demonstrate OCBs in an effort to informally compensate this treatment. At the end employees will opt to stay at the job no matter what. Social exchanges are supported by what Blau (1964) referred to as "macromotives" such as loyalty and commitment. To the degree that employees' macromotives are positive, they are more likely to consider engaging in OCBs to compensate the organisation and its key representatives for the positive experiences contributing to these motives. However, when individuals' macromotives become negative, the tension contributing to the desire to pay-back their social exchange debts to key organisational representatives diminishes, effectively shutting off the flow of discretionary contributions such as OCBs (Bolino, Turnely&Niehoff 2004; Mossholder, Setton & Henegan 2005). Relating the SET to the current study,thisresearch submits that, an effort by SME owners or managers to create a supportive organisational environment is likely to stimulate a positive perception of fairness in their employees. Furthermore, as a result of this perceived fair treatment and in accordance to SET, SME employees' workplace equity will be raised thereby contributing to organisational commitment and ultimately citizenship behaviours enhanced in reciprocation. For that reason, the SME employees' commitment and citizenship behavior will eventually lead to improved job performance, hence the SMEs' improved competeness, viability, profitability and intention to stay in the organisation in the long term.

2.2. Organisational Commitment

There are many definitions of organisational commitment depending on who the researchers are and what they are examining. Porter, Steers, Mowaday and Boulian (1974) identifies three major components of organisational commitment definition as follows: (1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, and (3) a definite desire to maintain organisational membership. Organisational commitment has also been defined by other researchers from either a psychological perspective or sociological thrust. For instance those who subscribe to the psychological view submit that organisational commitment acts as a psychological bond to the organisation and influences individuals to act in ways that are consistent with the interests of the organisation.

These researchers suggest that low levels of organisational commitment may be dysfunctional to both the organisation and the individual, while high levels may have positive effects that leads to higher performance, greater satisfaction and lower turnover. Another school of thought has differentiated organisational commitment definitions according to how the construct has been conceptulised by organizational behaviour researchers and social psychologists (Razali 2004). For instance, organisationalbehaviour researchers use the term to describe the process by which employees come to identify with the goals and values of the organisation and desire to maintain membership in the organisation. On the other hand, social psychologists have focused on behavioural commitment. This approach draws heavily on the works of several social psychologists and focuses on how an individual's past behaviour serves to bind the organisation. However, despite all the other definitions, this study will define organisational commitment as an employee's strong beliefs in the organisation's goals and values, a willingness to work on behalf of the organisation, and a desire to maintain membership in the organisation (Porter, *et al*., 1974). This sense of commitment among employees could be used not only to preserve the longevity of their businesses, but also to create a positive working environment for employees (Yamaguchi 2013). Researchers have discovered three components involved in organisational commitment which are affective or emotional commitment, continuance or calculative or instrumental commitment and normative or moral commitment (Meyer & Allen 1997; Jones & Mclntosh 2010).

2.3. Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Scholarly concerns in organisational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) have increased dramatically over the past two decades and OCB has rapidly become one of the most extensively studied topics in applied psychology and organizational behaviour, (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach 2000; Podaskoff, Whiting, Podaskoff & Blume 2009). Interest in OCB can be traced back to Barnard (1938), who firstly pointed out the magnitude of cooperative efforts in organisational operation. Later in 1983, Organ and his colleagues coined the term organisational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Bateman & Organ 1983), thereby triggering OCB studies to expand to various domains of management such as marketing, human resource management, strategic management, and the like (Podsakoff*et al*., 2000).

Kinicki and Kreitner (2008) defined OCB as behaviours consisting of employee behaviours that are beyond the call of duty. Examples include gestures as constructive statements about the department or organisation, expression of personal interest in the work of others, suggestions for improvement, care for organisational property, training new people, punctuality and attendance well beyond standard or enforceable levels. OCB positively correlates with customer satisfaction, organisational commitment and performance ratings (Bateman & Organ 1983). There is a broader impact of OCBs on organisational effectiveness (Bolino & Turnley 2005). It is important to note that when employees are being treated fairly at work they are more willing to engage in OCB, managers are encouraged to make and implement employee-related decisions in an equitable fashion (Chiang & Hsieh 2012).Managers need to reduce absenteeism, turnover and deviant workplace behaviour and increase organisational citizenship behaviours and job satisfaction. Employees will feel wanted and as part and parcel of the organisation and will opt for staying on the job.

