

**ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: EVIDENCE FROM THE GHANA POLICE
SERVICE**

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ABSTRACT: *The study was conducted on the influence of organisational support for career development on organisational commitment in the Ghana Police Service. The topic was chosen because most studies conducted in Ghana's security sector have focused on job satisfaction, job stress, corruption, and image branding. Given the importance of the Police work to society and extensive skills and training associated with preparing them for effective policing, it has become extremely important to study issues about their career development and employee commitment. To validate this framework, a cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, a sample of 271 junior and senior personnel from the headquarters of the Ghana police service in Accra were selected. Hypotheses formulated were tested through linear and hierarchical regression analytic procedures using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Findings suggested that organisational support for career development had a significant impact on affective and normative commitment. Again, personnel perceived low organizational support for career development. Personal characteristics such as age, gender, and level of education also had moderate effects on organisational commitment. It was concluded that the government should develop and maintain highly skilled personnel by providing them with more career development options and supports as this will greatly impact on their willingness to stay with their organisation and also reflect in their job performance.*

KEYWORDS: organisational support, career development, Ghana police service, commitment

INTRODUCTION

Most organisations have come to realize that structures and logistics are not self-productive but it takes effective and strategic human capital development and management to achieve organisational goals and objectives (Liu *et al*, 2017). Increasingly, organisations are paying more attention to the development of employee skills. Employee development forms a central element in the practice of human resource management and Lee and Bruvold (2003), argue that high commitment human resource practices that focus on employee commitment affect organisational outcomes by shaping employee capacities, behaviours, and attitudes. Organisations in return may expect certain employee attitudes such as commitment in their profession (Ahmad *et al.*, 2017). Organisational support for employee career development could be formal strategies or informal

but both have positive implications for staff as they will enhance their skills and would make them more reflective in their activities (Marsick, & Watkins, 2015). Most often, financial resources are wasted when it fails to link career development with organisational goals and strategies. Research has it that it costs an organisation almost one and a half times to replace a skilled employee who has vacated his or her position (Hussain *et al*, 2016). Thus, it becomes imperative on the part of organisations to play a major role by having career development support systems in place, more importantly, in the service industry such as the law enforcement sector because their tasks require professionalism. Employee organizational commitment also provides constructive results for any organisation, including law enforcement agencies. Organisational physiognomies such as organisational support have a strong influence on increasing organisational commitment in other sorts of organizations; the police organisational environment is unique and can hamper the facilitation of these characteristics (Johnson, 2015).

The Ghana Police Service (GPS), since its inception has been in the frontline of the criminal justice system of Ghana. When it comes to law and order, it is evident that the GPS is the most visible arm of government and a symbol to the people. It was mandated by the Police Service Act 1970, Act 350, and continued in existence by Article 200 of the 1992 Constitution. It was made one of the fourteen public services in Ghana by Article 190 (1) (a) of the same Constitution. The Constitution of Ghana mandates the Service to operate on democratic policing principles. In that regard, the GPS is committed to a constant transformation of its services from traces of its military and coercive policing profile into one operating on the democratic philosophy and international best practice of providing secure and peaceful community policing services. To fulfill its mission, it is imperative on the part of the Ghana Police Service to increase its intake and by so doing bridging the people-police ratio, enhance its training capacity as well as support its staff to build their capacity to enhance their performance (Anane, 2011).

However, there is the need for effective maintenance of peace and security, to achieve socio-economic development of the citizenry and draws people's attention to the Police Service with particular reference to how the personnel discharges their duties (Agbemabiese, 2012; Gyamfi, 2014; Bottoms & Tankebe, 2017). Research shows that little attention has been centered on organizational commitment within the law enforcement organizations possibly because these conditions are far more difficult to create (Johnson, 2015). Currently, law enforcement agencies like many other organizations have found themselves competing to attract and retain highly qualified employees. Given the importance of the Police work to society, and extensive skills and training associated with preparing them for effective policing, maintaining a stable workforce with positive work attitude become extremely important, hence the need for this research. Most studies on organizational commitment have mainly focused on the antecedents, correlates, and nature of organizational commitment in industries other than the police organization (Jaros 2007; Johnson, 2015). This research also seeks to fill this gap in the literature by studying the dimensions of organizational commitment through the validation of Allen and Meyer's model. Even though career development programs have been used in the private sector for many years, their existence

in police agencies is relatively new. Over a few decades ago, police managers proposed the use of career development support systems or specific developmental activities to address issues related to organisational performance (Hussain *et al.*, 2016). It was based on the merging fact of a review of various publications that researchers decided on looking into a study of career development.

