

## **THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND THE INTENTION TO STAY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study attempted to examine critically the influence of employee commitment on organizational performance and intention to stay at Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA), Kumasi – Ghana. A quantitative research methodology was employed in this study where two hundred and eleven (211) respondents were selected for the study using random sampling. The population consists of civil servants and other categories of work at Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly in Ghana. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents for data collection. Data were analyzed using SPSS. The study found that affective commitment and normative commitment significantly influence organizational performance. The study further found that affective commitment and normative commitment and continuance commitment significantly employees' intention to stay. In practice, the management of KMA needs to take effective initiatives to increase employee commitment to the organization. Management can provide employees with training, and career development programs and increase their compensational packages. This will influence employees to remain loyal to the organization. This will also reduce employee turnover and intentions to stay in the organization. Also, the study recommends that the Management of KMA and other institutions alike should create value for the work activities and duties carried out by each employee in the organization. Creating value by recognizing individual efforts and rewarding positive behaviors will cause the employees to remain members of the organization because of the perception that they cannot secure better job opportunities elsewhere.

**Keywords:** Affective commitment; Continuance commitment; Normative commitment; intention to stay; organizational performance

### **INTRODUCTION**

Organizations worldwide get their goals and objectives accomplished through employees who perform different tasks (Brow and Taylor, 2011). Employees of an organization, therefore, play an important role in improving the performance of the organization (Lo, 2011). Mohammed (2018), mentioned that the fast-changing business environment and the intensive competition are making it very difficult to achieve their objectives. Most organizations depend on their employees to improve their organizational performance and gain a large market share. Employee commitment is now considered a pivot and natural process for the effective performance of individuals and organizations. Armstorm (2015), noted that most organizations are finding it very difficult to induce commitment in their employees. Most organizations value commitment among their

employees because it reduces withdrawal and poor attitudes such as turnover, lateness and absenteeism (Armstrong, 2015). According to Lo (2011), there is no doubt that employee commitment positively influences organizational performance. Most employees' sense of commitment to the organization influences them to engage in their service and be more willing to accept the change that will result in organizational performance.

Employee commitment has been identified as a crucial factor in achieving organizational performance. Organizations achieve their goals and objectives when they have competent and committed employees. Getting committed employees who show much competence helps improve organizational performance (Lee and Chen, 2011). According to Khan, Razi, and Asghar (2013), organizational performance is defined as the attained outcome of actions with the skills of employees who perform in some situation. Employee commitment also leads to high employee intention to stay in the organization. When employees are committed to the organization, they feel secure and also feel part of the whole family in the organization.

Moreover, Brow and Taylor (2011), mentioned that most employees who are committed to their organization are of great value to the organization. Such employees require no supervision and accomplish the tasks assigned to them. Employee commitment helps organizations to achieve their performance and gain a competitive advantage in this competitive business environment. John and Elyse (2010), mentioned that employees need to be committed to the company's goals and objectives, and perform their duties to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. Even though employee commitment is very important and results in organizational performance and increases the intention to stay of employees in the organization. Organizations need to understand that every employee has their requirements and personal wishes that need to be taken into consideration. If the organization refuses to provide for the needs of the employees, their attitude to work will reduce. This will result in turnover intentions among employees in the organization. Lee and Chen (2013), mentioned that employees will be less committed to their organization when their needs and wants are not provided by the organization. Lack of employee commitment has a negative influence on organizational performance.

Research indicates that quite a several studies have focused on numerous factors which influence employee commitment in the organization. However, it is very important to note that a few studies have been conducted in the area of organizational commitment, employee commitment, organizational performance and intention to stay in the organization. This study thus examined the influence of employee commitment on organizational performance and intention to stay.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

### **Affective commitment and organizational performance**

Employee commitment represents an attitude towards the organization. Affective commitment is considered very important to the organization as it helps most organizations to achieve success (Bergmann et al., 2011). Employees with low levels of affective commitment will not increase performance in the organization. Thus, employees with a less affective commitment to the organization will put their hearts into the work and mission of the organization (Khan et al., 2014).

