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The Impact of Organization Practices on Affective Employee Commitment Among
Public Sector Employees
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Résumé

Cette étude explore l'impact des pratiques organisationnelles sur l'engagement affectif des employés dans le secteur public québécois, au Canada. L'engagement affectif des employés se réfère à l'attachement émotionnel positif qu'un employé ressent envers l'organisation. Avec la pénurie de main-d'œuvre au Canada, les entreprises du secteur public doivent encourager l'engagement affectif afin de réduire le roulement du personnel, qui a un impact financier important sur l'organisation. Par conséquent, cette recherche quantitative a recueilli des données auprès d'un échantillon de 1 355 employés du secteur public québécois à l'aide de questionnaires afin de déterminer la perception des employés quant à la corrélation entre différentes pratiques organisationnelles telles que la politique au sein du lieu de travail, la surcharge de rôles, l'autonomie professionnelle, la sécurité psychologique, les opportunités de carrière et de développement, l'épuisement de l'ego et le leadership valorisant, avec l'engagement affectif des employés. L'analyse factorielle confirmatoire par Lisrel et la régression linéaire multiple sur SPSS ont été utilisées pour examiner les données. Les résultats montrent que les opportunités de carrière et de développement ainsi que le leadership valorisant ont un impact positif significatif sur l'engagement affectif, tandis que la perception de la politique organisationnelle a un impact négatif significatif sur l'engagement affectif des employés. La sécurité psychologique, la surcharge de rôles, l'autonomie professionnelle et l'épuisement de l'ego ont été jugés sans relation significative avec l'engagement affectif des employés dans le secteur public québécois, au Canada. Une limite de cette étude est sa restriction au secteur public québécois au Canada. Elle présente également une limite liée aux réponses auto-déclarées. La recommandation pour de futures recherches est d'examiner d'autres industries du secteur public.

Mots-clés : Engagement affectif, secteur public canadien, politique au sein du lieu de travail, autonomie professionnelle, opportunités de carrière et de développement, engagement des employés.

Méthodes de recherche : Méthode de recherche quantitative utilisant une conception descriptive. Des questionnaires ont été utilisés pour la collecte de données.

Abstract

This study explores the impact of organizational practices on employee affective commitment in the Quebec Public Sector, Canada. Affective employee commitment refers to the positive emotional attachment that an employee has toward the organization. With the labor shortage in Canada, firms in the public sector need to encourage affective commitment to minimize employee turnover, which has a significant cost effect on the organization. Therefore, this quantitative research gathered data from a sample of 1,355 employees from the Quebec Public Sector using survey questionnaires to determine the perceptions of employees on how various organizational practices, such as workplace politics, role overload, job autonomy, psychological safety, career and development opportunities, ego depletion, and empowering leadership correlate with employees' affective commitment. Confirmatory factor analysis using Lisrel and multiple linear regression through SPSS were used for examining the data. Results show that career and development opportunities and empowering leadership had a significant positive impact on affective commitment, while perceived organizational politics had a significant negative impact on employee affective commitment. Psychological safety, role overload, job autonomy, and ego depletion were found to have nonsignificant relationships with employee affective commitment in the Quebec Public Sector, Canada. One limitation is that the study is restricted to the Quebec Public Sector, in Canada. It also has a limitation of self-reported responses. The recommendation for further research is to examine other industries in the public sector.

Keywords: Affective commitment, Canadian public sector, workplace politics, job autonomy, career and development opportunities, employee commitment.

Research methods: Quantitative research method using descriptive design. Survey questionnaires were used for data collection.

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Preface

Canada is currently facing a significant labor shortage, which has posed challenges for organizations across various industries. The scarcity of skilled workers has created a highly competitive job market, making it difficult for businesses to attract and retain talent. In such a scenario, it becomes crucial for organizations to implement better management practices to ensure stronger affective commitment from their employees. By cultivating a positive work environment, fostering employee engagement, and providing opportunities for professional growth and development, organizations can enhance job satisfaction and loyalty. Stronger affective commitment from employees not only promotes their long-term retention but also boosts productivity, innovation, and overall organizational success. Thus, in the face of the labor shortage, effective management practices are vital for organizations to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce.

The present study delves into an in-depth exploration of the impact of organizational practices on employee affective commitment within the context of the Quebec public sector in Canada. The study undertook a quantitative research approach, collecting data from a sample of 1,355 employees from the Quebec public sector. Through the use of meticulously designed survey questionnaires, our research aimed to discern employees' perceptions regarding the correlation between various organizational practices and affective commitment.

Our findings revealed noteworthy insights. Career and development opportunities, as well as empowering leadership, emerged as influential factors positively impacting affective commitment. Conversely, perceived organizational politics exerted a significant negative influence on employee affective commitment. Meanwhile, psychological safety, role overload, job autonomy, and ego depletion displayed insignificant relationships with affective commitment among employees within the Quebec public sector.

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Finally, this achievement is dedicated to my mother Leila Osgouei for her incredible dedication to raise my brother and I. We would not be the successful adults we are today without your unconditional love and support. No amount of thank you can make up for everything you have done for us, but I hope that these achievements make you proud. I love you with all of my heart.

Introduction

In today's competitive business world, entrepreneurs have acknowledged employees as the most valuable assets that an organization can have to gain a competitive advantage (Anitha, 2016). Not only do employees add value to the organization's products in terms of quality and quantity, but they also help build the organization's brand image. As a result, creating affective commitment among employees is very important for the success of any business and the growth of an economy. Affective employee commitment refers to the positive emotional attachment that an employee has toward the organization (Lamba & Choudhary, 2013). Committed employees tend to identify with the organizational goals and objectives, leading to higher employee motivation and productivity. Thus, not only does having committed employees help organizations achieve their goals and objectives, but it also reduces employee turnover (Anitha, 2016).

Employee turnover, defined as the worker who makes a material decision to terminate their membership in an organization (Zhang, 2016), could cost organizations in several ways and, therefore, should be avoided by increasing affective employee commitment. For instance, voluntary employee turnover can attract the most direct costs for organizations, such as replacing the employee through another recruitment process and finding temporary replacements (An, 2019). The indirect costs associated with voluntary employee turnovers include the effect on the morale of remaining members, loss of human capital, cost of training and development, and pressure on other staff members (Zhang, 2016). The effect of employee turnover is that the remaining employees' morale may be affected by the departure of their colleagues, and they start to question whether it is right for them to stay. Furthermore, attitudes towards the organization may be negative if such turnover is perceived as a role model. Yildiz (2018) added that the level of demoralization amongst remaining employees depends on the reason behind the turnover; if it were for personal reasons, the effect would be much less than if the reason was because of work conditions or management.

In addition, high employee turnover has a significant impact on the financial health of organizations, especially the cost of new hires (Yildiz, 2018). The costs increase with

the level of employees, whereby high-level employees cost the organization more than lower-level employees. For instance, Wong et al. (2019, p.110) cited that the estimated cost of the turnover of a high-performing employee can cost the organization as high as 45 percent more compared to the costs incurred for the turnover of a mediocre or lower-level worker. Other costs to consider when an employee decides to leave include the cost associated with the reduced production or service output between the recruiting and training of the new hire (Yildiz, 2018, p.484). Further, employee turnover is found to be extremely disruptive and upsetting due to the costs associated with employee turnover (Kwame et al., 2017). According to Staw, the departure of a key staff member can disrupt the system and make it difficult for the organization to maintain stable and successful operations. Generally, the disruption can be greater for employees of higher levels leaving due to the loss of accumulated knowledge (Park & Shaw, 2013). This makes employee turnover a critical concern for an organization to manage effectively.

Therefore, organizations strive to enhance employees' affective commitment by implementing better organizational practices regarding workplace politics and environment, career and development opportunities, job autonomy, role overload, psychological safety, and empowering leadership. Some of the organization's practices identified by Meyer and Allen to influence employees' affective commitment include goal clarity, receptiveness by management, role clarity, peer cohesion, dependability, and equity (Andrew, 2017). Therefore, the factors identified by Meyer and Allen could be examined through the lens of workplace politics and environment, career opportunities, job autonomy, and empowering leadership to determine employees' perceptions of how they influence their affective commitment. This study examines work-related perceptions about organizational practices in the public sector and the impact on their affective commitment to the organization.

Canadian Labour Market

Canada's labor market affects all sectors requiring employees to operate, which includes the public service sector. Various studies have found that employees are critical for the competitiveness of firms in the current competitive business world, and many businesses in Canada suffer from labor shortages. In September 2018, the Business

Development Bank of Canada (BDC) released a report titled "*Labour Shortage: Here to Stay*" where they surveyed 1,208 entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized businesses across the country (Cocolakis, 2018). Based on these responses, BDC found that almost 40 percent of these business owners expressed having difficulty finding employees, which greatly impacts their operations and hinders their company's growth (Cocolakis, 2018).

In the United States, it was reported by the Labor Department that the total turnover number had reached its highest at about 4.5 million employees, a rate of 3 percent, who had left their jobs in November (Liu, 2022). The findings of both reports are congruent regarding which sectors are most affected: manufacturing, retail, construction, and health services (Cocolakis, 2018; Liu, 2022).

The continued labor shortage in Canada is expected to stay drastically high, at around a 0.2 percent labor growth rate per year until 2030, when it will start to increase slightly (Cocolakis, 2018, p.3). Figure 1 illustrates the decreasing labor pattern in Canada.

Figure 1

Labour Force Decreasing Growth Rate until 2023
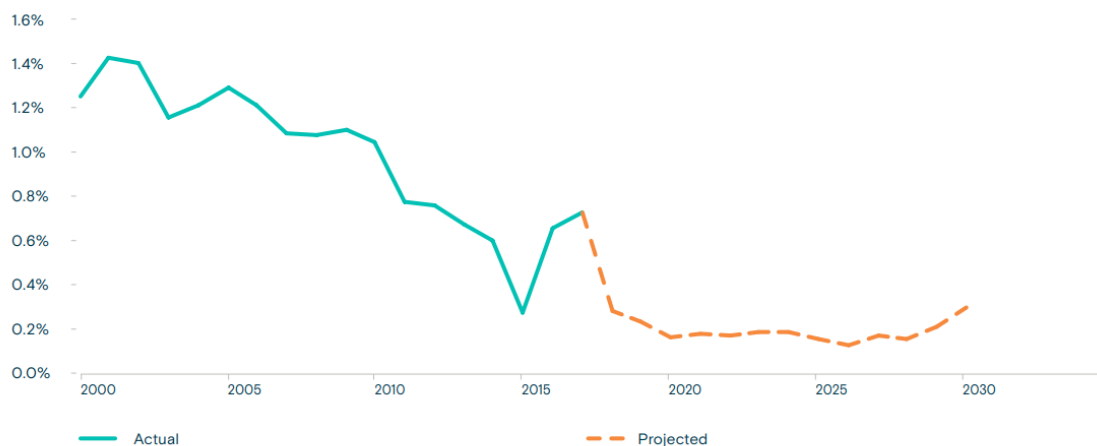
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM 051-0001 and 052-0005.