The results of several research studies on the effectiveness of organizational career development programs show that it produces correspondingly higher levels of quality of working life, organizational commitment, professional development and productivity (Kannan 2007; Manyasi *et al.*, 2013). Researchers have divergent views on whether the employee or the organization own career development. Guided by the psychological contract theory, organizational theory and the motivational theories, Manyasi *et al.* (2013) and Hussain *et al.* (2016) argue that it is the responsibility of the organisation to support the career development of employees. However, Hussain *et al.* (2016) establish the fact that the issue of career development is a treat to organisations as it can raise employee expectations to a level the organisation cannot satisfy and make employees wish to leave their current job. The issue of career development is increasingly receiving attention in private and public sector organisations and this study examines and establishes empirical model for the impact of organisational support for career development on organisational commitment in the Ghana Police Service. Hence, the central issue to be investigated is organizational support for career development and its impact on organizational commitment among police personnel in Ghana. For this reason, the study looks into the relationship between career development and organizational commitment.

THE CONCEPT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

To understand the meaning of career development, it is important to define what a career is. Greenhaus *et al.* (2018) state that a career is best described as "the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of one's life. This definition includes both objective events, such as jobs, and subjective views of work, such as the person's attitudes, values, and expectations (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2018). As a result, both a person's work-related activities and his/her reactions to those activities form part of the person's career. This definition is consistent with the notion that careers develop over time, and that all persons have careers, regardless of their profession, their level of advancement or the stability of their work pattern. The idea of the "new career" differs from the traditional notion in the sense that responsibility for managing one's career has shifted from the employer to the employee and so Saleem and Anim (2013) defined career as an occupation undertaken for a specific period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress. They emphasized that a decent career is the one that has the opportunity to develop, maintain and increase commitment in employees.

Interestingly, they did not define career as a single lifetime engagement as the traditional definition purports. To them, the definition of a career depends on the focus. Saleem and Amin (2013) defined "career" from the individual's perspective (protean career) which is centered on interested

tracks along with the objectives of the individual's emotion. They shared in the definition of Greenhaus *et al.* (2018) as the pattern of work-related experience that spans the course of a person's life. Career development is crucial to the success of lifelong learning policies. Governments regularly state that such policies need to be significantly driven by individuals. The reason is simple: schooling can be designed as a system, but lifelong learning cannot. It needs to embrace many forms of learning, in many different settings. This shows that it is the individual who must provide a sense of impetus, of coherence and continuity. It means that if, as many governments believe, lifelong learning is crucial to their country's economic competitiveness and social wellbeing, then their country's future is significantly dependent on the quality of the decisions and transitions made by individuals. The definitions of these concepts are necessary for this study in the sense that it helps the researcher to appreciate the meaning and time involved in career development.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment has captured the minds of scholars for many years. Similarly, professionals have been enamored because of the desirable outcomes to high levels of organizational commitment which includes increased expenditure, increased job satisfaction, and lower levels of absenteeism (Morrow, 2011). Consequently, evidence from many academic scholars gave a better understanding of relations between organizational commitment and other constructs (Saleem & Amin, 2013; Johnson, 2015; Greenhaus *et al.*, 2018; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1992; Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004; Tansky, & Cohen, 2001). Different definitions of organizational commitment can be found in the literature. Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1992) note that "commitment is the relative strength of an individual's identification with the involvement in a particular organization". To them, three characteristics of commitment exist.

These include an employee's belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, the willingness to exert dedicated efforts on behalf of the organisation and lastly, having a strong desire to maintain organization membership. This viewpoint of Mowday *et al.* (1992) has been measured with a scale known as the organizational commitment questionnaire.

Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe (2004), however, defined organizational commitment as a psychological relationship between employees and the organization. This definition conceives commitment as comprising some form of psychological bond between an employee and the organization. Meyer and Allen (1990) also conceptualized organizational commitment as a three-dimensional construct.

DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Meyer and Allen (1993) developed a framework to measure three dimensions of organizational commitment. These three components are viewed as separate and distinguishable components, rather than types of attitudinal commitment (McElroy & Morrow, 1999). These dimensions have also been found to correlate differentially with antecedent variables (Tankebe 2010; Park &

Rainey, 2007). They referred to them as Affective, continuance and normative commitment. In arguing for their framework, Meyer and Allen (1991) contended that affective, continuance and normative commitment were components rather than types because employees could have varying degrees of all three. For instance, one employee might feel both a strong attachment to an organisation and a sense of obligation to remain.

Another might enjoy working for the organisation but also recognize that leaving would be very difficult from an economic standpoint and this can be seen in Ghana where even though most employees are not committed to their jobs, they still stay because jobs are limited (Johnson, 2015). Again, an employee might also experience a considerable degree of desire, need, and obligation to remain with the current employer (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Even though they present this argument; they do not imply that there is a rationale for summing all the scales to obtain an overall score for organisational commitment. It has long been argued that employees can experience varying degrees of all three forms of commitment and that the three components combine (interact) to influence organisational behaviour. Consequently, for this research, the different scales were referred to as dimensions rather than components (Morrow, 2011).

AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

Affective commitment is defined as employees' emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment stay with the organization because they want to. Affective Commitment reflects commitment based on emotional ties the employee develops with the organisation basically through positive work practices (Jaros 2007; Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004).

Continuance Commitment

The second dimension of organizational commitment (Becker's side-bet theory) called continuance commitment, was defined as 'the extent to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving Continuance commitment refers to employees' assessment of whether the costs of leaving the organization are greater than the costs of staying (Jaros, 2007). Employees who perceive the costs of leaving the organisation as greater than the costs of staying remain because they need to. It is also based on the perceived costs, both economic and social, of leaving the organisation (Jaros, 2007).

Normative Commitment

The third dimension, which is normative commitment was defined by Jaros (2007) as the employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organization. This means that employees can experience each of these psychological states to varying degrees. Employees experiencing higher levels of normative commitment stay with the organisation because they feel they ought to. Normative Commitment is based on perceived obligation towards the organization, (maybe in the quest to reciprocate).

Empirical Literature

Contemporary literature on business in general and on careers' specific related issues emphasize the dynamic nature of labour markets. The impression often portrayed is that in the past organizations had a rigid hierarchical structure, and operated within a stable environment (Baruch, 2006). Thus careers were predictable, secure, and linear. In contrast, the organizational system is now in a mode of all change, all dynamic, total fluidity, and thus careers are unpredictable, vulnerable, and multidirectional (Baruch, 2006). In both depictions of the past and the current state represent extreme scenarios that do not reflect a true and fair representation of the real case in hand. This is because in one instance, while there has been a drastic shift from the traditional and conventional mode, most organizations still perform within a relatively stable environment and apply well-established strategies for their management, keeping a significant share of the traditional system intact (Saleem & Amin, 2013). On the other hand, even within the traditional model, it looks obvious that the psychological contract and the actual practice were not fully rigid.

Literature indicates that the concept of career development and organizational commitment has been researched very well over the last century (Baruch, 2006; Kannan, 2007; Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Manyasi *et al.*, 2011; Ransley & Mazerolle, 2009; Thite, 2001; Kokemuller, 2013; Saleem & Amin 2013; practitioners and researchers the opportunity to re-assess concepts and issues pertaining to career development and organizational commitment specifically from the Ghanaian perspective. Previous studies (Chui *et al.*, 2007; Kleiman, 1984; Tankebe, 2010) also noted from their studies that career supports provided by organizations do affect employee commitment. For instance, Hussain *et al.*, (2016) and Baruch (2006) argued that career advancement, autonomy, creation of job ladders and job flexibility will maximize commitment of employees and thus minimize absenteeism. Career opportunities have been identified as a determinant of organizational commitment as well (Bashir & Ramay, 2008).