This category of employees considers personal success than the success of the overall organization. However, employees who are committed to the organization increase their performance to meet the target for the organization. Affective committed employees also considered themselves to be an integral part of the organization (Habib, 2010). According to Khan (2010), affective commitment influences an employee's job performance in the organization. Also, Habib (2010), stated that employee commitment enhances employee performance in the organization which results in a competitive advantage. Based on the argument above, the current study hypothesized that;

***H1: Affective commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance.***

### **Continuous commitment and organizational performance**

Akinatayo (2010), mentioned that commitment refers to the degree to which the employee feels devoted to their organization. Their level of commitment influences them in the organization, feel attached to the organization and remain loyal to the organization. Employee commitment also explains employees' attitude towards the organization which has a positive influence on organizational performance (Aydin et al., 2011). The continuous commitment involved employee perception regarding the cost related to leaving the organization. Thus, when employees perceived the cost of leaving is higher, they will decide to stay with their current organization. This influences them to commitment level in the organization and also makes them increase their performance in the organization (Akinatayo, 2010). Individuals commit to the organization because they perceive high costs of losing organizational membership, including economic losses, such as pension accruals and social costs, like friendship ties with co-workers that would have to be given up (Santos, Abrahamyan & Mirzoyan, 2014). Khan et al., (2014) asserted that continuance commitment is expressed as a need to stay in the organization founded on the costs related to leaving. Based on the argument above, the current study hypothesized that;

***H2: Continuous commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance.***

### **Normative commitment and organizational performance**

The normative commitment of employees has become very important in most organizations. Normative commitment is described as the commitment of employees toward the organization when they feel they owe it to their organization to continue working there (Akinatayo, 2010). Normative commitment influences employees to remain in the organization for a longer period. Normative commitment has also developed and advanced in many different directions. Current research on employee commitment has highlighted the important importance of normative commitment and how it influences organizational performance (Santos et al., 2014). Higher rates of employee commitment contribute to deep confidence in recognition of the goals and ideals of a company; a strong commitment to expanding the organization's best efforts; and a strong motivation to continue with the organization (Meyer et al., 2004). Employee normative commitment is also a much greater indicator of staff morale than productivity, work satisfaction,

success at individual and company level, employee loyalty and overall organizational efficiency (Bergmann et al., 2011). The study hypothesized based on the argument above that;

***H3: Normative commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance.***

### **Affective commitment and intention to stay in the organization**

The human resource or the employee of the organization is a very important asset of the management. There is a need for organizations to influence and persuade employees to fulfil their tasks. According to Abdi and Jamal (2017), unless the employees of an organization are satisfied, they are not motivated to task fulfilment. Employee commitment is the psychological immersion of employees which in the institute through a sense of belonging, and ownership of organizational goals. Affective commitment also influences an employee to be ready to accept challenges within the organization and increases their intention to stay at the organization (Santos, Abrahamyan & Mirzoyan, 2014). Gul (2015), argued that for an organization to create committed employees they need to provide for the need of the employees and motivates them to stay in the organization. Based on the argument above, the current study hypothesized that;

***H4: Affective commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay.***

### **Normative commitment and intention to stay in the organization**

Normative commitment involves employee perception regarding their responsibility towards their organization. The implication is that if the organization is loyal to employees, they are willing to stay in the organization (Abdi and Jamal, 2017). Also, if the organization has educational efforts and career development efforts, the employee may report a higher degree of normative commitment which influences them to stay in the organization. Most organizations now are attracting the right sort of employee and providing a suitable working environment which can largely influence employee interaction between employers and employees in the organization (Gul, 2015). In promoting normative commitment in the organization, the relationship between employees in the organization and employers needs to be healthy. This can influence employees to stay in the organization for some time. The implication is that commitment is complex and continuous and also requires employees to discover means of motivating and encouraging employees to enhance their performance (Dirks and Ferrin 2012). Based on the argument above, the current study hypothesized that;

