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## Finding Synergic Relationships in Teamwork, Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction: A Case Study of a Construction Organization in a Developing Country

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### Abstract

The construction industry and its impact in strengthening the economic development of a country by providing work for an important constituent of the labour market is acknowledged. This is largely due to its contributing features to the growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country. Within this industry, teamwork is essential. If managed properly it may contribute to, among others, employees' commitment to an organization and their job satisfaction. Against this perspective, the study examines the relationship between teamwork, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. The study is located within a quantitative research paradigm using a cross-sectional survey design through a structured questionnaire. Data from 178 employees were analyzed. The results show that team work, normative, and affective commitment contribute positively to job satisfaction, whereas continuance commitment reflects a negative association with job satisfaction. It seems that employers in this organization need to concentrate on employees' continuance commitment in shaping employees' propensity to their commitment in the organization. Since the construction industry depends heavily on the human resource, employers need to assess existing compensation and professional recognition, motivate employees through assignment of meaningful tasks, and create a working environment that inspires and enthruses workers so that their job satisfaction increases.

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## 1. Introduction

The popularity of teams in organizations has amplified over the past decade. Numerous organizations use teams to implement day-to-day activities to assist them in attaining strategies to cope with complexity and competition, especially in meeting customers' demands and expectations. Castka et al. (2001) argue that the experience of organizations using teamwork has shown that the effective use of teams can result in considerable improvement in productivity, efficiency, creativity and performance, as well as employee satisfaction. Similarly, Harvey et al. (2004) comment that an organization's survival in a competitive global environment depends on its ability to accommodate dynamic and adaptive teams. Alshawi and Faraj (2002) posit that a construction project involves a collaboration of individuals, who are assembled to allow synergy that ensures success to a project.

The construction industry is a project-based industry in which every project requires different people in accordance with their knowledge, expertise, competence and experience. The collaboration between individuals affects the relationships and eventually depicts an ability to work together. According to Azmy (2012), teamwork is prevalent in the cultural tradition of construction which ensures the successful completion of projects.

Over the years organizational commitment (OC) and job satisfaction (JS) have drawn attention from researchers in different disciplines and have been a focus for many organizations, primarily because of their effect on organizational outcomes such as employees' turnover intentions, absenteeism, organizational citizenship behaviour, performance, job involvement, and effectiveness. Organizations that have a committed workforce with values and respect, which are fair to their employees, may generate OC among employees' (McKinnon et al., 2003).

On the other hand, job satisfaction plays an important role in the overall productivity of any industry. Sempene et al. (2002) opine that job satisfaction is a result of an individual's perception and evaluation of the job. This perception is influenced by the individual's unique circumstances such as needs, values and expectations. Arising from this perception are a range of aspects that may influence one's level of job satisfaction. Some of these aspects comprise the level of pay and benefits, promotion, working conditions, supervision, leadership and interpersonal relationships, and the job itself. Saari and Judge (2004) posit that happy employees become productive employees.

In light of the fact that there exist few academic studies on the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction within a construction context in South Africa, this paper sought to empirically determine the strength of the relationship between these variables in a construction setting.

## 2. Teamwork in organizations

Teams are viewed as an essential feature of modern management theory and practice (Tennant & Langford, 2006). Teamwork is defined as a collection of a small number of individuals with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable (Greenberg & Baron, 2003) which may engender social interactions between team members (Hoegel and Gemuende, 2001). Three aspects of this definition are important: interactions among individuals, group effort, and interdependence. Teamwork results in individuals working jointly in a supportive environment to achieve common team goals through the sharing of knowledge and skills. Building on this conceptualization, Luca and Tarricone (2002) opine that successful teamwork relies on the synergy between team members in creating an environment, where all members contribute and participate in order to promote and develop a positive effective team outcome. These authors emphasize that team members are required to be flexible enough to adjust in cooperative work settings where goals are achieved through collaboration and social interdependence.

In the context of the construction industry, teamwork may be viewed as a situation in which construction employees' work interdependently to reach an objective for which they share responsibilities. In the construction industry, organizations have a strong confidence in the power of teamwork. By embracing a cooperative setting with project teams, organizations are able to deliver complex projects on time and provide high levels of customer outcomes.

In the construction industry, organizations or project teams require the involvement of every member as it is a composition of human multitasking, including owners and construction professionals to facilitate and allow synergy that ensures more output and ultimately success. The importance of individual skills is certainly not suppressed, but in order to achieve maximum performance, an individual needs to be competent in the context of the team.

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