Many researchers have proven that career development is beneficial to both the employee and the organization (Baruch, 2006; Kannan, 2007; Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Manyasi *et al.*, 2013; Ransley & Mazerolle, 2009; Hussain, *et al.*, 2016; Thite, 2001; Githu, 2018). However, its disadvantages should not be downplayed. Saleem and Amin (2013) indicate that discussing career issues and supporting employees might reduce commitment to their organizations for others. In Ghana, for instance, most organizations fail to offer support to employees for the fear that such employees will be poached by their competitors. There is a dearth of literature with regards to scholarly works on organizational commitment in the security sector and this was affirmed by Johnson (2015). According to the author, little attention has been placed on organizational commitment within the police organization possibly because, in law enforcement organizations, these are far more difficult to create. Hussain *et al.* (2016) also indicate that Career Development Programs in law enforcement have been even slower in developing. To the author, "career development has been traditionally viewed as nothing more than promoting officers through the ranks until they are eligible to retire". At best, employees are given limited guidance in professional development and little, if any, guidance in areas about personal growth. The police like any other organization are

confronted with constant challenges of harnessing the energies of the personnel to ensure that their command is sufficiently motivated to be loyal even in the face of competing demands from other sources within the wider social structure (Ransley & Mazerolle, 2009). This makes it important to study police personnel's commitment to their organizations. A review of few studies (Anane, 2011; Agbemabiese 2012; Gyamfi , 2014 & Aning, 2006) in Ghana on the police show that most researchers criticized the police for corrupt behaviours, limited logistics, politicized promotions, unprofessionalism among others and are not clear on the solution. This present study addresses an important gap in the literature by investigating the relationship between career support and organizational commitment of police personnel to their organization. It seems Allen and Meyer's (1997) three-component model of organizational commitment has not been extensively utilized or tested on the Ghana police service.

Employees need to determine whether, and to what extent, an organization will recognize and reward their effort, support their socio-emotional needs, and help them on request. According to organizational support theory, in return for a high level of support, employees work harder to help their organization reach its goals. Employees who experience a strong level of perceived organisational support theoretically feel the need to reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with attitudes and behaviours that in turn benefit the organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) noted that a given antecedent variable can contribute to the development of any or all of Affective Commitment, Normative Commitment, or Continuance Commitment depending on how it is perceived by employees. For example, training opportunities can contribute to a sense of desire, obligation, or a need to remain with the organization depending on whether it is viewed as a reflection of organizational support, a benefit requiring reciprocation, or an investment of time to acquire organization-specific skills, respectively. Also, organizational learning such as training, job rotation, mentoring according to Meyer and Allen (1997) influences organizational commitment as such extensive investment in competence development is positively associated with the development of perception of continuance commitment by making it costly for employees to leave. This study was backed by Meyer and Smith (2000) as they found evidence to support continuance commitment. For this reason, this research seeks to explore whether supports offered to employees towards career development would have a significant influence on their career using Meyer and Allen's concept of commitment.

Hypotheses

The study aims to test the following hypotheses:

H1: There will be a significant positive impact of organizational support for career development on the affective commitment of police personnel.

H2: There will be a significant positive impact of organizational support for career development on continuance commitment of police personnel

H3: Organizational support for career development has a significant positive impact on normative commitment.

Conceptual Framework

In addition to the theoretical framework, this study relies equally on the outlined conceptual framework. It shows the effect of the independent variable (organisational support for career development) on the dependent variable (three dimensions of organisational commitment). From the conceptual framework, organizational support for career development variables focuses on in the study was training, study leaves, job rotation, mentoring, career counseling, promotions, internal/external appointment, and scholarship. These organizational supports for career development variables were linked to organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen (1993) note that three constructs of organizational commitment include normative, affective and continuance commitments. This study drew a link on how these career development practices impacted positively on organizational affective, continuance and normative commitments of police personnel in Ghana. There is much evidence from the literature to support the fact that support for employee career development enables organizational effectiveness through commitment. For instance, studies by Baruch (2006), Githu (2018), Bashir and Ramay, (2008), Lee and Bruvold (2003), Saleem and Amin (2013) among other studies have all reiterated that supports offered to employees by organizations have some positive impacts on organizational commitments.

