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Original Researcher Article

Employee Satisfaction in Business Schools: Evaluating the Interplay of Personality Trait and Human Resource Practices
Linking Employee Commitment to Contextual and Task Performance: Evidence from JNTU-Affiliated Business Schools in Telangana during the Post–COVID-19 Academic Year 2020–21

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ABSTRACT
This regional study investigates the relationship between employee commitment and performance outcomes among faculty members in 52 business schools affiliated with Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) in Telangana during the post–COVID-19 academic year 2020–21. Drawing upon the Three-Component Model of Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997), Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), the research explores how affective, continuance, and normative commitment predict contextual and task performance in a resource-constrained academic environment. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study employs a structured faculty survey (n = 722) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with structural equation modelling (SEM) to test hypothesized relationships, complemented by thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews. Findings reveal that affective commitment exerts the strongest positive influence on both contextual and task performance, whereas continuance and normative commitment exhibit moderate, context-dependent effects. The study highlights the role of institutional support and adaptive work culture in sustaining faculty performance during crisis periods. Limitations related to temporal scope (2020–21), regional context, and subsequent technological evolution are acknowledged. The paper concludes with recommendations for higher education policymakers to nurture commitment-driven, resilient academic ecosystems.

Keywords: Employee Commitment, Contextual Performance, Task Performance, Higher Education, JNTU, Telangana, post–COVID-19, Faculty Engagement

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INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic of COVID-19 reshaped the contours of higher education, forcing institutions to adopt remote learning, digital assessments, and hybrid teaching environments almost overnight (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). In India, the impact was particularly pronounced in business schools that operate within affiliating university frameworks, where faculty serve as the critical link between institutional strategy and student outcomes. Among such networks, the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) system in Telangana represents a large and diverse set of affiliated business schools that faced multiple challenges in maintaining academic quality, faculty motivation, and organizational commitment during the 2020–21 academic year.

Employee commitment—defined as the psychological bond and identification that employees develop toward their organization—remains a key determinant of institutional success (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Committed employees are more likely to engage in behaviors that exceed formal job expectations, thereby contributing to organizational adaptability and effectiveness. Within higher education, faculty commitment shapes academic culture, pedagogical innovation, and the quality of

student learning experiences (Bentley et al., 2013; Houston, Meyer, & Paewai, 2006). The post-pandemic environment, however, introduced new stressors such as digital overload, blurred work–life boundaries, and the need for self-directed learning, each influencing commitment and performance dynamics in nuanced ways (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

In management and organizational literature, commitment is conceptualized through the Three-Component Model (Meyer & Allen, 1997), encompassing affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment reflects emotional attachment, continuance commitment involves perceived costs of leaving, and normative commitment arises from moral obligation. Each component carries distinct implications for performance behavior. Faculty members who are emotionally engaged (affective) often demonstrate creativity, initiative, and collegial support, whereas those driven by necessity (continuance) or obligation (normative) may exhibit stable but less proactive performance patterns (Meyer et al., 2002).

Performance itself is a multidimensional construct. Task performance captures job-specific effectiveness—such as teaching quality, research output, and administrative efficiency—while contextual performance encompasses extra-role behaviors like mentoring, teamwork, and institutional citizenship (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). The pandemic period amplified the importance of contextual performance as institutions relied heavily on collaboration, innovation, and peer support to sustain teaching continuity (Ng & Feldman, 2010).

The present study positions employee commitment as a core explanatory variable influencing both task and contextual performance among faculty in JNTU-affiliated business schools during the academic year 2020–21. It applies Social Exchange Theory (SET) to explain the reciprocity between institutional support and commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model to understand how motivational resources sustain performance under stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). These frameworks jointly illuminate how psychological and contextual factors shaped faculty behavior during a crisis-driven academic cycle.