Source: (Cocolakis, 2018)

Many reasons were found to be associated with this prolonged labour shortage among Canadian firms. One of them is that in recent years, there's been significant gross domestic product (GDP) growth in Canada of close to 4 percent and globally 2 percent, which results in an increased demand for labour (Cocolakis, 2018). Okun's law argues an increase in economic growth measured by GDP helps to create new jobs, leading to an increase in the employment rate (Tumanoska, 2020). It implies that more new jobs give employees high leverage over employers and make it difficult to recruit to fill vacancies as they arise in the business. Therefore, global and Canadian GDP growth has significantly contributed to the labour shortage; thus, employers have to design more effective strategies that could be used to attract and retain employees by enhancing their commitment.

Additionally, the global COVID-19 pandemic that hit the country in 2020 caused disruptions in the labour market, giving workers leverage over employers (Liu, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic induced an economic recession in Canada, which led to workforce reduction as a measure to manage the pandemic (Lemieux et al., 2020). The working hours were reduced, which led to the loss of profit margins for businesses, resulting in the loss of jobs to help companies stay financially afloat. Another reason is based on seasons, whereby November is usually the month when most people quit their jobs to start a new one in January, the first quarter of the new fiscal year, but this year is a record high (Liu, 2022).

Problem Statement

Given the reality of the current labor market and the record high turnover rate, which is not expected to improve in the next few years, can organizations cope with these new conditions without taking necessary measures to improve it from their end? The answer is probably no unless they completely review their organizational practices to enhance employee commitment to their goals and objectives. Exploring the impact of employee affective commitment is important because the managers of large and small companies in Canada, as well as in the public sector, can learn from the most effective organizational practices to help not only to retain their current employees but also to attract new talents despite the stiff competition in the labor market. Hence, our research

question is clearly defined as the following: How do seven different work-related organizational practices, including workplace politics, career and development opportunities, psychological safety, role overload, ego depletion, job autonomy, and empowering leadership, impact employee affective commitment in the current labor market context with a high turnover rate in the public sector?

Research Objectives

i. Examine the perception of employees on how **perceived workplace politics** impacts their affective organizational commitment.

ii. Explore the perceptions of employees on how **perceived career and development opportunities** impact their affective organizational commitment.

iii. Examine the employees' **perception of psychological safety** and how it impacts their affective organizational commitment.

iv. Examine the impact of **role overload** and its impact on affective organizational commitment.

v. Determine the impact of employees' **ego depletion** on their affective organizational commitment.

vi. Determine the perceptions of employees on how **job autonomy** impacts their affective organizational commitment.

vii. Explore the perceptions of employees on how **empowering leadership** impacts their affective organizational commitment.

A summarized definition of each concept is also necessary to provide to the readers as an introduction before the literature review on these concepts:

Employee Affective Commitment: This refers to an employee's emotional attachment and dedication to their organization and it's values, with a genuine desire to contribute to the organization's goals and a willingness to stay with the organization (Lamba & Choudhary, 2013; Meyer and Herscovitch (2001).

Workplace Politics: This concept encompasses the various power dynamics, self-serving behaviors and tactics employees and managers use to influence decision-making within

the organization (Hochwarter et al., 2020; Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Landells & Albrecht, 2019; Malik et al.,2019; Yang 2017).

Career and Development Opportunities: This HR concept relates to the available pathways for employees to advance their careers and acquire new skills within the organization. It encompasses mentoring, training, promotions, and skill development programs (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Napitupul et al., 2017; Rahayu et al., 2019) .

Psychological Safety: is the employees' perception on the safety of expressing their ideas or concerns without fear of negative consequences or retribution from their managers or colleagues (Li et al., 2022).

Role Overload: Role overload occurs when employees feel overwhelmed with excessive job responsibilities and tasks that exceed their capacity, leading to stress and potentially affecting their commitment to the organization (Ko et al., 2022; Malik & Waheed, 2010).

Ego Depletion: Ego depletion refers to the depletion of an individual's self-control and willpower resources as a result of prolonged or intensive decision-making and self-regulation efforts (Deng et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2015). In the context of this study, it relates to how such depletion may affect an employee's commitment.

Job Autonomy: This concept refers to the degree of independence and control an employee has over their work tasks and decisions (Brunetto et al., 2011; Jaiswal and Dhar, 2017; Naqvi et al., 2013; Sowmya and Panchanatham, 2011).

Empowering Leadership: Refers to a leadership style that emphasizes delegation, trust, and empowerment of employees. These type of leaders encourage employees to take ownership of their work and contribute to the organization's success (Brunetto et al., 2012; Kim and Beehr, 2020).

Literature review

All seven of the organizational factors mentioned in the introduction of the research paper have been studied over the last four decades. This literature review section summarizes the past findings of each of these variables. Truly, the current labour market has changed in terms of the new demographic, what people look for in jobs now since the pandemic, what motivates them, and so on. Therefore, it will be interesting to compare these past findings with our research findings a few decades later.

Affective Organizational Commitment

Before proceeding with the job factor variables, it is important that we clearly define the main variable: affective commitment. The definition that will be used to define affective commitment in this paper is the definition by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), who have both extensively reviewed existing literature. They came to the conclusion that mindset is what distinguishes different types of commitment and in the context of affective commitment, it is one's desire to commit due to their sense of identification and attachment to the organization and its shared values, whereas other types of commitments are based on perceived cost (continuance commitment) and/or obligation (normative commitment).

Perceived Workplace Politics

The first factor to examine is perceived workplace politics. There are many interpretations of the meaning of workplace politics or organizational politics, both referring to the same concept. The table below is a summary of the different definitions from past researchers.

Authors	Their definition of organizational politics
Yang (2017)	"Organization politics involves illegitimate, self-serving behaviours that are strategically designed to gain, secure, or enhance self-interests and often occurs at the expense of the organization or its members'' (p.250)
Landells & Albrecht (2019)	"self-serving, contradictory to organizational objectives, and premeditated to cause harm to individuals, groups or entities" (p.2).
Sowmya & Panchanatham (2011).	While citing Dubrin (2001), Sowmya and Panchanatham (2011) defined organizational politics as "informal approaches to gaining power through mean other than merit or luck." (p.9).
Malik et al. (2019)	Citing Ferris et al. (2000) Malik et al. defined organizational politics to involve ''an individual's attribution to behaviors of self-serving intent, which is defined as a person's subjective evaluation about the extent to which the work environment is characterized by coworkers and supervisors who demonstrate such self-serving behavior" (p.1).
Hochwarter et al., 2020; Kacmar & Carlson, 1997)	''Organizational politics reflects an evaluation of the workplace context characterized by unsanctioned, self-serving behavior linked to informal actions directed towards power figures to protect one's self-interests over others, for example striving for in-group status, sucking up to others, backstabbing, and pursuing personal goals

	instead of those that benefit the group or organization" (as cited in Burakova et al., 2022, p.3).

Politics is part of people's lives, and it tends to be difficult to avoid it (Fikry & Arie, 2021). As such, individuals tend to behave politically in order to provide opportunities for the potential maximization of its benefits and minimization of potential loss (threats). Considering all these definitions, and their respective authors, they seem to convey almost the same definition of workplace politics. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the definition of workplace politics can be summarized as an intentional, strategic behavior for one's own personal gain that can put others at a disadvantage.

Source of Workplace Politics

Many researchers in the past have tried to understand why and where organizational politics stem from. Based on the review of the available literature on the subject matter, we have extracted the best possible claim, which is that it stems from ambiguous organizational rules or there are limited resources. Some organizational elements have been found to have an influence on workplace politics. Fikry and Arie (2021, p.109) cited Olorunleke (2015) that organizational elements that will have an influence on politics in the organization include: "uncertain environment, goal, and task interdependence, lack of resources, ambiguous goals and roles, organizational climate and history, segmentation of information and organizational structure". Workplace politics can also stem from managers' and workers' behavior and from the policies and practices of the organization (Yildiz, 2018). In 1979, the renowned Canadian academic in the field of business management, Henry Mintzberg, in his book *Power in and Around Organizations*, claimed that there is fewer politics in more formalized organizations; the reason being that these types of settings leave no room for politics when there are clear rules and procedures (Räkköläinen, 2016, p.442). To explore the relationship between these organizational factors, Mishra et al. (2016) found a positive relationship between formalization and perceived workplace politics. Moreover, it is also important to

understand that perception of politics is formed through individual experiences of events or behaviors they have encountered at the workplace, such as diversity, relationship conflict, and the need for power (Ferris et al., 1996). Therefore, each employee can have different perceptions of politics in their organization based on their own individual experiences and interactions at work.

Individual Characteristics and Perception of Workplace Politics

Regarding the influence of perceived politics, there are claims that individual characteristics or personality can influence the individual's perception of workplace politics and justice. For instance, Aggarwal et al. (2022) conducted a cross-sectional study to determine the relationship between individual personality and the perceptions of organizational politics, whereby the authors collected data using a multi-stage random sampling method. The sample size used for the study consisted of 493 faculty members working in four public universities in Punjab, India. After analyzing the data using the structural equation modeling, the results revealed that conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness have a negative correlation with perceptions of organizational politics (POP), while neuroticism was found to have a positive correlation with perceptions of organizational politics. In addition, the results also showed that POP has a negative impact on employees' perceptions concerning organizational justice. Further, POP was found to mediate the correlation between a person's personality and perceived organizational justice.

Adding to the influence of individual characteristics, such as age, on POP, Khan et al. (2020) explored the moderating effect of age between POP and employees' intention to leave, job stress and job satisfaction. The authors used self-administered and cross-sectional questionnaires to gather data from 164 participants from various businesses in Lahore, Pakistan. Using multiple regression analysis, age was found to have a positive moderating effect between POP and job satisfaction and stress.

While considering gender differences and organizational politics, research shows that males are more involved in organizational politics than women. A study by Rosin and Korabik (1990) found that more female managers have cited leaving the organization due

to politics involving males dominating the environment. Previously, Ferris and colleagues (1989) found that women perceived more workplace politics than men in the same organization. The authors believed this phenomenon was because most of them were occupying positions that were inferior to the men, leaving them in a more disadvantaged position. Other studies found that the lack of skills in politics is a barrier to minorities and women for their advancement, and it is essential that they be provided training on it (Rosen, 1982; Fernandez, 1981). In this regard, Brafford (2019) investigated gender differences in organizational politics by sampling lawyers in U.S. law firms. They also examined whether political skills and will are associated with affective employee commitment, burnout, turnover intention, and job satisfaction. The author reported that "women are more averse to organizational politics compared to men" (Brafford, 2019, p.8). The author used online surveys to gather data from 121 participants consisting of 61 male lawyers and 60 women lawyers. The findings were that there is a gender difference in organizational politics whereby men are more likely to develop political skills and will than women.