In this study OCB refers to SME employees' willingness to remain with the enterprise, their actions surpass their job description, and their proactive behaviour goes beyond job responsibilities (Chiang & Hsein 2012; Yildirim, Uzum&Yildirim 2012; Bolino, Harvey &Bachrach 2012; Yen &Teng 2012; Mamman, Kamoche & Bakuwa 2012; Wei, Qu & Ma 2012). Thus SME employees' citizenship behaviour refers to that behavioural motivation that go beyond the normal call of duty through cooperation among colleagues, self-improvement, and creating a positive organisational image (Cho & Johanson 2008). Although prior research has argued a great deal about the antecedents and consequences of OCB, the focus on the positive aspects of citizenship has left a number of potentially important research questions unexplored especially those dealing with the potential downside of OCB (Bolino, *et al*., 2002; Bolino*, et al*., 2004; Witt 2008; Bolino, *et al*., 2010; Bolino, Valcea & Harvey 2010). Despite its value, OCB is not always undertaken or appreciated by others as a genuine act of goodwill (Kim, Neill & Cho 2010; Spector & Fox 2010). Impression management researchers have argued that OCB can be driven either by other-serving organisational concerns and pro-social motives, or by self-serving motives to create and maintain a positive image. Podaskoff, Mackenzie and Hui (1993) acknowledged that some employees might engage in citizenship behavioursto make themselves look good. Bateman and Organ (1983), Bolino (1999), Bolino and Turnley (2005) and Bolino *et al*., (2010), describe individuals who engage in OCBs as "good soldiers".

This metaphor evokes the image of dutiful, compliant, loyal employees who go the extra mile out of commitment to and concern for their organisations. However, there is an overlap between citizenship and impression-management behaviours (Rioux & Penner 2001). Some consider helping one's supervisor and arriving at work early to be impression-management behaviours while others describe these same as OCBs.Individuals often engage in prosocial behaviours following transgressions to reduce guilt or negative effects, promote a positive self-image or restore belief in a justly world (Kim, *et al*., 2010). Logically, then, employees may engage in certain OCBs because they have actually wronged their organisation and are seeking to make amends for their transgressions. For example an employee may stay late to finish a project not because he or she is highly committed or especially conscientiousness but instead because he or she feels guilty after taking a two- hour lunch break or after spending several hours surfing the internet. Although research has not formally examined the link between transgressions and OCBs, anecdotal evidence suggests that individuals often engage in OCBs after they have engaged in personal activities during work hours (Shellenbarger 2002, Song 2008). Thus the transgression motivation suggests that some OCBs may actually follow organisationally dysfunctional actions that are acts of anti-citizenship (Bolino *et al*., 2004).OCBs are often explained by good intentions or desirable situational factors, however it is important to note that citizenship may also be a function of self-serving motives. Ideas of OCBs that might result from self-serving motives has received little attention from organisational researchers. Instead the goal is to suggest that the scope of OCB research could be broadened to include the investigation of more self-serving motives as well.