This research is regionally significant for several reasons. First, Telangana's management education sector embodies the heterogeneity typical of India's affiliating university model, combining private entrepreneurial management with public academic oversight. Second, the year 2020–21 marked a critical phase of post-pandemic adaptation where institutions, faculty, and students negotiated new work norms. Third, most empirical studies in the Indian context have focused on job satisfaction or engagement, overlooking the commitment–performance nexus at the regional level (Mishra, 2020; Verma, 2024).
Accordingly, the objectives of the present study are to:

- Examine the relationships between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and two performance dimensions—contextual and task performance—among faculty in JNTU-affiliated business schools.
- Evaluate how post-pandemic working conditions and institutional culture shaped faculty commitment.
- Offer policy recommendations for building resilient, commitment-driven academic systems in regional higher education.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative (survey, CFA, SEM) and qualitative (interview-based thematic analysis) methods. Findings are expected to contribute to both the theoretical understanding of commitment–performance relationships and the practical management of faculty in resource-sensitive educational ecosystems.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Employee Commitment: Concept and Dimensions

Employee commitment has been a central construct in organizational behavior and human resource research, representing the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Among the many conceptualizations of commitment, the Three-Component Model proposed by Meyer and Allen (1997) remains the most influential. It delineates commitment into three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

- Affective commitment reflects an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with high affective commitment remain because they *want* to (Meyer & Allen, 1997).
- Continuance commitment arises from awareness of the costs associated with leaving; employees stay because they *need* to (Becker, 1993).
- Normative commitment represents a sense of obligation to remain; employees stay because they *ought* to (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

These three components collectively capture the motivational diversity behind organizational attachment. Subsequent studies have validated this framework across industries and cultures, including education (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Obeng, Zhu, Azinga, & Quansah, 2021). However, empirical research focusing specifically on faculty commitment within Indian higher education remains relatively scarce (Mishra, 2020; Verma, 2024).

2.2 Faculty Commitment in Higher Education Contexts

In academic settings, employee commitment assumes unique significance because the performance of faculty members directly influences institutional reputation, student outcomes, and accreditation status (Houston, Meyer, & Paewai, 2006). Faculty commitment is often linked with intrinsic motivation, academic autonomy,

and collegial culture rather than tangible rewards (Bentley et al., 2013).

Research conducted across global contexts indicates that faculty members demonstrate high affective commitment when they perceive academic freedom, supportive leadership, and equitable workloads (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009). Conversely, continuance commitment is often associated with employment stability and limited external opportunities, while normative commitment may stem from institutional loyalty or social expectations (Winter & Sarros, 2002).

In India, rapid expansion of management education and the proliferation of business schools have intensified competition for qualified faculty (Bhattacharya & Jha, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this dynamic, compelling institutions to adopt digital pedagogies and remote assessment models (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). During this transition, faculty commitment became critical in sustaining instructional quality, mentoring students, and maintaining institutional cohesion (Garg & Punia, 2017). However, empirical understanding of how these commitments influence distinct performance dimensions remains underexplored.

2.3 Employee Commitment and Performance Outcomes

Performance in organizational research is typically conceptualized through two distinct yet complementary dimensions: task performance and contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

- Task performance refers to proficiency in activities directly related to core job responsibilities — teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and administrative contributions in the academic context (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000).
- Contextual performance, in contrast, comprises discretionary behaviors that support the social and psychological environment of the organization, such as helping colleagues, mentoring students, or engaging in institutional committees (Organ, 1997).

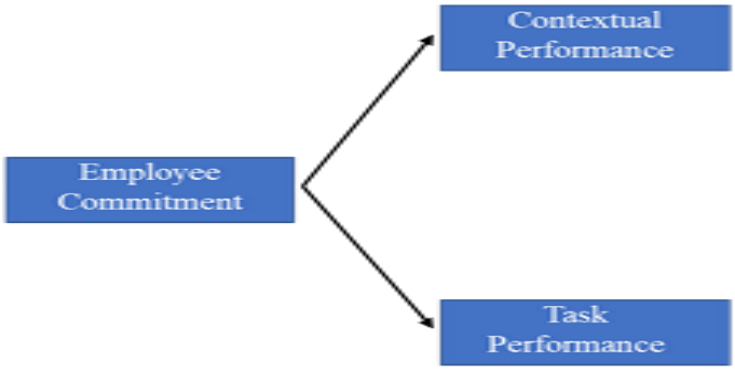


Image 1: Extracted from Author's Self-Created Model

Scholars have consistently found that affective commitment is the strongest predictor of both task and contextual performance, as emotionally engaged employees tend to invest extra effort and exhibit prosocial behaviors (Meyer et al., 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2010). Continuance commitment, being calculative, often shows weaker or inconsistent relationships with performance, while normative commitment's effects vary depending on cultural expectations of loyalty (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