Use of Power and Influence

Power and influence are also used by politicians in our own governmental systems. Not only do these politicians have to have certain characteristics to be viewed as potential leaders of a country, but they must act in a certain way to influence others. One could say that individuals involved in workplace politics adopt the same tactics and behaviors as politicians in order to influence others. Bodla and Danish (2013) listed eight methods of organization's politics: "(1) attack or blame on others, (2) selective application of information, (3) image building, (4) generating support for ideas, (5) praising others and ingratiating, (6) building powerful coalitions and strong allies, (7) associating with influential others, (8) creating obligations and using reciprocity" (Bodla, M. A. & Danish, 2013, p.457). These traits and tactics are very similar to those used by governmental politicians who seek to be in power and maintain it as long as possible. Recognizing these straights can be a step towards addressing the power dynamics that can be present in organizational settings, with some members being left at a disadvantage if they do not know how to play the political game.

Potential Outcomes of Workplace Politics

Given the understanding of what workplace politics means, why it exists, where it potentially stems from, and what characterizes it when individuals either experience it through others or choose to engage in it, it is important to consider the potential effects and outcomes of organization politics. In the last decades, there has been a great number of researchers who have had an interest in studying organizational politics and its potential consequences for individuals and organizations. The next couple of sections will summarize the past findings on perceived workplace politics and its effects on different individual and organizational variables.

The previous paragraphs outlined that the perception of organizational politics differs across individuals based on their experiences, whether or not they were involved in it. Sowmya and Panchanatham (2011) stated that certain employees might perceive politics negatively if they were negatively affected by it, in some shape or form, whereas some employees may perceive it positively if they had benefited from it and see it as a means to obtain organizational gains. Moreover, they found that political perceptions affect how employees work, their workplace behavior with their colleagues and supervisors, their productivity, job satisfaction, and their intention to leave the organization.

Regarding the effect of perceived workplace politics and organizational culture, Landells and Albrecht (2019) added that perceived organizational politics can affect the organization negatively depending on the employees' reaction to these political activities. It can affect job satisfaction, burnout, intention to leave, stress and organizational commitment. Additionally, employees would have to put up a fight or flight response due to the feeling of not being able to cope with politics, leading to an unfair and unjust work environment. Most of the remaining employees are at a greater risk of stress and burnout because they do not want to engage in those political activities that benefit those satisfied with them. Furthermore, employees perceiving their organization as being an unfair work environment where honest individuals are not compensated fairly for their personal efforts and investments will result in stress and burnout for those employees. While contributing

to the negative effect of organizational politics, Byrne et al. (2017) found that organizational politics can negatively affect employee engagement. They asserted that employees who view negative organizational politics perceptions as an issue apply problem and emotion-focused coping involving any of these three strategies: disengaging, reducing their engagement, or narrowing the focus of engagement. These strategies can be detrimental to organizational outcomes.

Khalid and Ishaq (2015), while citing Harrel and Colleagues (1996), have shown that job performance can also be affected by perceived politics. Not only is job performance affected by perceived workplace politics, but job satisfaction is also at risk of being affected. In 2004, Harris studied the relationship between organizational politics and the effect it has on employees' job satisfaction. He confirmed that organizational politics negatively affected the job satisfaction of employees. However, there are variables that are able to moderate the relationship between organizational politics and job satisfaction. We will explore moderating variables in the next section.

Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Studies have shown that perceived organizational support has a moderating effect on organizational politics. Malaeb et al. (2022) investigated the mediating role of perceived organizational support on the connection between employee engagement and self-leadership in firms in Lebanon and the UAE. Data was gathered from 225 workers in Lebanon and 251 workers in UAE, upon which moderating analysis was done using Process V3.3. The results found a significant positive moderating role of perceived organizational support on employee engagement and self-leadership in UAE but no effect in Lebanon. The authors recommended the use of POS to enhance employee engagement.

Additionally, Lai et al. (2022) explored the moderating role of POS on employee job stress and turnover intention using a sample of 720 employees from SMEs in China. The authors applied linear and multiple regression models of analysis on SPSS v25 to find the statistical relationship. Job stress and turnover intention were examined in relation to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whereas the findings showed that there was a significant positive relationship between job stress and turnover intention, it was found

that POS weakened this relationship. This shows that POS has a weak moderating effect between employee turnover intention and job stress.

Hochwarter et al. (2003) examined the moderating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between perceptions of politics in the workplace and work outcomes. One of the motives of their study was to understand why perceived politics leads to negative job-related reactions from employees. They claimed that the reason for this is that "politics perceptions have the potential to cultivate negative reactions since individuals question the organization's motivation to protect their psychological safety and well-being" (p.439). In addition, Hochwarter et al. claimed that political environments have the potential to instill a negative mindset through their perceived lack of support on the organization's end. Therefore, they hypothesized that perceived organizational support could mediate this relationship. Thus, based on these past research findings, perceived organizational support could be a valuable means for managers to buffer the effect on employees of perceived politics in their work environments.

Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Research has found that perceived organizational support has a mediating role in organizational politics. Bergeron and Thompson (2020) explored how perceived organizational support (POS) plays a mediating role between voice behavior and organizational politics. They investigated the extent to which POS can be used to explain the nature of the relationship. Using lagged survey data from 257 employees, the results found that perceptions of organizational politics have a negative relationship with voice behavior and POS had a positive relationship with voice behavior. In addition, POS was found to have a mediating effect on the relation between organizational politics and voice behavior within the workplace.

Adding to the mediating role of perceived organizational support, Saadeh and Suifan (2020) examined the mediating role of POS on job stress and organizational commitment within the healthcare business in Amman, Jordan. Using a cross-sectional and quantitative survey, the authors collected data from a sample of 500 participants

drawn from six hospitals in Amman to test the mediating effect of POS on job stress and organizational commitment. Upon analyzing the results using regression analysis, the results showed that besides having a significant negative relationship between POS and job stress, there was also a negative mediating effect of POS on organizational commitment and job stress.

Overall, the extensive review on workplace politics demonstrates how it is an intentional, strategic behavior aimed at personal gain, potentially disadvantaging others. It often stems from factors like ambiguous organizational rules, limited resources, organizational climate, and can be influenced by individual experiences and behaviors. More importantly, perceived workplace politics can impact various aspects, including job satisfaction, burnout, organizational commitment, employee engagement, job performance, and job satisfaction, with perceived organizational support moderating and mediating its effects on these variables.

Based on this review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organizational politics will negatively impact public sector employees' affective commitment.

Career and Development Opportunities

Employees' commitment is significantly influenced by the existing opportunities available within the organization for career growth. For instance, Rahayu et al. (2019) investigated how career training and development can significantly influence job satisfaction, which would lead to organizational commitment. The study involved 200 participants chosen from a population of 665 Regional Secretariats (SETDA) workers of the Njambi Provincial Government. In their quantitative research, Rahayu et al. (2019) found that career development and training have significant positive connections with job satisfaction and employee commitment. While job satisfaction was found to partially affect employee commitment, all three variables (career training, development, and job satisfaction) had a significant influence on employee commitment. Thus, including career

opportunities for employees to grow their knowledge and skills are essential for the needed employee affective commitment.

Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) conducted a study to determine employee commitment in the workplace using a general model. The research considered how career progression could significantly influence employees' effective motivation in the workplace and found that career opportunities in an organization can positively promote affective commitment. In this regard, employees' career opportunities did not necessarily imply promotions but also improved their skills through training and professional development. Researchers found that the lack of skills among employees is a barrier to minorities and women for their advancement, and it is essential that they be provided training on it to enhance their skills. In addition, a lack of opportunities for the minority gender and other social minorities leads to employee turnover and low commitment. For instance, more female managers had cited leaving the organization due to male dominance in many work environments. Earlier researchers, such as Ferris and colleagues (1996) examined individual characteristics as a prediction of perceived workplace politics, and their findings supported the findings, where they claimed that men often have more opportunities than women and see it as something that's part of the organization life; thus, they tend to view their workplace lacking opportunities for the female gender.

In another study, Napitupul et al. (2017) examined how career development enhances employee performance in the public sector in Indonesia. Their empirical study involved the mediating role of POS, motivation, and affective commitment by analyzing the perceptions of 250 civil servants in 15 regional branches. By applying using structural equation analysis with SmartPLS 2.0 program, the study revealed that career development has a strong influence on POS, motivation, and affective commitment. Further, POS was found to have a strong mediating effect on the relationship between the variables and organizational performance.

Adding to the topic of employee development and outcomes, Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) explored the role of supervisory mentoring in influencing employee affective commitment and reducing employee turnover through the critical role of

contextual factors. The study found that supervisory mentoring has a strong effect on employee affective commitment since it influences task performance and job conditions. For instance, besides creating a good supervisor-subordinate relationship, mentoring helps subordinates acquire skills and knowledge that would improve their task performance, leading to increased affective commitment. In their study, Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) surveyed 228 individuals to examine how contextual factors, such as career and development opportunities and job scope, moderate the link between supervisory mentoring, affective commitment and employee turnover and found that job scope and career and development opportunities have a strong positive moderating influence on affective commitment, leading to reduced employee turnover. This indirect influence of career and development opportunities on affective commitment and employee turnover provides a critical ground to examine whether there is a direct influence on affective commitment.

To summarize, the literature presented demonstrates how employee commitment is significantly influenced by the presence of career development and training opportunities within an organization.

Based on this review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Career and development opportunities will positively impact the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Perceived Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is another crucial organizational factor significantly affecting employee affective commitment. It is defined as an employee's shared belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks in their workplace to express their ideas and concerns freely (Li et al., 2022). Many research works have found that employees develop affective commitment in an organization that allows them to express their thoughts, ideas, and inspirations without fear of attracting punishment. For instance, while observing the influence of psychological safety on employee affective commitment within the healthcare setting by surveying 267 employees, Li et al. (2022) found that psychological

safety reduces job burnout and increases satisfaction, leading to high affective commitment. Psychological safety could be built through perceived organizational support, which in turn negates the effect of burnout and lead to affective employee commitment. Therefore, organizational support is a key ingredient needed to counter perceived negative feelings and restore the synergy toward a commitment to the organization. The findings by Li et al. (2022) confirmed what earlier research by Kirk-Brown and Van Dijk (2016) found when they examined the role of psychological safety on job resources, turnover intention, and affective employee commitment by comparing a sample of 92 employees with chronic illness and 512 general employees. In their study, Kirk-Brown and Van Dijk (2016) found a very low employee affective commitment and a strong turnover intention among general employees due to the perceived low psychological safety, especially with chronically ill persons in the workplace. From the results, creating a workplace environment where all employees feel safe and respect one another can significantly enhance affective employee commitment in an organization. Any perceived threat to safety can trigger emotions, leading to low affective commitment.

