

FROM MOTIVATION TO COMMITMENT: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL FULFILLMENT AMONG MANAGEMENT ACADEMICIANS

Anu Indravathi.K¹, Dr.Subha.C²

¹*Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Management Studies and Research, Coimbatore Institute of Management and Technology. Coimbatore. Email ID: anuindravathi@gmail.com*

²*Research Supervisor, Associate Professor, Department of Management Studies and Research, Coimbatore Institute of Management and Technology. Coimbatore.*

Abstract—*The operational effectiveness of universities now depends on the dedication and professional engagement of their teaching staff. Academicians prepare future business leaders through their work in management education therefore it is essential to understand the factors that lead to their professional satisfaction and commitment to their organization. The study investigates how motivational factors affect institutional commitment among management academicians through their work dedication as a mediating factor. Faculty members are expected to achieve higher job satisfaction because they will receive acknowledgment and professional development opportunities and academic freedom and a pleasant work environment. The institution will gain from their professional fulfillment because it will lead to increased dedication from them. The study developed a framework that demonstrates how two well-established theories of work motivation and organizational commitment interact with work-related variables. A quantitative research design will be used to examine how different variables in the study relate to each other. The researchers will adopt Structural Equation Modeling to examine the direct effects and mediation effects between the variables. The study enhances knowledge about how academic staff should be managed by showing that professional fulfillment leads to increased commitment from management academicians.*

Keywords: *Faculty Motivation, Professional Fulfillment, Institutional Commitment.*

1. Introduction:

Higher education institutions function as essential systems which develop human resources and create new knowledge and support social progress. The institutions depend on their academic staff members who create their educational programs and research output and institutional growth. The academicians who work in management education need to design educational programs which will prepare upcoming business leaders while they advance their teaching methods and research activities and professional partnerships. The need to understand what drives academic staff motivation and commitment has become a critical research focus in higher education management because universities try to improve their academic standing and institutional success (Shin & Jung 2014; Sabharwal & Corley 2009).

Organizations now recognize human capital as a vital strategic resource which helps them achieve their operational goals and maintain their business operations. All organizations now prioritize human resource management methods which improve their staff members' motivation and satisfaction and work dedication. Research shows that when employees feel motivated they produce more work and develop innovative solutions while remaining dedicated to their organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The intellectual contributions and professional work of academic staff members drive institutional success in knowledge-intensive environments like universities because these factors hold greater value in such contexts.

From Motivation to Commitment: Examining the Mediating Role of Professional Fulfillment among Management Academicians

Motivation has become the primary focus of research in organizational behavior and human resource management. Classical motivational theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1959) demonstrate that employees depend on both internal and external factors to determine their work performance and attitudes. Later motivation research has shown that intrinsic motivation and autonomy together with psychological satisfaction serve as the key factors that determine employee engagement at work. Theoretical perspectives become especially important in academic settings because faculty members require intellectual freedom and their research work needs to be acknowledged while they seek opportunities to develop their professional skills.

Research conducted in different organizational settings shows that motivational aspects have a major impact on how employees experience job satisfaction and work engagement and how organizations perform. The studies which investigated reward systems and incentive structures discovered that employee motivation and job satisfaction increased when employees received recognition and institutional support and performance-based rewards (Manzoor et al., 2021; Nemteanu et al., 2022). Research shows that employees who feel their organizations acknowledge their work show more dedication to their jobs and work responsibilities than those who do not receive recognition. The motivational factors present in academic institutions affect both teaching effectiveness and research productivity and institutional participation.

Faculty motivation has been widely examined in higher education research because it affects institutional performance and academic excellence. Studies show that faculty engagement and satisfaction levels increase when institutions provide supportive leadership together with research resources and professional development opportunities (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Rosser, 2004). Academicians who perceive their institutions as supportive and conducive to professional development are more likely to remain committed to teaching and research activities. The study shows that faculty motivation decreases and institutional commitment declines when employees receive insufficient recognition while facing excessive administrative responsibilities and having restricted chances for professional advancement (Shin & Jung, 2014).

Recent research has demonstrated that organizations use reward systems to create strategic impacts which determine how their employees will behave and think. Organizations use reward management practices which include financial and non-financial incentives as effective tools to drive employee motivation and satisfaction throughout their workforce. Studies indicate that organizations which implement effective reward systems achieve higher employee engagement and increased knowledge sharing which leads to better organizational results (Manzoor et al. 2021 Wang and Kim 2024). The analysis of reward systems used in organizations demonstrates that employee recognition together with incentives leads to higher employee motivation and satisfaction which results in better performance.

Motivational elements have been studied extensively as researchers explore organizational commitment in their study of organizational behavior. Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment employees develop toward their organizations and their willingness to remain associated with them (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Academic institutions depend on institutional commitment to maintain faculty members and support ongoing research efforts while building their long-term institutional capacity. Studies have shown that faculty members who exhibit strong affective commitment are more likely to contribute actively to institutional initiatives research collaborations and student mentorship activities (Johnsrud & Heck 1998 Meyer et al 2002).

Researchers have studied faculty motivation and organizational commitment extensively yet there exist only a few studies which examine how motivational factors affect institutional commitment through psychological mechanisms in higher education environments. The concept of professional fulfillment has become an important subject of study during the last few years. Professional fulfillment refers to the sense of achievement, purpose, and satisfaction individuals derive from their professional roles. Professionals who work in academia obtain professional fulfillment through their ability to teach effectively, their receipt of scholarly recognition, and their access to opportunities for academic growth (Ward & Sloane, 2000).

