Advanced International Journal of Business, Entrepreneurship and SME's
AIJBES
EISSN: 2682-8545
Volume 7 Issue 24 (June 2025) PP. 341-361
DOI 10.35631/AIJBES.724023

ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMES (AIJBES)
www.aijbes.com

BALANCING SELF-FULFILLMENT AND COMMITMENT, UNPACKING THE EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION LINK

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Article Info:

Article history:
Received date: 17.04.2025
Revised date: 30.04.2025
Accepted date: 12.06.2025
Published date: 23.06.2025

To cite this document:

Saeed, Z., Abdullah, H., & Jayatilleke, R. (2025). Balancing Self-Fulfillment And Commitment, Unpacking The Extrinsic Motivation Link. *Advanced International Journal of Business Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 7* (24), 341-361.

DOI: 10.35631/AIJBES.724023

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Abstract:

The reason for this study is to explore the causal relationship between organizational commitment and self-fulfillment, with a particular center on the intervening part of extrinsic motivation. The objectives incorporate looking at how organizational commitment impacts both extrinsic motivation and self-fulfillment inside an organizational setting. Utilizing a quantitative approach, information was collected from individuals of the scholarly community from higher education institutions organized in Selangor to test the proposed connections. The result shows a noteworthy positive effect of organizational commitment on both extrinsic motivation and self-fulfillment. Besides, mediation analysis uncovers that extrinsic motivation partially mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and self-fulfillment, recommending that whereas organizational commitment specifically improves self-fulfillment, it too does so in an indirect way by boosting extrinsic motivation. These discoveries emphasize the significance of cultivating an organizational commitment to upgrade worker inspiration and individual fulfillment, highlighting the requirement for organizations to create situations that bolster commitment and inspiration in their workforce.

Keywords:

Organizational Commitment, Self-determination Theory, Self-Fulfillment, Motivation, Academics, Malaysia

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Introduction

Considering the intensified competition, the ever-changing environment requires organizations to be more skillful, creative, and focused. Organizations need a committed workforce that can exert their best efforts to achieve their designed goals to cope with the novel challenges. Evidently, organizational commitment is instrumental in increase productivity (Abdirahman, 2018), reducing absenteeism (Jacobsen & Fjeldbraaten, 2020), cutting down turnover intentions, and creating an environment of better work-life balance (Pradhan, Jena, & Kumari, 2016). Resultantly, employees with a committed attitude are rewarded with extrinsic benefits and, intrinsically, a sense of accomplishment that nurtures self-fulfillment. A major challenge for organizations is maintaining a constantly motivated workforce. Factors like security, working conditions, and internal relationships are essential in motivating employees to be more committed towards their organizations (Karoso, Riinawati, Ilham, Rais, & Latifa, 2022).

Self-fulfillment is a psychological and personal notion that refers to a person's urge for self-actualization and personal development. It has to do with pursuing one's ambitions, ideals, and objectives since doing so can provide one a sense of direction and fulfillment in life. A sense of self-fulfillment can result when an organization's values and culture match a person's own values and ambition (Watton, Lichtenstein, & Aitken, 2019). Resultantly, there prevails a sense of achievement and satisfaction among employees that leads to self-fulfillment. As an antecedent to self-fulfillment, personal development and chances to grow professionally plays an important role for employees and leadership alike (Shanafelt, Trockel, Rodriguez, & Logan, 2021).

According to Pangarkar & Kirkwood (2013), organizational commitment can be defined as when employees are involved emotionally, physically, and mentally to achieve organizational goals. Although the importance of employee organizational commitment has been well understood and acknowledged by many scholars. The concept of employees' commitment towards their organizations is subject to the organization's commitment to its people through an inclusive culture (O'Reilly, 1989). In today's competition-driven environment, every organization strives for the best employees to gain a competitive advantage (Ngirande, 2021). In organizational setups, organizational commitment is instrumental in increasing productivity (Abdirahman, 2018), reduce absenteeism (Jacobsen & Fjeldbraaten, 2020), cutting down turnover intentions, and creating an environment of better work-life balance (Pradhan et al., 2016). There are a number of factors, like; security, working conditions, and internal relationships play an important role in motivating employees to be more committed towards their organizations (Karoso et al., 2022). That translates as motivation is a factor that drives employees' commitment, which provides a necessary reason for their actions. Particularly, extrinsic motivation is essential to harness organizational commitment McLaughlin & Cox (2022).

Malaysia's tertiary education sector has encountered two major systemic challenges in recent years: a decline in student enrollment and a reduction in funding from the Ministry of Higher Education. According to the Ministry's 2022 annual report, public universities have seen a 9.6% drop in undergraduate intake over the past five years, and federal allocations for higher education institutions were reduced by RM1.45 billion between 2019 and 2023. These financial and demographic strains have created a high-pressure environment for academic staff, impacting not only institutional performance but also the personal and professional well-being of lecturers and support personnel (Abbasi & Wan Ismail, 2023).

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In this evolving landscape, the conduct and attitudes of academic staff have become pivotal in maintaining the quality and effectiveness of Malaysian public universities. Self-fulfillment, defined as a deep sense of personal satisfaction and purpose in one's work, has emerged as a key predictor of job performance and academic excellence, both for faculty and the students they teach. This study aims to investigate whether a causal relationship exists between organizational commitment and the self-fulfillment of academic personnel in public research universities located in Selangor, Malaysia.

