

FACTORS INFLUENCING ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN ORGANISATIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Ludwikowska, K., Koszela, A.

Kamila Ludwikowska / Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Management, Wroclaw, Poland. Email: kamila.ludwikowska@pwr.edu.pl (corresponding author)

Anna Koszela / Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Management, Wroclaw, Poland. Email: anna.koszela@pwr.edu.pl

Abstract

With the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations faced profound social and economic upheaval. These circumstances forced organisations to make major changes. In the face of these changes, nurturing employee engagement and fostering a sense of belonging to the company have emerged as new challenges. Organisational commitment appears to be an important factor in ensuring that employees remain in the organisation despite the crises that occur. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to investigate the determinants of the organisational commitment of employees from the level of human resource management (HRM) policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, this study aims to gain a clear understanding of the relationship between training and organisational commitment through employee engagement in HRM COVID-19 strategies. We also considered the climate of implementation of HRM strategies during COVID-19 that may moderate the effect of training on participation in HRM COVID-19 strategies. The study was carried out among 378 organisations operating in Poland. To verify the hypotheses, the SPSS program with PROCESS Macro (Model 4 and 7) analysis was used. The mediation test was used to understand the influence of training on other variables, namely employee engagement in HRM COVID-19 strategies and organisational commitment. To examine the mechanism of organisational commitment, a moderated mediation model was tested in which the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate moderated the training mediation model, employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies and organisational commitment. The results show that organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate accounted for significant differences in the mediation models.

Implications for Central European audience: This study bridges the gap in the literature on organisational commitment by explaining how training is associated with organisational commitment. Managers are advised to consistently offer ongoing training to help them navigate evolving circumstances. Enhancing the impact of training on organisational commitment requires a focus on improving the quality of human resource management (HRM) COVID-19 strategies, fostering a supportive environment and garnering employee support for these strategies. Individuals are likely to demonstrate greater organisational

commitment when the organisation cultivates an environment that enables employees to endorse HRM COVID-19 strategies.

Keywords: Training; employee engagement; organisational commitment; organisational climate; HRM strategies; COVID-19; moderated mediation

JEL Classification: M12, M53

Introduction

On the threshold of 2020, organisations faced a serious social and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The related circumstances forced organisations to make profound changes, especially in the way their employees work (Bolino et al., 2024). Employee involvement and the sense of belonging to the company became a new challenge during the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, it was one of the areas that up to 93% of global respondents considered very important (Deloitte, 2021). Today, in new working modes, organisations must think about what builds their unique culture. Before the pandemic, the office was the glue that brought people together. The employees had their rituals, customs, common language and places. The office also determined certain elements of the hierarchy and structure in the company, e.g., open spaces, rooms and division into functions and departments depending on the floor or area on a given floor. Suddenly, it did not matter anymore because people had moved to a new working model. It created the need to increase or re-skill employees according to the new situation or even correct deficiencies in job performance caused by the new situation. Therefore, the role of employee training became a significant factor in building organisational commitment.

Although commitment is not a new concept, interest in this phenomenon remains significant. This is mainly because organisational commitment is one of the conditions for achieving high quality and effectiveness. Organisational commitment has many benefits for the organisation. The literature presents research showing the positive impact of commitment on job satisfaction, work safety, employee fluctuation, changes and faster acceptance, employee learning, customer loyalty and satisfaction, productivity, innovation, employee creativity, the success of projects in difficult conditions of reorganisation and the company's financial results (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). At the unit level, organisational commitment is combined with the employee's individual disposition to join activities leading to a goal. In this way, the employee identifies with the company's mission and values and shows readiness to belong to its structures.

Since organisational commitment leads to many benefits, it is important to identify the factors influencing them. The literature indicates determinants at the strategic level (e.g., supporting the organisation's strategy, adherence to values by management staff), the functional level (e.g., employment stability, investing in development, motivating with a remuneration system) and at the workplace level (e.g., selection based on high standards, teamwork, cooperation atmosphere) (Kochan & Dyer, 1993). Organisational commitment may also be determined by employee traits, e.g., belief in organisational goals and values, willingness to make efforts for the organisation and a strong desire to belong to the organisation (Cohen, 2007). Moreover, the nature of the organisation is also essential. Therefore, it is worth paying attention to

creating appropriate conditions and a working atmosphere because, in the long term, it can bring many benefits to the organisation.