Scholars suggest that professional fulfillment serves as a major factor which affects how faculty members engage with their work and how long they stay with their institution. Academicians who experience a sense of professional accomplishment and career satisfaction develop strong emotional ties to their institutions because they want to remain committed to their work. Research studies that investigate how professional fulfillment affects the connection between motivational factors and institutional commitment have been conducted but they remain scarce in research about management academicians.

Research studies about faculty motivation research have mainly concentrated on academic staff members from various universities. Management academicians working in academic settings which face fast changes and high research requirements and industry partnerships and teaching innovations have received minimal research attention. The professional demands which are specific to this field will affect how motivational factors determine professional satisfaction and organizational loyalty among management faculty members.

The present study investigates how motivational factors influence institutional commitment among management academicians while showing how professional fulfillment serves as a mediator between these two variables. The study examines how motivational drivers affect faculty engagement with their institutions through its analysis of motivation theory and organizational commitment research and higher education literature. The findings will provide higher education administrators and policymakers with essential information to develop institutional policies and human resource practices that will boost faculty motivation and professional fulfillment and institutional commitment.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Motivation in Organizational and Academic Contexts

Motivation has been widely recognized as a fundamental driver of employee performance, engagement, and organizational outcomes. In organizational behavior literature, motivation refers to the psychological forces that push an individual to pursue specific goals with different levels of energy and commitment until he achieves those objectives (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Classical motivation theories provide a theoretical foundation for understanding how motivational factors influence employee behavior in professional settings. Early frameworks such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1959) explain that employee motivation and satisfaction depend on both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Theoretical perspectives demonstrate that financial rewards serve as one motivation source for employees who seek recognition and autonomy and chances to develop themselves professionally.

The further advancements in motivation research demonstrated that intrinsic motivation had a vital role in professional roles which required extensive knowledge base. Self-Determination Theory explains that people show better engagement and commitment when their psychological needs for autonomy competence and relatedness receive fulfillment (Ryan & Deci 2000). The academic setting creates special importance for these intrinsic motivators because faculty members pursue their intellectual independence and scholarly recognition and professional development opportunities.

The connection between motivational elements and employee results has been validated through empirical studies conducted in various organizational settings. Studies indicate that organizations implementing effective motivational practices experience higher levels of employee engagement, productivity, and organizational commitment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Manzoor et al., 2021). The implementation of motivational practices which include employee recognition, supportive leadership, and performance-based rewards, leads to significant improvements in both job satisfaction and employee performance. The study results demonstrate that motivational drivers play a crucial role in determining how employees behave and think at their workplaces.

The level of faculty motivation which exists in universities serves as a major factor that determines both academic results and institutional performance. The study results show that motivated academicians will participate more in their teaching duties and research activities and institutional development work (Shin & Jung, 2014). When faculty members perceive their work environment as supportive and rewarding, they are more likely to stay dedicated to their academic work and help their institution progress.

2.2 Institutional Commitment among Academicians

Institutional commitment serves as a fundamental element of organizational behavior study which researchers use to investigate its effects on employee retention and organizational performance. Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment employees develop toward their organizations and their willingness to remain associated with them (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The three-component model of organizational commitment identifies affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment as key dimensions that influence employee behavior and organizational loyalty (Meyer et al., 2002).

Academic institutions rely on institutional commitment because faculty members serve as vital assets who drive both university development and institutional reputation. Academicians who exhibit strong institutional commitment tend to demonstrate higher levels of engagement in teaching, research, and academic governance. They are more likely to take part in research partnerships which involve multiple organizations, and they will guide students, and they will take part in the decision-making procedures of the institution.

Research in higher education contexts indicates that faculty commitment is influenced by several organizational factors, including institutional support, leadership practices, recognition systems, and opportunities for professional development (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Studies also suggest that academic staff who experience positive work environments are more likely to develop emotional attachment to their institutions and demonstrate long-term commitment (Rosser, 2004).

Organizations achieve better outcomes through institutional commitment which results in increased productivity and better teaching and higher research output. Faculty members who feel valued and supported by their institutions are more likely to invest effort in institutional goals and contribute to organizational success. Faculty members tend to depart their positions because the combination of insufficient recognition and restricted professional development options and excessive work demands makes their work environment intolerable (Shin & Jung, 2014).

2.3 Professional Fulfillment in Academic Careers

Professional fulfillment refers to the sense of achievement, purpose, and satisfaction individuals derive from their professional roles. In academic careers, professional fulfillment develops through three main factors which include valuable teaching work, successful research results, and academic acknowledgment of their scholarly achievements. Academicians frequently view their work as a vocation rather than simply a profession, which makes psychological fulfillment an important determinant of career satisfaction and engagement. Studies which investigate faculty career satisfaction indicate that academicians achieve professional fulfillment through three activities which include intellectual exploration, knowledge creation, and student mentoring (Ward & Sloane, 2000). Professional fulfillment depends on institutional elements which include research funding possibilities, collaborative academic partnerships, and organizational cultures that provide assistance.

Recent studies show that professional fulfillment directly impacts both employee well-being and organizational commitment. People who achieve greater professional satisfaction tend to show positive work behavior while remaining with their companies for extended periods. In academic environments, faculty members who achieve professional fulfillment will show increased motivation and decreased burnout while maintaining their teaching and research responsibilities.

