

Integrating Engagement and Interpersonal Bond: Effect on Directed Performance

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This study integrates the mediating effects of supervisory commitment and job engagement on directed outcomes of citizenship behaviors and task performance in multiple models. Independent, parallel, and serial mediational models were examined using data from supervisor-employee dyads in small-sized firms. Structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure in STATA 15 was used to fit the models and the PROCESS macros was used to validate the relationships. Both tests confirmed the independent and parallel but not the serial mediational model. Supervisory commitment was superior in mediating the effect of organizational commitment on all performance outcomes in the parallel model but not engagement. The results reaffirm the importance of the interpersonal bond and contrast the assumed predictive effect of job engagement.

Keywords: organizational commitment, interpersonal bond, supervisory commitment, job engagement, supervisor citizenship, organizational citizenship, task performance

INTRODUCTION

Research integrating job engagement and commitments shows that engagement mediates the effect of organizational commitment on employee performance (e.g., Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Gruman and Saks, 2011; Yalabik, Popaitoon, Chowne, & Rayton, 2013), which is consistent with the attitude-engagement model. Similarly, supervisory commitment—the interpersonal bond to the immediate supervisor—mediates the effect of organizational commitment on performance outcomes (e.g., Chen, Tsui, & Farh, 2002; Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Vandenberghe, Bentein, & Stinglhamber, 2004; Vandenberghe, Bentein, and Panaccio, 2017). Hence, there has been an attempt to integrate the interpersonal bond and job engagement (e.g., Chughtai, 2013). Yet these investigations are limited, and the

only study to our knowledge that has not incorporated organizational commitment in the integrative model. Thus, organizational commitment which is an essential antecedent of supervisory commitment and job engagement (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; Vandenberghe et al., 2017) is omitted in the integrative tests.

Therefore, this study aims to test the concurrent mediational effect of supervisory commitment and job engagement in the link between organizational commitment and performance outcomes. The study tests the mediating effects on directed performance outcomes of supervisor and organization citizenship behaviors and task performance in multiple competing models. We focus on the interpersonal target because supervisors are the custodians of the performance management system, and the bond to the supervisor is a proximal psychological bond with interactional influence on the job (Becker, 2009).

The study contributes to this research stream in several ways. Theoretically, testing the mediators and the antecedent on varied outcomes provide a complete test of the relationships and theory. The concurrent examination of the effect of job engagement and supervisory commitment is enabled by using the social exchange and the proximity frame of job engagement (e.g., Saks, 2006). The supervisory commitment (Becker, 2009) leads to the motivational influence of the two mediators and increase knowledge of their predictive effects. Practically, disentangling the dynamic interplay among the commitments and engagement constructs and how they influence directed outcomes on the job is essential in delineating these relationships for effective performance management.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Job Engagement

Kahn (1990) defined engagement as the harnessing of oneself to their work role in an organization by employing and expressing themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Therefore, engaged individuals are enthusiastically involved and look for opportunities to perform because of the positive, fulfilling state of mind (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker 2002). The terms job engagement and work engagement are used interchangeably in this study since they refer to the psychological connection with the task being performed (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010; Christian et al., 2011, p91). The extensive research shows that job engagement predicts task performance and citizenship behaviors (Christian et al., 2011; Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Rich et al., 2010; Saks & Gruman, 2014), with organizational commitment as an antecedent (e.g., Christian et al., 2011; Yalabik et al., 2013).

Commitment Bond

Klein, Molloy, and Brinsfield (2012) proposed a new approach to commitment and conceptualized the commitment bond to address the conceptual challenges (e.g., confounds) in commitment theory. We adopt their operationalization of commitment as “a volitional psychological bond that reflects the dedication to and responsibility for a particular target” (p.137). Hence, we define supervisory and organizational commitments as the volitional dedication to and responsibility for the supervisor and the organization, respectively. This conception of commitment implies high emotional involvement, and the willingness to embrace the bond aligns it conceptually and empirically with the affective commitment concept, which has been used widely in commitment research (Klein, Cooper, Molloy, & Swanson 2014).

