RESEARCH ARTICLE:

The Role of Communication Satisfaction in the Relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and Teachers' Affective Commitment

Sam Erevbenagie Usadolo[1], Queen Emwenkeke Usadolo[2] and Joseph Edigin[3]

Abstract

In this research, the effect of leader-member exchange (LMX) on teachers' affective commitment is examined using communication satisfaction as an intervening variable. Using a quantitative research method, data was collected with a cross-sectional survey. A regression analysis indicates that LMX has a significant effect on affective commitment of teachers in the five vocational colleges examined in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Further analysis showed that communication satisfaction (relational and informational communication satisfaction) partially mediated the influence of LMX (represented in this study as programme managers) on teachers' affective commitment. The findings are consistent with previous studies about the influence of workplace relationships on teachers' behaviours, especially supervisor-subordinate relationships. The implications of these findings are explained.

Keywords: *affective commitment; communication satisfaction; leader-member exchange; supervisor-subordinate relationship; workplace relationship*

Introduction

Affective commitment is an important and desirable workplace outcome because of its concomitant influence on employees' attitude such as retention or intention to leave. Retention of teachers has been a challenge at the vocational educational level in South Africa (Mmako and Schultz, 2016) because of the exodus of teachers to similar but better positions in other colleges as well as other sectors (Mmako and Schultz, 2016). For these reasons, the question of affective commitment of teachers at this level of education is crucial. In addition, the amalgamation of colleges, which is part of the reorganisations at the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, has caused several unexplained questions about teachers' employment conditions in the merged colleges, and this has had effect on teachers' overall Communication Satisfaction (CS) (Gewer, 2016). Wedekind and Buthelezi (2016) have noted that poor workplace relationships and shortage of quality teachers requires organized human resource interventions that focus on good outcomes for teachers to scale up their commitment to their work. Studies have shown the importance of supervisor-employee relationships, especially because such relationships are determinant of CS (Mueller and Lee, 2002) and affective commitment (Brunetto *et al.,* 2012). Thus, this study focuses on understanding the influence of positive supervisor-employee (LMX) relationship.

Several authors have noted that a committed employee is likely to have low or reduced turnover intention (see Michael, 2014; Usadolo, 2016). Affective commitment is as a result of internal organisational relationships which exist due to the nature of CS in the relationship. CS refers to employees' approval of communication in organisational contexts and it is one of the essential

[1]Durban University of Technology, samu@dut.ac.za
[2]North West University, queen.usadolo@nwu.ac.za
[3]Walden University, joseph.edigin@waldenu.edu

workplace outcomes because it indicates the nature of employees' working relationship with their supervisors or organisations (Downs and Adrian, 2004). As stated by Gregson (1990), CS has impact on college employees' levels of commitment (Madlock, 2012; Engin and Akgöz, 2013) and job satisfaction (Madlock, 2008; Steele and Plenty, 2015). Indeed, when communication is used strategically in organisation, the outcome is organisational commitment (Gill, 2015). Past research has revealed the significant influence of LMX on CS (Mueller and Lee, 2002) and affective commitment (Farr-Wharton and Brunetto, 2007; Usadolo, 2016). These scholars have investigated several predictors of affective commitments such as LMX (see Mueller and Lee, 2002), perceived organisational supports (see Usadolo, 2016; Kurtessis *et al.,* 2017) as well as supervisor supportive communication (see Michael, 2014; Usadolo, 2018), but very few research has integrated these constructs into more detailed models to discover if there is a construct that could intervene in the relationship between LMX and affective commitment at vocational level of education in South Africa. Thus, the second focus of this study is to understand whether CS could impact the relationship between LMX and affective commitment among teachers.

Emphasis on artisan skills by the South African government resulted in the creation of Further Education and Training Colleges (FETC), which later changed to TVET colleges. Consequently, the government initiated a comprehensive reorganisation that resulted in the conversion of former technical colleges into FETCs, which were then placed under the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (Buthelezi, 2018). Due to the reforms, the authority for appointing staff members became the responsibility of college governing councils (Gewer, 2016). The reforms resulted in poor response strategies on the part of the college governing councils, causing frequent uneasiness within colleges about employment conditions (Gewer, 2016). This, among others, caused academic staff's resignation as there were better employment conditions elsewhere (Wedekind and Buthelezi, 2016).