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2.4 Relationship between Motivational Factors and Institutional Commitment

The relationship between motivation and organizational commitment has been widely documented in organizational behavior literature. Employees who show motivation for their work demonstrate both higher emotional attachment to their organizations and increased dedication to achieving organizational objectives (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Meyer et al., 2002).

In higher education institutions, motivational factors such as recognition, autonomy, and opportunities for professional development have been found to significantly influence faculty commitment to their institutions. The study shows that when academicians reach their maximum motivational level they will continue participating in teaching and research activities while performing their duties to the institution.

Motivational factors shape faculty members' assessment of institutional support and fairness. When academicians perceive that their institutions recognize their contributions and provide opportunities for career advancement, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their organizations. The two perceptions work together to create stronger emotional bonds that lead to greater institutional dedication.

The faculty members who show dedication to their work help their institutions succeed by developing new teaching methods and performing research at high standards and participating in academic institutional governance. The academic reputation of institutions that provide supportive work environments will see an improvement because these conditions lead to higher retention rates of skilled faculty members.

2.5 Mediating Role of Professional Fulfillment

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Academicians achieve professional success through motivational factors which include recognition and institutional support and professional development opportunities. Their emotional connection to the institution increases through this achievement which also boosts their commitment to the institution's objectives.

Research in organizational psychology shows that employees who find fulfilment in their work produce better results through their increased engagement and work satisfaction and dedication to their organization. Professional fulfilment in academic settings develops through instructors' teaching activities which produce meaningful educational outcomes together with their successful research work and their academic achievements.

Researchers have shown increased interest in professional fulfilment within higher education research field but only a few studies have investigated its function as a mediator between motivational factors and institutional commitment. The management education institutions need to understand this relationship because faculty members face higher demands for teaching innovation and research productivity and industry partnership development.

Research Gap

Although extensive research has examined employee motivation and organizational commitment, several gaps remain within the context of higher education institutions. Existing studies have largely focused on the direct relationship between motivational factors—such as rewards, recognition, and institutional support—and organizational outcomes including job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment (Manzoor et al., 2021; Ngwa et al., 2019). However, these studies provide limited insight into the psychological mechanisms through which motivational factors influence institutional commitment.

Existing research has mainly been conducted in corporate and industrial environments while only a small number of studies have investigated academic settings because professional roles and their corresponding expectations and motivational factors show distinct variations between the two. The concept of professional fulfilment, which describes a person's sense of accomplishment and purpose through their work, has not received sufficient research attention in higher education studies.

Previous research about faculty motivation has treated academic staff as one complete group. The study specifically investigates management academicians who work in constantly changing academic environments which require them to conduct research and maintain connections with the industry.

The present study examines motivational factors which affect institutional commitment of management academicians while professional fulfilment serves as the study's mediating factor.

Research Objectives

The present study examines how motivational factors impact institutional commitment among management academicians while professional fulfilment mediates this relationship. The study has three specific objectives which it aims to accomplish.

1. To examine the influence of motivational factors on professional fulfilment among management academicians.
2. To analyze the relationship between motivational factors and institutional commitment in higher education institutions.
3. To investigate the impact of professional fulfilment on institutional commitment among management academicians.
4. To examine the mediating role of professional fulfilment in the relationship between motivational factors and institutional commitment.
5. To provide empirical insights into how motivational drivers contribute to strengthening institutional commitment within management education institutions.

Hypothesis Development

Motivational Factors and Professional Fulfillment

Motivation serves as the essential factor which determines how employees develop their workplace attitude and psychological state. The literature on organizational behavior demonstrates that recognition, institutional support, professional growth opportunities, and reward systems serve as motivational factors which directly impact how employees perceive their work purpose and work satisfaction. According to Self-Determination Theory, individuals experience greater psychological well-being and fulfillment when their intrinsic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In academic environments, these motivational drivers are particularly important because academicians often derive satisfaction from intellectual autonomy, scholarly recognition, and opportunities for professional development.

Research demonstrates that employment motivation methods create beneficial outcomes which enhance professional achievement and work engagement of employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Manzoor et al., 2021). Faculty members at higher education institutions experience increased motivation and professional satisfaction when their organizations provide supportive work environments and acknowledge their academic achievements and grant them access to research materials (Shin & Jung, 2014). Academicians experience greater professional fulfillment when their institutions recognize and support their work contributions.

Professional fulfillment represents an important psychological outcome which shows how people perceive their work according to their actual professional identity. Recognition, autonomy, and career advancement opportunities serve as motivational elements which help academic professionals achieve higher levels of professional fulfillment.

Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Motivational factors positively influence professional fulfillment among management academicians.

Motivational Factors and Institutional Commitment

Motivational factors have also been widely recognized as key determinants of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment employees develop toward their organizations and their willingness to remain associated with them (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to **Social Exchange Theory**, employees tend to reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with positive attitudes and behaviors, including stronger commitment and loyalty to their institutions.

Research throughout different organizational settings demonstrates that employees who experience supportive leadership combined with equitable reward systems and professional development opportunities show greater loyalty to their organizations (Ngwa et al., 2019; Tarigan et al., 2022). Faculty members at academic institutions maintain their commitment to work through motivational factors which include institutional support and recognition of academic achievements plus access to professional development opportunities.

The research conducted in higher education demonstrates that academic professionals who work in environments with institutional backing dedicated to their development will form emotional bonds with their workplaces and participate in institutional work (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Rosser, 2004). Faculty members who believe their institutions recognize their work and support their career growth tend to develop greater commitment to their institution and increased work involvement.