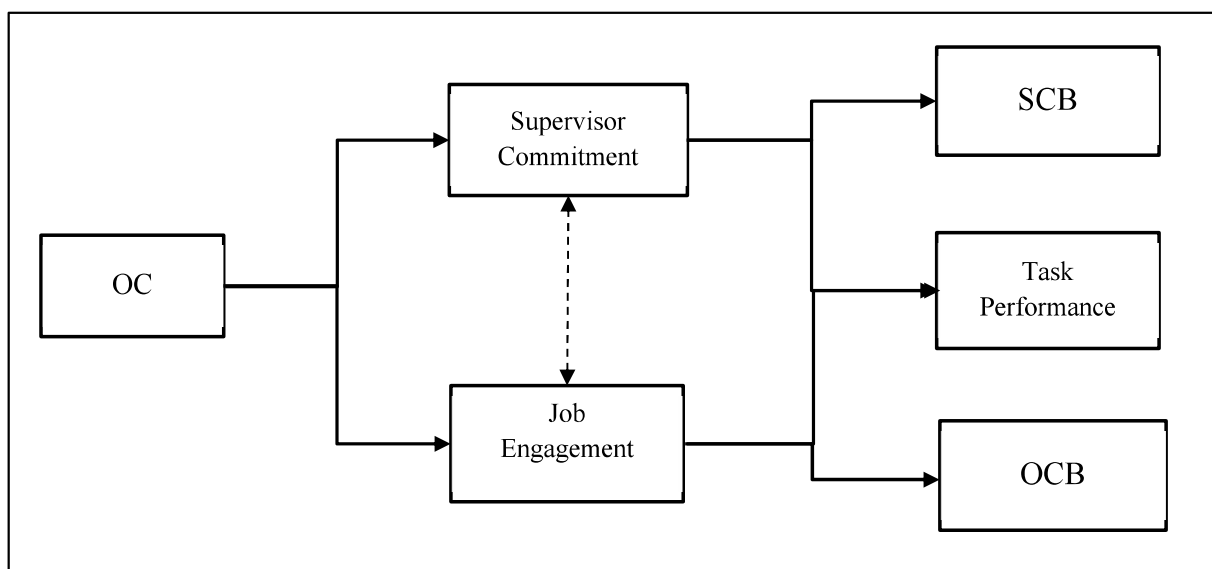
Research on the organization and supervisory commitments also abound, showing that supervisory commitment is superior or mediates the effect of commitment to the organization on outcomes (e.g., Chen et al., 2002; Vandenberghe et al., 2004; Vandenberghe et al., 2017). Despite the strong theoretical and empirical support for the attitude-engagement model, some research studies have found that commitments, including interpersonal bonds, could be predicted by job engagement (e.g., Albrecht & Dineen, 2006; Field & Buitendach, 2011; Yalabik, Van Rossenberg, Kinnie, & Swart, 2015; Saks, 2006). These outcomes support an engagement-commitment directional model.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

Our conceptual framework integrating the supervisory commitment with job engagement is presented in Figure 1. We specified job engagement and supervisory commitment as both potent predictors of job

performance using social exchange theory and the proximity perspective based on field theory. The conceptual model with the postulated paths enables the examination of the serial mediational effects with organizational commitment carried through the engagement-supervisory commitment or the supervisory commitment-engagement directional paths in line with prior research (Christian et al., 2011; Yalabik et al., 2015). It is also important and unique to examine the parallel model that allows the test of the concurrent effects of the two mediators; this is possible due to the postulated motivational focus of the mediators and the link to the targeted outcomes. Therefore, we test the mediations in three competing models: independent, parallel, and serial mediation models.

FIGURE 1
COMMITMENTS AND JOB ENGAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES



OC = Organizational commitment; SCB = Supervisor citizenship behavior; OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior

The Motivational Frame of Engagement and Supervisory Commitment

Engagement has long been considered a unique motivational state—self-investment, energy, and passion, which translates into higher levels of focal and extra-role performance (Kahn, 1990). This is based on the social exchange perspective (see Saks, 2006), which leads to psychological availability and motivation to act. As a motivational concept, engagement leads to persistence and intensity with which individuals pursue their work activities (Christian et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010). Conversely, the motivational influence of supervisory commitment is grounded in the proximity frame (field theory) and the proximity perspective of goal-setting theory (Brown & Warren, 2009; Locke & Latham, 2002). We employ these theoretical perspectives following the integrative motivational view that delineate the predictive power of the interpersonal bonds (Akoto & Akoto, 2019).