***H5: Normative commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay***

### **Continuous commitment and intention to stay**

Organizational providing a positive and supportive working environment has become a very important process in the past few years. Most organizations are compelled to provide benefits for employees to enable them to remain in the organization. Most employees leave the organization when they are not satisfied with the organization (Abdi and Jamal, 2017). Branham (2012), mentioned that most employees leave their organization because of the following reasons; low

pay, lack of recognition, unfulfilling jobs, inadequate career advancement, poor management practices, untrustworthy leadership and disordered work. When employees are working in a positive working environment, they are most committed and they also exhibit more positive work-related attitudes. This increases their intentions to stay in the organization. Employees who trust their management, are more satisfied, more loyal and less opposed to changes (Dirks and Ferrin 2012). Based on the argument above, the current study hypothesized that;

**H6: Continuous commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay.**

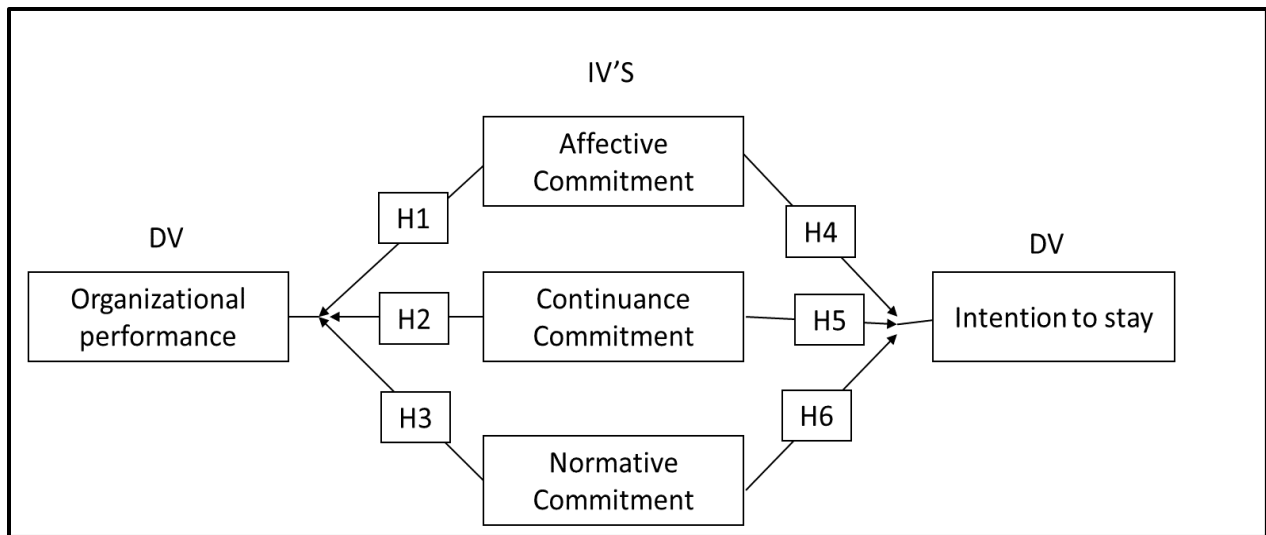


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and in addition, quantitative research methods were adopted in this study. Thus, explanatory research was used to establish the relationship between the variables in the study. The survey consists of civil servants and other categories of work at Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly in Ghana. The population also included people who were capable of understanding political vigilantism and democratic consolidation. The questionnaires were distributed 200 respondents to for data collection using the random sampling technique.

### Research Instrument

Commitment (affective, continuance and normative) was measured using eighteen (18) items, six (6) each adopted from Meyer & Allen (2004). Intention to stay was measured using five (5) items adopted from Hoye, Cuskelly, Taylor & Darcy (2008). Examples of the items included “I plan to

continue working for my current organization” and “I plan to continue working for my organization until a better opportunity comes”. Finally, organizational performance was measured using eleven (11) items adopted from Huo (2012). Affective, continuance and normative commitment and intentions to stay were measured on a seven-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4= undecided, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree and 7 = strongly agree. Organizational performance was also measured on a seven-point Likert scale 1 = Very poor, 2 = Poor, 3 = Slightly poor, 4 = Undecided, 5 = Slightly good, 6 = Good and 7 = Very good. The intention to stay with five items a had Cronbach alpha coefficient of .834. Affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment with six items each had Cronbach alpha coefficient values of .858, .850 and .846 respectively. Finally, organizational performance with eleven items had a Cronbach alpha coefficient value of .870.

