



From Perceived Organizational Support to Employee Creativity: Mediating Role of Affective Commitment

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Abstract: Employee creativity is important for innovation and performance in organizations, but how this creativity is encouraged in higher education institutions is not well understood. This study examines the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and employee creativity, with affective commitment as a mediating factor. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory and Organizational Support Theory, the research examines how supportive organizational practices increase emotional attachment among academic staff and encourage creative behavior. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was used to collect data from 200 academic staff at Kabul Polytechnic University through a structured paper-and-pencil questionnaire. Stratified sampling ensured representation across departments and academic ranks. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and mediation analysis using PROCESS Macro Model 4 in SPSS were performed to test the hypothesized model. The findings show that POS is a significant predictor of employee creativity. That affective commitment partially mediates this relationship, suggesting that organizational support influences creative behaviors both directly and indirectly through strengthening academic staff's emotional attachment to the university. This study contributes to the literature by showing how affective commitment serves as a mediator in the relationship between POS and employee creativity. The findings provide actionable insights for university administrators and policymakers in developing-country contexts and underscore the importance of fostering supportive organizational practices to enhance faculty members' creativity and innovation.

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INTRODUCTION

It has been recognized that employee creativity is essential for innovation, organizational effectiveness, and sustainability in today's ever-changing and unpredictable environments

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(Amoozegar *et al.*, 2025; Amabile and Pratt, 2016; Anderson, 2012; Wang *et al.*, 2023). Based on Gu *et al.* (2025), Richter *et al.* (2012), and Gu *et al.* (2017), creative employees are useful for problem-solving, teaching, research, and administrative processes. They also assist organizations, especially higher education, in adapting to and addressing changes in their environments. Therefore, it is not surprising that in organizational psychology and management, the primary focus is on organizational variables that stimulate employee creativity (Nazir *et al.*, 2019).

Among the contextual factors, POS has gained recognition as affecting how employees think and act (Yang and Zhou, 2022). Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) serve as the foundation for this concept. POS refers to employees' perceptions of the organization concern for their well-being (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Yang and Zhou, 2022). When employees perceive higher levels of organizational support, they tend to exhibit positive discretionary behaviors, such as increased motivation, commitment, and performance (Chen *et al.*, 2009; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Nazir *et al.*, 2018). Creativity is crucial in educational environments where productivity is the focus of teaching, research, and knowledge. Faculty members' adoption of creative approaches is likely to be greatly influenced by their perception of organizational support (Amoozegar *et al.*, 2025).

However, there is growing scholarly consensus on the need to explore the psychological mechanisms by which various aspects of perceived organizational support (POS) influence employees' creativity (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). One example of such psychological mechanisms is affective commitment, which is explained as the emotional ties and depth of involvement of the employee with the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Affective commitment is positively correlated with supportive organizational climates and employees' creative outcomes (Wang, 2022). Even though gathering empirical evidence of the direct link between perceived organizational support (POS) and creativity is relatively common, and that it is also somewhat common between POS and affective commitment, much less is known about affective commitment as a potential mediation of the influence of POS on creativity, particularly in the context of higher education in developing countries (Jeon and Choi, 2020; Semedo *et al.*, 2016). In many developing countries, universities must operate within a framework defined by resource scarcity, institutional instability, and the imposition of unreasonable expectations, making the roles of affective commitment and a supportive organizational climate particularly critical in fostering creative contributions by academic staff (Amoozegar *et al.*, 2025).

This study investigates how perceived organizational support influences employee creativity, with affective commitment functioning as the link among them. There is a huge gap in the present research, that this study aims to address. Grounding the work in social exchange theory and organizational support theory, which both suggest that when academic staff feel supported by their organization, their affective commitment increases. Thus, when this happens, they are more likely to exhibit creative behavior at work. To explore this further, the data was collected from academic staff at Kabul Polytechnic University, a public university

in Afghanistan. The responses provide us with reliable, practical information. This study makes several important contributions to the body of existing literature. First, it builds an integrated framework that links perceived organizational support and affective commitment. Second, it addresses calls for more empirical research on the psychological processes underlying the relationship between organizational support and creativity. Third, it introduces new data from Afghanistan's higher education sector, which researchers rarely examine. And finally, it provides practical guidance for university leaders and policymakers by highlighting the importance of supportive organizational practices and the strengthening of affective commitment in fostering creativity among academic staff.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Creativity

Perceived organizational support (POS) is an crucial concept in organizational behavior research, which is based on organizational support theory (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). POS indicates the global belief held by employees that the organization appreciates their input plus shows concern for their well-being (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Suifan *et al.*, 2018). This idea is a valuable contextual asset that influences work-related attitudes and behaviors including commitment, motivation, and creativity (Aldabbas *et al.*, 2023).