Supervisors are custodians of the performance management system and responsible for setting the performance (proximal) goals and providing resources on the job. Hence, the volitional dedication, emotional responsibility, and psychological availability to the supervisor will lead to the internalization of the proximal goals associated with the supervisor (Becker et al., 1996). According to Johnson, Chang, Yang (2010), internalization involves personalizing to the self; hence, self-determined motive to act. Internalizing the task-specific and performance-oriented goals will energize actions on the job and the willingness to undertake both task and extra-role performance. Following this, we posit that supervisory commitment will mediate the effect of organizational commitment on supervisor citizenship, organizational citizenship, and task performance outcomes, independent of job engagement. Similarly, the mediating effect by job

engagement, independent of the interpersonal bond, will be examined but not hypothesized because it is well-documented in the literature.

H1: *Commitment to the supervisor mediates the effect of organizational commitment on supervisor-focused citizenship.*

H2: *Commitment to the supervisor mediates the effect of organizational commitment on organizational-focused citizenship.*

H3: *Commitment to the supervisor mediates the effects of organizational commitment on task performance.*

As noted earlier, the conception of engagement as the harnessing of oneself to a work role implies a strong motivational state (e.g., Rich et al., 2010). Thus, following the social exchange and proximity theorizing, job engagement and supervisory commitment will have a strong motivational influence on employees' behavior. The interactional influence of the supervisor will be reciprocated with commitment and engagement on the job. However, it is unclear which predictor will have the preeminence in affecting outcomes when examined concurrently with the organizational commitment as an antecedent. In line with the compatibility view and following prior research, job engagement will relate strongly with the performance outcomes directed at the organization itself, such as organizational citizenship behavior and task performance. When employees are engaged on the job, they help undertake tasks that are beneficial to the organization. Still, supervisor commitment will have a strong motivational influence on outcomes relevant to the supervisor, including the supervisor's task goals and helping behaviors directed at the supervisor. This is more so due to the conceptual compatibility of the supervisory and organizational commitments (predictor-mediator compatibility). The following are, therefore, hypothesized based on this reasoning.

H4: *The mediating effect by supervisory commitment on task performance will be stronger than the mediating effect by job engagement.*

H5: *The mediating effect by supervisory commitment on supervisor citizenship behavior will be stronger than the mediating effect by job engagement.*

H6: *The mediating effect by job engagement on organizational citizenship behavior will be stronger than the mediating effect by supervisory commitment.*

The arguments and hypotheses above present a competing (parallel) effect of job engagement and supervisory commitment, but the two mediators may be correlated following prior research (Albrecht & Dineen, 2006; Chughtai, 2013). This suggests they could intermediate each other in multiple mediating relationships over the antecedent. But the question is whether job engagement mediates organizational and supervisory commitments in sequence or supervisory commitment mediates organizational commitment and job engagement in sequence? Based on research that shows commitments as an outcome of engagement (e.g., Saks, 2006; Yalabik et al., 2015) and the preceding hypotheses, supervisory commitment may carry the effect of organizational commitment and job engagement in sequence to supervisory citizenship behavior and task performance. On the other hand, job engagement may transmit the effect of organizational and supervisory commitments in sequence to the organizational citizenship behavior outcome. These are hypothesized as:

H7: *Supervisory commitment will serially mediate the effect of organizational commitment and job engagement on (a) supervisor citizenship behavior and (b) task performance.*

H8: *Job engagement will serially mediate the effect of organizational and supervisory commitments on organizational citizenship behavior.*

METHOD

Participants and Procedures

We collected data from six small-sized public and private organizations of various industries (service, manufacturing, recreation, education, and local government) located in the U.S. south. With each participating organization's help, the data was multi-sourced from employees (combined population of about 417) and their immediate supervisors separately. The researchers sent a web-link of the survey to the employees' emails, and QR codes were used for onsite administration during work hours with tablets, PDAs, smartphones, and laptops. As part of the survey questions, employees volunteered the names of their immediate supervisors. Of the 417 total population targeted, 223 employees responded, and 193 volunteered the names of their supervisors who were later surveyed on employee performance. A total of 162 responses from supervisors were matched with employee responses, representing a 38% response rate. The employee sample consists of 61% male and 39% female, with the majority of the sample between 40 and 59 years (51%), with organizational tenure (47%) and supervisor tenure (68%) between 0 and 4 years. While 45% of the sample had a high school diploma, 47% had an associate or bachelor's degree.