Many factors influence organisational commitment. One of the theories that tries to explain the emergence of organisational commitment among employees is the theory of social exchange (Bartlett, 2001). According to its assumptions, when employees receive a certain amount of resources from the organisation, they feel obligated to repay the organisation with a higher level of commitment (Saks, 2006). Employee behaviour in the organisation is shaped by human resource (HR) practices, i.e., employee development, remuneration motivation and employee evaluation. Therefore, HR practices play an important role in creating employee organisational commitment (Bulut & Culha, 2010; Chew & Chan, 2008). Among HR practices, employee training has been affirmed as an important factor influencing organisational commitment (Bartlett, 2001; Chew & Chan, 2008; Jaworski et al., 2018).

Several studies have used simple correlation or regression to investigate the relationship between training and organisational commitment. However, they have not considered other variables that can mediate or moderate the association (Chew & Chan, 2008; Hussain et al., 2020; Jaworski et al., 2018). Although the relationship between training and organisational commitment has been investigated (Jaworski et al., 2018), not too many studies have demonstrated the mechanism by which training influences organisational commitment (Bartlett, 2001). Therefore, the objective of this paper is to investigate the determinants of the organisational commitment of employees at the level of HRM policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, this study aims to gain a clear understanding of the relationship between training and organisational commitment through employee engagement in HRM COVID-19 strategies (i.e., mediation), where commitment is understood as the outcome of training. We also regard the climate of implementation of HRM strategies during COVID-19 as moderated mediation, which may moderate the effect of training on participation in HRM COVID-19 strategies. For this purpose, we formulate the following research questions: (1) How did organisations support employees during COVID-19 in terms of providing them with training in connection with the new situation? (2) What are the relationships between training and organisational commitment? (3) To what extent does organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate moderate the effect between training and employee engagement? (4) To what extent is employee engagement for COVID-19 strategies a mediator of organisational commitment? (5) How did the changes in the training area influence the level of employee involvement and to what extent was it influenced by the support of organisations in the implementation of changes in HRM strategy and the accompanying climate?

This paper aims to (1) examine the relationships between training and organisational commitment during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) to draw on testing the moderating role of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and the mediating role of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies on the relationship between training and organisational commitment.

1 Theoretical Development and Hypotheses

1.1 Training, employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies, organisational commitment

Any changes that take place in organisations can generate stress, aversion and dissatisfaction among employees, increasing the risk that employees become less committed to the organisation or possibly even leave it. Undoubtedly, all the changes taking place in the organisation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the change in working conditions and modes, the increase in demand and the implementation, on a larger scale than before, of new technologies, may cause stress and insecurity and a sense of bitterness, which could negatively affect the employees' well-being (Aurelia & Momin, 2020; Bolino et al., 2024). Therefore, as with any change that takes place in an organisation, HRM specialists are responsible for providing employees with the appropriate support to prepare them for the new working conditions. Such support certainly includes the training that the organisation offers its employees.

Training is one of the core elements of HRM practices. It is an investment in enhancing employee skills and knowledge and shaping desired attitudes (Goldstein, 1991; Bartlett, 2001; Hussain et al., 2020). Training refers to systematic activities to meet the tasks and goals established by the organisation (Bulut & Culha, 2010). Training is used to improve job-specific skills or correct deficiencies in job performance (Ludwikowska, 2021; Silva & Dias, 2016). This is particularly important when employees face changes in the organisation of their work. This situation was undoubtedly triggered by COVID-19. In this paper, training is understood as a form of support provided by the organisation to shape new skills in connection with new ways of working caused by the pandemic (Hackman & Oldham, 1975).