In these vocational colleges, the management structure includes the programme managers who help in advancing the prevailing organisational work procedures that affect individual and organisational decisions. Given the aforementioned, it is, therefore plausible to state that there is a need to examine the leadership influence on affective commitment and communication at the TVET colleges.

In the following sections, LMX will be discussed, followed by the discussion of CS and affective commitment and the proposed hypotheses.

Explaining Key Concepts

LMX theory focuses on workplace relationships in organisations (Agarwal *et al.,* 2012). The theory suggests that the nature of relationships supervisors have with their subordinates determines their success or failure (Graen and Scandura, 1987). A relationship is referred to as positive LMX when leaders have cordial relationships with their employees. Employees in positive LMX are known as in-group members and their relationships with their leaders are characterized with mutual support and trust (Mueller and Lee, 2002). On the contrary, a negative LMX is characterized with a poor working relationship between the leaders and their followers or workers in organisation, who are known as out-group members (Brunetto *et al.,* 2010), which could impact CS and affect affective commitment negatively. Positive LMX in organisation would result in a smooth flow of information between teachers and programme managers, and the relationships are characterized by dialogic communication and joint decision-making (Wayne *et al.,* 1997). In this type of relationship, the teachers, students, and the colleges benefit from the healthy teaching and learning environment. Despite the awareness of the importance of supervisor in providing satisfactory support, there is a few research on how supervisors' roles impact employees' affective commitment and CS. The purpose of this research is to investigate how the relationship of the programme manager influences teachers' affective commitment and the role CS plays in the relationship.

For affective commitment, this describes the level to which workers identify with and have faith in the organisational goal (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Studies have revealed that organisational commitment can result in several workplace behaviours such as loyalty to one's supervisor (Rhoades *et al.,* 2001). According to Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993), affective commitment is linked more to on-the-job performance. In addition, affective commitment, as stated by Somers (1995), is a consistent predictor of turnover and is positively associated with job satisfaction (Knights and Kennedy, 2005). Thus, this research will focus on the affective commitment of teachers at the TVET colleges. Affectively committed teachers are more likely to behave in line with their college policies and goals (Shum *et al.,* 2008). Previous studies suggest that supervisor–employee relationships have influence on affective commitment (Usadolo, 2016). Employees' feeling of high-quality LMX increases their sense of belonging to an organisation (Clary, 2004; Usadolo, 2016). Given that studies have been consistent about the positive influence of LMX on affective commitment, Usadolo (2016) and Clary's (2004) findings on volunteers are likely to apply to teachers at vocational colleges level. This is mainly because in a high-quality LMX relationships, there is information sharing, trust, and harmonious relationship (Mueller and Lee, 2002). These characterize high-quality LMX that is central to teachers' positive organisational experience because they help to promote the development of good interpersonal relationships.

Communication satisfaction (CS) refers to the satisfaction an individual derives from effective and successful communication with another employee (Thayer, 1968). It is also used to indicate the level to which communication satisfies organisational members' needs for information that would help them to complete job-related activities effectively (Putti, Aryee and Phua, 1990). Workers assess their working relationships primarily through their type of communicative relationship with their supervisors. This is acknowledged by Frese *et al.* (2003), who stated that communication is fundamental to how leadership is understood. From the foregoing, programme managers' communication skills at the TVET colleges investigated is contingent on good use of communication to manage work-related matters and to achieve their colleges stated teaching and learning goals. CS is generally referred to in two categories namely: relational CS and informational CS. The relational elements of CS in this study are centred on the satisfaction with the relationships between teachers and their programme managers at the colleges investigated. The relational elements are media quality, personal feedback, horizontal and informal communication, and relationships with supervisors (Gray and Laidlaw, 2004). According to Jalalkamali *et al.* (2016), the informational dimension of CS focuses on employees' satisfaction with the exchange of information about policies of the organisation. Informational CS variables include organisational integration, corporate perspective, and communication climate (Gray and Laidlaw, 2004). The key concepts and the explanation given about them in line with the focus of this study informed the hypotheses proposed below.