Measures

Employee-rated Measures

Organizational commitment (OC) and supervisory commitment (SC) were measured with the unidimensional target-free (KUT) measure of commitment bond by Klein et al. (2014). The phrasing of the items was interchanged with the organization or supervisor to reflect each target. It was employed using a 5-point Likert scale of extremely committed (5) to not at all committed (1). *Job engagement* was measured with a 12-item scale capturing the three sub-dimensions of engagement (cognitive, emotional, and physical) from Rich et al. (2010). The scale is one of the commonly used measures (Albrecht & Dineen, 2016) and captures the seminal conception of Kahn's (1990) with a motivational focus. Participants rated the items on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

Supervisor-rated Measures

About one week following the employee survey, the immediate supervisors of participating employees also completed a survey in which they rated their employees' task performance and citizenship behaviors. All the performance questions were prefixed with the stem "To what extent has this employee been fulfilling/performing the following." Response choices ranged from (1) Never to (5) Always. Task performance was measured with five items developed by William and Anderson (1991) and used recently by Rich et al. (2010). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was measured with six items adapted from the OCBI measure by Lee and Allen (2002) and used by Rich et al. (2010). Supervisor citizenship behavior (SCB) was measured with five items from the measure by Rupp and Cropanzano (2002), designed so that the supervisor was the beneficiary of the citizenship behavior (e.g., "Helps you when you have a heavy workload," "Assists you with your work when not asked").

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Reported in Table 1 are the descriptive statistics, correlations of the latent constructs, and reliability coefficients. On the correlation matrix, job engagement has a moderately high positive correlation with organizational commitment and only moderate correlation with supervisory commitment. Also expected is the positive correlation between organization and supervisory commitments, which was moderate. Most of the predictor constructs were positively correlated with the outcome constructs, while supervisory commitment recorded the highest but moderate correlations.

TABLE 1
LATENT VARIABLE MEANS, SD AND CORRELATIONS

Constructs	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. ENG	4.39	0.488	<i>0.81</i>					
2. OC	4.36	0.632	0.66**	<i>0.91</i>				
3. SC	4.35	0.671	0.38**	0.43**	<i>0.91</i>			
4. SCB	3.61	1.036	0.12	0.10	0.31**	<i>0.92</i>		
5. OCB	4.03	0.720	0.20*	0.26**	0.35**	0.67**	<i>0.92</i>	
6. Task	4.50	0.581	0.19*	0.18*	0.32**	0.64**	0.63**	<i>0.91</i>

N = 162. Values in diagonal are alpha coefficients. ENG = Engagements; OC = organizational commitment. SC = supervisory commitment; SCB = supervisory citizenship behavior; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; Task = Task Performance.
p*<.05 *p*<.01

Test of Measurement Model

Covariance structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine the proposed model in Stata 15. Model fit statistics were examined with the following criteria and thresholds; χ^2 (*p*-value > 0.05), *RMSEA* (< 0.08), *RSMR* (< 0.05), *CFI* (> 0.95), and *TLI* (> 0.95) (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The overall validity and reliability of the reflective constructs (outer model) were assessed through item factor loadings and Cronbach’s alpha. All the item loadings were above the 0.60 thresholds. The alpha coefficients for all the constructs were above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating evidence of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010).

As expected, the engagement sub-dimensions were highly correlated (*r* ≥ 0 .70), and a second-order engagement construct was examined by creating parcels as manifest indicators (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). The average of each facet's items was computed to create the three parcels representing the three natural components of engagement: cognitive, emotional, and physical in a formative structure. Parceling or using aggregates of items as indicators of latent constructs is not uncommon in SEM analysis (e.g., Bandalos, 2008; Yang, Nay, & Hoyle, 2010), and the engagement construct is considered a second-order construct (Rich et al., 2010). The results show that the manifest indicators contributed significantly to the formation of the latent second-order engagement construct: cognitive (0.83, *t* = 16.81, *p* < 0.001), emotional (0.74, *t* = 12.24, *p* < 0.001), and physical (0.82, *t* = 12.289, *p* < 0.001). Following this, we assessed the overall measurement model (see Table 2) involving the six factors (organizational commitment, supervisory commitment, job engagement, organizational citizenship behavior-OCB, supervisory citizenship behavior-SCB, and task performance).