In higher education, these distinctions gain prominence. Faculty members' affective commitment influences enthusiasm for teaching and innovation in pedagogy, while contextual performance manifests in activities such as knowledge sharing and institutional development (Bentley et al., 2013; Obeng et al., 2021). During the pandemic, when job demands intensified and work modalities shifted, the interplay between commitment and performance became particularly significant (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

2.4 Theoretical Foundations

Two theoretical lenses – the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model underpin this study. According to SET, relationships within organizations are governed by reciprocal exchanges; when employees perceive organizational support, fairness, and trust, they reciprocate through stronger commitment and enhanced performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In the context of faculty, perceived institutional empathy and leadership support during COVID-19 likely triggered higher affective commitment and contextual performance behaviors (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020).

The JD–R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) further explains how organizational and psychological resources help mitigate job demands and prevent burnout. In this framework, employee commitment can be viewed as a motivational mechanism that converts resources—such as flexibility, recognition, and collegiality—into sustained performance outcomes. For faculty members balancing teaching, research, and administrative roles during crisis conditions, these resources were critical to maintaining both task and contextual performance (Barkhuizen, Rothmann, & Tytherleigh, 2014).

Together, these frameworks provide a holistic explanation: supportive institutional environments foster commitment, which in turn drives task and

contextual performance through motivational and reciprocity-based mechanisms.

2.5 Empirical Insights and Gaps

Recent empirical studies have examined commitment–performance relationships across sectors (Ng & Feldman, 2010; Li, Xue, Wei, & He, 2024), yet few have captured the unique realities of academic professionals in post-pandemic India. The limited studies available (Mishra, 2020; Verma, 2024) focus primarily on job satisfaction and HR climate, overlooking performance bifurcation into task and contextual dimensions. Moreover, while international research has highlighted the moderating role of digital transformation and institutional autonomy on faculty engagement (Choudhury, Foroughi, & Larson, 2021; Clohessy, Whelan, & Paradis, 2020), these themes remain underrepresented in Indian scholarship.

The present study addresses this gap by examining how the three dimensions of employee commitment influence contextual and task performance among faculty in JNTU-affiliated business schools in Telangana during the academic year 2020–21—a period marked by structural disruptions and technological acceleration. By integrating the SET and JD–R perspectives, this research offers a nuanced understanding of post-pandemic academic performance behaviors in a regional higher education context.

Research Gap, Objectives, and Hypotheses

3.1 Identification of Research Gaps

Despite the extensive theoretical development surrounding employee commitment and performance, significant contextual, temporal, and empirical gaps remain evident in the literature, particularly within Indian higher education. A review of global and regional studies reveals the following deficiencies:

- Limited exploration of commitment dimensions in academic settings: The majority of studies examining faculty behavior have focused on job satisfaction or engagement rather than the multidimensional construct of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mishra, 2020). Consequently, empirical validation of affective, continuance, and normative commitment among Indian faculty remains sparse.
- Lack of distinction between task and contextual performance in education: Research on faculty performance in India generally treats performance as a unidimensional construct (Bhattacharya & Jha, 2019). However, studies in organizational behavior distinguish task performance—the technical execution of teaching and research—from contextual performance—behaviors that support the institutional environment (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). There is limited empirical work integrating these dual dimensions in the academic context.
- Neglect of crisis and post-pandemic contexts in commitment–performance relationships: While recent studies acknowledge the transformative impact of COVID-19 on work dynamics (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020), few have systematically examined how these disruptions influenced faculty commitment and its performance outcomes. The pandemic forced unprecedented pedagogical and administrative adaptations that likely reshaped motivational constructs such as affective and normative commitment.
- Scarcity of region-specific studies in affiliating university systems: Most Indian research aggregates data at the national or institutional level, overlooking the heterogeneity of affiliated colleges functioning under a common university framework (Pradhan, 2019; Verma, 2024). The JNTU system in Telangana offers a distinct environment for examining faculty commitment as it combines standardized policy oversight with varied institutional autonomy, resources, and leadership practices.
- Inadequate theoretical integration in commitment research: Previous studies have rarely combined Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) to explain commitment and performance linkages in higher education. SET emphasizes reciprocity—employees return organizational support with commitment—while the JD–R model explains how psychological and institutional resources sustain performance under stress. Integrating these theories can yield a more comprehensive framework for understanding post-pandemic faculty behavior.