Methodology

A self-administered survey using a cross-sectional research design, which is an element of quantitative research approach, was used to collect data for this study. Questionnaires were distributed to 380 participants (teachers)on six campuses of five TVET colleges, Eastern Cape, South Africa and 192 of the questionnaires were returned. Only 187 (49%) of the returned questionnaires were added in the analysis due to five incomplete questionnaires. One of the researchers held meetings with the management of the five TVET colleges before the questionnaires were distributed. The objectives of the research were explained and request for permission was sought from the management. In the meetings that were held with the management and teachers, they were told that information collected would be confidential and findings in the study would be reported anonymously. One of the researchers distributed and collected most of the questionnaires by hand during subsequent meetings that took place.

All measures used in this research were from past studies. The participants were asked to state their agreement or disagreement using six-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Supervisor-subordinate relationship was measured by Graen

and Uhl-Bien's (1995) unidimensional LMX-7 instrument. Past studies (see Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) bear evidence to the instrument's reliability and psychometric properties. One of the questions is, "I have a good working relationship with my programme manager" and the Cronbach's alpha was .90. CS was measured with the CS Questionnaire (CSQ) developed by Downs and Hazen (1977). The CSQ is made up of 40 items covering eight variables. Six of the variables were relationship with the supervisor, organisational integration, horizontal and informal communication, communication climate, corporate perspective, and media quality. The variables deleted were subordinate communication and personal feedback. Subordinate communication was removed because of its irrelevance to this study and personal feedback construct was removed because it was rejected by the factor analysis done.

The word "supervisor" used in the measures adapted, was replaced with "programme manager" because in this study, the programme manager is regarded as the supervisor of teachers. Relationship with supervisor was operationalised using four items and a sample item was "programme manager is open to ideas". The Cronbach's alpha for the four items used had a reliability score of .90. A sample of the five items used for organisational integration was, "information about departmental policies and goals is good" and the Cronbach's alpha was .94. Horizontal and informal communication was measured with three items and a sample was "horizontal communication with other employees is accurate and free flowing" and the Cronbach's alpha was .94; communication climate was measured with five items and sample item was "I receive on time information needed to do my job from the programme manager" and the Cronbach's alpha was .97; corporate perspective was measured with five items and sample item was "information about government action affecting the college is appropriate and sufficient" and the Cronbach's alpha was .94; media quality was measured with three items and a sample item was "meetings are well-organised, clear and concise". The Cronbach's alpha for media quality was .94.

Allen and Meyer's (1990) measure of employees' emotional attachment to the organisation was used to assess teachers' affective commitment. A six-item scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) was used and one of the items was: "I enjoy discussing my organisation with outside people". Previous studies have proved that the instrument is consistent and reliable (see Rhoades *et al.,* 2001; Brunetto *et al.,* 2010). The Cronbach's alpha for the present study was 0.91. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the biographical data of the participants. The male participants were 151(81%) and female participants were 36(19%). Participants who were between the ages of 27-46(82%) were more in number and the same applies to married participants who were 119(64%). Participants who were graduates amounted to 132(71%), and participants who had been working in their organisations for between two and five years were 174(93%).

A factor analysis was done on the 40 questions in the questionnaire with a factor loading of .50 as the cut-off point. The results showed eight latent variables with eigenvalues of > 1, which helped to explain 78% of the variance, with the first factor indicating 28.7% of the variance. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at a Chi-squared value of 6974.884 (p < .001), and the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was above the required value of .6. The value was .883. Construct validity was tested to evaluate the credibility of the measures used, as suggested by Hair *et al.,* (2010). It is essential to confirm that the items used align with the theoretical construct they were intended to measure (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). Content (face) validity was determined by using pre-validated survey instruments. Convergent validity was determined by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the items. The average variance values of the scales ranged from 0.68 to 0.76, higher than the minimum value of .50 (Hair *et al.,* 2010). These values provided support for both convergence and discriminant validity.

A correlation matrix indicates that all the variables correlate with each other. As none of the correlations was above .90, multi-collinearity and common-method bias were not a problem (Pavlou *et al.,* 2006). To establish common-method bias, the Harman's one-factor test was

undertaken. The finding indicated that one factor only explains 28% of the variance. This shows that common method was not a problem because common-method bias would be a cause of concern only if one factor explains 60-70% of the variance (Fuller *et al.,* 2016). Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients for each variable and the means and standard deviations of all the variables examined in the study.