The outcome indicates a good fit of the six-factor model to the data [$\chi^2 = 384.22$ (253), *RMSEA* = 0.05, *SRMR* = 0.05, *CFI* = 0.96, *TLI* = 0.95] than all the alternate confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) models. The model fit was achieved by dropping one poor loading item from OCB and SCB and correlating the error variances for the citizenship behavior measures. Also, the error terms for supervisory commitment and job engagement were correlated. These are not unusual in SEM analysis (e.g., Hoffman, Blair, Meriac, & Woehr, 2007; cf. Rich et al., 2010).

TABLE 2
RESULTS OF CFA AND STRUCTURAL MODEL COMPARISONS

Models	χ^2 (df)	χ^2 /df	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	TLI
Test of CFA Models						
Six-factor (employee + supervisor rated constructs)	384.22 (253)	1.51	0.05	0.05	0.96	0.95
Three-factor (employee rated constructs)	104.17 (41)	2.54	0.09	0.05	0.95	0.93
Three-factor (supervisor rated constructs)	208.44 (74)	2.81	0.10	0.06	0.93	0.91
Single factor (employee rated constructs)	563.27 (44)	12.80	0.27	0.17	0.61	0.52
Single factor (supervisor rated constructs)	673.24 (77)	8.74	0.21	0.10	0.70	0.65
Test of Independent Structural Models						
<i>Engagement-performance model</i>	239.54 (175)	1.36	0.04	0.05	0.97	0.96
<i>Supervisor commitment-performance model</i>	303.65 (195)	1.55	0.05	0.05	0.96	0.95
Test of Integrative Structural Models						
<i>Parallel model</i>	391.27 (256)	1.52	0.05	0.05	0.96	0.95
<i>Job engagement serial mediation model</i>	478.99 (260)	1.84	0.07	0.12	0.93	0.92
<i>Supervisory commitment serial mediation model</i>	399.68 (260)	1.53	0.05	0.06	0.95	0.95