Creativity among employees represents generating new and useful ideas (Amabile *et al.*, 2005) that are crucial to helping corporations adapt, innovate, and ultimately achieve continued success (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). Creative behavior is associated with unpredictability, experimentation, and the possibility of failure (Yin and Hoang, 2026). Therefore, when employees believe that their employers give them support for creative behavior by providing rewards and recognition of their creative efforts as well as showing them some tolerance for trying new approaches through experimentation (Chen *et al.*, 2022; Devi, 2024; Zhou *et al.*, 2001), they will be more probable to involve in creative actions. POS can help create a work environment that feels psychologically safe, allowing employees to feel comfortable challenging the current situation and suggesting new ideas without fear of reprimand (Li *et al.*, 2025).

Consistent with organizational support theory, POS meets employees' socioemotional needs, improves their overall mental health, and enhances their intrinsic motivation (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). Based on social exchange theory, individuals feel grateful to show reciprocity by engaging in behaviors that benefit the organization including creativity, when an organization values and gains their contributions (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Caesens *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, and following this reasoning, POS is seen as a very significant organizational factor that supports and encourages employees' intrinsic motivation and increases their willingness to commit cognitive (mental) and emotional effort to creative activities (Balkin *et al.*, 2015; Khan *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, by implementing supportive organizational practices, such as recognition, rewards, and the encouragement of innovation,

organizations will signal the importance they place on creativity and thus motivate employees to participate in creative activities (Hameed *et al.*, 2021). Empirical evidence has confirmed that there is a positive association between POS and employee creativity across cultures (Aldabbas, Pinnington and Lahrech, 2023; Rubel *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, we formulate our first hypothesis as follows:

H₁: Perceived organizational support positively influences employee creativity.

Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Commitment

As described by social exchange theory, employment relationships can be viewed not only as based on economic transactions but also as grounded in a range of mutual obligations that result from trust and reciprocal behavior (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). An individual feels obligated to exhibit positive attitudes/behaviors when they believe their organization places a high value on their contributions and cares about their health (Waseem *et al.*, 2025). Affective commitment is one of the most critical attitudinal consequences of reciprocal exchanges (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2024).

Affective commitment is described as an individual's emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in his or her organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Organizational commitment has three components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, and the strongest predictor of discretionary behavior and extra-role behavior is affective commitment (Van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2015). Employees who have a strong affective commitment to an organization will stay because they want to stay. Thus, this type of commitment is highly susceptible to perceived organizational support (Yoon *et al.*, 2015).

Extensive empirical research supports the determination that POS is a primary predictor of affective commitment (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). The fulfillment of employees' esteem, belonging, and emotional support needs through POS leads to improved identification with organizational objectives and strengthens the emotional attachment among employees and the organization (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Friedman, 2009). Thus, for positive affective commitment to be nurtured, organizations should implement supportive organizational policies. Consequently, our second hypothesis is as follows:

H₂: Perceived organizational support positively influences affective commitment.

Affective Commitment and Employee Creativity

Affective commitment is crucial in stimulating creativity because it encourages employees' extra role and discretionary behaviors (Organ and Ryan, 1995). Employees who are emotionally attached to the organization are more willing to put in extra effort to continue solving problems and generating new ideas that ultimately improve the organization's performance (Amabile, 1988; Richter *et al.*, 2012).

From a theoretical standpoint, affective commitment enhances employees' commitment to the organization's goals and creates opportunities for employees to actively participate in

processes related with organizational improvements and innovations (Asif *et al.*, 2019; Hasanein and Elrayah, 2025). Employees who are emotionally committed to their organization are also far more probable to use the resources at hand and to work with their coworkers to create new solutions to their work-related problems (Mohammed *et al.*, 2022).