Public sector employees are not exempted from developing affective commitment. In their contribution to the debate on affective employee commitment, Sun (2021) explored public sector motivation on affective employee commitment to facilitate organizational change. With the continuous changes happening in the global business environment, organizations are under pressure to effect organizational change, and therefore, employees are critical change recipients or agents. Of course, many studies have found that employees may resist change and feel stressed when it's time to make organizational change. This may result in low affective commitment due to vulnerability to job insecurity, leading to low psychological safety. Therefore, by surveying 465 front-line public sector employees in an eastern city of China that was undergoing public sector change, Sun (2021) found that voice behavior, which refers to proactive employee behavior that improves a situation through flexibility and improvements, has a mediating effect between public sector motivation and affective employee commitment to change. The study provides a solid understanding of the need to enhance change recipients' (employees) affective commitment in order to realize the desired change in the public sector. In this regard, psychological safety plays a critical role in motivating employees

to commit to public sector change, especially when employees become aware that the change will not cause them any harm. In this regard, Ahmad et al. (2021) examined the value of the psychological perspective for change-supportive intentions and behaviors of 135 public school teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq schools that were undergoing major reforms and found that psychological mechanisms are critical in the formation of change support in public sector organization.

In short, these studies demonstrate that positive perceptions of psychological safety in the workplace reduce burnout, increase job satisfaction, and lead to higher affective commitment, with organizational support playing a key role in fostering this safety.

Based on the above literature review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Perceived psychological safety will positively impact the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Role Overload

Role overload is an inevitable factor in an organization, and it has a serious effect on employees' behaviors and attitudes toward the organization. For this reason, ineffective management of roles can contribute to low satisfaction, increased job stress, and low motivation. Last year, a team of Korean researchers (Ko et al., 2022) investigated the negative effect of role overload on employee affective commitment and mitigation strategy. The researchers analyzed data from 269 employees from firms in South Korea and found a negative relationship between role overload and employee affective commitment and how providing employee compassion at work, work engagement, and positive psychological capital can moderate and mediate the negative effect. Thus, organizations that strive to provide an engaging work environment, reduce stress, and improve job satisfaction are more likely to improve employee affective commitment, thus, discouraging intention to leave (Ko et al., 2022).

Earlier research by Malik and Waheed (2010) explored the relationship between job stressors, which include job overload and job conflict, and effective employee

commitment and the mediating effect of job satisfaction. They applied a self-administered questionnaire on a sample of 151 private sector bank branch managers in Pakistan to help understand the correlation between job stressors and affective commitment and how job satisfaction mediates between the two variables. In their analysis, Malik and Waheed (2010) found that role overload and role conflict had both direct negative effects on the affective commitment of employees. Additionally, the results found a partial mediating role of job satisfaction between affective commitment and role overload. A more recent study on the effect of role stress consisting of role ambiguity, overload, and conflict on affective commitment was conducted by Morrissette and Kisamore (2020) using a meta-data analysis of 105 studies with a total of 37,993 participants between 2001 and 2019 and found that role stress, including role overload, strongly affect employee affective commitment. This is more severe in a workplace environment with fewer resources to perform the role, as well as a lack of organizational support to help perform the role. While citing conservation of resources (COR) theories by Hobfoll (1989), which argues that people seek to acquire and maintain resources, including better work-life balance, Morrissette and Kisamore (2020) stated that failure to get these resources to perform the role would strain an individual in the workplace, thereby lowering their affective commitment. In this regard, the authors found that organizational culture and occupational type have a significant moderating effect on role stress and affective commitment.

Another research by Fisher (2014) supported the earlier findings on the negative effect of role overload on the affective commitment by investigating a sample of 6,264 employees drawn from 337 different workplaces in a multinational organization across 18 countries. Although the author did not find the variation of affective commitment as a function of organizational culture as earlier found by Malik and Waheed (2010) since one culture might be ineffectual in another, Fisher (2014) found a significant influence of cooperative climate and structural empowerment to moderate the negative effect of role overload on affective commitment. Therefore, the evidence from various studies has acknowledged that there is a negative influence of role overload on employee affective commitment. However, the only variation between these research works is the moderating and the mediating variables to mitigate the negative effect of role overload on affective commitment. In this regard, the literature reviewed found that organizational support

plays a key moderating role in mitigating the negative effect of role overload and affective commitment in an organization.

In sum, the literature review on role overload highlights its detrimental impact on employee behaviors and attitudes within organizations, including low job satisfaction, increased stress, and reduced motivation.

We thus propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Role overload will negatively impact the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Ego Depletion

Naturally, individuals often express a strong impulse to develop behaviors that tend to deviate from organizational goals, such as expressing inappropriate anger, overspending, breaking the rules, etc., depending on the level of power such individuals have. If not suppressed through self-control, such impulses may hinder the achievement of organizational goals. People exercise self-control to help them achieve their desired goals or influence or be influenced by others. Kim et al. (2015) conducted a study investigating ego depletion resulting from previous self-control as a precursor of a sense of power. The main aim was to answer the research question: "What happens to a person's sense of power after he or she controls the self?" They conducted five studies, where one was to determine the correlation between power and self-control, and four were experimental to demonstrate ego depletion determines an individual's sense of power. A total sample of 531 individual participants was used to determine how ego depletion arising from previous self-control shapes an individual's personal sense of power. The authors hypothesized that depleted individuals with low-level self-control are more likely to feel they have limited resources to influence other people, thus, reducing their sense of power and leading to low affective commitment. The results found a direct connection between ego depletion and an individual's sense of power, whereby a depleted individual who thinks concretely experiences a sense of power, but the power disappears when they think abstractly. On the other hand, Kim et al. (2015) found that construal level

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(psychological distance and a person's thinking) can be manipulated easily through a simple mental process, thereby allowing the depleted individual to maintain a sense of power through a high-level of mental representation.

Another study by Deng et al. (2016) on ego depletion from self-regulation caused by value incongruence between employees and the organization through the resource-based account using ego-depletion theory found that the connection between value incongruence and ego depletion is significant among employees with high positive affective commitment. They cited that ego depletion theory maintains that "effortful self-regulation depends on a minimal resource that becomes depleted by any acts of self-control, causing subsequent performance on other self-control works to become worse" (Deng et al., 2016, p.7). In this regard, ego depletion is likely to be experienced when two opposing motives occur, such that one motive has to be suppressed in favour of the other motive. This consumes much energy in the process, thereby leaving less energy for other self-regulating activities for an individual, leading to high negative affect. Therefore, by administering questionnaires to 305 employees and their supervisors from a large organization in China, Deng et al. (2016) found that individuals with excess and deficit value incongruence conditions expressed strong ego depletion compared to those individuals with congruent conditions, leading to low affective commitment among employees with value incongruence.

Adding to the application of ego depletion theory, a more recent study by Hussain et al. (2021) examined why and when employees may demonstrate perfectionism personality traits toward others and how it's linked to incivility by administering three waves of questionnaires on a sample of 253 employees‑coworker dyads. Incivility, in this case, refers to low-intensity deviant behaviours having ambiguous intentions to harm and violation of existing norms for mutual respect. By applying confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for data analysis, Hussain et al. (2021) found that perfectionism personality traits are positively linked with incivility to others and that ego depletion mediates between the two variables. Ego depletion makes perfectionist individuals experience depletion due to psychological factors, such as changing thoughts and distress that induce their personalities of individuals to act incompatible with coworkers, leading to a low

commitment to organizational goals. This implies that ego depletion negatively affects employee affective commitment.

In summary, the literature review on ego depletion reveals that individuals often struggle to control impulses that deviate from organizational goals, and their ability to exercise self-control is crucial for achieving these objectives.

Based on the above discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Ego depletion will negatively impact the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Job Autonomy

Initially, job autonomy in the workplace referred to the degree of freedom that the managers give their subordinates to decide how much ownership they have on the job to determine their own ways of doing it. Recent studies expanded this definition to encompass three interrelated factors to autonomy, which include decision-making, work methods and work scheduling (as cited in Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Studies show that a high degree of job autonomy influences employees' affective commitment. For instance, in their cross-sectional study, Brunetto et al. (2011) tested the influence of supervisor-subordinate perception of autonomy, among other variables, on employees' affective commitment by surveying 900 workers in healthcare in Australia. After performing a correlation analysis, Brunetto et al. (2011) found a statistically significant relationship between job autonomy and affective employee commitment, implying that increased employee job autonomy may foster affective commitment.

When exploring the concept of job autonomy or power to make decisions about the job in the workplace, one should also be noted the implication of power and influence on employee commitment. Sowmya and Panchanatham (2011) defined power as "one's ability to influence other people [and] influence is the process of affecting the commitment of the person." (p.8). Therefore, allowing employees to have job autonomy would imply giving them greater flexibility to determine the course of action regarding the job assignment.

Naqvi et al. (2013) conducted a study on how job autonomy impacts job satisfaction and commitment using a sample of 107 workers in fast-food restaurants operating in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan. The study used a quantitative research methodology and analyzed data on SPSS to determine the statistical influence of job autonomy on the commitment of employees. The results found that the increased job autonomy for employees had a significant influence on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment due to the created shared organizational culture. Therefore, as one of the organization's practices, job autonomy influences commitment by making individuals feel skillful and creative in the way they are given the freedom to perform tasks, leading to increased affective commitment. Adding to the effects of autonomy on the affective commitment of employees in the hotel industry, Jaiswal and Dhar (2017) considered job autonomy as a human resource practice and its effect on employees' affective commitment and creativity. They administered semi-structured questionnaires to 440 employees chosen from 35 hotels and used hierarchical regression analysis for data analysis. The authors found that job autonomy had a significant moderating effect between employee creativity and affective commitment. These research articles confirmed the significant influence of employee job autonomy on job satisfaction and affective commitment by giving employees the freedom to be creative in solving work-related problems. However, there is a geographical limitation where the studies were done in other countries outside Canada.

A more recent study conducted in Ghana by researchers Ahakwa and his colleagues (2021) on 330 public sector workers also revealed a significant positive relationship between job autonomy and organizational commitment which coincided with the research findings of past studies described in their literature review. In regard to this work design factor, the authors concluded that the more autonomy an employee is given at their job, the higher their commitment toward their organization or institution will be. Nonetheless, the same geographical limitation is applicable due to the study being conducted outside Canada.

To summarize, the presented studies on job autonomy highlights the evolving concept of job autonomy in the workplace, initially defined as the degree of freedom

granted by managers to employees. These recent studies have expanded this definition to encompass decision-making, work methods, and work scheduling, emphasizing its significant influence on employees' affective commitment.

Based on this review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Job autonomy will have a positive impact on the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Empowering Leadership

Empowering leadership is an important aspect that affects employee reaction to organizational goals, including performance and withdrawal. The autonomy provided by empowering leadership gives employees expanded responsibilities to enable them to grow their skills and experience, thus, promoting affective commitment. Kim and Beehr (2020) conducted a study to test the mediating effect of empowering leadership on withdrawal behaviors, such as lateness, absenteeism, and employee turnover intention using a sample of 294 full-time U.S. employees. The study employed a survey to collect the perceptions of employees' empowering leadership on their turnover intention, withdrawal, and absenteeism. The results from structural equation modelling showed that empowering leadership behavior was positively related to affective organizational commitment. However, the study found a negative relationship between empowering leadership and withdrawal and turnover intention. Further, the results of the study found no direct influence of empowering leadership on withdrawal, but it directly influenced employee lateness.