## RESULTS

The study presented descriptive results, correlation analysis results and multiple regression analysis results which helped the researchers to test for the hypotheses that guided the study.

Table 1: Descriptive Results

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Affective Commitment	1.00	6.83	4.2440	1.36202
Continuance Commitment	1.00	7.00	4.3170	1.32350
Normative Commitment	1.33	7.00	4.4536	1.31260
Intentions to Stay	1.00	7.00	4.4090	1.44210
Organizational Performance	1.91	7.00	4.5465	1.31967

As presented in Table 1 above, the results show that on average, most of the respondents agreed to the question items that were used to measure affective commitment given a mean score of 4.24 and a standard deviation of 1.36. Likewise, most of the respondents agreed to the question items that were used to measure continuance commitment given a mean score of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 1.32. Again, the mean score of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 1.31 shows that most of the respondents agreed with the question items that were used to measure normative commitment. Moreover, most of the respondents on the average agreed to the question items that were used to measure intention to stay given a mean score of 4.41 and a standard deviation of 1.44. finally, a mean score of 4.55 and a standard deviation of 1.319 shows that most of the respondents agreed with the performance indicators that were used to measure organizational performance.

Table 2: Correlational Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1</b> Affective commitment	1				
<b>2</b> Continuance commitment	.866**	1			
<b>3</b> Normative commitment	.860**	.852**	1		
<b>4</b> Intention to Stay	.830**	.837**	.821**	1	



<b>5</b>	Organizational Performance	.832**	.800**	.865**	.832**	1
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**\*\*.** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The correlational results suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between affective commitment and intention to stay ( $r = .830$ ) and organizational performance ( $r = .832$ ). This means that an increase in employees' affective commitment to organizations will increase their intention to stay as well as organizational performance. Again, there is a significant and positive relationship between continuance commitment and intention to stay ( $r = .837$ ) and organizational performance ( $r = .800$ ). This means that an increase in employees' continuance commitment to organizations will increase their intention to stay as well as organizational performance. There is also a significant and positive relationship between normative commitment and intention to stay ( $r = .821$ ) and organizational performance ( $r = .865$ ). This means that an increase in employees' normative commitment to organizations will increase their intention to stay as well as organizational performance.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis

Hypothesized Paths:	Dependent Variables					
	Intentions to Stay			Organizational Performance		
Predictors:	Beta (t)	Sig	VIF	Beta (t)	Sig	VIF
<b>Constant</b>	.055 (.305)	.761	-	.549 (3.470)	.001	-
Affective Commitment	.298 (3.841)	.000	5.059	.297 (3.977)	.000	5.064
Continuance Commitment	.361 (4.800)	.000	4.774	.089 (1.223)	.223	4.832
Normative Commitment	.258 (3.470)	.001	4.643	.533 (7.435)	.000	4.670
R		.873			.883	
ΔR-square		.761			.780	
Adjusted R-square		.758			.776	
Δ F-statistics		213.776			235.943	
<b>P – value</b>		<b>.000</b>			<b>.000</b>	

The result of the study revealed that affective commitment has a significantly positive effect on an organizational performance given ( $B = .297$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported. The implication is that when employees exhibit higher levels of affective commitment to the organization, their performance will increase which will culminate in the overall performance of the organization. Continuance commitment had no significant effect on organizational performance given ( $B = .089$  and  $P < 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 2 is therefore not supported. Further results revealed that normative commitment has a significantly positive effect on an organizational performance given ( $B = .533$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 3 is therefore supported. The implication is that when employees exhibit higher levels of normative commitment to the organization, their performance will increase which will culminate in the overall performance of the organization.

In terms of affective commitment's effect on the intention to stay, the result revealed that affective commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .298$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 4 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced when they are affectively committed to the

organization. Again, the findings indicated that normative commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .258$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 5 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced as their normative commitment to the organization increases. Finally, the result of the study revealed that continuance commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .361$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 6 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced as their level of continuance commitment to the organization increases.