Table 1: Mean, standard deviations and correlation matrix

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.Gender	1.19	.40	1												
2.Age	4.21	2.40	-.139	1											
3.Marital status	2.21	.89	-.118	.117	1										
4.Education	1.98	.54	.064	-.100	-.037	1									
5.No of years	3.20	1.23	.129	.035	.024	.005	1								
6.Rel. with supervisor	4.07	1.14	.009	.171*	-.082	.140	.197**	1							
7.Corp. perspective	4.13	1.26	-.097	.065	-.027	-.035	.026	.089	1						
8.Organ. integration	4.17	1.09	-.156*	.080	.052	.119	.025	.314**	.220**	1					
9.Com. climate	3.67	1.43	. 168	-.057	.119	-.022	.138	.217**	.132	.225**	1				
10. Hor. communication	4.56	1.04	.064	-.044	.056	.115	-.112	.020	-.005	-.069	.030	1			
11. Medial quality	4.84	1.13	.071	.109	.035	.061	.017	.129	.086	223**	.292**	.014	1		
12. LMX	4.19	.87	.018	.078	.042	-.063	.051	.463**	.231**	.345**	.363**	-.095	.400**	1	
13. Affect. commitment	4.27	.90	-.056	.097	.034	-.108	.223**	.430**	.455**	.437**	.372**	-.129	.329**	.537**	1

Note: *Correlation is significant at the .05 level, ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

A linear regression was used to examine the validity of all the hypotheses because they predicted direct relationships between LMX and affective commitment and indirect relationships between LMX and affective commitment using CS as an intervening variable.

The hypotheses tested include:
  i. Hypothesis 1: LMX is positively related to teachers' affective commitment.
  ii. Hypothesis 2a High-quality LMX will influence teachers' affective commitment through relational CS at TVET colleges.
  iii. Hypothesis 2b: High-quality LMX will influence teachers' affective commitment through informational CS.

Results and Discussion

The influence of LMX on affective commitment

The regression analysis supports the acceptance of Hypothesis 1 because the relationship between LMX and affective commitment was positive and statistically significant (R^2 = .327, F = 44.723, p < .0001). LMX accounted for 33% of the variance in affective commitment (see Table 2).

Table 2: Regression analysis detailing the relationship between high-quality LMX and affective commitment

	B scores	*ES B* scores	**β** scores
Constant	1.523	.297	
No of years	.144	.044	.196*
LMX	.545	.062	.527**
R^2			.327**
F			44.723**

Note: N = 187, ** Correlation is significant < .0001 level. * Correlation is significant < .005 level.

The mediating effect of communication satisfaction on the relationship between high-quality LMX and affective commitment

The results of the mediation are discussed below using the two categories of CS: Relational and informational CS.

Multiple regression analysis showed some support for Hypothesis 2a as the result indicates a partial mediation. That is, relational CS partially mediated the relationship between LMX, and affective commitment as indicated by Hypotheses 2a (R^2 = .381, F = 22.334, p < .0001), except for one of the elements of relational CS, namely, horizontal, and informal communication as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Mediated multiple regression detailing the relationship between high-quality LMX on affective commitment through the relational communication satisfaction variables

Step 1: LMX on relational communication satisfaction			
	Relationship with supervisor (β)	**Media quality (β)**	**Horizontal and informal communication (β)**
No of years	.174*	-.003	-.107
LMX	.454**	.062	-.089
R^2	.245**	.160**	.020
F	29.780**	17.481**	1.923
Step 2: Relational communication satisfaction on affective commitment			
	B scores	*ES B* scores	**β** scores
No of years	.096	.047	.131*
Relationship with supervisor	.293	.051	.371**
Media quality	.180	.040	.280**
Horizontal and informal communication	-.109	.054	-.126*
R^2			.297**
F			19.218**
Step 3: LMX and communication satisfaction on affective commitment			
	B scores	*ES B* scores	**β** scores
No of years	.110	.044	.150*
LMX	.372	.075	.360**
Relationship with supervisor	.171	.054	.216*
Media quality	.100	.041	.156*
Horizontal and informal communication	-.074	.052	-.085
R^2			.327**
F			44.723**
ΔR^2			.054*
ΔF			22.334**

Note N = 187, ** Correlation is significant < .0001 level. * Correlation is significant < .005 level.