The challenges identified by Abbasi & Wan Ismail (2023) remain largely unresolved in 2025, warranting fresh scholarly attention. Additionally, Azim, Hassan, Zaid, and Daud (2020) found that high self-fulfillment among Malaysian academics is linked to a 32% reduction in workplace deviant behaviors, underlining the practical implications of this psychological construct. Furthermore, job dissatisfaction among lecturers in Malaysian public universities reportedly reached 37.5% in a 2021 national survey conducted by the Malaysian Employers Federation, highlighting the urgency to examine what drives academic satisfaction and motivation.

Academic research in Malaysia has explored how factors such as job satisfaction (Ehido, Halim, & Awang, 2019), personal growth and citizenship behavior (Djaelani, Sanusi, & Triatmanto, 2021), work-life balance (Janib et al., 2021), and alignment between personal and organizational values (Arokiasamy & Tat, 2020) contribute to self-fulfillment. However, many of these studies conceptualize organizational commitment merely as a mediating variable, rather than examining its potential as a direct antecedent to self-fulfillment. International evidence from India (Gopinath, 2021) and Uganda (Mwesigwa, Tusiime, & Ssekiziyivu, 2020) also supports the premise that institutional loyalty and job attachment contribute significantly to well-being and performance.

In light of these findings, this study seeks to address the gap by positioning organizational commitment as a primary independent variable and exploring the mediating influence of extrinsic motivation. Understanding this relationship can help institutions build a committed and motivated academic workforce, a strategic asset in a competitive and resource-constrained educational environment.

Moreover, self-fulfillment in academic roles is not merely a personal aspiration, it also has strong social and institutional implications. Research shows that employees who report high self-fulfillment demonstrate significantly higher teaching engagement, research output, and collegial cooperation (Zhou, Law, & Lee, 2022). Hence, creating conditions that foster commitment and motivation does not just benefit the individual but contributes to organizational stability, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

Therefore, this study aims to examine how organizational commitment impacts self-fulfillment among academic staff and to what extent extrinsic motivational factors mediate this relationship. The findings will provide actionable insights for university leadership to design policies and environments that enhance academic engagement, reduce turnover intentions, and ultimately support the academic mission of Malaysian public universities.

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Literature Review

Commitment and Organizational Commitment

Human self-fulfillment is a multifaceted construct attracting a great deal of attention from across disciplines. In the organizational context, multiple components of self-fulfillment, such as self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, play a substantial role in organizational and personnel development (Scherrer & Preckel, 2019). There is a convincing body of evidence suggesting a strong positive relationship between employees' commitment, self-fulfillment, and a higher level of motivation as well (Akbar, 2022; Dong, Mahfudnurnajamuddin, Semmaila, & Latief, 2019).

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment an individual has towards their organization, encompassing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors towards organizational goals and values (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Research suggests that organizational commitment is positively associated with various desirable outcomes such as job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, involves performing duties to get rewards from external sources and to avoid punishment. Examples include salary, bonuses, and recognition. While intrinsic motivation stems from internal drives and enjoyment of the task itself, extrinsic motivation plays a significant role in shaping employee behavior and performance, especially in organizational settings (Deci & Ryan, 1987).

According to Lichterman (1995) and Tsurkan (2023) discovered a significant relationship was discovered between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment. Similarly, in the case of Malaysian academia, there is a strong and positive relationship between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment (Ehido, Halim, & Awang, 2019). Raza et al. (2020) evidence also proves that committed workers tend to have a higher level of self-fulfillment.

This ponder tried the interceding part of outward inspiration between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment in a scholastic setting. Agreeing to Nutt, (1999), outward rewards can straightforwardly propel workers, which eventually has an effect on the level of their self-fulfillment (Romney, Harrison, & Benson, 2024). Moreover, in multi-national organizations, outward variables like affirmation and financial rewards can play an intervening part between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment (Arokiasamy & Tat, 2020). The multi-layered affiliation among self-fulfillment, organizational commitment, and outward inspiration is much complicated. But, Davis, Agrawal, & Guo (2023) attest that organizational commitment makes a difference, giving a much-needed establishment in accomplishing employees' self-fulfillment, whereas outward variables serve as a device to shape commitment to procure self-fulfillment.

Theoretical Framework (Self-Determination Theory)

In the dynamic environment of higher education, especially within the Malaysian academic context, understanding the motivational forces that sustain academic staff performance is essential. Researchers and practitioners alike are increasingly focused on exploring strategies to enhance employee motivation, commitment, and self-realization (AlEssa & Durugbo, 2022). As Davis (2023) asserts, a higher level of motivation ultimately results in employees' self-fulfillment and a stronger commitment to their organizations. This dual pursuit, balancing self-fulfillment and commitment, is theoretically grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), a comprehensive framework developed by Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000), which analyzes human

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motivation based on the fulfillment of three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

In the academic setting, these needs are manifested through a sense of personal control over work (autonomy), mastery and growth in professional capabilities (competence), and meaningful connections with colleagues and institutional culture (relatedness). According to Racine, Kusch, Cascio, & Bogossian (2021), when employees experience autonomy in decision-making and control over their professional paths, they tend to exhibit higher self-fulfillment and intrinsic motivation. Competence provides a sense of efficacy, contributing to feelings of achievement and sustained engagement. Relatedness creates emotional and social bonds that anchor employees to their organization's mission and goals.