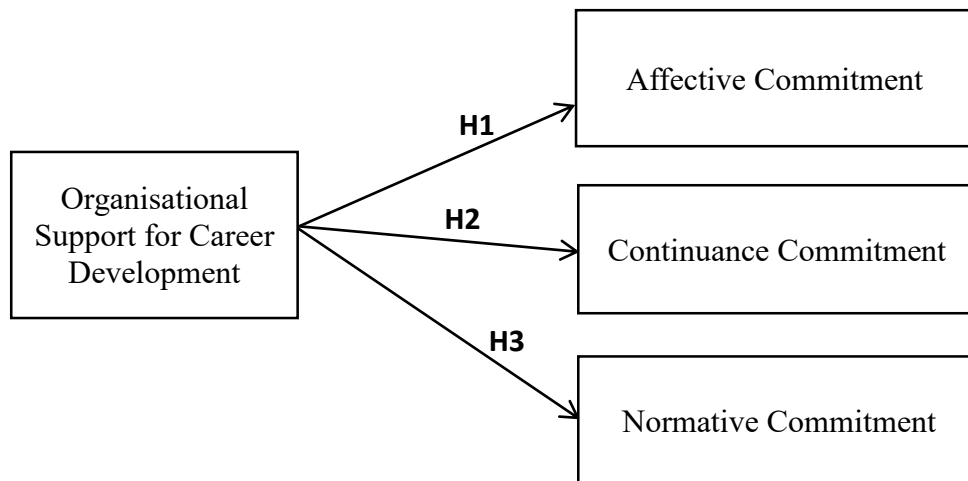


Figure 1.0 Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey design was used for this study. This design was considered appropriate for the study because it aids in finding out the views or opinions of a population on issues being investigated (Kumar 2005). However, the population of the study comprised of senior-level and

junior level officers involved in the day to day policing operations at the Ghana police service national headquarters. The study adopted the multistage sampling technique. First, the convenience sampling technique was used to select the headquarters of the Ghana Police Service. This was because the researcher believed that the national headquarters being the center of all operations, all the needed information relevant to the study can be gathered. The quota sampling technique was further used to divide the headquarters of GPS into various departments. This was because the researcher wanted to gather data from a proportional number of respondents in each department since some departments were larger than others. In all, 280 questionnaires were distributed. However, 270 were retrieved and used for analysis. Scales used for the questionnaires were adopted from Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). Responses to these items were all measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example of the items is "The Ghana Police Service pays participation fees and upkeep for personnel attending conferences, seminars, workshops, and other career development programmes. Correlational and hierarchical regression analyses were used to assess the relationship and impact of career support on commitment among police personnel at the headquarters of the GPS respectively. The quantitative data were inspected for statistically significant relationships with the aid of correlational and hierarchical regression analyses.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities of study Instruments

In general, career development supports offered to police personnel was not very good. Personnel perceived low support in the service. Organizational support ($M=2.745$, $SD=0.768$). Personnel also had moderate commitment levels exhibiting more of Affective ($M=3.40$, $SD=8.25$) than Continuance ($M=2.98$, $SD=0.719$) and Normative commitment ($M=3.17$, $SD=0.592$).

The estimated average inter-item correlation in this study was calculated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), if the Cronbach's alpha is less than .6, this means that the instrument used has low reliability (and thus opens for some errors). If the alpha value is within .7, the instrument has acceptable reliability. The instrument is said to be highly reliable when the alpha value exceeds .8. From Table 1 below, Organisational support for career development recorded a Chronbach's alpha of .77, Affective commitment had .77, continuance commitment was .61 and normative recorded .72. It can, therefore, be concluded that all the study variables recorded an acceptable range of reliabilities. These are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of Continuous Variables

Study Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha
Sex of Respondents	1.31	.465	.802	-1.367	-
Age of Respondents	3.28	1.283	.249	-.577	-
Educational level	1.79	.823	1.006	.694	-
Marital Status	1.75	.513	.052	1.666	-
Length of Service	2.46	1.040	.279	-1.122	-
Rank of Respondents	2.86	1.554	.770	-.475	-
Organisational support for Career Development	2.74	.768	.210	-.084	.77
Affective Commitment	3.40	.825	-.304	-.387	.77
Continuance Commitment	2.98	.719	-.006	.035	.61
Normative Commitment	3.17	.592	-.449	.227	.72

The Relationship among Continuous Variables

The study sought to establish the relationship between organisational support and the various dimensions of commitment. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to this effect and the hypotheses were tested at a significant level of 0.01.

From Table 2, it was found that there exists a significant positive relationship ($r = .407$, $p < .01$) between organisational support and affective employee commitment. This indicates that employees' commitment is likely to increase at a very significant rate when the Service provides support for its employees. On the contrary, if organisations fail to provide support for their employees, their sense of attachment to the organisation will decrease.