2.4. Employee Intention to Stay

The extant literature indicates that it is relatively less expensive to retain employees than constantly hire new ones (Currivan 1999). As a result of this necessity to reduce turnover intentions by HR practioners and strategies that foster turnover reduction have been treated with expedience and as a matter of priority. Mobley (1982:5) defined turnover as "the cessation of membership in an organisation by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organisation". Egan, Yang and Barlett(2004:90) defined turnover intention as a conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organisation. Robbins and Judge (2009:210) defined turnover as the voluntary and involuntary permanent withdrawal from an organization. A high turnover rate will result in increased recruiting, selection and training costs.The questions that challenge academics and human resource practitioners alike are "why do people leave their jobs?" and "why do they stay in their jobs?". Over the years, researchers have developed partial answers to these questions (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski & Erez 2001). It is important to note that intention to stay and intention to leave are opposite sides of the same coin. Most researchers now accept the premise that intention to stay or leave a job with a particular employer is the final cognitive step in the decision making process of voluntary turnover (Mustapha, Ahmad, Uli& Idris 2010). Perhaps, given alternatives, people stay if they are satisfied with their jobs and committed to their organisations and leave if they are not. However, empirical evidence indicates that work attitudes play only a relatively small role in employee tenure or turnover intentions (Hom&Griffeth 1995; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner 2000). Drawing from the extant literature, the current study defines employee intention to stay as the employee's willingness to remain in an organisation. It shows the employee's level of commitment to an organisation and the willingness to remain employed within the same organisation (Egan *et al*., 2004; Mustapha *et al*., 2010).

It is important to note that not all turnover is detrimental to an organisation's ability to be effective (Laschinger, Shamian & Thomson 2001). Companies can actually benefit from losing poor performers and the inflow of new blood which is fresh and hyper active. However employees are recognised as a very important organisationsl asset. Ultimately firms invest considerable capital in the human resources. Organisational costs incurred due to employees quitting their jobs and the subsequent hiring of the replacement personnel, new hire training and the general costs of the administration can be tremendous in terms of personnel, work unit and organisational adjustments (Ranida 2005). Thus retaining employees it's a very important organisational issue that merits thorough exploration.

2.5. The Proposed Research Model

Drawing from the literature review, in particular the theoretical and empirical literature aforementioned, a research model is conceptualized. Hypothesized relationships between research constructs are developed thereafter. In the conceptualized research model, OC is posited to be the mediating variable on OCBs and ITS.Figure 1:1 Illustrates this Conceptual Research Model

Figure 1: Conceptual Research Model

Relationship between Organisational Citizenship Behaviour and Organisational Commitment

Bolino and Turnley (2005) acknowledged that there is a broader impact of OCBs on organisational effectiveness which leads to organisational commitment at workplaces. Successful organisations need employees who will do more than their usual job duties, who will provide performance beyond expectations. Employees who engage in "good citizenship" behaviours help others on their team, volunteer for extra work, avoid unnecessary conflicts, respect the spirit as well as the letter of rules and regulations and gracefully tolerate occasional work (Cho &Johanson 2008). Empirical evidence from organisationalbehaviour literature indicates that organisations that have employees with good citizenship behaviour outperform those that do not have (Greenberg 2009; Jain & Cooper 2012; Jung & Yoon 2012). In the same vein, good organisational citizenship behaviours are reported in the extent literature to precipitate reduced workplace absenteeism, turnover intentions and deviant workplace behaviour (Bolino&Trurnley 2005). According to Jung and Yoon (2012) organizational behaviours such as reduced workplace absenteeism, turnover intentions and deviant workplace behaviour are associated with organisational commitment. The same sentiments have been echoed by (Jain & Cooper 2012) who found that organisational citizenship behaviour leads to organisational commitment. As a result of organisational citizenship behaviours, the SME employees bring their entire selves (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to the company, regard their work as a mission and more than as a mere job (Jain & Cooper 2012). Eventually, this in turn will likely equip themselves with the enthusiasm to pursue extra citizenship behaviours at work. Thus an association between SME employees' citizenship behaviour and their organisational commitment can be conjectured. Previous studies have also provided support for the positive influence of organisational citizenship behaviour and organisational commitment (Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson 2003). Accordingly, it is expected in this study that employee organizational behaviours are likely to lead to organisational commitment in the SMEs sector in Zimbabwe. Therefore, drawing from this deliberation, H1 is proposed as follows:

H1: Organisational citizenship behaviours have a significant positive effect on their organisational commitment in the Zimbabwean SMEs.