This relationship is supported by numerous empirical researches (Binnewies *et al.*, 2009; Jeon and Choi, 2020; Semedo, et al., 2016; hi *et al.*, 2017; Shi *et al.*, 2017; Tierney, 2008). Affective commitment and employee creativity have been found to be positively correlated across different areas of organizations (Binnewies *et al.*, 2009; Shi *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, affective commitment, along with supportive leadership and supportive work environments, increases employee creativity (Hi et al., 2017; Jeon and Choi, 2020; Semedo Tierney, 2008). The evidence from these studies provides a strong basis for contention that affective commitment is a significant motivational base for being creatively engaged. We formulate our third hypothesis as follows:

H₃: Affective commitment positively influences employee creativity.

Mediating Role of Affective Commitment

As stated earlier, affective commitment plays an important role in understanding employees' creativity (Jeon and Choi, 2020; Yoon *et al.*, 2015; Van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2015). As an example of the growing body of research establishing a relationship between various organizational variables and their influence on affective commitment, employees' levels of affective commitment have been found to be significantly impacted by perceived organizational support (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Affective commitment is therefore a key mediator among the organizational setting and creative behavior. Moreover to its direct effect on employee behaviors, affective commitment serves as a mediator (i.e., a psychological pathway) through which more 'distal' organizational factors influence employee behaviors (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

Consistent with social exchange theory and organizational support theory, perceived organizational support enhances employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and engagement with the organization (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001). When employees believe that their organization values both their contributions and their well-being, they develop a stronger affective commitment, which is then geared towards reciprocation through organizationally beneficial employee conduct, including creativity and innovation (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001). In this sense, affective commitment mediates the impacts of supportive organizational practices on employees' optional behaviors by enhancing intrinsic motivation, perseverance, and desire to put effort into coming up with ideas (Amabile *et al.*, 2005; Hameed *et al.*, 2021).

Empirical research proves this mediating logic. Organizational support has been shown to indirectly influence positive employee outcomes through psychological states such as commitment, engagement, and motivation (Amabile *et al.*, 2005; Hameed *et al.*, 2021). Affective commitment also works like creative self-efficacy in mediating the effect of individual and contextual factors on creativity (Gong *et al.*, 2009; Li *et al.*, 2022; Martinaityte

et al., 2019) by serving as a psychological mechanism that facilitates the transformation of organizational support signals into creative performance (Rego *et al.*, 2012). Such employees are thus more possible to translate perceived organizational support into sustained creative effort and output, thereby enhancing employee creativity (Shi *et al.*, 2017). Thus, in the current research, it is assumed that perceived organizational support strengthens affective commitment, which, in turn, leads to increased employee creativity, representing a mediating effect (Figure 1). Hence, we formulate our third hypothesis as follows:

H₄: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity.

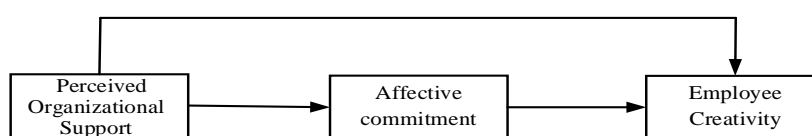


Figure 1. Conceptual model. Source; Elaborated by the author

RESEARCH METHOD

Participants and Data Collection

The current research employed a cross-sectional descriptive approach to investigate the mediating role of affective commitment on the association between perceived organizational support and employee creativity. The sample of this research was drawn from the academic staff of Kabul Polytechnic University, comprising faculty from various departments. Despite major improvements in higher education in Afghanistan, universities still struggle with academic performance, innovation, and staff engagement, underscoring the need for faculties to take creative, proactive steps to foster better learning outcomes and institutional productivity.

A stratified sampling approach was used to ensure that academic staff were proportionally represented across departments and academic ranks. Out of the questionnaires, 250 were distributed, with 220 returned. Therefore, a response rate of 80% (200 usable questionnaires) was used for the final analysis after deleting incomplete questionnaires and those with outliers. The sample included 199 males and 1 female across all academic ranks, including lecturers and full professors.

Initially, the questionnaires were in English before being translated into Dari using the back-translation technique recommended by Brislin (1980). The survey instrument was administered via paper-and-pencil. Before the study, a cover letter explaining the study's purpose and guaranteeing the confidentiality and anonymity of participants' responses was provided. They were also instructed to disregard any notion of right or wrong answers and to complete the questionnaire independently and attentively. Before data collection, the

relevant university authorities approved it. Data collection was conducted for about 1 month during normal working hours.

Measures

Perceived Organizational Support (POS): We measured POS with 8-item scale of Eisenberger *et al.*, (1986), which assesses faculty perceptions of whether the organization cares about and values their contributions. POS was assessed with 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). ($\alpha = 0.81$).