Furthermore, an insignificant positive ($r = .069$, $p > .05$) relationship was found between organisational support and employees' continuance commitment. On the other hand, there was a significant positive relationship ($r = .259$, $p < .01$) between organisational support for career development and employees' normative commitment. This means that when support for personnel increases, employees' normative commitment will also increase and vice versa.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients of Continuous Variables

Study Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Gender of Respondents									
2 Age of Respondents	-.099								
3 Education Level	-.033	.249**							
4 Marital Status	-.087	.515**	.201**						
5 Length of Service	-.059	.798**	.297**	.459**					
6 Rank of Respondents	.048	.532**	.311**	.281**	.501**				
7 Organisational support for career development	.001	.132*	.021	.086	.132*	.173**			
8 Affective Commitment	-.083	.109	-.013	-.008	.078	.073	.407**		
9 Continuance Commitment	-.048	-.027	-.003	.038	.014	-.078	.069	.058	
10 Normative Commitment	.085	-.033	-.104	-.076	.010	-.011	.259**	.471**	.272**

Note: n=270. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$. Gender was coded as Male= 1 and Female=2

Hypotheses Testing

The Effect of Organisational Support for Career Development on Affective Commitment

In Model 1 of Table 3, the effects of gender, age and educational level in the prediction of affective employee commitment were controlled for. Gender, age, and educational level predicted only 1.9% of the variance in affective employee commitment as shown by the R^2 value in Model 1 ($R^2 = 0.019$). After the organisational support for the career development variable was entered into Block 2, it predicted 17.6% of the variance in affective employee commitment ($R^2 = .176$). This means that there was an increase of 15.7% of the variance when the effect of organisational support was added ($\Delta R^2 = 15.7\%$).

From model 2 of Table 3 below, it can be seen that organisational support for career development had a significant positive influence on affective employee commitment ($\beta = .400$, $p < 0.01$). It was found that the entire model significantly predicted affective employee commitment ($F(4, 265) = 14.13$, $p < 0.01$). These findings support the assertion in Hypothesis 1 which stated that "*There will be a significant positive impact of organizational support for career development on the affective commitment of police personnel*".

Table 3: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis showing the Influence of Organisational Support for Career Development on Affective Commitment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p	F	R	R ²	AR ²	ΔR ²
	B	Std. Error	Beta							
1	(Constant)	3.406	.223	15.275	.000	1.707	.137	.019	.008	.019
	Gender of Respondents	-.129	.108	-.073	-1.190	.235				
	Age of Respondents	.072	.041	.113	1.784	.076				
	Educational Level	-.043	.063	-.043	-.685	.494				
2	(Constant)	2.350	.253	9.282	.000	14.13*	.419	.176	.163	.157
	Gender of Respondents	-.139	.100	-.078	-1.397	.164				
	Age of Respondents	.037	.038	.058	.990	.323				
	Educational Level	-.038	.058	-.038	-.662	.508				
	Organisational support for career development	.429	.061	.400	7.090	.000				

Note: n=270. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The Effect of Organisational Support for Career Development on Continuance Commitment

Table 4 depicts a hierarchical multiple regression analysis showing the impact of organisational support for career development on continuance employee commitment within the Ghana Police service. In Model 1, the effects of gender, age and educational level in the prediction of continuance employee commitment were controlled for. Gender, age, and educational level predicted only 0% of the variance in continuance employee commitment as shown by the R² value in Model 1 (R² = 0.003). Similarly, organisational support for career development predicted 0% of the variance in continuance employee commitment (R² = 0.009) in model 2 of Table 4. Therefore, there was no change ($\Delta R^2 = 0.00$) in the amount of variance when the effect of organisational support was added to the model. It was also found that organisational support for career development had an insignificant impact on continuance employee commitment ($\beta = .075$, $p > 0.01$). The entire model showing the impact of organisational support for career development on continuance employee commitment was also found to be insignificant ($F(4, 265) = .592$, $p > 0.01$).

Hence, hypothesis 2 which predicted that "there will be a significant positive impact of organizational support for career development on continuance commitment of police personnel" was not supported by the findings of this study.