While SDT primarily emphasizes intrinsic motivation, it also provides a nuanced view of extrinsic motivation, recognizing that externally driven behaviors can still be internalized to varying degrees. In this context, extrinsic motivation, through rewards, recognition, job security, or career advancement, can serve as a crucial mediating mechanism that reinforces commitment and supports the journey toward self-fulfillment, especially in resource-constrained or competitive environments. This makes the theory especially relevant in understanding how externally regulated behaviors, when aligned with personal values or organizational culture, can produce meaningful outcomes.

Therefore, this study applies Self-Determination Theory as a conceptual lens to empirically test the causal relationship between organizational commitment and self-fulfillment among academic staff. At the same time, it examines the mediating role of extrinsic motivation in this relationship. Through this framework, the study seeks to unpack how external incentives can support internal psychological needs, ultimately enabling a balance between organizational loyalty and individual psychological enrichment.

Organizational Commitment and Self-Fulfillment

All human actions stem from a desire for self-fulfillment, an eager conception of one's earnest capacities (Gewirth, 2009). The applied side of it has a long-lasting and profound impact on social and psychological development. The abstract state of the concept, self-fulfillment, tends to envision a reflexive inclination that we have not yet attained. The embedded reason for such an argument rest in its subjective nature. The scholarly consensus on self-fulfillment revolves around a meaningful life (Martela & Steger, 2016) with different aspects consisting of: coherence, the existence as a part of a coherent whole (Heine, Proulx, & Vohs, 2006), the significance of one's life (George & Park, 2014), and having a purpose in life (Reker, Peacock, & Wong, 1987). This scientific discourse reinforces and furthers the same point of view as Balthip, McSherry, Petchruschatachart, Piriyakoontorn, and Liamputtong (2017) describe self-fulfillment in life as the result of a circular course of appreciation, commitment to a purposeful life, and happiness. The scholarly prominence of self-fulfillment has waxed and waned over the decades, but lately, the construct has gotten its well-deserved central position and chances for further exploration. As the psychological sphere discovers new facets of the human mind and behavior in changing times, it is important to develop a new understanding to deal with it. Besides a meaningful and happy life, it has got to be psychologically rich as well to have a fulfilled life (Oishi & Westgate, 2021).

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Organizational commitment is among the most studied subjects because of its significant consequences on employees' turnover intentions, job performance, and self-fulfillment (Chen & Francesco, 2003), and it works as an instrument for better organizational performance (Xiong Chen & Aryee, 2007). It has also been found that employees' emotional intelligence and job attitudes have an aptitude to reinforce organizational commitment. (Ahad, Mustafa, Mohamad, Abdullah, & Nordin, 2021). Herrera and Herrera, & De Las Heras-Rosas (2021) find strong support in the literature between organizational commitment and psychological contract. Memari, Mahdieh, & Marnani (2013) also find that employees having a stronger commitment are less likely to leave their organization and tend to be more satisfied with their jobs, which translates into as self-fulfillment. There is a common understanding that employees with higher levels of commitment have shown more focus, and act in a positive fashion on their work with consumers, supervisors, clients, working groups, occupations, service providers, and organization (Bingham, Mitchell, Bishop, & Allen, 2013). Hierarchical linear modeling suggests a positive impact on workplace innovation (Odoardi, Battistelli, Montani, & Peiró, 2019).

Meyer & Allen (1991) ponder upon organizational commitment as a psychological state of a person and explain it through three different dimensions: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Among these complementary components of organizational commitment, affective commitment shows the emotional attachment of employees to stay in the organization (Perry, Hunter, & Currall, 2016). Multiple meta-analyses found that affective commitment has a stronger correlation with better performance as compared to continuous and normative commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

Fundamentally, there are two main reasons an employee stays with the organization: a fear of loss (friend, working environment, fringe benefits, etc.) and lack of opportunities. The fear of loss encompassed by continuous commitment is based upon voluntary and willful decisions made by the employee to stay, but the commitment because of fear of being fired or demotion is subjective in nature (Windsteiger, Ahlheim, & Konrad, 2022). Occasionally, employees are compelled to perform their duties, resultantly having low level of significance of continuous commitment to the organization as Glazer, Mahoney, & Randall (2018) demonstrated in their research on millennials. However, the multidimensional organizational commitment framework progressed by Allen and Myer describe continuous commitment as a need-based obligation.

The following literature summary table highlights authors, variables studied, and main findings for ease of comparison and strengthens the clarity of your literature review.

Table 1: Summary of Key Literature on Self-Fulfillment, Organizational Commitment, and Motivation

Author(s)	Year	Key Variables Studied	Context	Main Findings
Romney, Harrison & Benson	2024	Extrinsic motivation and self-fulfillment	Organizational	Rewards impact self-fulfillment levels.
Davis, Agrawal & Guo	2023	Organizational commitment, extrinsic factors, self-fulfillment	Workplace	Commitment fosters self-fulfillment; rewards shape commitment.