Training increases employees' confidence, thus reducing stress and also ensures the development of knowledge and skills (Caligiuri et al., 2020). Furthermore, providing employees with training and development in the appropriate area, especially in the new working conditions enforced by the COVID-19 pandemic, will ensure that the employee feels supported. This is extremely important because support from the organisation also makes the employee feel an obligation to the organisation (Yang, 2012; Suksod & Cruthaka, 2020; Bartlett, 2001). Indeed, research confirms that the support offered to an employee positively influences his/her commitment to the organisation (Zaitouni et al., 2011; Suksod & Cruthaka, 2020; Bulut & Culha, 2010). Training also provides a better understanding of organisational processes and procedures, which also enhances organisational commitment (Maheshwari & Vohra, 2015; Iqbal et al., 2020).

Organisational commitment is understood as the employee's level of attachment to and identification with the organisation (Bartlett, 2001; Bulut & Culha, 2010) and is one of the work-related attitudes that indicate whether an employee will stay with the organisation. In many studies, organisational commitment is conceptualised by different components. Cohen (2007) perceived organisational commitment through employee commitment, affective organisational commitment or affective commitment. This means that employees accept the organisational strategy and are motivated to work and stay in an organisation. Buchanan (1974) described three components, namely identification, commitment and loyalty. Employees adapt to the goals and values of the organisation, are involved in daily tasks and feel connected to the organisation. Many authors have pointed to affective commitment as

the main component of organisational commitment (Bulut & Culha, 2010). In this paper, organisational commitment is also understood as an affective commitment when employees have a sense of belonging to the organisation and a willingness to develop their career in the organisation, as well as when they express the extent to which they identify with organisational problems (Meyer et al., 1990).

In view of the above, we argue that those employees who undertake training would be predicted to be more committed to the organisation. Therefore, the following hypothesis is tested:

H1: Training has a positive influence on organisational commitment.

Employee support may be the key to successful implementation of some changes in HRM practices, allowing organisations to better adapt to the new working conditions forced by the COVID-19 pandemic (Lamm & Gordon, 2010; Shin et al., 2012). In this paper, we consider employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies that were adopted to deal with new challenges during COVID-19. Employee support is therefore expressed by their engagement and willingness to contribute to the company's HRM COVID-19 strategies (Shen & Zhang, 2019; Chen et al., 2020).

Employee support in the implementation of change in the organisation manifests itself in meaningful engagement of employees leading the organisation to successfully implement the change and their enthusiasm for the change and promoting it among other employees (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

To stimulate a supportive attitude in employees towards the changes taking place in the organisation and the introduction of new HRM practices, it is necessary to ensure that they understand the meaning and purpose of the upcoming changes (Raeder and Bokova, 2019; Bulut & Culha, 2010). Therefore, the key to building these positive attitudes may be proper communication, such as conducting training that introduces the employee to the processes of the changes that are taking place and prepares him or her appropriately for them. Knowledge and skills imparted during training will allow the employee to better cope with difficult situations and understand the need for the changes that are occurring (Prewitt & Weil, 2014). This will maintain the employees' trust in the organisation and provide them with a sense of stability and support from the organisation (Verburg et al., 2018). In fact, there is a lot of research in the literature that confirms that appropriate training encompasses a range of knowledge, skills and abilities that employees can acquire and that will provide the ability to deal with crises, minimise the negative effects of the crises and provide the organisation with a competitive advantage (Athamneh, 2018). Appropriate change management, by preparing the employee for these changes, is fundamental to the success of change implementation (Agote et al., 2016; Yue et al., 2019). This is because organisations need to maintain trust among employees, primarily in the face of ongoing change. After all, without the employees' support, the initiatives that occur in the organisation may end in a major failure (Agote et al., 2016; Lewis, 2019). It is therefore posited that:

H2: Training has a direct and positive influence on employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies.