Similar to the context of our research, a team of researchers from Australia also conducted a study in the private and public health sectors. Brunetto et al. (2012) compared the impact of supervisor-subordinate relationships along with empowering leadership to the effect of affective commitment amongst Australian public and private sector nurses. With a large sample size of 1283 employees, researchers were able to add valuable insights to management academia. Brunetto and his colleagues found that between the two demographics, there were significant differences. The noticeable differences were

that private sector nurses were more satisfied with their supervisor-employee relationship, had a higher perception of empowerment and showed significantly more commitment to their hospital (Brunetto et al., 2012). The research findings also revealed that they perceived to have greater autonomy than public sector nurses. In their concluding remarks, Brunetto et al. described the importance of improving supervisor-employee relationships, along with psychological empowerment, which will positively impact affective commitment. More interestingly, "a stronger effect is expected within the public sector due to levels of bureaucratization" (Brunetto et al., 2012, p.2250).

Adding to the effect of empowering leadership on affective commitment, Al Otaibi et al. (2022) examined the role which empowering leadership plays in employee psychological empowerment, engagement, and affective commitment. Various studies have argued that empowering leadership has a significant influence on the psychological, engagement, and affective commitment of employees. In their study, Al Otaibi et al. (2022) conducted a self-structured questionnaire on a sample of 231 nurses who were working in a university hospital in Saudi Arabia by applying a cross-sectional design on SEM to assess the level of relationship between engagement, psychological, and affective commitment. The findings of the structural equation modelling analysis revealed a significant connection between affective commitment and psychological empowerment, with a mediating role of employee engagement.

While contributing to employee affective commitment, Alfaris and Zakiy (2021) explored the mediating role of empowering leadership between affective commitment and employee creativity. They claimed that leaders that have demonstrated trust in their employees would make them feel empowered and enhance their creativity. In their study, Alfaris and Zakiy (2021) conducted a study in five Islamic financial institutions in Yogyakarta using a sample of 219 employees. The study was a descriptive quantitative analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) on SmartPLS3.2 to determine the effect of empowering leadership on affective commitment and employee creativity. The results revealed that empowering leadership has a significant positive relationship with employee creativity and affective commitment. Their findings confirm the results of the

study by Kim and Beehr (2020) on the positive role of empowering leadership on commitment, making it an essential variable to explore in the public sector.

In sum, these studies collectively highlight the importance of empowering leadership in promoting employee commitment and performance across various sectors.

Based on this review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Empowering leadership will have a positive impact on the affective commitment of public sector employees.

Research Methodology

This study used a quantitative research methodology with a descriptive research design. Quantitative research methodology involves collecting and analyzing numerical data using statistical techniques to answer the research question (Apuke, 2017). The intention was to explore the perceptions of public sector employees in Quebec, Canada, about various organizational practices and affective commitment.

A group of researchers from HEC Montréal developed a digital platform (the Global Experience Panel (https://www.panelexperienceglobale.com/en/) that allows surveying employees for public and private organizations about their work experiences. This platform was used to collect the data for the present study. The scope of the research audience was extended to 8 different provincial agencies and departments with a variety of sectors such as finance, environment, arts, cultural and entertainment, family, professional association, energy, and building management. This initiative would allow organizational leaders to get a clearer portrait of the compiled responses, which would help them get a better understanding of their employees' overall experience and perceptions of different aspects related to work. In this specific research initiative, the variables that were assessed included: perceived organizational politics, empowering leadership, job autonomy, career and development opportunities, role overload, ego depletion, perceived psychological safety, and affective commitment.

Survey Questionnaires

All the variables mentioned above were assessed through scales that were based on past empirical research. The majority of the items were measured through a five-point Likert-type scale except for career and development opportunities, given the context of this particular variable.

Below is the list of the variables and the source of reference for scale development:

Variables	References of the question items
Role overload	Role overload items based on the research of John Schaubroeck, John L. Cotton, and Kenneth R. Jennings in 1989.
Psychological safety	Psychological safety items based on the research of Amy Edmondson in 1999.
Perceived organizational politics	Perceived organizational politics items based on the research of Eran Vigoda in 2002.
Career and development opportunities	Career and development opportunities items based on the research of Maria L. Kraimer, Scott E. Seibert, Sandy J Wayne, Robert C. Liden and Jesus Bravo in 2011.
Ego depletion	Ego depletion items based on the research of Junchao (Jason) Li, Christopher M. Barnes, Kai Chi Yam, Christiano L. Guarana and Lin Wang in 2019.
Job autonomy	Job autonomy depletion items based on the research of Frederick P. Morgeson and Stephen E. Humphrey in 2006.
Empowering leadership	Empowering leadership items based on the research of Michel Ahearne, John Mathieu, and Adam Rapp in 2005.
Affective Commitment	Affective commitment items based on the research of John P. Meyer, Nathalie J. Allen, and Catherine A. Smith in 1993.

Data Collection Process

Prior to sending the surveys to participants, an initial communication was created for each organization to be sent out to their employees. This communication informed potential participants about the pertinence and existence of this research project. This step

was essential to get participants to voluntarily participate by being transparent about the purpose and use of this research.

The selection process of participants was randomized. Once the departments and agencies had given their approval to their respective human resources department, the HR representatives proceeded with collecting the names and emails of the employees who responded to participate in the study voluntarily. Then, the list of names and emails from each organization was uploaded to the survey platform. The research team ensured that names and emails were anonymized by randomly assigning them digital ID numbers. The surveys were then sent to the participants in three waves, with three-month gaps in between Wave 1 = month zero; Wave 2 = 3rd month; Wave 3 = 6th month. The data used in the present study included only a subset of the variables measured in the surveys. In the context of the present study, the first wave's questionnaire focused on individual characteristics such as age, gender, tenure, education level, employment status, and number of team members (see Appendix), and the substantive variables of psychological safety, perceived organizational politics, career and development opportunities, ego depletion, and role overload. The second wave included scale items that focused on job autonomy and empowering leadership, while the third wave included the measure of affective commitment.

During the first wave of data collection, the platform gathered a total of 1,355 valid responses. In the subsequent waves, the number of responses decreased due to normal turnover in these different organizations where a movement occurs amongst their current staff members, with some employees leaving for whatever reason or new ones joining the organization during that three-month period. Only the participants who were able to respond to all three waves of surveys were considered in the analyses conducted in this study. Hence, having new employees join the organization or return from leave after the first wave was not considered in the compilation of responses.

Analysis of Results

Introduction

The analysis of the demographic information related to the sample is based on the Time 1 data (N = 1,355). The results are presented in tables as follows.

Summary of the sample demographics

Through the first questionnaire participants voluntarily filled out, we were able to determine the characteristics of our sample demographics. Table 1 shows that the sample consisted of 820 females (60.5%) and 498 males (36.8%). However, 28 respondents chose not to respond.

Table 1

Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
A man	498	36.8	37.5	37.5
A woman	820	60.5	61.8	99.3
Other	9	0.7	0.7	100
Missing responses	28	2.1		
Total responses	1327	97.9	100	

Source: (Survey, 2023)

Gender composition is crucial in this research because they demonstrate different perceptions about organizational practices. For instance, research shows that females perceive workplace politics more than males (Ferris and colleagues,1989; Rosin & Korabik, 1990). Therefore, a balanced gender can provide a more generalized perception.

All participants confirmed the sector they worked for. Table 2 shows that the majority of the respondents worked in different sectors, such as environment (37.0%), family (16.6%), and building management sector (23.9%), while 22.5% work in other sectors, such as arts, finance, professional associations, culture and entertainment, and energy.

Table 2

Associated Sector

Sector	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Environment	502	37	37	37
Arts	38	2.8	2.8	42.1
Family	225	16.6	16.6	58.7
Finance	65	4.8	4.8	63.5
Professional Association	42	3.1	3.1	66.6
Building Management	324	23.9	23.9	90.6
Cultural & Entertainment	69	5.1	5.1	95.6
Energy	59	4.4	4.4	100
Total responses	1355	100	100	

Source: (Survey, 2023)

Examining the perceptions of employees in different sectors assists in making generalizations about the public sector employees' perceptions of organizational practices.

Table 3 shows that the majority of the sample has achieved higher education, with 370 respondents having obtained a college/professional diploma (28%), 559 respondents having a bachelor's degree (42.3%), and 344 respondents having a master's degree (26%). Thirty-two respondents didn't disclose their level of education.

Table 3

Highest Level of Education Completed

Degree	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Elementary	1	0.1	0.1	0.1
High School	38	2.8	2.9	42.1
College/Professional	370	27.3	28	30.9
Bachelor's	559	41.3	42.3	73.2
Master's	344	25.4	26	99.2
Ph.D.	11	0.8	0.8	100
Missing responses	32	2.4		
Total responses	1323	97.6	100	

Source: (Survey, 2023)

Table 4 shows that most respondents are regular employees (91%), meaning they worked full-time indeterminately or determinately. Employment status is important to this study since employment status influences employees' long-term commitment to the goals of the organization.

Table 4

Employment Status

Status of employment	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Regular	1207	89.1	91	91
Casual	120	8.9	9	100
Student Intern				

Missing responses	28	2.1	
Total responses	1327	97.9	100

Based on the statistics in Table 5, the majority of the respondents are full-time employees (95.1%).

Table 5

Employment Type

Type of employment	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Full-time	1288	95.1	97.1	97.1
Part-time	39	2.9	2.9	100
Missing responses	28	2.1		
Total responses	1327	97.9	100	

Age and tenure determine the commitments based on employee experiences. Table 6 shows that the average tenure with the supervisor is 2.41 years. The average age of the participants is close to 45 years, with 20 years old being the youngest and 74 being the oldest. Lastly, the average tenure with the respective organization is 7.45 years.

Table 6

Tenure and Age

Tenure and Age (years)	*N*	Min	Max	Average	SD
Tenure with Supervisor	842	0	24	2.4114	2.92385
Age	1319	20	74	44.8916	9.81388
Org. Tenure	1323	0.25	34	7.4546	7.40535
Valid Responses (list)	838				

Source: (Survey, 2023)

For this research, we were also interested in knowing the team sizes the respondents worked in. Based on the compilation in Table 7, we can see that most teams in the public service are large, ranging from 2 members up to 38 members in a team.