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Author(s)	Year	Key Variables Studied	Context	Main Findings
Tsurkan	2023	Self-fulfillment and commitment	General	Confirmed Lichterman's findings.
Davis	2023	Motivation and commitment	Organizational	High motivation leads to commitment and fulfillment.
Ryan & Deci	2022	Self-determination theory	Psychological framework	Autonomy, competence, and relatedness promote motivation and commitment.
Windsteiger, Ahlheim & Konrad	2022	Continuance commitment	Organizational	Fear-based commitment differs from affective commitment.
AlEssa & Durugbo	2022	Motivational techniques	Organizational	New strategies are needed to enhance employee motivation.
Oishi & Westgate	2021	Psychological richness and fulfillment	Conceptual	Fulfilled life requires meaning, happiness, and psychological richness.
Racine et al.	2021	Autonomy, self-fulfillment	Workplace	Autonomy enhances self-fulfillment.
Ahad et al.	2021	Emotional intelligence, job attitude, commitment	Organizational	EI and job attitude reinforce commitment.
Herrera et al.	2021	Psychological contract and commitment	Organizational	Strong link between commitment and psychological contract.
Raza et al.	2020	Commitment and self-fulfillment	Organizational	Committed workers show higher levels of self-fulfillment.
Arokiasamy & Tat	2020	Extrinsic motivation, commitment, self-fulfillment	Multinational organizations	Rewards mediate relationship between self-fulfillment and commitment.
Ehido, Halim & Awang	2019	Self-fulfillment and commitment	Malaysian academia	Strong positive correlation in local academic context.
Dong et al.	2019	Commitment, motivation, self-fulfillment	Organizational	High motivation linked to greater self-fulfillment and commitment.
Odoardi et al.	2019	Commitment, innovation	Organizational	Positive link between commitment and workplace innovation.
Glazer, Mahoney & Randall	2018	Commitment (Millennials)	Generational study	Millennials show low significance in continuance commitment.

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Author(s)	Year	Key Variables Studied	Context	Main Findings
Balthip et al.	2017	Self-fulfillment, happiness, purpose	Life purpose framework	Self-fulfillment stems from appreciation, commitment to purpose, and happiness.
Perry, Hunter & Currall	2016	Affective commitment	Organizational	Emotional attachment leads to stronger commitment.
Martela & Steger	2016	Meaningful life, self-fulfillment	Psychological	Self-fulfillment tied to meaning, purpose, coherence.
George & Park	2014	Meaning in life	Psychological	Perceived life significance enhances well-being and fulfillment.
Memari et al.	2013	Commitment, satisfaction, fulfillment	Organizational	Committed employees are more satisfied and fulfilled.
Heine, Proulx & Vohs	2006	Coherence and meaning	Psychological	Coherence contributes to a meaningful and fulfilling life.
Meyer et al.	2002	Organizational commitment, performance	Meta-analysis	Affective commitment has strongest link to positive outcomes.
Chen & Francesco	2003	Commitment, performance, fulfillment	Organizational	Commitment reduces turnover and increases fulfillment.
Meyer & Allen	1991	Organizational commitment (3 dimensions)	Theoretical	Defined commitment as affective, continuance, and normative.
Lichterman	1995	Self-fulfillment and commitment	General	Found significant positive relationship.
Nutt	1999	Extrinsic motivation	Workplace	Rewards directly influence employee motivation.
Reker, Peacock & Wong	1987	Purpose in life	Psychological	Purpose is a core component of a fulfilling life.
Deci & Ryan	1987	Intrinsic vs extrinsic motivation	Psychological theory	Extrinsic rewards can shape behavior and performance in work settings.
Gewirth	2009	Self-fulfillment	Theoretical	Human actions stem from desire for fulfillment.

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Individual well-being and engagement within an organizational context are greatly influenced by the dynamic interplay between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment (Martinez, Rochford, Boyatzis, & Rodriguez-Chaves, 2021). An individual's devotion, allegiance, and emotional bond with their place of employment are reflected in their organizational commitment. A fulfilling work experience and overall job satisfaction can be enhanced when employees have a strong sense of commitment to their organization (Mahmood Aziz et al., 2021). Conversely, self-fulfillment is the sense of accomplishment and contentment people get from their work. A sense of self-fulfillment is fostered when work environments assist employees in reaching their personal and professional objectives, which are in line with their values and aspirations. Essentially, a relationship that is mutually reinforcing develops: organizational commitment fosters a positive work environment that allows individuals to fulfill their personal and professional goals (Grego-Planer, 2019). Based on the previous findings, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational commitment has a direct and positive impact on self-fulfillment.

Organizational Commitment and Extrinsic Motivation

According to Luchak & Gellatly (2007), extrinsic motivation and organizational commitment are complex relationships that differ from person to person because these are two distinct psychological concepts that affect an employee's behavior, attitudes, and performance at the workplace. Sometimes, organizational commitment and extrinsic motivation show a complementary relationship, for instance, when regarded as fair and equitable, extrinsic benefits can act as a type of positive reinforcement, strengthening a person's loyalty to the company (Calvin, 2017). In some cases, this relationship becomes conditional when extrinsic rewards are more likely to encourage commitment if they are strongly correlated with an employee's values and personal objectives and vice versa. Qu, Météreau, Butera, Villeval, & Dreher (2019) believe that there may occasionally be a trade-off between organizational commitment and extrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic motivation is defined as incentivized or reward-driven human behavior. These incentives or rewards could be abstract like fame, praise, appreciation, etc. or tangible like; money, medals, promotion and other things of this nature. Legault (2020), defines extrinsic motivation as performance of behavior primarily depending upon achievement of a result separable from a set of action themselves. Fundamentally, extrinsic motivation is instrumental in nature to achieve desired goals. Sansone & Tang (2021) infer that extrinsic motivation can be defined in relation to external sources, while Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan (2017), describe extrinsic motivation in terms of "a construct that refers to engaging in an activity solely for its own sake, independent of its instrumental value, and applies whenever an activity is carried out in order to achieve some separable outcome." There are some common attributes in defining extrinsic motivation, i.e., incentives, rewards, praise, or criticism are among them.