According to the literature, an employee's support of the organisation can be characterised by the employee's belief in the goals and values of the organisation, his or her willingness to make efforts to support the organisation in achieving its goals, or a sense of strong intention to maintain belonging to the organisation (Porter et al., 1976). Taking into account the upcoming changes induced by a crisis in the organisation, success in achieving organisational goals will be possible if employees support the organisation in the reorganisation process. Employee participation in the introduction of new HRM strategies shows a willingness to make efforts and a belief in the achievement of organisational goals. Therefore, it seems natural that the more an employee supports an organisation in implementing new COVID-19-related HRM strategies, the more he or she identifies with the organisation and its goals and feels committed to it. Indeed, research conducted so far confirms that involvement in organisational change during a crisis results in positive outcomes, such as stress relief or improved employee well-being (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

According to researchers, the most positively effective type of organisational support in implementing change is the employee's support of the change implementation process (Morin et al., 2016). This is because it is associated with a sense of willingness to provide the organisation with support for change due to a deep belief in the benefits of this change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). It turns out that the employee's engagement in the process of implementing changes in the organisation caused by the intention to support the organisation positively affects the way the employee deals with change, additionally triggering in them a sense of empowerment in the organisation, which consequently increases their commitment to the workplace (Morin et al., 2016). Therefore, we hypothesise:

H3: Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies has a direct positive influence on organisational commitment.

1.2 Mediating role of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies

Better informing an employee about the process of planned changes in the organisation, especially in the face of a crisis, will reduce the stress that occurs due to the lack of a sense of stability (Aurelia & Momin, 2020; Bulut & Culha, 2010). In addition, making the employee aware of the meaning and purpose of the changes can lead to the employee's belief in acceptance of the changes (Lamm & Gordon, 2010; Shin et al., 2012). An employee who actively participates in the change process, supporting the organisation in its efforts, for example, by positively promoting the change requirement and its benefits, identifies much more with its goals, as well as with the organisation itself (Agote et al., 2016; Yue et al., 2019). Therefore, it will have a positive impact on work-related attitudes, including a positive impact on the employee's commitment to the organisation (Morin et al., 2016). Therefore, we propose that employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies mediates the association between training and organisational commitment:

H4: The effect of training on organisational commitment is mediated by employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies.

1.3 Moderating role of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate in shaping organisational commitment

Researchers have confirmed that employees who work in a positive and healthy environment apply all their efforts in their jobs to achieve greater efficiency and better performance (Gonzalez & Grazzo, 2006). Therefore, it becomes important for an employer to understand the factors that affect the level of employee commitment (Bartlett, 2001). We expect that the association between training and organisational commitment will be moderated by employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies and that the mediation mechanisms for training/employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies/organisational commitment will vary considerably, depending on the quality of the organisation's HRM COVID-19 strategy climate.

The organisational climate is created by common practices, policies, procedures, shared beliefs, perceptions and the value system followed by the organisation. For individuals, climate is a set of attributes that describe organisational activities (Chen & Huang, 2007; Schneider et al., 2013). Various studies have discovered that there is a significant correlation between organisational commitment and organisational climate (McMurray et al., 2004). The role of climate is to shape employees' behaviour and encourage them to share opinions and communicate freely. In the current pandemic, the climate is especially important for COVID-19 strategies so that employees feel committed to supporting them.

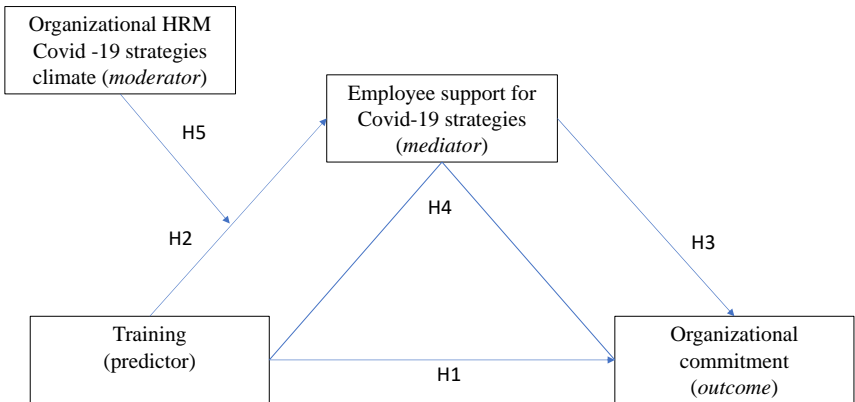
The organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate may play an important role in determining how employee support for the HRM COVID-19 strategies would mediate the organisational commitment of trained employees. The relationship between training and organisational commitment is stronger for those who perceive a more favourable organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and weaker for others. When trained employees perceive the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate as valuable, they are more likely to be committed to the organisation.