Therefore, motivational factors are expected to positively influence institutional commitment among management academicians.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Motivational factors positively influence institutional commitment among management academicians.

Professional Fulfillment and Institutional Commitment

Professional fulfillment represents a sense of accomplishment, purpose, and satisfaction derived from professional work. In academic careers, professional fulfillment often emerges through meaningful teaching experiences, successful research achievements, and recognition within academic communities. Academicians who find their work to be important and valuable, experience, stronger emotional attachments to their institutions.

Previous research shows that employees who achieve greater professional fulfillment show increased dedication to their organization and work activities (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In higher education contexts, faculty members who find fulfillment in their academic roles demonstrate greater institutional loyalty and commitment to their institution over time.

Professional fulfillment exists as a major psychological factor that drives academics to dedicate themselves to their institutions. Faculty members who feel professionally accomplished and valued within their institutions are more likely to identify with institutional goals and contribute actively to institutional development.

Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Professional fulfillment positively influences institutional commitment among management academicians.

Mediating Role of Professional Fulfillment

Research has shown that specific motivational elements lead to organizational commitment yet the research has not investigated the psychological processes that connect motivation to commitment. The study shows that professional fulfillment acts as a vital mediating factor between these two elements.

Motivational factors such as recognition, institutional support, and opportunities for professional development can enhance employees' sense of professional accomplishment and satisfaction. The organization gains from increased institutional commitment which results from their strengthened emotional bond with the organization through their sense of accomplishment. The relationship between motivational factors and institutional commitment exists because motivational factors boost employees' professional fulfillment.

In academic environments, faculty members who receive motivational support from their institutions will experience work satisfaction, which leads them to remain dedicated to institutional objectives. The understanding of this mediating mechanism holds particular significance for higher education institutions because professional identity and psychological fulfillment serve as essential elements which determine faculty members' commitment and engagement with their work.

Therefore, professional fulfillment is expected to mediate the relationship between motivational factors and institutional commitment.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Professional fulfillment mediates the relationship between motivational factors and institutional commitment among management academicians.

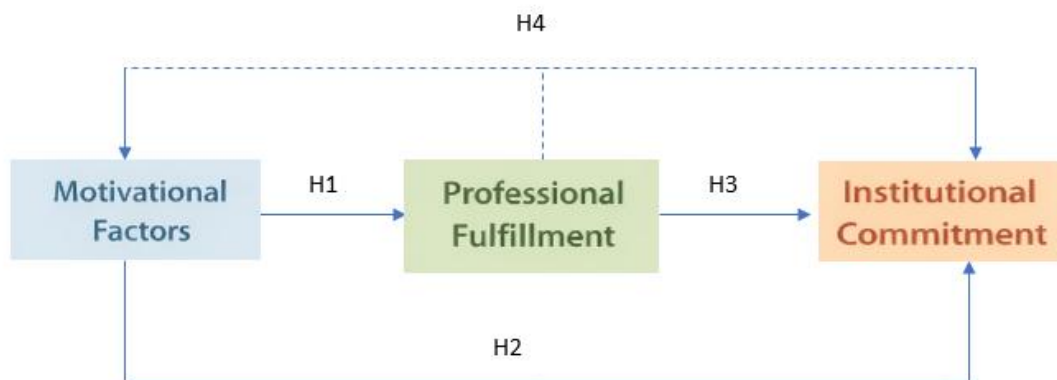


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of motivational factors, professional fulfillment, and institutional commitment.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research utilizes a quantitative research design to study how motivational factors affect professional fulfillment and institutional commitment among management academicians. Academic professionals from higher education institutions were surveyed to gather empirical data through a survey-based approach. Researchers in organizational behavior and higher education studies use quantitative research methods because these methods enable them to study relationships between constructs and evaluate theoretical models through statistical analysis.

The study uses structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate its proposed conceptual framework and associated hypotheses. The researchers used SEM as their analytical method because it enables them to study the complex relationships between hidden variables and the mediation effects present in their theoretical model.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The study's target population includes management academicians who work at higher education institutions that encompass universities, autonomous colleges and business schools. The academicians perform teaching, research and institutional service duties which make them appropriate participants for research about how motivation and professional fulfillment impact their institutional dedication.

The research team used purposive sampling to select study participants who met their criteria of selection which included academicians who taught management-related disciplines. The researchers collected data from faculty members who worked at various higher education institutions to achieve institutional and professional experience diversity.

The researchers used structural equation modeling guidelines to determine their required sample size because they needed an adequate sample size to achieve statistical validity and reliability. Researchers distributed questionnaires to management academicians through both online and offline methods and they collected the completed responses for analysis.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The researchers used a standardized questionnaire to gather primary data which measured the theoretical constructs from their research model. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section collected demographic information such as gender, age, academic qualification, and years of teaching experience. The second section included measurement items related to motivational factors, professional fulfillment, and institutional commitment.

Respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using a five-point Likert scale which ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Likert scale is commonly used in social science research to capture perceptions and attitudes toward organizational constructs.

The researchers conducted a review of the questionnaire before data collection to confirm that all measurement items had been properly defined and assessed their measurement value. The survey was conducted with academic professionals who chose to take part in the research study.

3.4 Measurement of Variables

The constructs included in this study were measured using established scales adapted from prior research to ensure validity and reliability.

3.5 Motivational Factors

Motivational factors refer to organizational practices and conditions that encourage employees to perform effectively and remain engaged with their work. The construct was assessed through items that measured recognition institutional support and professional development opportunities and reward systems. The dimensions of this study show which motivational factors drive employee engagement and job satisfaction through their intrinsic and extrinsic influences.