Understanding the connection between extrinsic motivation and organizational commitment is essential to comprehending employee satisfaction and engagement. Extrinsic motivators like competitive pay, benefits, rewards, and availability of resources are just a few of the variables that affect organizational commitment, which is defined by loyalty, identification, and emotional attachment to the workplace.

Meyer & Allen's (1991) research emphasize the importance of external influences in determining organizational commitment, as well as the relevance of monetary rewards and recognition in fostering employee loyalty. Extrinsic motivation provides external incentives to

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reinforce intrinsic motivators and serves as a method for reinforcing commitment (Malek, Sarin, & Haon, 2020). Fair remuneration, recognition efforts, and other extrinsic rewards are investments made by corporations to improve the workplace and boost employee loyalty to the company. In summary, the type of extrinsic rewards, a person's values and needs, and the broader organizational culture all influence how organizational commitment and extrinsic motivation interact.

To establish a strong commitment to the company, organizations should work to balance extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and cultivate a culture where workers feel appreciated, engaged, and fulfilled. Thus, it is hypothesized that:
Hypothesis 2: Organizational commitment has a positive impact on extrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic Motivation and Self-Fulfillment
According to (Morales, 2022), there exists a complex relationship between extrinsic motivation and self-fulfillment, wherein an individual's sense of accomplishment and personal fulfillment can be positively impacted by external rewards or recognition. The relationship is based on the compatibility of intrinsic values with extrinsic incentives and the possibility of using outside forces as tools to accomplish internal objectives (Mulugeta, 2021). A shift toward intrinsic motivation—engaging in activities for their own intrinsic value and personal significance—is frequently necessary in the pursuit of long-lasting self-fulfillment, even though extrinsic motivators like recognition or financial success can offer initial encouragement (Corduneanu, 2020). Finding a balance between utilizing outside motivators to support one's genuine goals and make a meaningful and fulfilling life journey is crucial. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: Extrinsic motivation has a positive impact on Self-Fulfillment.

In a professional setting, extrinsic motivation can play a mediating role in the complex relationship that exists between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment. Extrinsic motivators from an organization, like promotions, pay raises, or recognition, can be concrete demonstrations of dedication and gratitude. Employee commitment to the company is increased and their sense of self-fulfillment is sparked when they believe that their efforts and contributions are valued and acknowledged. Individuals are encouraged to invest more deeply in their roles due to the tangible benefits and external validations, which foster a supportive environment and increase commitment to organizational goals. Employees' sense of self-fulfillment is increased when they encounter success and advancement made possible by extrinsic motivators. This positive cycle is a result of organizational commitment and personal fulfillment supporting one another and developing a symbiotic relationship between the individual and the organization. This relationship can be hypothesized as:

Hypothesis 4: Extrinsic motivation partially mediates the relationship between organizational commitment and self-fulfillment.

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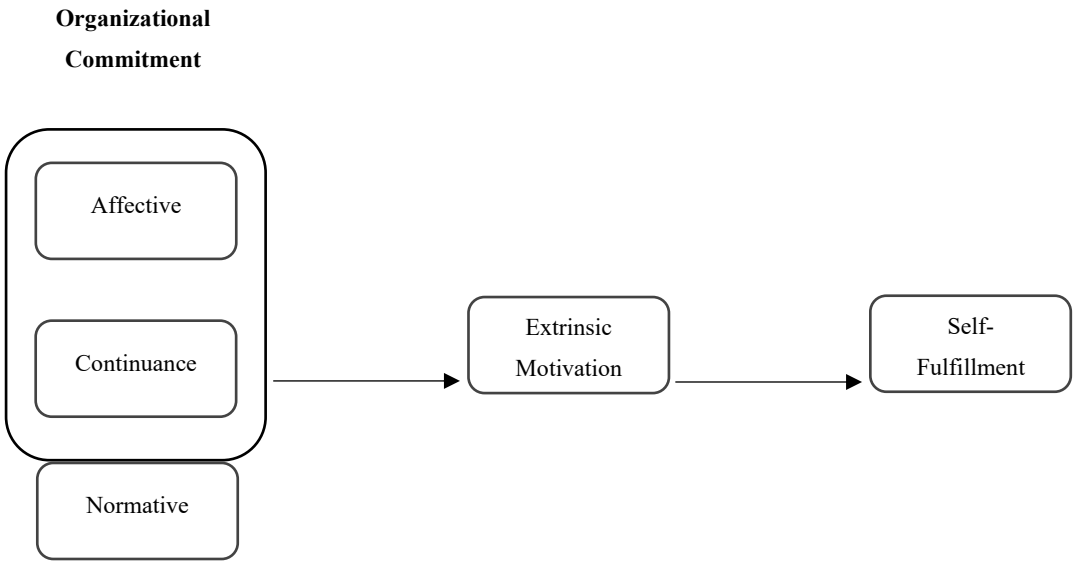

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Method, Data, and Analysis

This quantitative study was conducted over a period of six months, from June 2024 to November 2024, across four public universities located in the Klang Valley region of Malaysia. The selected institutions represent a diverse academic population, suitable for examining organizational commitment, self-fulfillment, and the mediating role of extrinsic motivation among academic staff. The target population consisted of academic staff members, including, lecturers, Assistant professors, and professors.