Support for training and organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate would explain the mechanism of the relationship between training and organisational commitment:

H5: The higher the value of the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate perceived by employees, the stronger the influence of training on organisational commitment (in the mediation model of training on organisational commitment).

Figure 1 shows all the developed hypotheses.

Figure 1 | Developed hypotheses



Source: Own elaboration

2 Research Methodology

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of training on organisational commitment with moderated mediation of organisational climate HRM COVID-19 strategies and employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies. To investigate the proposed hypothesis and the theoretical mediation model presented in Figure 1, we conducted empirical research based on a survey. We took organisational commitment as a dependent variable while training was taken as an independent variable. Furthermore, the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate was taken as a moderator and employees support COVID-19 strategies as a mediator.

Data were analysed using various statistical tools and tests. Reliability analysis was used to confirm whether the research data were reliable enough. The validity of the questionnaire was tested by factor analysis. Besides, mediation and moderated mediation analyses were applied to measure the effect of training on organisational commitment: moderated mediation of the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies. Mediation analysis was used to show the effect of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies on the relationship between training and organisational commitment. Finally, moderated mediation was applied to investigate the indirect effect of training on organisational commitment through employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies and the moderation of the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate.

This study employed Hayes' PROCESS Macro Models 4 and 14 (Hayes, 2013) to investigate the proposed hypotheses. The mediation analysis (Model 4) allowed testing whether the indirect effect of employee engagement in HRM COVID-19 strategies mediates the effect of training on organisational commitment with the bootstrapping confidence interval. We further used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Macro Model 7 to measure the impact of training on organisational commitment: moderated mediation of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies.

For statistical analysis and to test the proposed set of hypotheses, which is used to construct a hypothetical model, the PROCESS Macro analysis by Hayes was used – a sequential mediation model based on regression analysis (Hayes, 2013). The results were analysed using Macro (v.3.5) for IBM SPSS Statistics (v. 25) (Figure 2).

2.1 Research sample

The main research survey was conducted in April 2021. The survey consisted of 100 questions related to organisational policies and HRM practices. The sample was taken from 378 companies, and participation was obtained from 378 senior managers who had a broad view of the entire organisation. The research used the CAWI (computer-aided web interview) method. The sample elements were selected purposefully, the only restriction being the geographical scope of the study. Although characteristics such as organisation size or primary income source did not influence inclusion in the research sample, they were nonetheless investigated. The characteristics of the obtained sample are presented in Table 1, showing the sampling variability.

Table 1 | Size and source of revenue of organisations included in sample

Organisation size	Source of revenue			Total
	Production	Trade	Service	
Micro (below ten people)	10	12	8	30
Small (11–50 people)	29	56	33	118
Medium (51–250 people)	45	27	43	115
Large (above 250 people)	46	14	55	115
Total	130	109	139	378

Source: Own elaboration

2.2 Variables

The measures of the study constructs are adapted from previous studies.

Organisational commitment was measured with three items that focused on the employees' sense of belonging to the organisation and willingness to develop their career in the organisation, as well as the extent to which they identified with the problems of the organisation (Meyer et al., 1990).

Training was measured with one item that tested whether the organisation provided support to shape new skills in connection with a new mode of work/situation through training and other forms (Hackman & Oldham, 1975).

Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies was measured with four items that focused on employee engagement and willingness to contribute to the company's HRM COVID-19 strategies (Shen & Zhang, 2019; Chen et al., 2020).

Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate was measured with three items focused on how the organisation recognises and rewards employees' contributions to the HRM COVID-

19 strategies. It also tested whether employees are aware of what is right to support HRM COVID-19 strategies (Shen & Zhang, 2019).

The study utilised a five-point Likert scale for several reasons (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011). Firstly, the five-point Likert scale was chosen to avoid forcing respondents into definitive opinions, thereby reducing response bias, which is crucial in social science research. Secondly, five-point scales are recognised for offering higher reliability compared to three-point scales (Hartley, 2014).