Test of the Structural Models

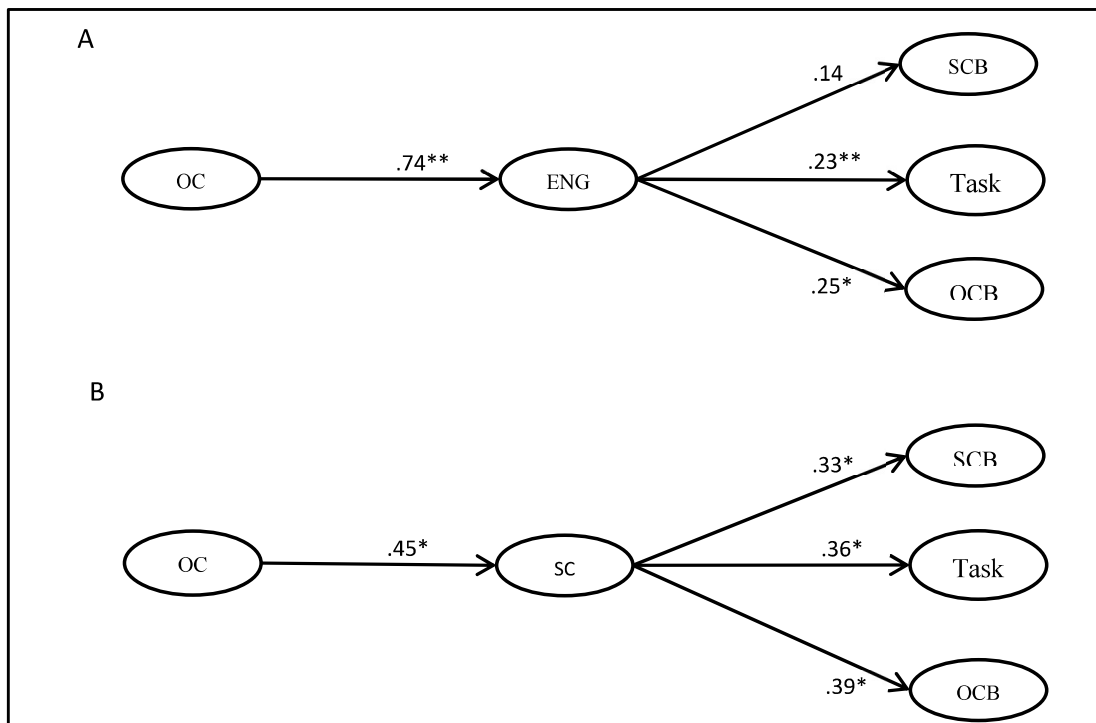
In the structural model test, we examined independent, parallel, and serial mediational models also reported in Table 2. The independent models involving the mediation effect of job engagement [$\chi^2 = 239.54$ (175), $RMSEA = 0.048$, $CFI = 0.97$, $TLI = 0.96$] and supervisory commitment [$\chi^2 = 303.65$ (195), $RMSEA = 0.059$, $CFI = 0.96$, $TLI = 0.95$] on the organizational commitment-performance links were examined. Both models fit the data well, confirming the mediating effects by job engagement and supervisory commitment independently. The standardized path estimates for the engagement model (Figure 2-A) show that job engagement significantly predicts OCB and task performance (β s 0.23 to 0.25), but not SCB. The estimates for the supervisory commitment model (see Figure 2-B) show that supervisory commitment significantly predicts all performance outcomes (OCB, SCB, task performance) with higher effect sizes (β s 0.33 to 0.39). The outcome is generally in line with prior research and provides initial support for hypotheses 1-5 but not hypothesis 6 since supervisory commitment had a slightly larger effect on OCB (0.39) than job engagement (0.25). These outcomes serve as a referent point for examining the integrative models.

Table 2 also reports the outcome of the integrative structural models. The outcome of the parallel model (first integrative test) is the best fit model to the data (e.g. $SRMR = 0.05$, $AIC = 6117$). The standardized path estimates (see Figure 3) show that supervisory commitment significantly mediates the effect of organizational commitment, but not job engagement. Supervisory commitment was a significant predictor of SCB ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$), OCB ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$), and task performance ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, the parallel model provides further support for Hypothesis 1-5, but not hypothesis 6. Though not at the same level as the parallel model, the serial mediation models (second integrative test; Table 2) were good fit to the data. However, the model with supervisory commitment as the serial mediator had better fit statistics (e.g. $SRMR = 0.06$, $AIC = 6118$) and meets the recommended threshold better than the model with

job engagement as the serial mediator (e.g. $SRMR = 0.12$, $AIC = 6197$). In line with previous outcomes, the path models also show that supervisory commitment has larger effect sizes in affecting the outcomes. The outcome, therefore, needed to be confirmed and decoded with bias-corrected bootstrapping due to sample size limitation.

To test the robustness of the SEM outcomes, we employed the PROCESS procedure with 5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). This procedure allows for the testing of the significance of each indirect path to confirm the serial mediational model. The outcome shows that the confidence intervals of the bias-corrected betas for the serial indirect effects through supervisory commitment-job engagement to SCB (-0.011, 0.037), OCB (-0.013, 0.016), and task performance (-0.005, 0.030) included zero. Similarly, the confidence intervals for the serial indirect effects through engagement-supervisory commitment to SCB (-0.001, 0.167), OCB (-0.013, 0.016), and task performance (-0.004, 0.098) included zero. These do not provide support for the serial mediation effects (hypotheses 7 and 8). However, the outcome in the parallel model is confirmed; the bias-corrected confidence intervals of the mediation effect by supervisory commitment did not include zero for SCB (0.106, 0.406), OCB (0.047, 0.293) and task performance (0.032, 0.229), compared to job engagement which includes zero for OCB (-0.125, 0.135), SCB (-0.110, 0.177) and task performance (-0.098, 0.022).