Table 4: Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Continuance Commitment on Organisational Support and Career Development Intentions

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	p	F	R	R ²	AR ²	ΔR ²
(Constant)		16.046	.000	.830	.058	.003	.008	.003
Gender of Respondents	-.051	-.829	.408					
Age of Respondents	-.033	-.514	.608					
Educational Level	.003	.052	.958					
(Constant)		12.273	.000	.670	.094	.009	.006	.003
Gender of Respondents	-.052	-.847	.398					
Age of Respondents	-.043	-.670	.503					
Educational Level	.004	.067	.947					
Organisational support for career development	.075	1.215	.225					

Note: n=270. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The Effect of Organisational Support for Career Development on Normative Commitment

Finally, the hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used in Table 5 to establish the impact of organisational support for career development on the normative commitment of police personnel in the Ghana Police Service. Model 1, shows the controlled impact of gender, age and educational level in the prediction of normative employee commitment. Gender, age, and educational level predicted only 1.8% of the variance in normative employee commitment as shown by the R² value in Model 1 of Table 5 (R² = 0.018). Furthermore, organisational support for career development predicted 8.7% of the variance in normative employee commitment (R² = 0.087) in model 2 of Table 5. Therefore, there was a 7.0% change (ΔR² = 0.070) in the amount of variance when the effect of organisational support was added to the model. It was also found that organisational support for career development had a significant positive impact on normative employee commitment (β = .266, $p < 0.01$). The entire model showing the impact of organisational support for career development on normative employee commitment was also found to be significant (F (4,265) = 6.320, $p < 0.01$). These findings of the study, therefore, support the hypothesis that "*Organizational support for career development has a significant positive impact on normative commitment.*"

Table 5: Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Normative Commitment on Organisational Support and Career Development Intentions

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	P	F	R	R ²	AR ²	ΔR ²
1	(Constant)	13.674	.000	.196	.132	.018	.006	.018
	Gender of Respondents	.082	1.342	.181				
	Age of Respondents	.001	.010	.992				
	Educational Level	-.101	-1.611	.108				
2	(Constant)	8.811	.000	6.32**	.295	.087	.073	.070
	Gender of Respondents	.078	1.325	.186				
	Age of Respondents	-.036	-.582	.561				
	Educational Level	-.098	-1.615	.108				
	Organisational support for career Development	.266	4.486	.000				

Note: n=270. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major purpose of this study was to determine the impact of organisational support for career development on employee commitment in the public sector of Ghana with special focus on the Ghana Police Service. One of the major objectives of the study was to establish the impact of organisational support for career development on the affective commitment of employees in the Ghana Police Service. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant positive impact of organisational support for career development on the affective commitment of employees. This finding is consistent with that of Kurtessis *et al.* (2017) that used the social exchange framework, to prove that when employees perceive a high degree of organisational support, they repay the organization through increased affective commitment. Similar findings were discovered by (Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore and Linden, 1997; Cook *et al.*, 2013).

The results of this study which confirmed the assertion that organisational support for career development has a significant positive impact on affective commitment of employees was also consistent with the study by Driscoll and Randall (1999) on employees from dairy cooperatives, who found that the belief that organizations support and value their employees' contribution, it increased their emotional attachment to their organization. Another study by Kurtessis *et al.*, (2017) proved that perceived organisational support (POS) for career development and Affective

Commitment (AC) were empirically distinctive. They also found that POS was positively and directly related to AC, which they attributed to social identification with the organization. In other studies, it was found that the act of organisational support cultivated affective organizational commitment by strengthening employees' perceptions of both personal and company pro-social identities, images of the self and the organization as helpful, caring, and benevolent (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Nazari *et al.*, 2012). Their findings suggested that support to employees initiates a process of pro-social sense-making, which leads employees to judge personal and company actions and identities as caring, and thereby strengthens their affective commitment to the company.

Furthermore, the study fulfilled one of its major objectives by finding the impact of organisational support for career development on continuance commitment. The study discovered that organisational support for career development had an insignificant impact on employee commitment. This result contradicts that of Adam, Dutton, and Rosso (2008) who asserted that organisational support to employees strengthens continuance commitment by increasing the perceived costs of withdrawing from the organization. This is because offering support to employees will privately and publicly demonstrate their dedication to their organization, employees may also feel that they will lose the credit gained for their donations if they leave the organization, and will thus display stronger continuance commitment to avoid these costs. The finding of this study perhaps was not supported because of contextual issues. Also, considering the economic situation in Ghana currently, an employee in the GPS is likely to stay with the organization even if he or she perceives low or no support for career development.