Multiple regression analysis provided some support for Hypothesis 2b. That is, informational CS represented by Hypotheses 2b partially mediated the relationship between LMX and affective commitment (R^2 = 0.504, F = 36.749, p < 0.0001). The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Mediated multiple regression detailing the relationship between high-quality LMX on affective commitment through informational communication satisfaction variables as mediators

Step 1: LMX on informational communication satisfaction			
	Organisational Integration (β)	**Communication climate (β)**	**Cooperate perspective (β)**
No of years	.008	.119	.014
LMX	.344**	.357**	.230*
R^2	.119**	.146**	.053*
F	12.413**	15.697**	5.186*
Step 2: Informational communication satisfaction on affective commitment			
	B scores	*ES B* scores	**β** scores
No of years	.128	.042	.174

Organisational integration	.250	.049	.302**
Communication climate	.145	.036	.233**
Corporate perspective	.220	.042	.353**
R^2			.418**
F			32.667**
Step 3: LMX and informational communication satisfaction on affective commitment			
	B scores	*ES B* scores	**β** scores
No of years	.127	.039	.173*
LMX	.344	.061	.332**
Organisational integration	.181	.047	.219*
Communication climate	.085	.035	.138*
Corporate perspective	.220	.039	.307**
R^2			.327**
F			44.723**
ΔR^2			.177**
ΔF			36.749**

Note N = 187, ** Correlation is significant < .001 level. * Correlation is significant < .05 level.

The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of LMX on affective commitment and to examine the effect of CS as a mediator in the relationship between teachers' supervisors and their affective commitment at the TVET colleges studied. The findings showed that supervisors' relationships had a significant impact on their teachers' affective commitment. Equally, the influence of supervisors on teachers' affective commitment was partially influenced by CS. Beginning with the influence of LMX on affective commitment, the results support previous studies that have found a significant and positive relationship between LMX and affective commitment. For example, Usadolo's (2016) finding that LMX relationships result in higher levels of affective commitment in non-profit organisations is consistent with the findings of this study. Similarly, study on nurses (Brunetto *et al.,* 2013) have found significant relationships between LMX and affective commitment. The current research shows a direct relationship between LMX and affective commitment, indicating high-quality LMX will increase teachers' affective commitment at TVET colleges.

Although the past studies stated above have examined the direct impact of LMX on the affective commitment, they are not based on teachers at the TVET level of education. Hence, the current research adds new knowledge by providing a better understanding of the influence of LMX relationships on teachers' affective commitment at TVET colleges. The indirect effects of LMX on teachers' affective commitment (Hypotheses 2a and 2b) were also tested. The results show that CS has a partial effect on the relationship between LMX and affective commitment. The influence of CS when considered generally in the relationship between LMX and affective commitment is not surprising in that Meyer and Allen (1991) stated employees' commitment is due to their organisational experience that is aligned with their values. Such experience can be described as the satisfactory communication the teachers receive from their programme managers that enable them to do their work.

The significant relationship between LMX and affective commitment through relational CS (Hypothesis 2a) is essential because it indicates high-quality relationships characterised by mutual trust and that programme managers at the colleges provide effective communication channels. The findings are consistent with a situation of mutual trust that results in a cooperative relationship between employees and their supervisors (Hopper, 2009) and as the findings have shown, relational communication has a role to play in the case of such relationships when vocational education level is considered. Given the partial mediating effect of relational CS in the relationship between LMX and teachers' affective commitment, it means that teachers believe that they are valued and that their programme managers do give them job-related support; hence,

they are affectively committed. Previous studies have shown that the provision of a supportive supervisory communication is directly related to increased levels of affective commitment, and this happens in a high-quality LMX relationship. The informal and horizontal construct of relational CS in Hypothesis 2a was insignificant in the mediation analysis. The results suggest that informal and horizontal communication channels are not vigorously promoted at the colleges investigated. The results are consistent with previous study by Usadolo *et al.,* (2019) whose findings produced somewhat similar results when the direct influence of LMX on teachers' CS was examined.