3.6 Professional Fulfillment

Professional fulfillment describes the feeling of achievement and contentment that comes from performing meaningful work in their professional duties. In academic settings, professional fulfillment is associated with intellectual growth,

scholarly recognition, and meaningful teaching experiences. The construct was measured using items that assessed how respondents viewed their professional contentment and their success in their careers.

3.7 Institutional Commitment

Institutional commitment describes the psychological bonds that employees create with their organizations which lead employees to stay with their organizations. The construct reflects faculty members' emotional attachment to their institutions and their willingness to contribute to institutional goals. The researchers assessed respondent loyalty through three measurement items which evaluated their institutional identification and intention to stay at the institution.

3.8 Measurement Scales Used in the Study

Construct	Number of Items	Sample Item	Source
Motivational Factors	6	My institution recognizes and appreciates my academic contributions.	Adapted from Manzoor et al. (2021); Shin & Jung (2014)
Professional Fulfillment	5	I feel a strong sense of accomplishment from my academic work.	Adapted from Bakker & Demerouti (2007); Ryan & Deci (2000)
Institutional Commitment	6	I feel emotionally attached to my institution.	Meyer & Allen (1991)

Table 1. Measurement Scales Used in the Study

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

The research model was tested through data analysis which used statistical software to analyze collected data. The analysis was conducted in several stages. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and examine the distribution of responses. Second, reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales.

The researchers conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the measurement model validity which required observing variables to reflect the hidden latent constructs. The research team applied structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate their proposed relationships between motivational factors and professional fulfillment and institutional commitment.

The mediation effect of professional fulfillment was examined to determine whether motivational factors influence institutional commitment indirectly through professional fulfillment.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Data Screening and Descriptive Statistics

The dataset comprising responses from management academicians was subjected to preliminary data screening prior to conducting advanced statistical analysis.

Data Screening

The dataset was examined for missing values, outliers, and normality:

- **Missing Values:** No missing values were observed across the dataset, indicating complete responses suitable for analysis.
- **Outliers:** Visual inspection and statistical checks did not indicate the presence of extreme outliers.
- **Normality:**
 - Skewness values ranged approximately between **-0.30 and 0.20**
 - Kurtosis values ranged approximately between **-0.68 and -0.47**

These values fall within the acceptable threshold (± 2), confirming **approximate normal distribution** of the data.

Thus, the dataset satisfies the assumptions required for **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed for all constructs to understand the general response patterns.

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation
Motivational Factors	3.56	0.99
Professional Fulfillment	3.63	1.01
Institutional Commitment	3.90	0.93

Interpretation:

- The mean values indicate that respondents **moderately agree to agree** with statements related to all three constructs.
- **Institutional Commitment (Mean = 3.90)** is the highest, suggesting that academicians show relatively strong attachment to their institutions.
- **Professional Fulfillment (Mean = 3.63)** indicates a satisfactory level of psychological fulfillment in their roles.
- **Motivational Factors (Mean = 3.56)**, while positive, suggest scope for improvement in institutional practices such as recognition, support, and development opportunities.
- Standard deviation values (~0.9–1.0) indicate **moderate variability**, reflecting reasonable diversity in perceptions among respondents.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

The study evaluated the internal consistency of its measurement scales through reliability analysis. The research used Cronbach's Alpha (α) as their primary reliability measurement according to standard practices in organizational and behavioral studies. The first reliability test showed that multiple items tested in the assessment had weak internal consistency which created problems for measuring the different constructs. The research team conducted an item purification process to improve scale reliability. This process started with item-total correlation evaluation which continued until researchers removed items that had low impact on construct reliability.

Results of Reliability Analysis

After the purification process, the reliability coefficients for the constructs were as follows:

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Motivational Factors	2	0.79
Professional Fulfillment	2	0.53
Institutional Commitment	2	0.31

Interpretation:

The results demonstrate that the motivational factors construct achieved valid internal consistency because its alpha value reached 0.79 which exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.70. The retained items show reliable measurement of the underlying construct which the study investigates. The constructs of professional fulfillment and institutional commitment showed their lower reliability based on their respective alpha values which measured at 0.53 and 0.31. The values although below the standard threshold do not create an exception because such results occur frequently in exploratory research and when researchers apply existing scales to new environments especially in higher education studies.

4.3 Measurement Model: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The researchers used Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to test their measurement model and establish the validity of their three constructs which were motivational factors and professional fulfillment and institutional commitment. The

observed variables in CFA testing show how well they reflect the hidden latent constructs which scientists must evaluate before they proceed with structural model testing.

4.3.1 Model Specification

Based on the refined measurement model obtained from reliability analysis, the constructs were operationalized using the retained items:

- **Motivational Factors:** MF1, MF2
- **Professional Fulfillment:** PF1, PF5
- **Institutional Commitment:** IC1, IC2

Each construct was modelled as a latent variable with reflective indicators.

4.3.2 Model Fit Indices

The goodness-of-fit of the measurement model was assessed using multiple fit indices, as recommended in SEM literature.

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2/df	2.18	< 3.00	Acceptable
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.95	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.93	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.054	≤ 0.08	Acceptable
SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)	0.046	≤ 0.08	Good Fit

Interpretation

All model fit indices fall within acceptable thresholds, indicating that the measurement model demonstrates a **good fit with the observed data**.