Table 7

Team Size

Team Size (ind.)	Frequency	Percentage%	Valid %	Cumulative %
2	5	0.4	0.5	0.5
3	7	0.5	0.8	1.3
4	26	1.9	2.9	4.2
5	31	2.3	3.4	7.6
6	60	4.4	6.6	14.2
7	59	4.4	6.5	20.6

8	42	3.1	4.6	25.2
9	18	1.3	2	27.2
10	38	2.8	4.2	31.4
11	50	3.7	5.5	36.9
12	19	1.4	2.1	39
13	88	6.5	9.7	48.6
14	65	4.8	7.1	55.8
15	61	4.5	6.7	62.5
16	63	4.6	6.9	69.4
17	15	1.1	1.6	71
19	65	4.8	7.1	78.2
20	26	1.9	2.9	81
21	10	0.7	1.1	82.1
22	16	1.2	1.8	83.9
23	33	2.4	3.6	87.5
24	24	1.8	2.6	90.1
25	15	1.1	1.6	91.8
26	7	0.5	0.8	92.8
27	19	1.4	2.1	94.6
28	19	1.4	2.1	96.7
31	16	1.2	1.8	98.5

38	14	1.0	1.5	100
Missing responses	444	32.8		
Total responses	1355	100		

Source: (Survey, 2023)

To summarize, the sample mostly consisted of female respondents with high education from college to master's degrees. The largest portion of respondents came from three sectors: environment, family and building management. Most of the respondents are regular full-time employees with an average age of 44.89 years. The average organizational tenure is 7.45 years and the average tenure with their respective supervisor is 2.41. Overall, respondents are part of large teams ranging from 4 members to 38 members.

Descriptive Statistics

Through analytical software such as Lisrel and SPSS, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis, extracted descriptive statistics and correlations, and conducted multiple linear regression analyses. A confirmatory factor analysis through Lisrel was conducted to examine the discriminant validity of the study variables, which included perceived organization politics, job autonomy, empowering leadership, role overload, psychological safety, ego depletion, career and development opportunities, and affective commitment. Table 8 shows the fit indices for the theorized 8-factor confirmatory factor analysis model.

Table 8

Fit Indices for the 8-Factor Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model

Indices	Value	P value
Chi-Square	3853.96	0.0
Degrees of Freedom	1006	-
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.066	-
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.96	-
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.96	-
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	0.063	-

Source: (Survey, 2023)

From the analysis presented in Table 1, the chi-square statistic, which measures the fit between the hypothesized model and the actual data obtained from a set of observed variables (Alavi et al., 2020), was 3853.96. The degrees of freedom were 1006, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.066, Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) was 0.96, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.96, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was 0.063.

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) loadings for scale items were all significant and sizable, as can be seen from Table 9.

Table 9

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Loadings of Scale Items

Items	Loading
Factor 1: Role overload	
1. The amount of work I am expected to do is too great	.80***
2. I never seem to have enough time to get everything done at work	.86***
3. It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do	.92***
Factor 2: Psychological safety	
4. If you make a mistake in this team, it is often held against you (reverse coded)	.60***
5. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues	.67***
6. People on this team sometimes reject others for being different (reverse coded)	.55***
7. It is safe to take a risk on this team	.59***
8. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help (reverse coded)	.50***
9. No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts	.48***
10. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized	.69***
Factor 3: Perceived organizational politics	
11. Favoritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead around here	.78***
12. Rewards come only to those who work hard in this organization (reverse coded)	.47***
13. There is a group of people in my department who always get things their way because no one wants to challenge them	.73***
14. People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down	.69***
15. I have seen changes made in policies here that only serve the purposes of a few individuals, not the work unit or the organization	.77***
16. There is a no place for yes-men around here: good ideas are desired even when it means disagreeing with superiors (reverse coded)	.58***
Factor 4: Perceived career and development opportunities	
17. There are career opportunities that are attractive to me in this organization	.92***
18. There are job opportunities available within this organization that are of interest to me	.79***
19. My organization offers many job opportunities that match my career goals	.83***
20. Training opportunities in this organization match my needs	.51***
21. There are opportunities to learn new things in this organization that are of interest to me	.64***
Factor 5: Ego depletion	
22. I feel drained	.74***
23. My mind feels unfocused	.81***
24. It takes a lot of effort for me to concentrate on something	.82***
25. I cannot absorb any information	.69***
26. I feel like my willpower is gone	.80***
Factor 6: Job autonomy	
27. My job allows me to make my own decisions about how to schedule my work	.79***
28. My job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work	.87***
29. My job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work	.85***

Factor 7: Empowering leadership	
30. My supervisor ... helps me understand how my objectives and goals relate to that of the company	.81***
31. … helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company	.84***
32. … helps me understand how my job fits into the bigger picture	.84***
33. … makes many decisions together with me	.72***
34. … often consults me on strategic decisions	.71***
35. … solicits my opinion on decisions that may affect me	.79***
36. … believes that I can handle demanding tasks	.72***
37. … believes in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes	.78***
38. … expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level	.79***
39. … allows me to do my job my way	.74***
40. … makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple	.78***
41. … allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy customer needs	.77***
Factor 8: Affective commitment	
42. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	.91***
43. I am proud to belong to this organization	.89***
44. I feel emotionally attached to this organization	.93***
45. I feel like "part of the family" at my organization	.85***
46. I really feel that I belong in this organization	.83***
47. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	.45***

Note: N = 809.

****p < .001.*

Based on Table 9 results, a sample of 809 participants was analyzed. The loadings for the role overload items were very high, ranging from 0.80 to 0.92, indicating that the items reflected a single overall construct. The loadings for the psychological safety items were significant but lower, ranging from 0.48 to 0.69. Loadings on the perceived organizational politics were relatively high, ranging from 0.47 to 0.77. The perceived career and development opportunities item loadings were high, ranging from 0.51 to 0.92. Further, loadings for ego depletion range from 0.69 to 0.82. Job autonomy items also had loadings relatively high, ranging from 0.79 to 0.87. The loadings on empowering leadership were also very high, ranging from 0.71 to 0.84.

Finally, the participants' affective commitment to their organizations ranged from 0.45 to 0.91.

Overall, the CFA results found that all the factor items were statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.001. As the CFA model yielded excellent fit to the data, it implies that the constructs of perceived organizational politics, job autonomy, empowering leadership, role overload, psychological safety, career and development opportunities, and ego depletion exhibited good discriminant validity.

Furthermore, from a descriptive perspective, Table 10 reports the results of the correlational analysis for the study variables, as well as the variables' means and standard deviations.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age (years) (T1)	44.89	9.81	—										
2. Gender (T1)	1.63	0.50	−.11**	—									
3. Organizational tenure (years) (T1)	7.45	7.41	.39**	−.11**	—								
4. Psychological safety (T1)	4.10	0.69	−.08*	.02	−.07*	(.78)							
5. Perceived organizational politics (T1)	2.35	0.90	.09**	−.04	.23**	−.55**	(.83)						
6. Career and developmental opportunities (T1)	4.38	1.50	−.19**	−.03	−.23**	.30**	−.43**	(.86)					
7. Ego depletion (T1)	1.92	0.87	−.14**	.06	−.01	−.30**	.28**	−.25**	(.87)				
8. Role overload (T1)	2.96	1.17	.12**	−.06	.15**	−.17**	.25**	−.12**	.31**	(.91)			
9. Job autonomy (T2)	4.04	0.86	−.09**	.01	−.09**	.37**	−.31**	.25**	−.19**	−.05	(.88)		
10. Empowering leadership (T2)	3.91	0.84	−.09**	.00	−.12**	.45**	−.44**	.35**	−.22**	−.07*	.58**	(.95)	
11. Affective commitment (T3)	3.74	0.87	−.01	−.00	−.06*	.29**	−.38**	.41**	−.20**	−.05	.28**	.43**	(.91)

Note. Ns = 829-1355. For gender: 1 = male, 2 = female. T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2; T3 = Time 3. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) appear in parentheses along the diagonal.
*p < .05; **p < .01.

The variables Psychological Safety, Perceived Organizational Politics, Ego Depletion, Role Overload, Job Autonomy, Empowering Leadership, and Affective Commitment were measured using a 5-point agreement scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree), while the variable Career and Development Opportunities was measured using a 7-point agreement scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

The internal consistency of the variables was tested using Cronbach's alpha, for which the recommended threshold is 0.70. The results show that the internal consistencies for all variables were above the threshold, as indicated in Table 10 in parentheses. Several of the correlations among variables were found to be statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.01 and 0.05. From the analysis, the standard deviation for career and development opportunities was larger (1.50) while the standard deviation for psychological safety was lower 0.69. Interestingly, psychological safety, career and development opportunities, job autonomy, and empowering leadership had positive associations with affective commitment while perceived organizational politics and ego depletion exhibited negative correlations with affective commitment.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to delineate the level of influence of perceived organizational politics, job autonomy, empowering leadership, role overload, psychological safety, career and development opportunities, and ego depletion on employee affective commitment. Table 11 shows the results of the multiple linear regression analyses. The control variable of age, gender, and tenure were introduced in Model 1. Then, the substantive variables measured at Time 1 (i.e., psychological safety, perceived organizational politics, career and development opportunities, ego depletion, and role overload) were added to Model 2. Finally, Model 3 added job autonomy and empowering leadership to the equation. As can be seen from Model 3, perceived organizational politics ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .001$), career and development opportunities ($\beta = .26$, $p < .001$), and empowering leadership ($\beta = .23$, $p < .001$) had a significant effect on affective commitment, in a direction that was consistent with Hypotheses 1, 2, and 7. These hypotheses are thus supported. In contrast, psychological safety ($\beta = -.01$, *ns*), ego

depletion ($\beta = -.04$, *ns*), role overload ($\beta = .02$, *ns*), and job autonomy ($\beta = .05$, *ns*) were

unrelated to affective commitment. Hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 6 are thus rejected. Overall,

the independent variables accounted for significant variance in affective commitment

($R^2 = .29$, $p < .001$).

Table 11

Multiple Linear Regression Results for Time 3 Affective Commitment

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Age (years) (T1)	−.01	.03	.03
Gender (T1)	−.04	−.01	−.01
Organizational tenure (Years) (T1)	−.04	.07	.07
Psychological safety (T1)		.07	−.01
Perceived organizational politics (T1)		−.22***	−.16***
Career and developmental opportunities (T1)		.31***	.26***
Ego depletion (T1)		−.06	−.04
Role overload (T1)		.05	.02
Job autonomy (T2)			.05
Empowering leadership (T2)			.23***
ΔR^2	.00	.24***	.05***
Total R^2	.00	.24***	.29***

Note. $N = 765$. Except for Total R^2 and ΔR^2 rows, entries are standardized regression
coefficients. For gender: 1 = male, 2 = female. T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2.
***$p < .001$.

Discussion

Using confirmatory factor analysis and regression analysis, this study explored the impact of organizational practices and experiences, such as perceived organizational politics, job autonomy, empowering leadership, role overload, psychological safety, ego depletion, and career and development opportunities, on employee affective commitment in the Quebec Public Sector. The results show a significant positive relationship between career and development opportunities and empowering leadership with affective commitment (p-value 0.001), while perceived organizational politics has a significant negative relationship with affective commitment (p-value less than 0.001), consistent with our predictions. Psychological safety, ego depletion, role overload, and job autonomy were insignificantly associated with employee affective commitment, which contradicts their associated hypotheses.