The relationship between LMX and affective commitment is mediated by informational CS (Hypotheses 2b). This finding suggests that when programme managers provide information about employees and job-related news, policies, changes in the organisation, and progress, academic staff members are likely to be affectively committed. In addition, the good relationship between LMX and affective commitment through informational CS implies that appropriate communication channels for handling conflicts within colleges could strengthen teachers' commitment to their work and the college. The results are important for the colleges investigated, given that Downs and Adrian (2004) noted that CS relating to organisational integration indicates that programme managers are providing suitable opportunities for teachers to talk about their jobs, and this gives a sense of belonging to teachers in the ingroup relationship. The results are similar to those of Terek *et al.* (2015) which showed a statistically significant association between the dimensions of leadership and those of CS for schoolteachers in Serbia. Meintjes and Steyn's (2006) study at a private higher institution – using the CSQ to measure employees' CS – found that employees feel more satisfied with their superiors for offering job-related advice, trusting them, and including them in decision-making and these, in the context of the current study, will result in affective commitment.

Based on the findings reported, this research contributes to the literature by illuminating the importance of LMX as an element that could promote and influence teacher's affective commitment. Notably, the reforms that have taken place at the TVET level among some academic in South Africa have not resulted in poor relationships between programme managers and academic staff, and the level of CS in the relationship is good. The programme manager-academic staff members' positive relationship is central to the success of an organisation, especially when aspects of organisational communication, as exemplified by constructs of CS examined, are factored into the working relationship the programme managers have with their teachers. In addition, the study adds to past studies by investigating a more comprehensive model of LMX and affective commitment that includes CS as an intervening variable. The current study has extended knowledge about LMX, affective commitment and CS since no similar study has been carried out at vocational education level in South Africa.

The findings have implications for organisations' management, communication at organisational and interpersonal levels, and affective commitment, which goes to the core of employees group harmony and retention management at the TVET colleges level in South Africa. The association between high-quality LMX, teachers' affective commitment and CS indicates that supervisors' leadership approaches may play a crucial role in improving workplace outcomes. The effects of high-quality LMX on affective commitment that was partially mediated by both the informational and relational elements of CS have consequences for the administration of vocational education. The findings suggest why it is essential that programme managers at vocational education level are supported within the school system to have good relationships with teachers who are affectively committed. For instance, positive communication in the relationship between LMX and teachers' affective commitment might progressively result in positive communication patterns, thus motivating teachers to complete duties easily. Hence, it is important to strengthen programme manager relationships with their teachers as such relationships can have positive influence on teachers' workplace behaviour if the requirements of communication are met.

The findings show that matters about CS should be of primary concerns of human resource managers because it is fundamental in effective workplace relationship. Regular policy change in the South African vocational education system (Deacon, 2010) requires management to ascertain how the mix of organisational factors (such as LMX), workplace behaviours (affective commitment) and CS could help teachers to attain their intended work outcomes. The current study is unique and has added to the understanding of a construct that can possibly influence high-quality workplace relationships. Moreover, the study contributes to the body of literature by demonstrating the mechanism through which high-quality LMX influences in group harmony and trust in workplace relationship.

Conclusion

LMX's studies provide adequate information that helps in the understanding of the causes of workplace behaviours that benefit organisations. The discussion of LMX, affective commitment, and CS, has shown why they are important factors in the consideration of workplace relationships at the colleges investigated. Equally the discussion provides a clear understanding of how LMX can promote workplace relationships that enhance affective commitment not forgetting the central role played by CS. It is therefore essential for supervisors and management at the TVET colleges to provide an environment for the realisation of positive workplace outcomes. As stated above, the informal and horizontal communication aspect of CS did not mediate the relationship between LMX and affective commitment. Due to the quantitative approach that was used in the study, it was not possible to ascertain why this was the case. Hence, a mixed method study is recommended to provide an in-depth understanding of the findings of the present study. Furthermore, future studies should consider adopting a longitudinal approach that would allow data to be collected more than once from the same sample - to give a comprehensive explanation of the causal relationships involved.

References

Agarwal, U. A., Datta, S., Blake-Beard, S. and Bhargava, S. 2012. Linking LMX, innovative work behaviour and turnover intentions: The mediating role of work engagement. *Career Development International,* 17(3): 208-230.

Allen, N. J. and Meyer, J. P. 1990. The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organisation. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1): 1-18.

Brunetto, Y., Farr-Wharton, R. and Shacklock, K. 2010. The impact of supervisor-subordinate relationships on morale: Implications for public and private sector nurses' commitment. *Human Resource Management Journal,* 20(2): 206-225.