### Regression Equation

$$DV = \text{const.} + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + e$$

$$\text{Intention to stay} = 0.055 + 0.298(\text{Affective commitment}) + 0.361(\text{Continuance commitment}) + 0.258(\text{Normative commitment}) + e$$

The implication of the regression equation above is that, at a unit increase in affective commitment, intention to stay will increase by 29.8%. Again, a unit increase in continuance commitment will increase the intention to stay by 36.1%. Finally, a unit increase in normative commitment will increase the intention to stay by 25.8%. This means that management should put up measures which can enhance employees' continuance commitment if they want them to stay.

$$\text{Organizational Performance} = 0.549 + 0.297(\text{Affective commitment}) + 0.533(\text{Normative commitment}) + e$$

The implication of the regression equation above is that, at a unit increase in affective commitment, organizational performance will increase by 29.7%. Also, a unit increase in normative commitment will increase organizational performance by 53.3%. This means that if management wants to increase organizational performance, it should focus more on enhancing the normative commitment of its employees.

Table 4: Hypotheses Results

S/n	Hypothesis Statement	$\beta$ -value	P-value	Results
H1	Affective commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance	.297	.000	<b>Supported</b>
H2	Continuance commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance.	.089	.223	Not Supported
H3	Normative commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance.	.533	.000	<b>Supported</b>
H4	Affective commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay	.298	.000	<b>Supported</b>
H5	Normative commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay	.258	.001	<b>Supported</b>



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<b>H6</b>	Continuance commitment will have a significant effect on the intention to stay.	.361	.000	<b>Supported</b>
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## DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis of the study indicated that affective commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance. The result of the study revealed that affective commitment has a significantly positive effect on an organizational performance given ( $B = .297$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported. The implication is that when employees exhibit higher levels of affective commitment to the organization, their performance will increase which will culminate in the overall performance of the organization. The finding of the study is similar to previous works. For example, Dutton (2011), mentioned that employees who bond in their organization emotionally have higher work performance. In the same vein, Xiao-hua (2011), stated that affective commitment influences the work performance of employees in the organization. According to Khan (2010) also, affective commitment influences an employee's job performance in the organization.

The second hypothesis of the study indicated that continuance commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance. The result of the study revealed that continuance commitment has no significant effect on an organizational performance given ( $B = .089$  and  $P < 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 2 is therefore not supported. Thus, continuance commitment does not influence organizational performance. The results of the study confirm that of previous findings. For instance, Poznanski and Bline (2012), mentioned that commitment influences the job performance of employees in the organization. Gregson (2011), mentioned that commitment of the level of employees influences their job satisfaction which also improves the performance of employees in the organization. Meyer and Allen (2001), stated that commitment blinds managers in the organization and enables them to be innovated.

The third hypothesis of the study indicated that normative commitment will have a significant effect on organizational performance. The result of the study revealed that normative commitment has a significantly positive effect on an organizational performance given ( $B = .533$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 3 is therefore supported. The implication is that when employees exhibit higher levels of normative commitment to the organization, their performance will increase which will culminate in the overall performance of the organization. Studies have shown that higher rates of employee commitment contribute to deep confidence in and recognition of the goals and ideals of a company; a strong commitment to expanding the organization's best efforts; and a strong motivation to continue with the organization (Meyer et al., 2004). Employee normative commitment is also a much greater indicator of staff morale than productivity, work satisfaction, success at individual and company level, employee loyalty and overall organizational efficiency (Bergmann et al., 2011).

The fourth hypothesis of the study indicated that affective commitment will have a significant effect on employees' intentions to stay. The result of the study revealed that affective commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .298$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 4 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced when they are affectively committed to the organization.

This confirms studies by (Meyer, Stanley, Topolnylsky & Hersevoich 2002; Luchak & Gellatly 2007) who reported that employees who have high affective commitment had intentions to stay with the organization. When workers have workplace interactions that fulfil their needs to feel relaxed physically and mentally, it contributed to their staying intentions.