Perceived Organizational Politics

Perceived organizational politics was found to have a direct significant negative relationship with employee affective commitment, implying that an increase in perceived organizational politics leads to a decrease in employee affective commitment. This finding confirms the results by different researchers, such as Landells and Albrecht (2019) and Byrne et al. (2017) that perceived workplace politics can trigger negative reactions from employees (Landells & Albrecht, 2019), which may affect their commitment and engagement (Byrne et al., 2017). The strong negative relationship between the perceived organizational politics and affective commitment could be a result of many challenges that an organization faces in its daily operations, such as limited resources, information segmentation, uncertain environment, ambiguous goals, etc. (Fikry & Arie, 2021), which leads to competition among employees, thus, reducing their affective commitment. Moreover, individual personality traits can also facilitate the perceived workplace politics, whereby males tend to engage in workplace politics more than females, making the perceived organizational politics to be influenced by a wide range of factors that have been identified by many research works. Therefore, the study accepts the hypothesis that

perceived organizational politics have a significant negative effect on employee affective commitment.

Career and Development Opportunities

On the other hand, career and development opportunities had a significant direct positive connection with employee affective commitment. This confirms the findings of other researchers and implies that increasing career and development opportunities for employees within the workplace would increase their affective commitment. Naturally, employees need to feel that they can grow their skills and knowledge and be given opportunities to practice those skills. As such, providing them with such opportunities for career growth would not only increase their retention but also increase their motivation and commitment to work for the organization. Thus, the findings concur with the results of many other scholars who found that career and development increase job satisfaction, leading to employee affective commitment (Rahayu et al., 2019), eliminating skill barrier to minority groups in an organization, resulting in an increased affective commitment (Meyer &Herscovitch, 2001); increase perceived organizational support (POS) among employees, leading to affective commitment (Napitupul et al., 2017); and creates a sense of supervisory monitoring of employees to understand their needs and mentor them, which help reduce employee turnover and increase affective commitment (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2017). Therefore, career training and development opportunities should be provided by an organization for greater affective employee commitment since employees gain new skills and knowledge they need for higher roles.

Empowering Leadership

Further, the study found that empowering leadership is another critical ingredient that employers can use to enhance affective commitment in an organization since there is a strong direct positive relationship between empowering leadership and employee affective commitment. It implies that increasing empowering leadership skills would lead to an increasing employee affective commitment, leading to the acceptance of our hypothesis. This finding agrees with the results of other researchers that leaders demonstrating empowering leadership behaviors in an organization can help increase

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affective commitment and reduce negative employee bahaviors, such as lateness (Kim & Beehr, 2020); improve the perceptions of employees on empowering leadership, thus, increasing supervisor-subordinate relationships (Brunetto, 2012); enhance greater psychological empowerment, engagement, and affective commitment among employees (Al Otaibi et al., 2022); and enhance creativity and affective commitment in an organization (Alfaris &Zakiy, 2021). While Kim and Beehr (2020) did not find any relationship between empowering leadership behaviors and employee intention to leave, it can be argued that since empowering leadership can discourage some negative employee behaviors, incorporating career and development opportunities as part of empowering leadership behavior can create high affective commitment and reduce intention to leave. This means that combining the factors that enhance employee affective commitment in an organization could be a more effective strategy for creating high affective commitment than employing these tactics independently or in isolation.

Role Overload

The reason for the insignificant association between role overload and affective commitment could be due to other stress factors, such as role ambiguity and role conflict (Malik & Waheed, 2010; Morrissette & Kisamore, 2020). Researchers have found that other factors, such as the lack of work-life balance, can also affect employee commitment. It implies that role overload might not be a major cause of low affective commitment in the public sector when other factors are improved, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis. The findings on the relationship between role overload and affective commitment in the Quebec public sector contradict the results found by other researchers. For instance, it contradicts the results of the study by Ko et al. (2022) conducted in South Korea, which found a direct negative relationship between role overload and employee affective commitment. As such, moderating this negative effect using positive psychological capital, compassion and work engagement would therefore be crucial to maintain positive employee commitment at work, reduce stress and improve satisfaction. Furthermore, whereas Malik and Waheed (2010) and Fisher (2014) also found a significant negative relationship between role overload and affective employee commitment contrary to this study's findings, the authors showed that other strategies,

such as improving job satisfaction, structural empowerment, and cooperative climate, could moderate the negative effect to improve employee affective commitment. Therefore, it could be argued that role overload affects the public and private sectors differently.

Job Autonomy

Job autonomy was also found to have an insignificant relationship with employee affective commitment in the public sector of Quebec, leading to the rejection of our hypothesis. The findings disagree with what other researchers found. Many studies have found that other factors, such as employees' level of experience and skill levels on the job, will affect the degree of autonomy that employees may need. In this regard, employees with low skill-level or limited experience may not need job autonomy to develop affective commitment. For instance, the finding disagrees with the findings by Ahakwa and his colleagues (2021) and Brunetto et al. (2011), who found that job autonomy has a significant relationship with employee affective commitment since it affects employee creativity. While the arguments support the need for job autonomy to improve employee affective commitment by enhancing creativity, as noted by Jaiswal and Dhar (2017), other critical determinants that would encourage creativity include leadership style and power that would influence employees to develop commitment (Sowmya and Panchanatham, 2011) as well as the work design. As such, affective commitment may not be achieved by just improving job autonomy without considering work design and leadership, thus, making job autonomy to have an insignificant influence in promoting employee affective commitment. Therefore, several other factors that were not examined in this study could have strong relationships with employee affective commitment, making job autonomy to have an insignificant influence and disagreeing with other findings, leading to the rejection of our hypothesis.

Psychological Safety

The study also found that psychological safety has an insignificant relationship with affective commitment due to other factors that were not examined, resulting in the rejection of our hypothesis. One possible reason for the insignificant association between

psychological safety and affective commitment is that psychological safety is based on one's beliefs and emotions, which vary significantly among employees, and therefore, it may be mediated or moderated by other factors, such as job burnout and satisfaction (Li et al., 2022). These differences in beliefs and emotions are triggered by differences in interests, ambitions, personalities, and other personal traits that may not be met by the organization. Whereas most of the studies supporting a positive influence of psychological safety on employee affective commitment alluded that high psychological safety prevents employee intention to leave (Brown & Van Dijk, 2016), many factors can create a perception of low psychological safety, including a lack of job security. However, job security in the public sector may not be a big problem compared to the private sector; thus, psychological safety should be higher in the public sector, which may limit its influence on employee affective commitment. Therefore, since psychological safety is based on one's beliefs and perceptions, it could be difficult to determine whether it has a direct significant influence on employee affective commitment. Moreover, none of the literature reviewed shows a direct relationship between psychological safety and affective commitment, thus, making it possible to conclude that there is no relationship between psychological safety and employee affective commitment, leading to the rejection of our hypothesis.

Ego Depletion

Just like psychological safety which is based on individual perceptions, ego depletion is also more of an individual's perception of the influence they have on others due to the power and resources they control. In this regard, the study did not find a significant relationship between ego depletion and affective commitment since many studies have associated ego depletion with the amount of resources that individuals control, which gives them power (Kim & Rua, 2015). Individuals with more resources will have greater influence; thus, they may experience less ego depletion. As a result, such individuals become self-regulated and develop value incongruence, meaning their personal values may contradict the values of the organization. Therefore, controlling resources and workplace commitment may not be related since an individual may develop ego depletion due to other factors which may not be related to affective commitment.

To summarize, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights specific to the Quebec Public Sector. Furthermore, it also adds to the existing literature that perceived organizational politics has a significant negative impact on employee affective commitment, aligning with prior research findings. Additionally, it highlights the crucial positive influence of career and development opportunities and empowering leadership on affective commitment, emphasizing the importance of these factors in fostering commitment among public sector employees. However, this study challenges previous assumptions by revealing the non-significance of psychological safety, ego depletion, role overload, and job autonomy in predicting affective commitment within this context. These findings offer valuable insights for public sector organizations aiming to enhance employee commitment by emphasizing the significance of career development and empowering leadership while recognizing that factors like psychological safety may have limited direct influence.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the existing literature in three ways. One way is by providing data that show a direct correlation between organizational practices and experiences, such as career and development opportunities, organizational politics, job autonomy, role overload, ego depletion, psychological safety and empowering leadership and affective commitment. Many studies have examined some of these variables as mediating or moderating the effect of other variables. For instance, in a study by Napitupul et al. (2017) on the impact of career and development opportunities on employee performance, the authors used perceived organizational support and affective commitment as medicating variables. Similarly, when Lapointe and Vandenberghe 2017) explored how supervisory monitoring lead to affective commitment, they used career and development opportunities as a moderating variable. Other researchers, such as Ko et al. (2022), used positive psychological capital as moderating and mediating variables in their study.

In this regard, very few researchers explored the direct relationships between these variables without moderating and mediating variables. Understanding the direct relationships between variables is essential to draw the right conclusion and avoid pitfalls

arising from drawing conclusions from statistical analyses and wrong inferences. The findings of this research show direct associations; thus, they can be relied upon to make conclusions. Moreover, it provides information on the relationship between ego depletion and affective commitment, which is limited in exploration. Past studies examined ego depletion as a mediating variable, not as the main independent variable (Hussain et al., 2021) and as a dependent variable moderated by another variable (Deng et al., 2016).

This study provided the results on the relationships between ego depletion and affective commitment as independent and dependent variables without any moderation or mediation, thus, adding this new information to the current literature. Whereas this study did not find any relationship between ego depletion and affective commitment, it actually provides good basic information that future researchers can develop an interest in to further explore and confirm the validity of this finding. Moreover, this study was conducted in the public sector; thus, the findings could be different in the private sector.

The other contribution of this study to the existing literature is that it adds knowledge to the existing limited studies in the public sector on affective commitment. A lot of literature revolves around non-public companies due to limited research on public sector organizations. This made previous research works use smaller sample sizes when studying public sector companies, such as research by Ahmad et al. (2021). Therefore, this study provides a more accurate result due to a larger sample size collected from public sector employees. Moreover, it examined various sectors in the Quebec Public Sector, such as finance, environment, arts, culture and entertainment, family, professional association, energy, and building management. This fulfils a recommendation by Hussain et al. (2021) that sampling different sectors can enrich the understanding of different study variables.

Furthermore, theoretically, it is believed that employees in the public sector are generally assumed to be less engaged and less committed to the organization than employees in the private sector, probably due to ambiguous objectives (Zona et al., 2018, p. 375). This assertion may not be considered true without conducting comprehensive research to determine what factors could contribute to less engagement and commitment

in the public sector since even the private sector has ambiguous objectives. Therefore, this research provided key organizational practices that when an organization in the public sector implements them may encourage employee affective commitment, leading to the achievement of those ambiguous objectives in the public sector. From the results, discouraging workplace politics, especially facilitated by political alignments of employees, for example, in the public sector, can increase the affective commitment of employees.