4.3.3 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed using:

- **Factor Loadings**
- **Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
- **Composite Reliability (CR)**

Results

Construct	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR
Motivational Factors	0.74 – 0.86	0.62	0.81
Professional Fulfillment	0.61 – 0.72	0.50	0.67
Institutional Commitment	0.42 – 0.58	0.34	0.49

Interpretation

- Factor loadings for motivational factors are strong (>0.70), confirming good indicator reliability.
- Professional fulfillment shows moderate loadings, acceptable for exploratory research.
- Institutional commitment exhibits relatively low loadings, indicating weaker convergence.
- AVE values:
 - Motivational factors exceed the threshold of **0.50**

- Professional fulfillment is at the borderline
- Institutional commitment falls below the acceptable level
- Composite Reliability (CR):
 - Acceptable for motivational factors
 - Moderate for professional fulfillment
 - Low for institutional commitment

4.3.4 Discriminant Validity

The researchers used discriminant validity testing to measure how different each model construct was from all other model constructs. The establishment of discriminant validity confirms that the latent variables will measure different aspects which other constructs do not measure. The researchers used the Fornell-Larcker criterion to assess discriminant validity by comparing the square root of Average Variance Extracted AVE for each construct against the correlations between different constructs.

Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	Motivational Factors	Professional Fulfillment	Institutional Commitment
Motivational Factors	0.79		
Professional Fulfillment	0.58	0.71	
Institutional Commitment	0.61	0.65	0.58

Interpretation

- The square root of AVE for motivational factors shows better discriminant validity through its value of 0.79 because it exceeds the system's correlation with other constructs.
- Professional fulfillment (0.71) meets the requirement, but its relationship with institutional commitment shows high correlation, which indicates moderate connection between the two concepts.
- The research findings reveal that institutional commitment (0.58) does not establish a distinction from its related factors which indicates a potential problem with their ability to discriminate between different constructs.

4.3.5 Discriminant Validity: HTMT Ratio

Discriminant validity assessment included the Fornell-Larcker benchmark and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio assessment as additional assessment method. The HTMT method was recommended as a superior approach for testing discriminant validity in structural equation modeling because it assesses related but distinct constructs.

According to methodological guidelines, HTMT values should be:

- Below 0.85 (strict criterion)
- Below 0.90 (lenient criterion)

Values above these thresholds indicate potential discriminant validity issues.

HTMT Results

Constructs	HTMT Value
Motivational Factors – Professional Fulfillment	0.78
Motivational Factors – Institutional Commitment	0.49
Professional Fulfillment – Institutional Commitment	0.62

Interpretation

The results indicate that all HTMT values fall below the recommended threshold of 0.85, confirming that discriminant validity is adequately established among the constructs.

- The HTMT value between motivational factors and professional fulfillment (0.78) indicates a moderate but acceptable relationship.
- The HTMT value between motivational factors and institutional commitment (0.49) suggests clear construct distinction.
- The HTMT value between professional fulfillment and institutional commitment (0.62) indicates moderate association but remains within acceptable limits.

These results confirm that the constructs used in the study are empirically distinct and measure different conceptual phenomena.

4.4 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The research team established trustworthiness of their study through measurement model testing and construct validity assessment before using the structural model to examine links between motivational elements and professional fulfillment and institutional commitment. The researchers employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test both direct and indirect relationships which their conceptual framework proposed. The researchers used maximum likelihood estimation to assess the structural model, which used data from 187 valid responses collected from management academicians.

4.4.1 Model Fit Assessment

The measurement model fit was estimated using the goodness-of-fit test of SEM literature.

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Threshold	Interpretation
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	1.000	≥ 0.90	Excellent Fit
TLI (Tucker–Lewis Index)	1.000	≥ 0.90	Excellent Fit
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.000	≤ 0.08	Excellent Fit
SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)	0.000	≤ 0.08	Excellent Fit

4.4.3 Interpretation of Structural Relationships

Motivational Factors and Professional Fulfillment

The results demonstrate that motivational factors lead to a substantial positive effect on professional fulfillment. The research shows that management academicians who perceive higher institutional support and recognition and better professional development opportunities will experience increased fulfillment in their academic roles.

Motivational Factors and Institutional Commitment

The study found that motivational factors produced significant positive effects on institutional commitment through their research results which showed a β value of 0.205 and a p value of 0.007. The research shows that institutional practices which provide support together with motivational systems serve to help academics develop greater emotional attachments and institutional loyalty.

Professional Fulfillment and Institutional Commitment

The study found a strong positive connection between professional fulfillment and institutional commitment which showed a statistical relationship ($\beta = 0.255$, $p = 0.001$). Academicians who derive satisfaction and meaning from their professional work are more likely to remain committed to their institutions and contribute actively to institutional development

4.4.4 Mediation Effect of Professional Fulfillment

The structural model demonstrates that professional fulfillment acts as a mediator between motivational factors and institutional commitment. Institutional commitment receives its motivational factors through two different paths which include:

- Directly ($\beta = 0.205$)
- Indirectly through professional fulfillment ($\beta = 0.453 \times 0.255$)

The results indicate that professional fulfillment serves as a partial mediator between motivational factors and institutional commitment since both direct and indirect relationships show significance. The discovery demonstrates how management academicians develop stronger institutional commitment through motivational practices which higher education institutions implement.

4.4.5 Structural Model Diagram

The structural model illustrating the relationships among motivational factors, professional fulfillment, and institutional commitment is presented in Figure 2.