Brunetto, Y., Farr-Wharton, R. and Shacklock, K. 2012. Communication, training, wellbeing and commitment across generations. *Nursing Outlook,* 60(1): 7-15.

Brunetto, Y., Xerri, M., Shriberg, A., Farr-Wharton, R., Shacklock, K., Newman, S. and Dienger, J. 2013. The impact of workplace relationships on engagement, wellbeing, commitment and turnover for nurses in Australia and the USA. *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* 69(12): 2786-2799.

Buthelezi, Z. 2018. Lecturer experiences of TVET college challenges in the post-apartheid era: A case of unintended consequences of educational reform in South Africa. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training,* 70(3): 364-383.

Chan, S. H. J. and Lai, H. Y. I. 2017. Understanding the link between communication satisfaction, perceived justice and organisational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Business Research,* 70: 214-223.

Clary, E. 2004. Volunteer sustainability: How non-profits can sustain volunteers' commitment'. *Snapshots: Research Highlights from the Nonprofit Sector Research Fund,* 36: 1-6.

Deacon, R. 2010. Educating the educators: Challenges facing teacher education and development in South Africa. *Focus,* 59: 38-43.

Downs, C. and Hazen, M. 1977. A factor analysis of communication satisfaction. *Journal of Business Communication,* 14(3): 63-74.

Downs, C. W. and Adrian A. D. 2004. *Assessing Organisational Communication: Strategic Communication Audits.* London: Guilford.

Eisenberg, E. M. and Goodall, H. 2004. *Organisational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint.* 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.

Engin, E., Akgöz, B. E. 2013. The effect of communication satisfaction on organisational commitment. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences,* 14(2): 109-124.

Farr-Wharton, R. and Brunetto, Y. 2007. Organisational relationship quality and service employee acceptance of change in SMEs: A social exchange perspective. *Journal of Management and Organisation,* 13(2): 114-125.

Frese, M., Beimel, S. and Schoenborn, S. 2003. Action training for charismatic leadership: Two evaluations of studies of a commercial training module on inspirational communication of a vision. *Personnel Psychology,* 56(3): 671-697.

Fuller, C. M., Simmering, M. J., Atinc, G., Atinc, Y. and Babin, B. J. 2016. Common methods variance detection in business research. *Journal of Business Research,* 69: 3192-3198.

Gewer, A. 2016. Unfinished business: Managing the transformation of further education and training colleges. In: Kraak, A., Paterson, A. and Boka, K. eds. *Change Management in TVET Colleges: Lessons Learnt from the Field of Practice.* Johannesburg: JET Education Services, 23-46.

Gill, R. 2015. Why the PR strategy of storytelling improves employee engagement and adds value to CSR: An integrated literature review. *Public Relations Review,* 41(5): 662-674.

Graen, G. B. and Scandura, T. A. 1987. Toward a psychology of dyadic organising. *Research in Organisational Behaviour,* 9: 175-208.

Graen, G. B. and Uhl-Bien, M. 1995. Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 Years – Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly,* 6(2): 219-247.

Gray, J. and Laidlaw, H. 2004. Improving the measurement of communication satisfaction. *Management Communication Quarterly,* 17(3): 425-448.

Gregson, T. 1990. The separate constructs of communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. *Educational and Psychological Measurement,* 51(1): 39-48.

Guffy, M. E., Rhoddes, K. and Rogin, P. 2005. *Business Communication.* Toronto: South-Western.

Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B. and Anderson, R. 2010 *Multivariate Data Analysis: A Global Perspective.* New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Hopper, M. L. 2009. Communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and intention to leave. Master's dissertation, The University of Waikato.

Jalalkamali, M., Ali, A. J., Hyun. S. S. and Nikbin, D. 2016. Relationships between work values, communication satisfaction, and employee job performance: The case of international joint ventures in Iran. *Management Decision,* 54(4): 796-814.

Knights, J. A. and Kennedy, B. J. 2005. Psychological contract violation: Impacts on job satisfaction and organisational commitment among Australian senior public servants. *Applied HRM Research*, 10(2): 57-72.

Kurtessis, J. N., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M. T., Buffardi, L. C., Stewart, K. A. and Adis, C. S. 2017. Perceived organisational support: A meta-analytic evaluation of organisational support theory. *Journal of Management,* 43(6): 1854-1884.