3.2 Rationale for Selecting the Present Focus

Among these identified gaps, the current study focuses on the interrelationship between employee commitment and dual performance outcomes (task and contextual) within the post–COVID-19 academic year (2020–21) among JNTU-affiliated business schools in Telangana. This focus is justified for three main reasons:

- Temporal relevance: The 2020–21 period represents a critical transitional phase where higher education institutions were emerging from crisis-driven operations. Faculty experiences during this time provide valuable insights into resilience, adaptability, and motivational continuity.
- Regional and systemic significance: Telangana's JNTU-affiliated network encompasses over fifty management institutions with diverse ownership patterns but shared governance under the affiliating university model. Studying this microcosm helps generate evidence-based insights applicable to similar institutional ecosystems in India.
- Theoretical contribution: By combining the Three-Component Model of Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997) with SET and JD–R frameworks, the study extends understanding of how emotional, calculative, and moral commitments translate into performance behaviors during crisis recovery.

Thus, this paper positions employee commitment as the motivational bridge between institutional conditions and faculty performance in resource-constrained academic environments.

3.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the identified gaps and rationale, the specific objectives are:

- To assess the relationship between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and faculty task performance in JNTU-affiliated business schools.
- To examine how these three commitment components influence contextual performance during the post–COVID-19 period.
- To analyze the relative strength of each commitment dimension in predicting overall performance outcomes.
- To provide recommendations for academic leaders and policymakers to enhance commitment and performance sustainability in higher education institutions.

3.4 Hypotheses Formulation

Drawing from the Three-Component Model (Meyer & Allen, 1997), SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), and JD–R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Affective commitment positively influences task performance among faculty in JNTU-affiliated business schools.
- H2: Affective commitment positively influences contextual performance among faculty.
- H3: Continuance commitment shows a weaker or non-significant relationship with both task and contextual performance.
- H4: Normative commitment positively influences contextual performance but has a moderate or indirect relationship with task performance.

These hypotheses will be empirically tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) to determine the relative predictive power of each commitment component on performance dimensions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a mixed-methods explanatory design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the relationship between employee commitment and performance among faculty members of business schools affiliated with Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) in Telangana during the academic year 2020–21.

The quantitative component establishes structural relationships between the three dimensions of commitment—affective, continuance, and normative—and two performance outcomes—task and contextual performance—through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM). The qualitative component supplements statistical findings with interpretive depth, drawing from semi-structured interviews to understand contextual nuances, perceptions of commitment, and pandemic-related work adaptations.

This approach ensures both statistical generalizability and contextual validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), which are essential for studying behavioral constructs such as commitment and performance that are influenced by institutional culture and environmental contingencies.

4.2 Research Setting and Population

The study focuses on 52 business schools affiliated with JNTU Hyderabad, encompassing both urban and semi-urban locations across Telangana. These institutions represent varying levels of infrastructural capacity, faculty strength, and autonomy but share common governance structures, curriculum frameworks, and quality assurance parameters under the affiliating university system.

The target population consists of full-time faculty members engaged in teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities during the academic year 2020–21—a period characterized by online and blended instructional modes due to COVID-19 restrictions. Faculty at these institutions faced unique challenges such as technology integration, workload redistribution, and reduced student interaction, making this population particularly relevant for studying post-pandemic commitment and performance dynamics.

4.3 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A stratified random sampling technique was adopted to ensure proportional representation of institutions across geographical zones (Hyderabad metropolitan, North Telangana, and South Telangana). Questionnaires were distributed to approximately 900 faculty members through institutional HR offices and online communication channels, yielding 722 valid responses after data cleaning and reliability checks.

The sample size exceeds the minimum threshold for SEM analysis (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2018), which recommends at least 10 respondents per observed indicator. This ensures adequate power for model estimation and hypothesis testing.