The fifth hypothesis of the study indicated that normative commitment will have a significant effect on employees' intentions to stay. The result of the study revealed that normative commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .258$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 5 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced as their normative commitment to the organization increases. Normative commitment implies an individual's feeling of obligation, which compels one to remain working for the organization and not think of working for any other organization even if they offer a better compensation (Jomah, 2017). Studies in the literature confirm that the sense of faithfulness and responsibility are the underlying factors which influence the individual to stay with the organization which is normative commitment (Khan et. al., 2014; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The sixth hypothesis of the study indicated that continuance commitment will have a significant effect on employees' intentions to stay. The result of the study revealed that continuance commitment has a significantly positive effect on employees' intentions to stay given ( $B = .361$  and  $P > 0.05$ ). Hypothesis 6 is therefore supported. The results imply that employees' intent to stay with the organization will be enhanced as their level of continuance commitment to the organization increases. Continuance commitment is expressed as a need to stay in the organization founded on the costs related to leaving (Khan et, al., (2014). Individuals commit to the organization because they perceive high costs of losing organizational membership, including economic losses, such as pension accruals and social costs, like friendship ties with co-workers that would have to be given up (Santos, Abrahamyam, & Mirzoyan, 2014; Aydin et al., 2011).

## **IMPLICATIONS**

In theory, the study has contributed to the stock of knowledge in the area of employees' commitment, organizational performance and intention to stay. More specifically, the study has expanded the findings on the dimensions of the commitment which can predict organizational performance and intention to stay in a developing economy such as Ghana. In practice, the management of KMA needs to take effective initiatives to increase employee commitment to the organization. Management can provide employees with training, and career development programs and increase their compensational packages. This will influence employees to remain loyal to the organization. This will also reduce employee turnover and intentions to stay in the organization. These programs should be designed in such a way that they enable employees to gain knowledge and skills for their position in the organization which in the long run will enhance commitment and increase performance.

The results showed that effective commitment significantly influences organizational performance and intention to stay. The study, therefore, recommends that the management of KMA should put in measures that can enhance the commitment of their employees. First of all, management should ensure that employees identify with the organization and take on the

organization's goals and values as their own and continue to work with great reliability voluntarily. Employees should be allowed to take part in the decision-making process and the outcomes affecting the organization. This will enhance employees' affective commitment. Also, the study recommends that the Management of KMA and other institutions alike who may use the findings of the study should create value for the work activities and duties carried out by each employee in the organization. This is because individuals commit to the organization. After all, they perceive high costs of losing organizational membership, including economic losses, such as pension accruals and social costs, like friendship ties with co-workers etc. Creating value by recognizing individual efforts and rewarding positive behaviours will cause the employees to remain members of the organization because of the perception that they cannot secure better job opportunities elsewhere. This also can enhance employees' continuance commitment.

Literature suggests that an individual's feeling of obligation, compels one to remain working for the organization and not think of working for any other organization even if they offer better compensation. Likewise, the sense of faithfulness and responsibility are the underlying factors which influence the individual to stay with the organization which is normative commitment. Thus, the study recommends that the management of KMA should make good use of their employees and ensure that employees feel responsible for whatever they do. This can be done when employees are given some form of autonomy to decide on their pace of work and contribute to decisions that affect them as well as being part of quality circles in the organization. Last but not the least, since the study found a positive relationship between commitment and organizational performance and intention to stay in the organization, the study recommends that management needs to provide employees with the needed resources to remain loyal and stay with the organization for a longer period and also increase performance.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study examined the influence of commitment on organizational performance and intentions to stay at the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly in Ghana. This study concludes that commitment on the part of employees is a recipe to increase organizational performance and their intention to stay. Thus, for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives, employee needs to be committed and there should be a sense of attachment to the organization and its mission and vision. Also, for managers of organizations to be able to predict the chances of employees staying or leaving the organization, attention is supposed to be given to their levels of commitment since the study proved that commitment can significantly predict employees' intentions to stay.

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