Madlock, P. 2008. The link between leadership style, communicator competence, and employee satisfaction. *Journal of Business Communication,* 45(1): 61-78.

Madlock, P. E. 2012. The influence of power distance and communication on Mexican workers. *Journal of Business Communication,* 49(2): 169-184.

Mayfield, J. and Mayfield, M. 2002. Leader communication strategies - Critical paths to improving employee commitment. *American Business Review*, 20(2): 89-94.

Meintjes, C. and Steyn, B. 2006. A critical evaluation of the Downs-Hazen instrument (CSQ) by measuring employee communication satisfaction at a private higher education institution in South Africa. *Communication,* 32(1): 152-188.

Meyer, J. P. and Allen, N. J. 1991. A three-component conceptualization of organisational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1): 61-89.

Meyer, J. P. and Allen, N. J. 1997. *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Meyer, J. P. and Herscovitch, L. 2001. Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 11(3): 299-326.

Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J. and Smith, C. A. 1993. Commitment to organisations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(4): 538-551.

Michael, D. F. 2014. The impact of leader-member exchange, supportive supervisor communication, affective commitment, and role ambiguity on bank employees' turnover intentions and performance. *International Journal of Business and Social Science,* 5(7): 8-21.

Mmako, M. and Schultz, C. 2016. An employee engagement framework for technical vocational education and training colleges in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education,* 30: 143-163.

Mueller, B. H. and Lee, J. 2002. Leader-member exchange and organisational communication satisfaction in multiple contexts. *International Journal of Business Communication,* 39(2): 220-244.

Pavlou, P. A., Liang, H. and Xue, Y. 2006. Understanding and mitigating uncertainty in online environments: A programme manager-agent perspective. *MIS Quarterly,* 31(1): 105-136.

Putti, J., Aryee, S. and Phua, J. 1990. Communication relationship satisfaction and organisational commitment. *Group and Organisation Management,* 15(1): 44-52.

Rhoades, L., Eisenberger, R. and Armeli, S. 2001. Affective commitment to the organisation: The contribution of perceived organisational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(5): 825-836.

Saks, A. 2006. Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* 21(7): 600-19.

Schumacker, R. and Lomax, R. 2004. *A Beginner's Guide to Structural Equation Modelling.* London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Shum, P., Bove, L. and Auh, S. 2008. Employees' affective commitment to change: The key to successful CRM implementation. *European Journal of Marketing*, 42(11/12): 1346-1371.

Sias, P. M. 2005. Workplace relationship quality and employee information experiences. *Communication Studies,* 56: 375-395.

Somers, M. J. 1995. Organisational commitment, turnover and absenteeism: An examination of direct and interaction effects. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 16(1): 49-58.

Steele, G. A. and Plenty, D. 2015. Supervisor–subordinate communication competence and job and communication satisfaction. *International Journal of Business Communication,* 52(3): 294-318.

Terek, E., Nikolic, M., Gligorovic, B., Glušac, D. and Tasic, I. 2015. The impact of leadership on the communication satisfaction of primary school teachers in Serbia. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice,* 15(1): 73-84.

Thayer, L. O. 1968. *Communication and Communication Systems in Organisation Management, and Interpersonal Relations*. Homewood: R. D. Irwin, Inc.

Usadolo, Q. E. 2016. The impact of social exchange on volunteers' workplace outcomes in non-profit organisations. Doctoral thesis, Southern Cross University.

Usadolo, S. E. and Usadolo, Q. E. 2018. The impact of lower-level management on volunteers' workplace outcomes in South African non-profit organisations: The mediating role of supportive supervisor communication. *Voluntas*, 30(1):244–258.

Usadolo, S. E., Usadolo, Q. E. and Makwambeni, B. 2019. Influence of leader-member exchange on teachers' workplace outcomes at vocational colleges in South Africa. *Journal of African Business,* 21(2): 264-287.

Wayne, S., Shore, L. and Liden, R. 1997. Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal,* 40(1): 82-111.

Wedekind, V. and Buthelezi, Z. 2016. A climate for change? Vertical and horizontal collegial relations in TVET colleges. In: Kraak, A., Paterson, A. and Boka, K. eds. *Change Management in TVET Colleges: Lessons Learnt from the Field of Practice*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services, 23-46.