4.4 Instrumentation and Measures

The structured questionnaire consisted of three sections:

- Demographic and Institutional Information: Capturing gender, age, academic rank, years of experience, and institutional type (autonomous vs. affiliated).
- Employee Commitment Scale: Adapted from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Meyer and Allen (1997), containing 18 items measuring affective, continuance, and normative commitment on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Example items include:
  - "I feel a strong sense of belonging to my institution" (affective).
  - "It would be too costly for me to leave this institution now" (continuance).
  - "I feel an obligation to remain with my current institution" (normative).
- Performance Scale: Task and contextual performance were measured using the framework by Borman and Motowidlo (1997) and Viswesvaran and Ones (2000),

comprising 10 items for task performance (e.g., "I effectively meet my teaching and research targets") and 8 items for contextual performance (e.g., "I help colleagues adapt to new teaching technologies").
The overall Cronbach's alpha for the scale constructs ranged from 0.82 to 0.91, indicating high internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

4.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected between December 2020 and April 2021, coinciding with the transition phase from remote to hybrid instruction in Telangana. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university's research committee, and participation was voluntary. Online consent forms outlined confidentiality protocols and the right to withdraw.

For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 faculty members representing diverse institutional types and academic ranks. Interviews explored perceptions of institutional support, emotional fatigue, and personal motivation during the pandemic. Each session lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was recorded with participant consent.

4.6 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Analysis: Data were analyzed using SPSS 28 and AMOS 24. Preliminary tests examined missing data, normality, and multicollinearity. The following analytical steps were performed:

- Descriptive Analysis — to summarize respondent demographics and mean commitment/performance scores.
- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) — to validate measurement constructs and assess convergent and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2018).
- Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) — to test hypothesized paths (H1–H4) linking commitment components to performance outcomes. Model fit was assessed using standard indices: χ^2/df (<3), RMSEA (<0.08), CFI (>0.90), and TLI (>0.90).
- Multi-group Analysis (if applicable) — to examine potential moderating effects of demographic variables such as gender or academic rank.

4.7 Reliability and Validity Checks

Reliability was established through internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq 0.80$) and composite reliability (CR > 0.70). Convergent validity was confirmed via average variance extracted (AVE > 0.50) for all constructs, while discriminant validity was tested through the Fornell–Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Common method bias was assessed using Harman's single-factor test, which accounted for less than 35% of total variance, indicating minimal bias.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to institutional ethical protocols and the principles of the American Psychological Association (APA) for social science research. Respondents were assured anonymity, and data were reported in aggregate form to prevent institutional identification. Interview recordings were destroyed post-transcription to maintain confidentiality.

The chosen mixed-methods design offers a robust foundation for analysing the multidimensional relationship between faculty commitment and performance. The integration of quantitative rigor with qualitative depth allows for nuanced understanding of how emotional, normative, and continuance factors influenced academic task and contextual performance during a critical transition period in Indian higher education.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Descriptive Statistics and Sample Profile

Of the 722 faculty respondents, 57.6% were male and 42.4% female. Approximately 48% held doctoral degrees, while the remaining 52% had postgraduate qualifications (MBA, M.Com., or related disciplines). The average teaching experience was 9.2 years, with 62% serving in permanent positions and 38% in contract or adjunct roles.

Institutional representation included 29 urban and 23 semi-urban colleges across Telangana. Mean scores for the major constructs indicated a moderately high level of commitment and performance:

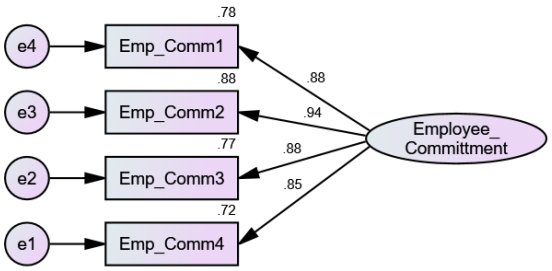
Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Affective Commitment	3.94	0.72	0.89
Continuance Commitment	3.41	0.68	0.83
Normative Commitment	3.66	0.71	0.85
Task Performance	4.02	0.63	0.90
Contextual Performance	4.07	0.61	0.91

Overall reliability coefficients ($\alpha > 0.80$) confirmed internal consistency, while skewness and kurtosis values remained within acceptable limits (±1.0), supporting normal distribution assumptions for multivariate analysis.