Relationship between Organisational Commitment and Employee Intention to stay

The relationship between organisational commitment and intention to stay has been reviewed and examined extensively by researchers and academics over the last years (Meyer & Allen 1997; Cater &Zabkar 2009). Most of these studies argue that organisational commitment is an indication of employee satisfaction with their workplace and as a result of this satisfaction, their turnover intention is reduced. Besides, SET agree in that an employee, who feels fairly treated, motivated and committed to the job is unlikely to contemplate leaving an organisation to another. Furthermore, substantial empirical evidence has supported the positive linkage between organisational commitment and employee intention to stay on the job (Meyer & Allen 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch 2001; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolynytsky 2002; Rhoades, Eisenberger & Armeli 2001). Accordingly, when SME employees are commitment to their organisation, because they feel motivated and fairly treated at their workplace, they are motivated to stay on the job. Therefore, drawing from the aforementioned arguments, this thesis posits that:

H2: Employees organisational commitment has a significant positive effect on their intention to stay in Zimbabwe' SME sector

3. *Research Design*

3.1. Sampling Design Technique

The study made use of a probability sampling method. With stratified sampling, the population was divided into mutually exclusive groups (industry sectors) and random samples were drawn from each group (Hair, Babin, Anderson & Tatham 2010). This procedure placed the SMEs into specific industry sectors (manufacturing and service).

3.2. Target Population

The database of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises was used to collect information from employees in non-managerial positions in small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe. The sample was drawn from the major cities in Zimbabwe (Chitungwiza, Bulawayo, Bindura, Chinhoyi and Harare). Non-managerial employees provided the information that is needed in this study because they are the least paid, have many grievances; compared to those who are in managerial positions who tend to be secretive, happy and are highly remunerated (Gono, 2009).

3.3. Measurement Instrument

Research scales were operationalised mainly on the basis of previous works. Minor adaptations were made in order to fit the current research context and purpose. Seven-item scales were used to measure OCB which were adapted from the previous works of Jung and Yoon (2012). The sample question asked to the participants was ” I am always ready to help those around me”.   A seven-item scale adapted from Powell and Meyer (2004) was utilized to determine organisational commitment. The sample question asked to the participants was ” I have invested too much time in this organisation to consider working elsewhere”. A five-item scale was adapted from Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997) to measure employee intention to stay on the job. The sample question asked to the respondents was ” I have no intention of leaving this company in the forseeable future”.

3.4. Tests of Measures and Accuracy Analysis Statistics

The reliability and validity of the measuring scales was assessed to ensure valid data analyses. This was important for this study since a few of the scales have been modified to adapt to the particular business context. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to examine the reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the multi-item construct measures. All the factor loadings are above 0.5 which shows a high validity of the measurement instruments used. Overall acceptable CFA model fit indices used in this study included: the χ^2/(df) (Chi-Square/Degree of Freedom) value equal to or less than 3.00, the CFI (Comparative Fit Index) value equal to or higher than 0.90, Tucker and Lewis Index (TLI) value equal to or higher than 0.90, the Incremental Index of Fit (IFI) value equal to or higher than 0.90, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value equal to or less than 0.08. Recommended statistics for the final overall model assessment showed an acceptable fit of the measurement model to the data, that is: χ^2/(df) = 1.237; CFI = 0.950; TLI = 0.909; IFI = 0.965 and RMSEA = 0.029.

Table 1: Accuracy Analysis Statistics

Research Construct	Cronbach's Test		C.R Value	AVE Value	Highest shared variance (SV)	Factor loading
	Item-total	α value				
OCB1	0.939					0.945
OCB2	0.962					0.967
OCB3	0.952	0.983	0.983	0.922	0.760	0.963
OCB4	0.953					0.966
OCB5	0.945					0.960
OC1	0.958					0.966
OC2	0.960					0.964
OC3	0.961					0.967
OC4	0.967					0.972
OC5	0.965	0.993	0.992	0.937	0.760	0.969
OC6	0.966					0.968
OC7	0.963					0.970
OC8	0.966					0.969
OC9	0.969					0.970
ITS1	0.975					0.981
ITS2	0.971					0.976
ITS3	0.965	0.991	0.979	0.904	0.471	0.971
ITS4	0.973					0.980
ITS5	0.980					0.840