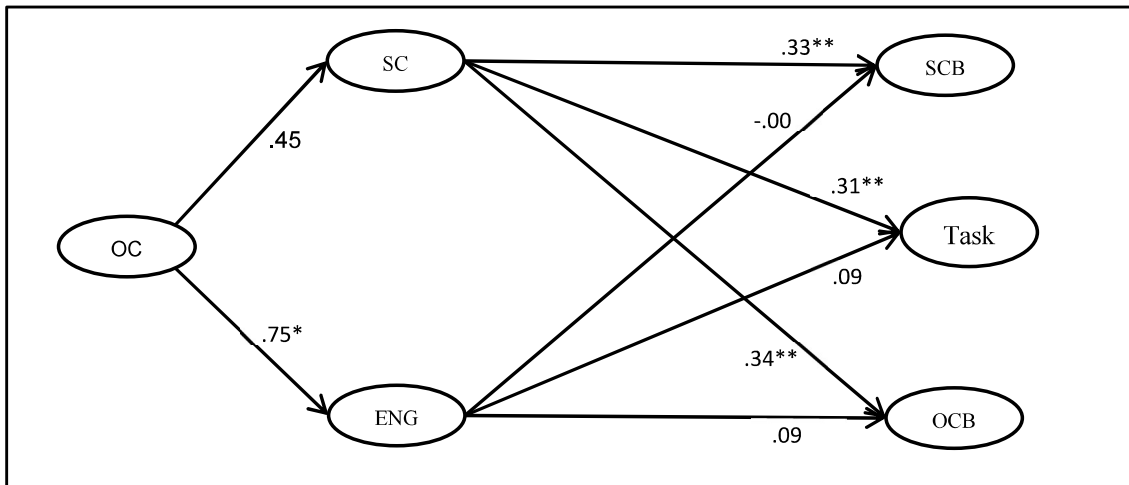
FIGURE 2
INDEPENDENT MEDIATING MODELS OF JOB ENGAGEMENT AND
SUPERVISORY COMMITMENT



Notes: Standardized paths of higher-order latent effects are shown. OC = Organizational commitment; SC = Supervisory commitment; ENG = Engagement; SCB = Supervisor citizenship behavior; OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior; Task = Task performance.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

FIGURE 3
PARALLEL MEDIATING MODEL OF JOB ENGAGEMENT AND
SUPERVISORY COMMITMENT



Notes: Standardized paths of higher-order latent effects are shown. OC = Organizational commitment; SC = Supervisor commitment; ENG = Engagement; SCB = Supervisor citizenship behavior; OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior; Task = Task performance.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Implications

This study's major contribution is the examination of the mediated effects of supervisory commitment and engagement in multiple competing models on targeted performance outcomes of SCB, OCB, and task performance. This involves the concurrent effect of the mediators based on the social exchange theory of engagement and the psychological proximity of supervisory commitment. The analysis follows research that has examined the concurrent effect of job engagement and intrinsic motivation (Rich et al., 2010) since commitment is considered a motivational phenomenon (Meyer et al., 2004). Therefore, assuming a motivational frame of the supervisory commitment provided the theoretical basis for testing its concurrent effect with job engagement. We extend research integrating interpersonal bonds and engagement (e.g., Chughtai, 2013; Yalabik et al., 2015) by examining OC as an antecedent of the mediators. While the independent model confirms prior research findings on the mediated effect of job engagement and supervisory commitment, the parallel model revealed that the interpersonal bond might be suppressing the effect of job engagement. Our theory posits that the interpersonal bond can operate in the same psychological space as engagement—the motivational state—hence, its suppressive effect over job engagement in predicting performance outcomes.

Our findings deviate from prior research and provide a different perspective that shows job engagement as the dominant mediator of OC and supervisory commitment (Christian et al., 2011; Chughtai, 2013; Harrison et al., 2006; Yalabik, 2013). This finding stands in contrast to Chughtai's (2013) outcome, showing that the interpersonal bond is the stronger transmitter of the antecedent (OC) to the outcomes, although OC has a stronger relationship with engagement. However, the link to compatible outcomes (mediator-outcome compatibility) partially impacts the findings as theorized. Compared to Chughtai (2013), our finding seems robust due to the multi-sourced data, and our sample from small firms where supervisors may be more intimate with employees may also explain the contrasting outcomes. We show that supervisory commitment as a social interactional stimulus with a motivational effect can energize behavioral outcomes as job engagement.