The current study sought to establish the impact of organisational support for career development on the normative commitment of employees. The study revealed that organisational support for career development had a significant positive impact on normative commitment. This finding confirmed that of Kurtessis *et al.* (2017) and Ahmad *et al.* (2017) asserted that employees believe that their organizations have a generally positive or negative orientation toward them that comprise both their contributions and their welfare. The provision of organizational support to an employee is likely to generate feelings of goodwill towards the organization, strengthen the bond between employer and employee, which, in turn, increases the feelings of obligation to repay the organization, through the norm of reciprocity.

Employees need to determine whether, and to what extent, an organization will recognize and reward their effort, support their socio-emotional needs, and help them on request. According to organizational support theory, in return for a high level of support, employees work harder to help their organization reach its goals. Employees who experience a strong level of POS theoretically feel the need to reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with attitudes and behaviours that in turn benefit the organization (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Anane, 2011).

In another study by Meyer *et al.*, (2002), it was found that apart from other employee attitudes such as organizational justice, overall job satisfaction, job involvement and role clarity believed to

contribute to the development of normative commitment, organizational support to employees also plays a major role in improving the normative commitment of employees at the workplace. The normative commitment may develop when an organization offers employees rewards in advance, such as paying college tuition, or if the organization goes to great length or cost to hire or train the employee (Meyer & Allen, 1991), perhaps illustrating the norm of reciprocity. This supports the findings of this study which indicates that organisational support for employees helps build their normative commitment in diverse ways.

Recommendations for Practice and Theory

Based on the key findings drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made: Based on the finding that personnel perceived low career support in the service, it is recommended that policies on supports such as study leave, reimbursements, training, and workshops should be revised to allow more personnel to develop their career. These policies should be formulated in consultation with all the stakeholders to ensure that all parties are satisfied with the terms and conditions. Consistent with existing studies, career development supports through organizational discretion that provides coaching, personal worth and perceived competence might meet the socio-emotional needs of employees, and hence lead to a favourable behavioural outcome (Wayne *et al.*, 1997; Meyer & Smith, 2000; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017).

Again, personnel who express interest in developing their careers must be guided with maximum supervision to help them make the right decision which can increase mutual benefit in the process of career development. This can be effective through the establishment of counseling and placement centers. Besides, Baruch (2006) postulated that career supports offered to employees much be implemented strategically or should be in line with their business, (Renee, Barnett & Bradley 2007; Tams & Arthur, 2010).

Moreover, due to the dynamic and demanding nature of the police job, it is recommended that the Ghana police service improves on personnel commitment through good workplace values. Jaros's (2007) research emphasized the fact that personnel organizational participation must be valued; supervisors must share appropriate information to allow mutual influence; recognize and regard good performance and not abusing the vulnerability of others as these behaviours largely determine subordinate commitment level.

Specifically, it is suggested that since perceived support depends on discretionary treatment by the organisation (Adam, *et al.*, 2008), support such as increases in pay, health insurance, rank, job enrichment, and decentralization of decision making can be used to enhance perceived support to the extent that these signified positive evaluations.

Recommendations for Future Research

The present study looked at the impact of organisational support for career development on employee commitment. This study provided a conceptual foundation for organisational support for career development. An enhanced understanding of the outcome of organisational support

resulted in an increased understanding of the organisational support factors fundamental to employees' commitment at the workplace. Although the present study provided extensive support for many existing research findings, there are still many outcomes of organizational support as well as antecedents of employee commitment that needs to be examined. It is therefore recommended that future studies examine other outcome variables of organizational support and antecedents of employee commitment to add to the existing knowledge on how employee commitment can be improved in the organisation to improve on efficiency and productivity.

This research hinged on the organizational support theory and so it is recommended that other studies can focus on other theories such as the social exchange theory, psychological exchange, and stakeholders' theory to have a holistic view on the concept of commitment.

Lastly, this study employed the cross-sectional research design, which means that the study took place within a limited period. Organisational support is an actual and ongoing process in any organisation and perceptions might already have changed since this study was conducted. Thus, a longitudinal study would provide information on the change in perceptions over time. Therefore it is recommended that future research should examine the impact of organisational support for career development on employee commitment and other job outcomes in a longitudinal study. For some employees, failure to provide organisational support for career development may elicit immediate reactions, while for others, it may build up negative feelings over time. Conversely, over time the initial negative attitudes employees experience following the absence of organisational support may become weaker due to them coping with the perceived failure of support from institutions and re-establishing trust with their organization.

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