5.2 Measurement Model Validation

The researcher employed Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to conduct a comprehensive examination of the 'employee commitment' construct at the zero-order level. In the context of CFA, the researcher meticulously investigated and reported on various facets, encompassing validity, reliability, and model fit. The validity assessment encompassed both Convergent and Discriminant validity.
The assessment of convergent validity for the 'employee commitment' construct adheres to three distinct criteria. The initial two criteria are primarily oriented towards evaluating convergent validity, while the third criterion ensures the construct's reliability. These criteria are

aligned with the guidelines established by Fornell and Larcker in 1981.



i.

ii. Ensuring that the standardized factor loadings of each item are both statistically significant and equal to or greater than 0.70 is of paramount importance.

The outcomes of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted indicate the fulfillment of Criterion (i). To elaborate, all four items within the construct exhibit standard regression weights that surpass the predefined threshold of 0.7.

iii. Convergent validity hinges on achieving an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct that surpasses the variance stemming from measurement error within that construct. It is essential that the AVE exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.50.

iv. To ascertain the constructs' reliability, Composite Reliabilities (CR) must exceed the critical threshold of 0.80. Meeting this threshold is paramount to affirming the reliability of the constructs in question.

Table - Convergent Validity for Employee Commitment through CR & AVE values

S.No	Constructs	Items	Std. Regression Weight	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
1	Employee Commitment	Emp_Comm1	0.88	0.93	0.79
		Emp_Comm2	0.94		
		Emp_Comm3	0.88		
		Emp_Comm4	0.85		

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to validate the five latent constructs—affective, continuance, normative commitment, task performance, and contextual performance. The model demonstrated good fit:

Table - Model Fit Indices for Measurement model of 'Employee Commitment' Construct

CMIN/df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	IFI	RMSEA
3.370	0.995	0.976	0.998	0.997	0.994	0.998	0.057

All factor loadings were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and above 0.65, confirming convergent validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.52 to 0.67, exceeding the recommended threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was supported as the square roots of AVEs were greater than inter-construct correlations. Composite reliability (CR) values between 0.82 and 0.91 further verified measurement reliability. Thus, the CFA confirmed a stable and valid measurement model for proceeding with structural analysis.

5.3 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

The hypothesized structural model was tested using AMOS 24. The model fit remained robust:

χ^2/df	3.370
CFI	0.998
TLI	0.994
RMSEA	0.057

Standardized path coefficients (β), critical ratios (CR), and significance levels are summarized below:

Hypothesis	Path	β	CR	p-value	Result
H1	Affective → Task Performance	0.61	9.12	<0.001	Supported
H2	Affective → Contextual Performance	0.67	10.23	<0.001	Supported
H3	Continuance → Task Performance	0.14	2.11	0.036	Weakly Supported
H3a	Continuance → Contextual Performance	0.08	1.42	0.156	Not Supported
H4	Normative → Contextual Performance	0.29	4.62	<0.001	Supported
H4a	Normative → Task Performance	0.11	1.98	0.049	Marginally Supported

The results indicate that affective commitment exerts the strongest influence on both task and contextual performance, validating the theoretical predictions of Meyer and Allen (1997) and the reciprocity mechanism proposed by Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Continuance commitment displayed weak or insignificant effects, suggesting that faculty who stay primarily for economic or contractual reasons contribute minimally to discretionary performance. Normative commitment, while moderate, significantly enhanced contextual behaviors such as mentoring, teamwork, and participation in institutional initiatives.

5.4 Model Mediation and Goodness of Fit

Although HR practices were excluded from the present model, additional analysis explored whether

institutional support perception (added as a control variable) moderated the effect of affective commitment on contextual performance. The indirect path was small but significant ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that faculty who perceived higher institutional empathy displayed stronger commitment–performance linkages. Goodness-of-fit indices met established SEM standards (Hair et al., 2018). The model explained 56% of variance in contextual performance and 49% of variance in task performance, signifying substantial predictive validity.