Finally, this study's findings affirm the results obtained by previous researchers on the mediating effects of some of the variables in this research. For instance, Bergeron and Thompson (2020) found a positive mediating effect of perceived organizational support on voice behavior and organizational politics. Similarly, Saadeh and Suifan (2020) affirmed the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on job stress and employee commitment. The two studies could be tied to the effect of empowering leadership in enhancing employee affective commitment by promoting organizational support that would lead to better performance. Therefore, it could be concluded that the results of this study support other studies that used related organizational practices in connection to employee affective commitment.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study carry several practical implications for organizational management and government bodies seeking to enhance employee affective commitment and create a more engaged and productive workforce:

1. Enhancing Affective Commitment for Increased Retention and Competitiveness: Affective commitment is a crucial indicator of employees' dedication and loyalty to the organization. It reflects their alignment with organizational objectives and their willingness to work towards achieving the organization's mission. Organizations should recognize the significance of affective commitment in retaining talented employees and increasing competitiveness in the market. By implementing evidence-based practices identified in this study, such as providing career and development opportunities and fostering empowering leadership, organizations can enhance employee

affective commitment. A more committed workforce is likely to be more motivated, productive, and loyal, leading to improved retention rates and a competitive advantage in the industry.

2. Investing in Employee Growth and Skill Development: Employees are the most valuable assets of any organization, and their motivation and commitment are critical for achieving organizational goals. To avert turnover intentions and boost productivity, top management should prioritize employee growth and skill development. Creating career and development opportunities allows employees to enhance their skills, not only for personal development but also for succession purposes. Investing in employees' professional growth not only boosts their commitment to the organization but also equips them with the necessary skills to meet current and future performance targets. This strategic investment in talent development can lead to improved organizational performance and long-term success.

3. Discouraging Perceived Organizational Politics: Perceived organizational politics can have a detrimental impact on employee affective commitment. Negative workplace politics can create negative perceptions, stress, and burnout among employees, leading to lower commitment levels. To foster a positive work environment and encourage unity of purpose, organizations, especially those in the public sector, should take proactive measures to discourage workplace politics. Open and transparent communication, fair decision-making processes, and a supportive organizational culture can mitigate the negative effects of perceived politics and promote a sense of trust and psychological safety among employees. As such, the Quebec government should discourage workplace politics in public sector institutions to eliminate negative feelings among employees and encourage unity of purpose.

4. Prioritize Empowering Leadership Development:

Given the strong positive correlation between empowering leadership and employee affective commitment, it is recommended that employers invest in developing their leadership teams' empowering skills. Providing training and resources to enhance

leadership behaviors that promote employee empowerment can contribute to fostering stronger bonds between employees and the organization.

To summarize, the practical implications of this study emphasize the importance of nurturing employee affective commitment to enhance retention, productivity, and organizational competitiveness. By investing in career and skill development opportunities, discouraging perceived organizational politics, and prioritizing empowering leadership development, organizations and government entities can create a positive work environment where employees are motivated, committed, and actively contribute to achieving organizational success. These evidence-based practices can serve as a foundation for implementing strategic HR policies and managerial approaches that foster a culture of commitment and engagement within the organization.

Limitations and Future Research

The limitations identified in this study provide valuable insights for future research and contribute to the overall understanding of affective commitment and its relationship with organizational practices and work experiences. Expanding on these limitations can help researchers design more comprehensive and robust studies in this field:

1. Self-Reported Data and Respondent Honesty: Relying on self-reported data can lead to self-consistency effects, where respondents may provide answers that align with social desirability or self-presentation biases. To mitigate this limitation, future research could employ additional measures to encourage respondent honesty. For instance, researchers can emphasize the anonymity and confidentiality of the survey to create a safe space for participants to provide genuine responses. Additionally, pre-testing the questionnaire and providing clear instructions to participants on the importance of truthful and candid responses can help improve the accuracy of the data collected.

2. Comparing Public and Private Sectors: This study focuses on affective commitment perceptions solely within the public sector in Quebec. To enhance the generalizability of the findings, future research should compare affective commitment perceptions between public and private sector employees. Examining potential

differences or similarities in affective commitment levels and the factors influencing them across different sectors can offer valuable insights into how organizational practices and experiences impact employee commitment in various contexts.

3. Exploring Other Types of Employee Commitments: The study concentrates solely on affective commitment, overlooking other important types of commitments that employees might express, such as normative or moral commitment, continuance commitment, instrumental commitment, and value commitment. Investigating the relationships between these different types of commitments and organizational practices can provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee commitment. Researchers could employ multi-dimensional commitment scales to assess the various facets of commitment and explore how they relate to different organizational factors.

4. Increasing Provinces Representation: Expanding the study's scope to include multiple provinces across Canada can enhance the external validity of the findings. Different provinces may have unique cultural, economic, and institutional factors that influence employee affective commitment and the impact of organizational practices. A multi-provincial study can offer valuable insights into regional variations and enable a more nuanced understanding of how organizational practices interact with the broader socio-economic context to shape employee commitment.

By addressing these limitations, future research can build on the foundation laid by this study and further advance the understanding of affective commitment and its determinants in organizational settings. A more comprehensive approach to data collection, comparative analysis between sectors, exploration of different types of employee commitments, and broader geographical representation can contribute to a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of employee commitment dynamics in different contexts. This, in turn, can inform organizational management and government policies to effectively enhance employee commitment and create a positive and productive work environment.

Conclusion

This research paper presented quantitative research findings to investigate the impact of organizational practices and experiences on the affective commitment of employees in the public sector in Quebec, Canada. It examined organizational practices and experiences such as perceived workplace politics, job autonomy, career and development opportunities, ego depletion, role overload, psychological safety, and empowering leadership and how they correlate with employee affective commitment within the public sector context based on employees' perceptions.

Affective commitment is crucial to the success of an organization since it increases employees' emotional attachment to the organization, which in turn can benefit the long-term performance of the organization. In the current ever-changing business environment, employees play a crucial role not only as change agents but also a very key resources to help the organization achieve its long-term goals and improve its competitiveness. By administering digital surveys on a sample of 1,355 employees, the study obtained adequate data to measure the relationship between perceived organizational practices and affective commitment based on the experiences of employees in the public sector. The findings can help managers understand the perceptions of employees regarding the current practices in their organizations so as to enable them to improve employee motivation and engagement by eliminating certain practices that could be perceived as political in the workplace and creating an environment for growth.

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Appendix

Demographic sample

Statistiques

Company name

N	Valide	1355
	Manquant	0

Company name

	Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	502	37,0	37,0	37,0
Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement	31	2,3	2,3	39,3
Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec	38	2,8	2,8	42,1
Ministère de la Famille	225	16,6	16,6	58,7
Ministère des Finances	65	4,8	4,8	63,5
Office des professions du Québec	42	3,1	3,1	66,6
Régie du bâtiment du Québec	324	23,9	23,9	90,6
SODEC	69	5,1	5,1	95,6
Transition énergétique du Québec	59	4,4	4,4	100,0
Total	1355	100,0	100,0	

Statistiques

Quel est le plus haut
niveau de scolarité que
vous ayez complété ?

N	Valide	1323
	Manquant	32

Quel est le plus haut niveau de scolarité que vous ayez complété ?

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	Primaire	1	,1	,1	,1
	Secondaire	38	2,8	2,9	2,9
	Collégial / Professionnel	370	27,3	28,0	30,9
	Universitaire / Baccalauréat	559	41,3	42,3	73,2
	Universitaire / Maîtrise	344	25,4	26,0	99,2
	Universitaire / Doctorat	11	,8	,8	100,0
	Total	1323	97,6	100,0	
Manquant	Système	32	2,4		
Total		1355	100,0		

Statistiques

Dans le cadre de votre
emploi, occupez-vous un
poste à temps plein ou
temps partiel ?

N	Valide	1327
	Manquant	28

Dans le cadre de votre emploi, occupez-vous un poste à temps plein ou temps partiel ?

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	Temps plein	1288	95,1	97,1	97,1
	Temps partiel	39	2,9	2,9	100,0
	Total	1327	97,9	100,0	
Manquant	Système	28	2,1		
Total		1355	100,0		

Statistiques

Quel est votre statut d'emploi ?

N	Valide	1327
	Manquant	28

Quel est votre statut d'emploi ?

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	Emploi régulier	1207	89,1	91,0	91,0
	Emploi occasionnel / Emploi étudiant / Stagiaire	120	8,9	9,0	100,0
	Total	1327	97,9	100,0	
Manquant	Système	28	2,1		
Total		1355	100,0		

Statistiques

Quelle catégorie
correspond le mieux à
votre type d'emploi?

N	Valide	1304
	Manquant	51

Quelle catégorie correspond le mieux à votre type d'emploi?

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	Personnel ouvrier ou emploi manuel ou col bleu	2	,1	,2	,2
	Personnel technique	299	22,1	22,9	23,1
	Personnel de bureau	160	11,8	12,3	35,4
	Professionnel	813	60,0	62,3	97,7
	Cadre intermédiaire	14	1,0	1,1	98,8
	Cadre supérieur (incluant dirigeants, propriétaire de l'entreprise, ministre, sous-ministre)	10	,7	,8	99,5
	Cadre opérationnel	6	,4	,5	100,0
	Total	1304	96,2	100,0	
Manquant	Système	51	3,8		
Total		1355	100,0		

Statistiques

Êtes-vous... ?

N	Valide	1327
	Manquant	28

Êtes-vous... ?

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	Un homme	498	36,8	37,5	37,5
	Une femme	820	60,5	61,8	99,3
	Autre	9	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	1327	97,9	100,0	
Manquant	Système	28	2,1		
Total		1355	100,0		

Statistiques descriptives

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Moyenne	Ecart type
T1.TenureWithSupervisor.years	842	,00	24,00	2,4114	2,92385
T1.Age.years	1319	20,00	74,00	44,8916	9,81388
T1.OrgTenure.years	1323	,25	34,00	7,4546	7,40535
N valide (liste)	838				

Statistiques

Team members count (number of team members or team size at Time 1)

N	Valide	911
	Manquant	444

Team members count (number of team members or team size at Time 1)

		Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage cumulé
Valide	2	5	,4	,5	,5
	3	7	,5	,8	1,3
	4	26	1,9	2,9	4,2
	5	31	2,3	3,4	7,6
	6	60	4,4	6,6	14,2
	7	59	4,4	6,5	20,6
	8	42	3,1	4,6	25,2
	9	18	1,3	2,0	27,2
	10	38	2,8	4,2	31,4
	11	50	3,7	5,5	36,9
	12	19	1,4	2,1	39,0
	13	88	6,5	9,7	48,6
	14	65	4,8	7,1	55,8
	15	61	4,5	6,7	62,5
	16	63	4,6	6,9	69,4
	17	15	1,1	1,6	71,0
	19	65	4,8	7,1	78,2
	20	26	1,9	2,9	81,0
	21	10	,7	1,1	82,1
	22	16	1,2	1,8	83,9
	23	33	2,4	3,6	87,5
	24	24	1,8	2,6	90,1
	25	15	1,1	1,6	91,8
	26	7	,5	,8	92,5
	27	19	1,4	2,1	94,6

	28	19	1,4	2,1	96,7
	31	16	1,2	1,8	98,5
	38	14	1,0	1,5	100,0
	Total	911	67,2	100,0	
Manquant	Système	444	32,8		
Total		1355	100,0		