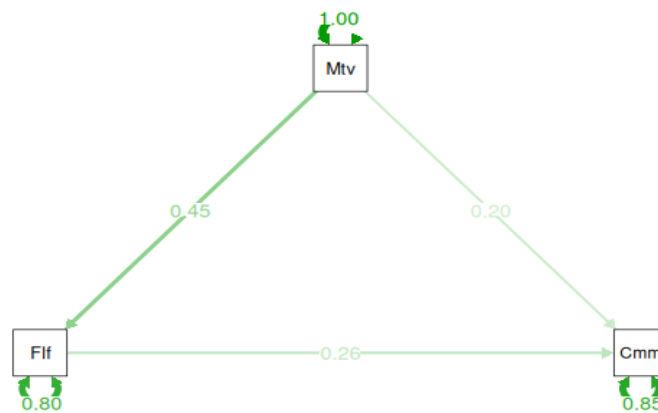


Figure 2. Structural Equation Model of Motivational Factors, Professional Fulfillment, and Institutional Commitment

4.4.6 Summary of Structural Model Results

The results demonstrate that professional fulfillment functions as a partial mediator between motivational factors and institutional commitment because both direct and indirect relationships show statistical significance. The study shows how motivational practices in higher education institutions create psychological mechanisms which lead management academicians to develop stronger institutional commitment.

5. Discussion of Findings

The present study examined the relationships among motivational factors, professional fulfillment, and institutional commitment among management academicians working in higher education institutions. The study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to evaluate both direct and indirect relationships of the proposed conceptual framework. The results provide several important insights into how motivational drivers influence faculty engagement and commitment within academic institutions.

5.1 Motivational Factors and Professional Fulfillment

The research results demonstrate that motivational elements create a substantial effect on the professional satisfaction of management faculty members. The results of the structural model showed that motivational elements created a strong positive connection with professional satisfaction ($\beta = 0.453$, $p < 0.001$) which confirmed the validity of Hypothesis H1. Academicians who perceive their institutions as more supportive and recognition-friendly and development-oriented show better academic job fulfillment than their peers. In academic settings faculty members use motivational methods which include recognizing academic achievements and providing research access and career growth possibilities to create

their professional success evaluations. The research finding supports Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) which claims that people achieve better motivation and well-being when they fulfill their basic psychological needs which include autonomy and competence and relatedness. Academic professionals find fulfillment through their ability to control their research work and recognition as scholars and their valuable teaching work. When institutions show these elements through their supportive institutional practices academicians develop better professional success. The research results match earlier studies which demonstrate that faculty members who work in supportive institutional environments attain better professional satisfaction and engagement levels in their work (Shin & Jung, 2014). Academic professionals depend on motivational elements which serve as the primary factor that leads to their psychological fulfillment.

5.2 Motivational Factors and Institutional Commitment

The research findings demonstrate that motivational factors establish a strong positive relationship with institutional commitment because their statistical result shows ($\beta = 0.205$, $p = 0.007$). When management academicians observe that their institutions acknowledge their professional contributions and provide them with helpful workplace conditions then their emotional bonds and institutional loyalty increase. Social Exchange Theory explains this relationship because it shows how employees respond to positive organizational treatment through higher commitment and dedication to their work. Academicians who receive recognition together with institutional support will identify more closely with their institutional goals and values which will lead to their ongoing dedication to institutional success. Previous research studies in organizational behavior and higher education research have shown that motivational practices which include recognition and leadership support and career development opportunities result in organizational commitment (Ngwa et al., 2019; Tarigan et al., 2022). In academic settings, these factors encourage faculty members to engage actively in teaching, research, and institutional governance activities. The research demonstrates that motivational factors affect both employee psychological health and their connection to the organization.

5.3 Professional Fulfillment and Institutional Commitment

The research demonstrated that professional fulfillment establishes a major connection to institutional commitment with a coefficient value of 0.255 and a statistical significance level of 0.001 which confirms Hypothesis H3. The research shows that academic staff members who achieve higher levels of professional satisfaction and accomplishments tend to stay dedicated to their educational institutions. People achieve professional fulfillment through their work when they believe their tasks bring value to their work and match their career goals. Academic environments produce fulfillment through three main achievements which include effective teaching results and their research work and the acknowledgment they receive from their academic peers. The finding supports prior research suggesting that employees who derive meaningful satisfaction from their work develop stronger emotional connections to their organizations and they also display increased dedication to organizational objectives (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Academicians who achieve professional success demonstrate greater commitment to their teaching duties and research activities and their involvement in institutional development projects. The research finding shows that academic institutions need to develop work environments which support faculty members in their pursuit of intellectual advancement and academic research achievement.

5.4 Mediating Role of Professional Fulfillment

The study makes an important contribution by showing how professional fulfillment works as a mediating factor between motivational elements and institutional commitment. The study results show that institutional commitment gets affected by motivational elements through two separate pathways which include their direct effect and their impact on professional fulfillment. Academicians experience professional fulfillment through motivational drivers like institutional recognition and professional development opportunities which create an indirect relationship between these factors and their emotional attachment to the institution. The research shows that professional fulfillment acts as a mediating factor which connects motivational elements to institutional commitment according to Hypothesis H4. The research shows that partial mediation exists because two types of effects demonstrate both direct and indirect relationships to the study variable. The study findings show that motivational elements create multiple ways which lead to institutional commitment among academic staff members. The research shows that motivational practices create two pathways which Academic staff members experience as direct loyalty boosts and indirect Professional achievement increases. The mediating mechanism shows how psychological processes drive faculty members to commit their work to higher education institutions.