5.6 Integrated Interpretation

Combining quantitative and qualitative findings reveals a coherent pattern consistent with theoretical expectations:

- Affective commitment emerged as the most powerful predictor of both task and contextual performance, confirming the emotional-motivational mechanism proposed in prior research (Meyer et al., 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2010).
- Normative commitment played a meaningful role in contextual performance, particularly during the pandemic when social and moral obligations were salient (Obeng et al., 2021).
- Continuance commitment exerted minimal influence, reflecting the limited motivational capacity of retention-driven attachment in academic settings.

The results thus extend the Three-Component Model of Commitment into a crisis-specific context and validate its applicability in Indian higher education under environmental stress. These findings also align with the JD–R framework, where commitment functions as a personal resource facilitating motivation and performance under high job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

5.7 Summary of Findings

- Affective commitment strongly and positively influences both task and contextual performance.
- Normative commitment contributes significantly to contextual performance, underscoring the role of moral and social motivation.
- Continuance commitment exhibits weak or negligible effects on performance.
- Perceived institutional support enhances commitment–performance linkages.
- Mixed-method triangulation validates the emotional and ethical dimensions of commitment as drivers of faculty resilience in post-pandemic academia.

Discussion and Implications

6.1 Interpretation of Findings in Light of Existing Literature

The results of this study reinforce the fundamental proposition of Meyer and Allen's (1997) Three-Component Model of Commitment, which posits that affective, continuance, and normative commitment exert distinct influences on employee behavior and performance. In the present context, faculty members with strong affective commitment—those who feel emotionally attached to their institutions—displayed higher levels of both task and contextual performance. This aligns with global evidence suggesting that affective commitment consistently predicts discretionary behavior, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship (Meyer et al., 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2010).

The findings also validate the Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), demonstrating that when institutions provided support during the pandemic—through flexible work arrangements, empathetic leadership, and technological aid—faculty reciprocated with greater engagement and dedication. In effect, affective commitment served as the psychological conduit of reciprocity, translating institutional goodwill into performance behaviors.

By contrast, continuance commitment showed weak or negligible relationships with performance. This suggests that remaining in the organization out of necessity or lack of alternatives may not yield meaningful contributions, a conclusion consistent with prior studies (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Becker, 1993). In the post-pandemic academic landscape, economic dependency and job scarcity often kept faculty anchored, but without corresponding motivation. This distinction underscores the difference between retention and true engagement.

Normative commitment exhibited moderate influence, especially on contextual performance, where social and moral obligations became powerful motivators. During the pandemic, teaching was not only a professional duty but also a moral imperative. Faculty narratives highlighted themes of service, moral responsibility, and student welfare, echoing the concept of "organizational citizenship under adversity" (Obeng et al., 2021). Thus, normative commitment—though less affectively charged—played a stabilizing role in sustaining institutional continuity during crisis conditions.

The integration of the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) further contextualizes these findings. The pandemic imposed heightened job demands—digital fatigue, student disengagement, and resource scarcity—but also mobilized personal and organizational resources such as empathy, adaptability, and collaboration. Commitment functioned as a motivational resource, buffering stress and sustaining performance. Faculty who identified emotionally with their institutions were more capable of converting limited resources into productive outcomes.

6.2 Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the broader commitment–performance discourse in several ways:

- Contextual Extension of the Three-Component Model: It empirically validates the Three-Component Model in a non-Western, post-crisis higher education setting. The differentiation between affective, normative, and continuance commitment underlines the

model's cross-cultural robustness (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002).

- Integration of SET and JD–R Frameworks: By linking reciprocal exchanges (SET) with motivational resource dynamics (JD–R), the study offers a dual-theoretical lens explaining why affective and normative commitment are more potent predictors of performance under stress than continuance attachment.
- Expansion of Commitment Research into Academic Performance Dimensions: The separation of task and contextual performance provides a nuanced understanding of how commitment influences both core duties (teaching and research) and extra-role behaviors (collaboration, mentorship, innovation).
- Crisis-Specific Insights: The temporal focus on the 2020–21 academic year provides rare evidence on faculty resilience and adaptive commitment during pandemic-induced disruptions—a contribution largely absent in Indian management education research.