Affective Commitment (AC): We measured AC with the 6-item of Meyer and Allen, (1997) assessing emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with the university. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Finally, a composite score was created by averaging the items. ($\alpha = 0.80$).

Employee Creativity (EC): We measured EC with the 7-item scale of Amabile *et al.*, (2005), capturing the faculty's ability to produce novel and useful ideas in teaching, research, and academic activities. The items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). ($\alpha = 0.91$).

Control variables

Prior research on employees' creativity (Gelaidan *et al.*, 2024; Tierney and Farmer, 2011) shows that employees' demographic influences the outcomes of the expected relationships in this study. As a result, age (year), gender (female = 0 and male = 1), academic rank (lecturer = 1, assistant = 2, assistant professor = 3, associate professor = 4, and professor = 5), organizational tenure (year), and educational level (master's degree = 1, and doctorate = 2) were all adjusted for.

FINDINGS

Data Analysis

The gathered data was analyzed using SPSS version 26 and AMOS version 26. First, the descriptive statistical analyses were done to present the demographic profile of the respondents. The validity and reliability of the instruments were then assessed. Next, the relationships among the study's variables were examined using a correlation analysis. Finally, the study hypotheses were examined utilizing the PROCESS Macro, which is an SPSS software extension.

Validity and Reliability Analysis

Prior to testing the research hypotheses, the scales utilized in this study were evaluated for validity and reliability. AMOS 26 was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to evaluate the measurement instruments' structural validity. The results displayed that all factor loadings were greater than 0.5, as suggested in the literature (Hair *et al.*, 2014), indicating good structural validity for the constructs. On top of that, the average variance

extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.5, and the construct reliability (CR) was greater than the AVE, confirming the convergent validity of the scales.

Then, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and CR. All values were above 0.7, indicating satisfactory reliability of the measurement instruments (Sürücü and Maslakçi, 2020). Then, CFA was conducted to check the model fit overall. The results showed a good model fit, with $\chi^2/df = 2.467$, GFI = 0.935, TLI = 0.941, CFI = 0.945, and RMSEA = 0.061. These findings mean that the measurement model is appropriate for further structural analyses and hypothesis testing (Meydan, 2011).

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Results

Construct / Items	Factor Load	C α	CR	AVE
Perceived Organizational Support (POS)	—	0.812	0.826	0.601
POS1	0.722			
POS2	0.893			
POS3	0.688			
POS4	0.763			
POS5	0.723			
POS6	0.768			
POS7	0.723			
POS8	0.782			
Affective Commitment (AC)	—	0.799	0.832	0.545
AC1	0.768			
AC2	0.825			
AC3	0.741			
AC4	0.693			
AC5	0.675			
AC6	0.763			
Employee Creativity (EC)	—	0.912	0.905	0.538
EC1	0.634			
EC2	0.752			
EC3	0.775			
EC4	0.761			
EC5	0.742			
EC6	0.734			
EC7	0.788			

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
One-Factor (POS + AC + EC)	742.521	90	8.250	0.801	0.721	0.764	0.138
Two-Factor (AC + EC; POS)	532.894	88	6.056	0.843	0.792	0.832	0.114
Three-Factor (Research Model)	204.678	83	2.467	0.935	0.941	0.945	0.061

POS: Perceived Organizational Support, AC: Affective Commitment, EC: Employee Creativity.

$\chi^2/df < 3$, GFI, TLI, CFI > 0.90 , and RMSEA < 0.08 indicate good model fit. Source: Elaborated by the author.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was performed after the validity and reliability of the measurement scales were established. Following Sürücü and Maslakçi (2020), correlation analysis assumes that the relationship between all the studied variables is examined. In this way, the distribution of data is the most influential factor for determining what statistical analysis is most appropriate. The first step is to analyze skewness and kurtosis, as these assess the data for normality. In examining skewness and kurtosis values in SPSS 26, values between -1.5 and $+1.5$ were found, suggesting normality (see Table 3); thus, the correlation analysis technique selected for this study was the Pearson correlation coefficient.

The correlation analysis indicates that perceived organizational support (POS) has significant positive correlations with affective commitment ($r = 0.435$, $p < 0.01$) and employee creativity ($r = 0.398$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, it was recognized that affective commitment has a significant positive correlation with employee creativity ($r = 0.470$, $p < 0.01$). These results tend to support the hypothesized linkage and perhaps display that affective commitment is an instrumental mediator in the link among perceived organizational support and employee creativity.