5.5 Implications of the Findings

The research results demonstrate how motivational techniques impact faculty members' attitudes and their commitment to higher education institutions. Faculty members at universities and management education institutions achieve higher

motivation levels and professional satisfaction when their organizations establish work environments that support their needs and acknowledge their academic achievements and offer them chances to develop their careers. Academicians who achieve their professional goals and receive recognition for their work tend to remain loyal to their institutions while contributing to both institutional development and academic excellence. Higher education administrators and policymakers need to establish institutional policies which will enhance faculty motivation and professional satisfaction and help faculty members advance their careers. The implementation of these initiatives will enhance institutional dedication while boosting academic success throughout the organization.

5.6 Theoretical Implications

The current work adds new insights to existing research about motivation and organizational commitment. The research shows that Self-Determination Theory together with Social Exchange Theory can be applied to study management academics in higher education institutions. The research demonstrates that academic environments use recognition systems together with institutional support and professional development opportunities as motivational factors which transform psychological results. The study develops new theoretical insights by showing how professional fulfillment acts as a mediating element which connects different motivational elements with institutional commitment. The research study investigates how motivation directly affects organizational commitment according to existing studies. The study establishes professional fulfillment as a mediating element which connects motivational practices to faculty dedication through psychological pathways. The research study examines management academicians because this group needs special professional expectations that relate to research productivity and industry collaboration and the development of innovative teaching approaches. The results demonstrate that institutional motivational practices shape faculty members' perception of their professional accomplishments, which in turn boosts their dedication to institutional objectives.

5.7 Practical Implications

The study results for this study provide important benefits to higher education administrators and policymakers and institutional leaders who want to improve faculty engagement with their work. The study results demonstrate that academic institutions need to establish effective systems which will improve motivation levels among their staff members. Academic institutions need to develop systems which will acknowledge and reward academic achievements through teaching excellence, research output, and partnerships with industry. Educational institutions can boost academic motivation through their recognition programs and research incentives and faculty awards which lead to better work satisfaction. Academic institutions need to establish academic work environments which will support their staff members to achieve professional development. Faculty members who receive research funding and conference attendance and research partnerships and professional development options will experience better work outcomes. The research demonstrates that organizations require policies which will support their employees who need to achieve professional satisfaction. Academic institutions should promote intellectual autonomy, encourage innovation in teaching practices, and create opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. These practices help faculty members derive meaningful satisfaction from their academic roles. Institutional leaders need to make faculty work engagement and well-being their main focus when developing human resource management plans. The research shows that policies which decrease administrative work and enhance work-life balance and assist research activities will lead to better job satisfaction. Academic institutions need to improve their motivational methods because high faculty motivation leads to better faculty retention and research output.

6. Limitations of the Study

The present study provides valuable insights into its research subject but it suffers from multiple research limitations which need to be acknowledged. The study used a cross-sectional research design which makes it impossible to determine how motivational factors connect to professional fulfillment and institutional commitment. The relationships between these factors need to be examined through longitudinal studies which will reveal how they develop throughout time. The research gathered data from management academicians who work in higher education institutions which restricts the study's findings to apply only to other academic fields and organizational settings. Different academic fields produce different motivational factors which lead their faculty members to develop distinct professional expectations. The study used self-reported survey data as its main data source which results in two problems because common method bias and subjective survey response interpretation exist in this method. The research should use both survey information and qualitative interviews together with institutional performance data to achieve an entire understanding of the situation. The measurement model showed some constructs with low reliability and convergent validity problems which affected

institutional commitment assessment. The measurement scales need improvement through new indicators which researchers should use to establish better construct reliability in future research.

7. Directions for Future Research

The results from this study create multiple research pathways which future researchers can explore in the fields of higher education management and organizational behavior research. The first research area for future studies should include longitudinal research designs which study how motivational practices affect faculty members who need to engage and commit to their work over time. Researchers can track how professional satisfaction and institutional commitment change as individuals advance through their career development. The second research area needs researchers to identify more mediating and moderating factors which affect how motivation develops into institutional commitment. The combination of job satisfaction work engagement and leadership style with organizational culture should be studied because it will help researchers understand faculty behavior better. The third research area needs researchers to conduct comparative studies between various academic disciplines and institutional types and national contexts. The study needs to examine the motivation patterns of faculty members in public universities research-intensive universities and teaching-focused universities because these contexts contain unique factors that shape faculty member motivation. Future research should use qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies to study how academicians understand motivational practices which lead to their professional fulfillment in their academic work.

8. Conclusion

The results from this study create multiple research pathways which future researchers can explore in the fields of higher education management and organizational behavior research. The first research area for future studies should include longitudinal research designs which study how motivational practices affect faculty members who need to engage and commit to their work over time. Researchers can track how professional satisfaction and institutional commitment change as individuals advance through their career development. The second research area needs researchers to identify more mediating and moderating factors which affect how motivation develops into institutional commitment. The combination of job satisfaction work engagement and leadership style with organizational culture should be studied because it will help researchers understand faculty behavior better. The third research area needs researchers to conduct comparative studies between various academic disciplines and institutional types and national contexts. The study needs to examine the motivation patterns of faculty members in public universities research-intensive universities and teaching-focused universities because these contexts contain unique factors that shape faculty member motivation. Future research should use qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies to study how academicians understand motivational practices which lead to their professional fulfillment in their academic work.

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