The study's outcome also adds to the theoretical view of commitment as a motivational factor, especially interpersonal bonds. Research in this stream considers commitment as a phenomenon of motivation and an energizer of behavior on the job (e.g., Meyer et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2010). In their theoretical framework, Meyer and colleagues postulated commitment, including the supervisory commitment, as a motivator of behavior and recommended an empirical test of the commitment constructs' motivational influence. We operationalized supervisory commitment along this line, a proximal volitional psychological bond with a motivational influence to drive actions on the job. This motivational state is derived from the internalization of the proximal goals associated with the target, leading to performance (Akoto & Akoto, 2019). Becker et al. (1996) asserted that commitment based on the internalization of values has greater predictive power. The outcome of this study demonstrates this motivational power and suggests that commitment to the supervisor can lead to a high-arousing positive state.

Finally, the study contributes to the utility of the new conception of commitment. Adopting the theory of commitment as a volitional dedication bond (Klein et al., 2012) helps the positioning of supervisory commitment in the motivational light that energizes behaviors on the job. According to Klein et al. (2012), the new conception of commitment is associated with a high level of emotional concern for the target, a greater level of psychological investment in the target, and target-associated tasks. The operationalization of commitment also enhanced the interpersonal bond's predictive power in line with Klein and colleague's theory. The outcome extend the notion by the authors that the new conception of commitment facilitates the concurrent examination of commitments and other constructs including job engagement.

Practical Implication

For managers, our results provide insight for managing multiple commitments in the organization while identifying which predictors are relevant for which outcomes. Although engagement is held in high esteem, managers, especially in small firms, who are the custodians of the performance management system, cannot ignore the supervisory interactional influences on the job. Commitment to the supervisor may be tapping into similar psychological states as job engagement (Newman et al., 2010), hence, overshadowing engagement. That is not to say that engagement is not essential as it predicts multiple outcomes on the job, but organizations and managers must also hold the immediate supervisors' interactions in high esteem due to their potential influence on employee behavior. For instance, it has been reported that businesses could lose as much as seven trillion dollars in lost productivity because workers are not engaged at work (Harter, 2017). Our test and the outcome show that the interpersonal foci and the supervisory relational influences could be a solution to this problem, another way of energizing performance. Performance management involves creating motivation to achieve objectives (Gruman & Saks, 2011), and the bond to the supervisor can create this positive state of mind for performance on the job.

Limitations and Directions for Further Research

This study's outcome has theoretical and empirical potential but must be interpreted with caution due to some limitations. Although we used multi-sourced data from varied sectors, the cross-sectional design implies that causal effects cannot be inferred. However, this does not invalidate the finding since most of the effects revealed are supported in the literature but in discrete and unintegrated studies. We used multi-sourced data with supervisors' ratings of employees' performance after a few days, which was not enough time lag to prove cause. Hence, future research may test our integrative models with longer time-lagged data for causal inferencing. Although we sampled both private and public organizations, the study population was not large enough to enable comparison across sectors but provided enough power for detecting simple mediational effects. The PROCESS approach, which enables the estimation of population confidence intervals, supported the independent and parallel models but not the serial mediation models. Future research may expand this study to large organizations that will enable the test of the models in different contexts with cross-sector comparisons. Such research may examine the serial mediation models with samples that provide more power for statistical test of the complex models. We have focused on supervisors as the interpersonal foci in this study, but other interpersonal bonds such as team commitment need to be examined. Teams are the foundational structures of organizations and working in teams is the

norm of today's workplace. In their study, Yalabik et al. (2015) found that engagement preceded multiple foci of commitment, including the work team. Future studies may test our integrative model with work group or team commitment and citizenship to the team. The dedication to team values (e.g., self-managed teams) may also energize behaviors on the job.

CONCLUSION

We have examined the mediational effect of job engagement and supervisory commitment in a fully integrated model. The integration shows the potential influence of the interpersonal bond in affecting different performance outcomes besides job engagement. The outcome suggests the need to examine these psychological predictors of performance in an integrative rather than discrete models. Employees' psychological states are not fragmented into component parts, but instead, affect behaviors holistically. Therefore, testing integrative models of psychological predictors may yield fuller and richer information for theorizing and managerial decisions.

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