Table 3: Correlation analysis results

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Perceived Organizational Support (POS)	3.50	0.64	1		
2. Affective Commitment (AC)	3.40	0.60	0.435**	1	
3. Employee Creativity (EC)	3.32	0.63	0.398**	0.470**	1
Skewness			-0.712	-0.065	-0.690
Kurtosis			0.478	-0.558	0.352

Note: ** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). ** denotes statistical significance at the 0.01 level—source: Elaborated by the author.

Hypothesis Tests

The current research aimed to study the impact of perceived organizational support (POS) on employees' creativity (EC) and the mediating role of affective commitment (AC) in this relation., the PROCESS Macro by Hayes (2017) was used to examine the hypotheses model.

The PROCESS Macro is commonly used for testing mediation models and is based on the bootstrapping technique, which overcomes the limitations of the traditional causal steps approach recommended by Baron and Kenny. By estimating indirect effects via confidence intervals, PROCESS provides more robust and reliable statistical evidence for mediation analysis (Gürbüz, 2019). Thus, this method was considered suitable for testing the hypotheses of the current study. Table 4 is shown the results of the analyses.

According to Hayes (2017), if 0 falls within the range of the lower (LLCI) and upper (ULCI) confidence intervals, it indicates no mediator effect. But if 0 is not in that range (LLCI and ULCI), then can specify the mediator effect is significant.

The results display that perceived organizational support has a significant and positive effect on employee creativity ($\beta = 0.312$, $SE = 0.048$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.218, 0.406]). Likewise, POS has a significant and positive effect on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.355$, $SE = 0.046$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.265, 0.445]). In addition, affective commitment has a significant and positive effect on employee creativity ($\beta = 0.142$, $SE = 0.052$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.039, 0.245]). Consequently, these results support all three of our hypotheses: 1, 2, and 3.

To examine the mediating role of affective commitment, the indirect effect of perceived organizational support on employee creativity through affective commitment was analyzed. The bootstrapping results showed that this mediator effect is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.050$, $SE = 0.018$, 95% CI = [0.016, 0.084]), because 0 is not in the confidence interval. This means that the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity mediates by affective commitment. So, Hypothesis 4 is also supported too.

Table 4. Hypothesis tests

Regression paths	Coeff.	SE	t	LLCI	ULCI
Perceived Organizational Support (POS) → Employee Creativity (EC)	0.312	0.048	6.500	0.218	0.406
POS → Affective Commitment (AC)	0.355	0.046	7.717	0.265	0.445
AC → Employee Creativity (EC)	0.142	0.052	2.730	0.039	0.245
Mediation Effect					
Indirect Effect (POS → AC → EC)	0.050	0.018	–	0.016	0.084

Source: Elaborated by the author

DISCUSSION

The current research investigated the link between perceived organizational support and employee creativity, and the mediating role of affective commitment, using data from academic staff at Kabul Polytechnic University. The results provide strong empirical support for all suggested hypotheses and reinforce the theoretical assumptions of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and organizational support theory (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Beyond statistical confirmation, the results highlight important psychological and contextual mechanisms through which organizational support influences creative behavior in higher education settings.

First, the positive effect of perceived organizational support on employee creativity shows that creativity is not only an individual trait but is strongly formed by the organizational environment. When academic staff perceive that their institution values their contributions and genuinely cares about their well-being, they are more possible to take intellectual risks,

experiment with new ideas, and engage in innovative teaching and research practices. This finding extends prior research (Aldabbas, *et al.*, 2023; De Stobbeleir *et al.*, 2011; Pundt and Herrmann, 2015; Rubel *et al.*, 2020) by emphasizing that in academic institutions, psychological safety and institutional recognition are critical enabling conditions for creativity. In contexts where resources are limited, such as Afghanistan, perceived support may serve as a compensatory mechanism, encouraging staff to remain innovative despite structural constraints.

Second, the positive link among perceived organizational support and affective commitment confirms that organizational support is a central driver of emotional attachment to the institution. Consistent with previous studies (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Friedman, 2009; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), the findings suggest that when employees feel valued, they reciprocate with stronger identification and emotional belonging. In the higher education context, this emotional bond is particularly important, as academic staff are more likely to internalize institutional goals and demonstrate loyalty when they perceive fairness, respect, and support in their work environment.