Based on the assumptions that organizational commitment influences self-fulfillment and extrinsic motivation mediates this relationship, this research aims to examine the impact of commitment factors (affective, continuance, and normative) on self-fulfillment. For the said purpose, a questionnaire to measure organizational commitment (7 items) was adapted from Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979) and extrinsic motivation measurement with six items was adapted from Ryan & Deci (2000). Self-fulfillment measurement having seven items was adapted from Schneider, Hanges, Smith, & Salvaggio (2003). Each item was measured on the 5-points Likert scale ranging from 1 being strongly agree to 5 being strongly disagree. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 35 respondents to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

This study used GPower version 3.1 software to determine the sample size. The data collected was more than sufficient to conduct this quantitative study. Members of academia—male and female—in public universities in Selangor, Malaysia was the target population to conduct this research. A simple random sampling technique was applied to collect data through adapted questionnaires. A total of 314 responses were qualified to be included in the data to perform data analysis. The data was analyzed by using partial least square (PLS), which is considered beneficial to get the predictive power of a structural model (Shmueli et al., 2019).

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According to Hair & Alamer (2022), PLS approach helps understand results better for a structural model. The mediation analysis was conducted by using PROCESS macro through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. The macro facilitates the investigation of complex relationships in social science research, allowing researchers to explore how the strength or nature of a relationship between two variables might be influenced by a variable act as a mediator in the relationship between two other variables (mediation).

Results and Discussion

The 314 participants were academics with job functions distributed among Professors (30.25%), Assistant Professors (19.43%), and Lecturers (50.32%). Gender distribution shows a higher representation of males, constituting 75.48% of the participants, while females account for 24.52%. In terms of ethnicity, the majority of participants are Malays (77.70%), followed by Indians (13.38%), Chinese (6.69%), and a small representation of Others (2.23%). This information provides valuable insights into the demographic makeup of the study's sample, highlighting the academic roles, gender distribution, and ethnic diversity among participants from Selangor, Malaysia.

Table 1. Respondent's Profile

Participants Characteristics	Frequency	%
Geography:	314	100
Klang Valley, Malaysia		
Job Function:		
Professor	95	30.25
Assistant Professor	61	19.43
Lecturer	158	50.32
Gender:		
Male	237	75.48
Female	77	24.52
Ethnicity:		
Chinese	21	6.69
Indians	42	13.38
Malays	244	77.70
Others	7	2.23

The Measurement Model Analysis

Three constructs, self-fulfillment, organizational commitment, and extrinsic motivation—are summarized in the following Table 2 along with their corresponding numbers of items, Cronbach's alpha (α) for internal consistency, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which shows how much variance the construct captures in relation to measurement error, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, which evaluates the suitability of the sampling for factor analysis. With seven items, Self-Fulfillment has good convergent validity (AVE = 0.793) and high internal consistency (α = 0.815). The construct's 0.692 KMO value indicates sufficient sampling. The seven-item Organizational Commitment measure has lower convergent validity

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(AVE = 0.601) but satisfactory internal consistency (α = 0.774). The KMO value of 0.728 suggests that the sampling adequacy was reasonable. The six-item Extrinsic Motivation measure has a comparatively low convergent validity (AVE = 0.582) but good internal consistency (α = 0.806). On the other hand, the construct's KMO value of 0.751 indicates adequate sampling for factor analysis. All things considered, these evaluations offer insightful information about the validity and dependability of the measurement tools used for each study construct.

Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity of Constructs

Construct	# Of Items	*α*	AVE	KMO
Self-Fulfillment	7	.815	0.793	.692
Organizational Commitment	7	.774	0.601	.728
Extrinsic Motivation	6	.806	0.582	.751

Direct Relationships between Organizational Commitment and Self-Fulfillment

The results of this study show the hypotheses testing, which presenting path coefficients, standard deviations, and p-values. Hypothesis 1 (H1) positing a relationship between Organizational Commitment (OC) and Self-Fulfillment (SF) yields a significant path coefficient of 0.8372 (STDEV = 0.8400, $p < 0.0000$), supporting the hypothesis.

Direct Relationships between Organizational Commitment and Extrinsic Motivation

Hypothesis 2 (H2), examining the association between Organizational Commitment (OC) and Extrinsic Motivation (EM), shows a substantial path coefficient of 0.5617 (STDEV = 0.8533, $p < 0.0000$), thus supporting the hypothesis.

Direct Relationships between Organizational Commitment and Self-Fulfillment

Hypothesis 3 (H3) explores the connection between EM and SF, revealing a noteworthy path coefficient of 0.5762 (STDEV = 0.8472, $p < 0.0000$), indicating support for the hypothesis. These findings provide empirical evidence for the proposed relationships among the variables in the study. The p-values suggest that the observed relationships are statistically significant, reinforcing the validity of the hypothesized paths. The use of standard deviations enhances the understanding of the precision and reliability of the estimated coefficients.