Note: C.R.: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted; S.V.: Shared Variance;* Scores: 1 – Strongly Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 5 – Strongly AgreeMeasurement CFA model fits: $\chi^2/(df)$ = 1.237;CFI = 0.950; TLI = 0.909; IFI = 0.965 and RMSEA = 0.029

Loadings of individual items on their respective constructs are shown in Table 1. The lowest value for individual item loadings for the research constructs is 0.840. Therefore, all the individual item loadings exceeded the recommended value of 0.50 (Hair *et al.,* 2010). This indicates that all the measurement instruments are acceptable and reliable since all the individual items converged well and with more than 50% of each item's variance shared with its respective construct.As indicated from the results shown in Table 1 the lowest obtained composite reliability (CR) value of 0.983 is well above the recommended of above 0.6 (Hulland, 1999), while the lowest obtained average variance (AVE) value is also above the recommended 0.5 which is 0.904. This indicates that convergent validity was achieved and also this further confirms internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instruments used (Fraering & Minor, 2006). Table 2 shows the discriminant validity was established by ensuring that average variance extracted (AVE) for each multi-item construct was greater than the shared variance between constructs as in Table 1 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 2: Correlations between Constructs

ResearchConstruct	Construct Correlation		
	OCB	OC	ITS
OCB	1.000	-	-
OC	0.875	1.000	-
ITS	0.558	0.687	1.000

OCB= Organisational citizenship behaviour ITS= Employee intention to stay OC=Organisational Commitment.

All pairs of constructs revealed an adequate level of discriminant validity (see Table 2) because all the correlations are less than 1. By and large these results provided evidence for acceptable levels of research scale reliability.Discriminant validity was also established by checking if the AVE value was greater than the highest SV value (Sin, Tse, Heung &Yim, 2005).This study further interrogated the average variance extracted (AVE) and the shared variance values (SV).

Discriminant validity was established by checking and confirming that the AVE values were greater than the highest SV values (Nunnally, 1978). Table 1 show that all the AVE values are above the SV values for all the research constructs, therefore further confirming the existence of discriminant validity.

Results of the Hypotheses

In Table 3 all the hypothesis are significant and strong because all the path coefficients are greater than 0.5. The highest path coefficient is OCB and OC which is 0.819, showing statistical significance indicating that in companies where employees perceptions of equity is high, OC is also high (Almar, 2005). The lowest path coefficient is OCand ITS which is 0.798 slightly lower than the highest path coefficient. This shows that all the path coefficients are significant.

Table 3: Overall Results of SEM Hypotheses Testing

Hyp	Hypothesis Statement	Path Coefficients	Results
H1	Organisational citizenship behaviour ⟶ commitment	0.819***	Supported
H2	Organisational commitment ⟶ Employee intention to stay	0.798***	Supported

Research structural model fits:χ^2/(df) = 2.737;CFI= 0.920; TLI = 0.905; IFI = 0.922 and RMSEA = 0.060.Note: 1. ***p-value<0.001, **p-value<0.05, *p-value<0.1; using a significance level of 0.05, critical ratios (t-value) that exceed 1.96 would be significant.

3.5. Discussion

(**H1**) The first hypothesis (H1) shows that there is a significant positive influence of employee OCB on OC in the Zimbabwean SMEs. From the result of the path there is a strong relationship between these two constructs because the p- value is less than 0.001. This is supported by Robbins and Judge (2011) who viewed that successful organisations need employees who will do more than their usual job duties, who will provide performance beyond expectations and ultimately leading to greater organisational commitment. Employees who engage in "good citizenship" behaviours help others on their team, volunteer for extra work, avoid unnecessary conflicts, respect the spirit as well as the letter of rules and regulations and gracefully tolerate occasional work (Cho & Johanson, 2008). Therefore high OCB is associated with high OC.