Third, the significant effect of affective commitment on employee creativity indicates that emotional attachment plays a motivational role in shaping discretionary and innovative behaviors. Emotionally committed academic staff are more willing to invest additional cognitive and emotional effort in developing new pedagogical approaches, improving curriculum design, and engaging in research innovation (Binnewies *et al.*, 2009; Jeon and Choi, 2020; Semedo *et al.*, 2016; Shi *et al.*, 2017; Tierney, 2008). This suggests that creativity in academic settings is not only driven by skills and resources, but also by employees' psychological identification with their institution.

Importantly, the findings established that affective commitment serves as a mediator in the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity. This result suggests that perceived organizational support has a direct impact on employee creativity and also indirectly increases employees' emotional attachment to the organization. According to social exchange theory and organizational support theory, academic staff who feel supported by their organization tend to develop a stronger affective commitment. This commitment encourages them to respond with creative behaviors. This mediating mechanism shows the important role of affective commitment as a key psychological pathway through which supportive organizational environments lead to better creative outcomes. In a developing country like Afghanistan, organizational support plays an important role in influencing both the emotional and creative engagement of academic staff. By providing empirical evidence from a higher education institution facing contextual and resource constraints, these results contribute to the existing literature and underline the growing importance of organizational support and affective commitment in maintaining employee creativity in developing-country contexts.

CONCLUSION

The current research examined the relationships among perceived organizational support, affective commitment, and employee creativity, specifically focusing on academic staff at Kabul Polytechnic University. The study used social exchange theory and organizational support theory to propose and test a model in which affective commitment serves as a mediator between POS and employee creativity.

The findings display that perceived organizational support positively affects employee creativity, both directly and through affective commitment. Academic staff who perceive higher levels of organizational support tend to feel more emotionally attached to their university and are more possible to involve in creative behaviors that improve institutional effectiveness. These findings emphasize the importance of supportive organizational practices in building emotional bonds and improving creative performance in higher education institutions.

The results suggest university administrators and policymakers should focus on strategies that strengthen organizational support. This includes recognizing academic contributions, ensuring fairness in decision-making, offering professional development opportunities, and encouraging innovative initiatives. Strengthening affective commitment among academic staff can support creativity and improve overall university performance.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are several limitations to this study that should be distinguished and that likewise provide opportunities for further study. First, the data were gathered from academic staff at Kabul Polytechnic University, a higher education institution. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to other universities or organizational contexts. Future studies should replicate the proposed model across multiple universities, sectors, and countries to enhance external validity and enable meaningful cross-cultural comparisons.

Second, strong causal findings about the links between affective commitment, employee creativity, and perceived organizational support are limited by the cross-sectional research methodology. Future research could use time-lagged or longitudinal approaches to better capture the dynamic and causal mechanisms underlying these relations in order to overcome this constraint.

Third, the current research trusted on self-reported data, which may raise concerns about common-method bias. Validated measurement scales were used to reduce this risk. However, future studies could improve results by including multi-source data, such as supervisor-rated creativity or objective performance indicators, to increase the robustness of the findings.

Finally, contextual factors associated with the higher education sector and the socio-cultural environment of Afghanistan may have influenced the observed relationships. Exploring this under-researched context offers a valuable contribution, but caution is needed when applying the results to different institutional or cultural settings. Future research may

extend the present model by incorporating extra mediating or moderating variables, such as psychological safety, intrinsic motivation, leadership styles, or job autonomy, to elucidate further how perceived organizational support translates into creative behavior. Qualitative or mixed-method approaches can offer deeper insights into academic staff's lived experiences of organizational support and how these perceptions shape affective commitment and creativity in complex organizational environments.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

- Mujeeb Rahman Rahmani and Sayed Sami Muzafary conceptualized and supervised the study.
- Sayed Sami Muzafary and Mujeeb Rahman Rahmani designed the research methodology.
- Sayed Sami Muzafary and Mohammad Farid Noorzad prepared the study materials and research instruments.
- Mohammad Farid Noorzad and Sayed Mustafa Muzafary collected and processed the data.
- Sayed Sami Muzafary and Sayed Mustafa Muzafary analyzed and interpreted the data.
- Mujeeb Rahman Rahmani and Mohammad Farid Noorzad reviewed the literature.
- Sayed Sami Muzafary drafted the initial manuscript.
- Mujeeb Rahman Rahmani critically revised the manuscript.
- Sayed Sami Muzafary finalized the manuscript.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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