Table 3. Coefficient of Correlation

Hypotheses	Path	Coefficient (R)	STDEV	p-value	Remarks
H_1	OC → SF	0.8372	0.8400	0.0000	Supported
H_2	OC → EM	0.5617	0.8533	0.0000	Supported
H_3	EM → SF	0.5762	0.8472	0.0000	Supported

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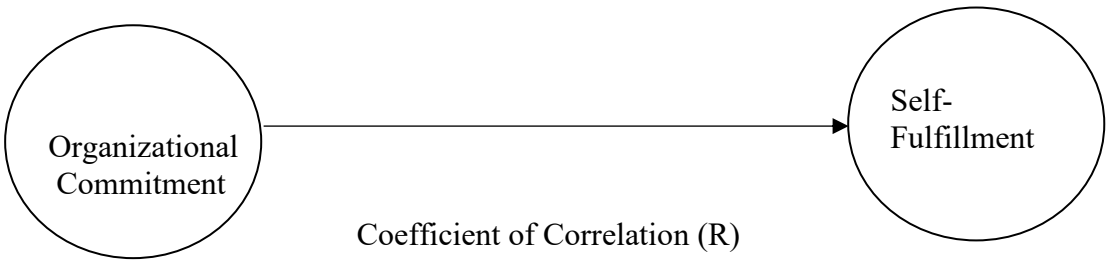

Figure 2. Effect of Organizational Commitment onto Self-Fulfillment

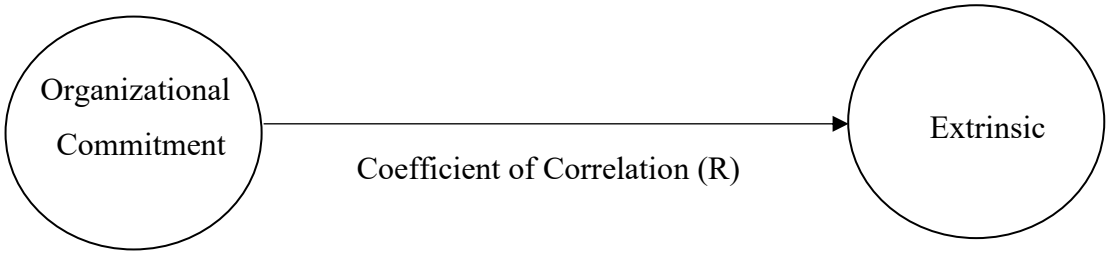

Figure 3. Effect of Organizational Commitment onto Extrinsic Motivation

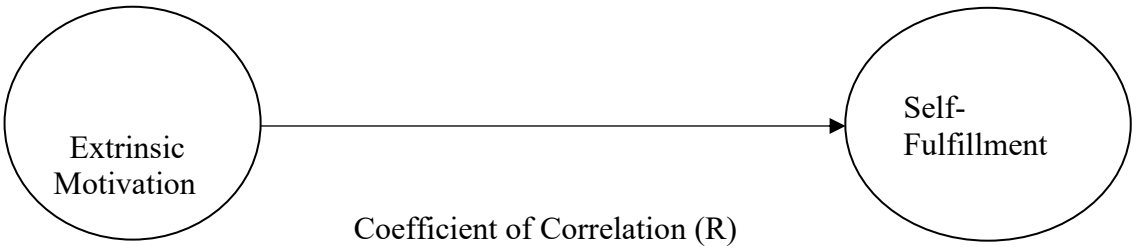

Figure 4. Effect of Extrinsic Motivation on Self-Fulfillment

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Mediation Analysis

The following table 4 and figure 5 present the results of a mediation analysis examining the relationship between variables OC (independent variable), EM (mediator), and SF (dependent variable). The Effect column displays the total effect of OC on SF, with a coefficient of .0971. The BootSE column represents the standard error of the bootstrap sampling distribution for the corresponding effect, indicating the precision of the estimate (.0437). The columns BootLLCI and BootULCI display the upper boundaries of the 95 percent confidence interval derived from bootstrapping for the effect size; their values are approximately 0.0141. 0.1880 Respectively. The results indicate a mediation effect where the direct impact of OC, on SF weakens when considering the mediating factor EM. The confidence interval denotes how accurate the estimate is; its exclusion of 0 signifies that the mediation effect is statistically meaningful. This table provides insight, into how mediation works and clarifies the involvement of EM in connecting OC and SF.

Table 4. Mediation Statistics

Relationship	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Conclusion
OC —> EM —> SF	.0971	.0437	.0141	.1880	Partial Mediation