(**H2**) The second hypothesis (H2) shows that there is a strong positive relationship between employees' organisational commitment and employees' intention to stay in Zimbabwean SMEs (p-value is less than 0.001). Research show that low levels of OC may be dysfunctional to both the organisation and the individual, while high levels may have positive effects that leads to higher performance, greater satisfaction and low turnover (Morrow 2011; Grawe*et al*., 2012). Drawing from the extant literature, it is noted that by and large, committed individuals believe in and accept organisational goals and values. This means that the individuals will be willing to remain with their organisations and provide considerable effort towards the achievement of their organisation's goals (Mowaday *et al*., 1979; Cater &Zabka 2009). A study by Currivan (1999) affirms that organisational commitment leads to employees' intention to stay on the job. In summary, the results shows that all the 2 hypotheses are supported in the whole model as hypothesized.

4. *Contributions and Recommendations of the Study*

The implications on the practical side are that first and foremost managers can attempt to increase OC and OCB in SMEs since it has a significant impact on intention to stay. By setting clear rules that are enforceable to ensure appropriate behaviours at the workplace it leaves little room for turnover intention among employees (Mustapha *et al*., 2010). Managers need to consistently reward desired behaviours (Chipika& Wilson, 2006). If positive behaviour is rewarded, employees will quickly learn and enact behaviours that will reap rewards, and in this process, lower negative behaviours. Making sure that the rules and procedures are in place, understood and enforced will minimize employees' intentions to leave the organisation and foster the intentions to stay on the job. Another way for SME managers to motivate the employees to remain on their jobs is for them to encourage increased cooperation amongst SMEs employees. For employees to display OCBs qualities, leaders must be authentic and develop trusting relationships with the subordinates. Managers who are not trusted are doomed to fail because employees can only display deviant behaviours in such situations which will be very detrimental to the survival of the organisation (Yen & Teng, 2012).

Managers should also consider investing in leadership training such as formal courses, workshops, rotating job responsibilities, coaching and mentoring. This will help subordinates perform beyond expectation leading to high organisational commitment.This study also makes a contribution on the practitioner's front. In particular, managerial implications for managers in the SMEs can be drawn. The results of this study are likely to benefit managers in the SME sector, SME Employees Representatives or Trade Unions and the Government of Zimbabwe at large. Practical recommendations are made to the managers in the SME sector to adopt professional codes of conduct at their workplace. Based on the current study findings, SME Employee Trade Unions are also encouraged to represent their SME members' grievances with their SME employers. Finally, the Government of Zimbabwe is also encouraged to adopt policies that are likely to provide a stable socio-economic stability in the country such that the SMEs might improve their performance and potentially increase the rewards offered to their employees. The reward system, mainly in the form of profit shares and non-monetary rewards, is commonly used to motivate employees to be committed to the organisation. To secure increased employee motivation levels, SMEs need to make use of more diversified incentives that could include salary raises, promotions, titles, trophies, holiday assistance, house and car purchase assistance.

5. *Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research*

Although this study makes significant contributions to both academia and practice and also that due care was taken to achieve rigour, there are some limitations which open up avenues for further research. First, the data were gathered from the SME employee's side, those not in managerial positions. The results would be more informative if data from both sides of the channel dyad were compared. Future studies may be conducted by using paired data from both workers at the operational floor and from management's perspective. Second, the current study was limited to a sample of SMEs in the Harare, Chitungwiza, Bulawayo, Chinhoyi, Mutare and Bindura only the five largest cities in Zimbabwe. Subsequent research could replicate this study in broader sampling contexts that includes all the SMEs in Zimbabwean cities or comparison analysis between Zimbabwean SMEs and another country such as South African SMEs.

6. *Conclusion*

A pioneering attempt is made to apply the Social Exchange Theory in order to explain the interrelationships of the variables, in which organisational commitment is the ultimate variable. A cross examination of the extant theory indicate that these theories have been largely applied in the large sized firms and at least to the best knowledge of the researcher, has not been applied in the current research context. The findings of this study therefore, fill in the void that has existed in academic literature. There is no best theory which is applicable to this study. Future research should try to include other theories for this same model like Dependency theory and Game theory to get different results or almost the same outcomes.

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