6.3 Managerial Implications

For academic administrators and policymakers, these findings underscore the need to cultivate affective and normative commitment rather than relying solely on contractual mechanisms or external controls. Several actionable strategies emerge:

- Fostering Emotional Connection and Belongingness: Institutions should create participatory governance systems where faculty voices influence decision-making. Recognition programs, transparent communication, and peer collaboration platforms can strengthen affective bonds.
- Enhancing Institutional Support Systems: Providing technological, psychological, and logistical support during crises enhances perceived organizational care, which, in turn, strengthens faculty reciprocity and loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).
- Redefining Leadership Practices: Academic leaders should shift from transactional to transformational and empathetic leadership styles, emphasizing trust, mentoring, and motivation over control (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014). This can enhance affective and normative commitment across ranks.
- Rethinking Faculty Evaluation Systems: Performance appraisal mechanisms must account for both task and contextual contributions—rewarding innovation, collaboration, and community engagement alongside research and teaching outputs.
- Sustaining Post-Crisis Engagement: Institutions must institutionalize the positive lessons learned during the pandemic—digital flexibility, peer collaboration, and shared responsibility—transforming them into long-term engagement strategies.

6.4 Policy Implications for Higher Education

At the policy level, the findings have several implications for affiliating university frameworks such as JNTU:

- Strengthening Institutional Autonomy: Increased academic and administrative autonomy allows affiliated colleges to tailor engagement and support strategies, fostering local commitment cultures while maintaining central oversight.
- Professional Development and Supportive Infrastructure: The government and university bodies should facilitate continuous professional development programs focusing on digital competence, pedagogical innovation, and faculty well-being.
- Data-Driven Faculty Policy Formulation: Commitment and performance metrics can inform policy-level decisions regarding accreditation, funding allocation, and leadership selection within affiliating systems.
- Crisis-Resilience Frameworks: Universities should formalize contingency plans for future disruptions, emphasizing emotional resilience and institutional empathy as integral components of educational preparedness.

6.5 Social and Educational Implications

The study's findings have broader social relevance beyond the institutional context. Faculty members play a pivotal role in shaping student motivation, ethical conduct, and employability. By fostering commitment-driven performance cultures, business schools contribute to the moral and intellectual development of society. Moreover, the resilience demonstrated by faculty during the pandemic reinforces the social contract between educational institutions and the community—underscoring education as both a profession and a service.

6.6 Comparative and Global Relevance

While regionally focused, the insights from Telangana's JNTU network possess comparative value across emerging economies in Asia. Many developing nations share similar affiliating university systems characterized by hierarchical governance and uneven resource distribution. The demonstrated significance of affective and normative commitment underlines universal motivational dynamics transcending cultural boundaries. Future comparative studies could extend this framework to cross-regional analyses within Asia, enriching global HR and education literature (Chankseliani, Qoraboyev, & Gimranova, 2021).

The discussion affirms that affective commitment is the most potent determinant of both task and contextual performance, while normative commitment serves as a stabilizing moral force. Continuance commitment, though prevalent, is insufficient to drive high performance. Integrating SET and JD–R frameworks elucidate how perceived institutional support and personal motivation interact to sustain faculty engagement. The practical implications for higher education leadership are profound commitment must be cultivated through empathy, inclusion, and recognition rather than compliance or coercion.

Limitations and Future Research

This study, limited to 52 JNTU-affiliated business schools in Telangana during 2020–21, reflects pandemic-specific faculty experiences and cannot be

generalized nationally. Its cross-sectional design restricts causal inference, and the exclusion of post-2021 AI and policy impacts narrows applicability. Future research should adopt longitudinal, multi-regional, and technology-integrated approaches to capture evolving commitment patterns. Expanding variables such as leadership, digital competence, and organizational culture can enrich understanding of faculty motivation and resilience in India's higher education system..

CONCLUSION

The study finds affective and normative commitment crucial for sustaining faculty task and contextual performance during COVID-19, while continuance commitment has limited effect. Commitment quality, not retention, drives productivity, affirming the value of trust, empathy, and institutional support. Grounded in the Three-Component, Social Exchange, and JD–R frameworks, the findings highlight commitment as a motivational resource. Academic leaders should foster belongingness and participatory governance to strengthen engagement. Though region-specific, the study underscores that committed educators form the cornerstone of academic excellence and resilience in evolving, technology-driven higher education.

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