Note: *significant at $p<0.05$, $t>1.96$, two-tailed

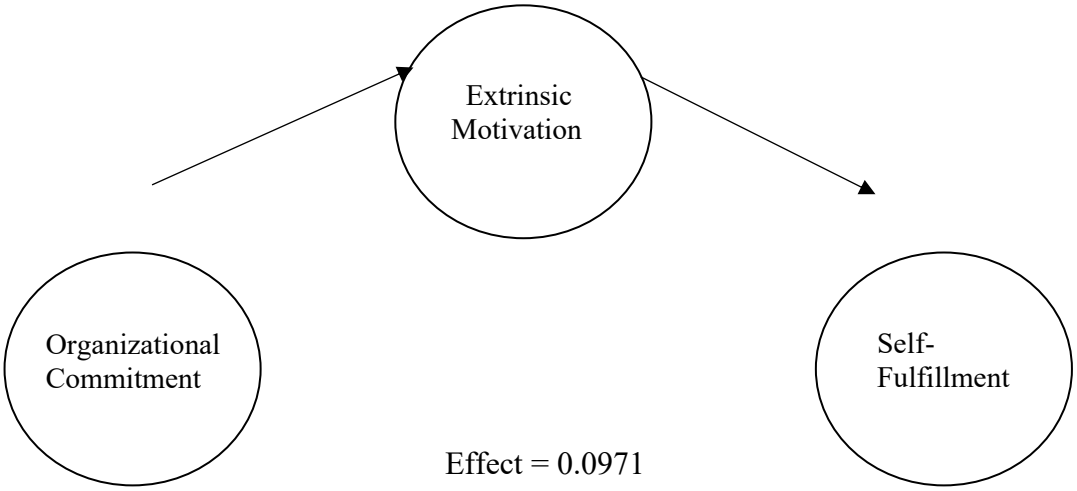

Figure 5. Effect of Extrinsic Motivation on Self-Fulfillment

Conclusion and Suggestion

This study of the relationship between self-efficacy, external support, and commitment to educational participation in the Malaysian state of Selangor highlights important issues across several dimensions. The findings highlight the impact of leadership, human resources, and leadership development on higher education institutions. Institutions can improve the health and job satisfaction of academic professionals through policy measures that recognize the balance between personal development and contract within the organization. These findings can inform policy choices and help build support and strengthen performance. This study highlights the need to consider motivation in examining the complexities of academic life and

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opens the door to future research and strategies to provide knowledge and success to teachers and researchers in different fields of study.

We extend the findings of this study on public school education in Selangor, Malaysia, and make some recommendations for schools and future research. First, organizations should consider providing training programs focused on job training to help employees become and remain motivated to learn. First, because the model is specialized in specific tasks and workplaces, the results may not be broadly applicable to researchers in other fields or across different workplaces. Good opportunities for professional development and career development, as well as an interesting workplace that values and recognizes one's contribution, can all contribute to job satisfaction. Personnel policies should be reviewed to ensure that they meet the needs and motivations of academic professionals. This research can be expanded in the future by analyzing the influence of management, workplace culture and motivation on the health of each employee. Furthermore, comparing studies conducted across research settings and geographic regions can provide insights into the implications of these findings and help inform strategies for different topics.

The main study examined the complexities of how motivation affects organizational commitment and individual achievement. Self-determination theory (SDT) is also in the context of a broader mediation. The results provide detailed information about the ways in which people communicate outside of the context of motivation for collaboration and achievement. In the context of interdisciplinary research, the goal is to determine the ways in which motivation mediates the relationship between self-determination and organizational commitment.

The application of mediation analysis allowed us to move beyond simple associations, unraveling the underlying processes that define the interplay between organizational commitment, extrinsic motivation, and the ultimate pursuit of self-fulfillment.

This investigation was conceptually underpinned by the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory, which holds that people are motivated by a variety of factors, from intrinsic to extrinsic. SDT proposes that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators influence human behavior, and this study sought to disentangle the nuanced impact of extrinsic motivation in the context of organizational commitment and self-fulfillment. The findings of this research are consistent with SDT, especially the considerable totally standardized indirect effect of extrinsic motivation on self-fulfillment (coefficient of 0.767). This research implies that extrinsic motivation still has a significant influence on how people progress toward self-fulfillment, despite the fact that it is typically seen as less autonomous and more externally directed. The findings of this study have significance for practitioners and policymakers who wish to foster commitment and self-fulfillment in a variety of contexts, including the workplace and educational institutions. Comprehending the function of extrinsic motivation as a mediator provides useful guidance for creating interventions that efficiently strike a balance between self-fulfillment and organizational commitment. In conclusion, this study contributes to the evolving discourse on motivation and well-being. The integration of mediation analysis and SDT enhances the understanding of how individuals navigate external motivators in their pursuit of personal fulfillment, paving the way for future research endeavors and practical applications in diverse contexts.

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The study, which involved academics from public universities in Selangor, Malaysia, has several limitations that should be considered. To begin with, conclusions may not be as broadly appropriate to scholastics in other locales or in an assortment of organization settings due to the sample's specialization to a particular region and kind of institution. The watched associations might be impacted by social characteristics special to Malaysia, which may confine the results' application to scholastic situations in other social settings. Since self-reported estimations are utilized, precision and unwavering quality of reactions may be affected by socially attractive quality predisposition and memory problems. The ponder disregards other possibly noteworthy components that will affect the scholastic environment, such as natural inspiration, work culture, or authority styles, since it as it were centers on commitment, outward inspiration, and self-fulfillment. These confinements highlight the need to work out caution when extrapolating what comes about and the centrality of future ponders handling these limits to have a more exhaustive get handle on the complexities inside the scholarly community.

Acknowledgment
The authors extend their sincere gratitude to the Department of Defense Studies and Management, University of National Defense Malaysia, for its support throughout this research. We also acknowledge the collaborative efforts of all authors, whose contributions, expertise, and insights were instrumental in the successful completion of this study. Additionally, we confirm that this research was conducted without financial support from any public, commercial, or non-profit funding agencies.

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