3 Results

3.1 Descriptive statistics and scale reliability analysis

We verified the reliability of each variable as a first step of the presented research (Table 2). Cronbach's alpha of all the research variables is near to or above 0.6. The acceptable value of Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0.6 to 0.95 (Taber, 2018). In just one case, Cronbach's alpha was slightly lower than the benchmark. However, it did not affect the overall result. Therefore, it might be concluded that the variables in the existing questionnaire are reliable.

Factor analysis has been utilised to elucidate the variance among observed correlated variables by representing them in relation to a potentially reduced set of latent variables referred to as factors. The component matrix of training, employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies, organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and organisational commitment revealed that there are no problematic or missing items in the existing data.

Table 2 | Descriptive statistics, reliability and validity of scale of identified variables

No.	Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	M	SD	Factor analysis
1.	Training	1	-	2.275	0.906	-
2.	Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies	4	0.767	2.409	0.701	58.939%
3.	Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate	3	0.587	2.485	0.695	54.931%
4.	Organisational commitment	3	0.666	2.545	0.712	59.983%

Source: Own elaboration

3.2 Mediation model

In this study, we used the SPSS PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2013) to test the mediation effect of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies on the relationship between training and organisational commitment (Model 4).

All the conditions for establishing the mediation model are met (Saks, 2006). Firstly, the independent variable significantly predicts the mediator. Secondly, there is a relationship between the dependent variables and the mediator. Thirdly, a significant relation between the independent variables and dependent variables is reduced (partial mediation) after introducing the mediator. The results obtained show clearly that there is a statistically significant and high correlation between all the variables analysed. It allows the initial acceptance of hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 (Table 3).

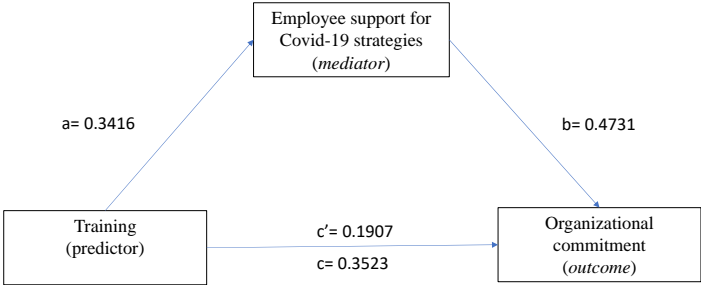
Table 3 | Correlation among variables

		Training	Organisational commitment	Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies	Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate
Training	<i>r</i>	1	0.448**	0.441**	0.391**
	<i>sign</i>		0.000	0.000	0.000
	<i>N</i>	378	378	378	378
Organisational commitment	<i>r</i>	0.448**	1	0.573**	0.524**
	<i>sign</i>	0.000		0.000	0.000
	<i>N</i>	378	378	378	378
Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies	<i>r</i>	0.441**	0.573**	1	0.642**
	<i>sign</i>	0.000	0.000		0.000
	<i>N</i>	378	378	378	378
Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate	<i>r</i>	0.391**	0.524**	0.642**	1
	<i>sign</i>	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	<i>N</i>	378	378	378	378

Source: Own elaboration

This conclusion enabled us to verify the mediation model of organisational commitment. We employed PROCESS Macro Model 4 to test the direct effect of training on organisational commitment and whether employee engagement in COVID-19 strategies mediates the effect of training on organisational commitment (H4). To do that, we performed a linear regression analysis with the mediator of training as an independent variable and organisational commitment as a dependent variable. Employee engagement in COVID-19 strategies was tested in the model as a mediator. The results revealed that the more organisations provide support to shape new skills in the situation by training and other forms, the more employees are likely to be more committed to the organisation and support other HRM COVID-19 strategies (Figure 2).

Figure 2 | Mediation effect of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies on predicting organisational commitment



Source: Own elaboration

There is a significant indirect effect of training on organisational commitment through employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies. The regression model obtained with the mediator is statistically significant and corrected (BootLLCI and BootULCI are both above 0). The obtained model shows that employees' support for COVID-19 strategies is a strong mediator of the relationship between training and organisational commitment. This result allows us to accept hypothesis H4. All the results are presented in Table 4.

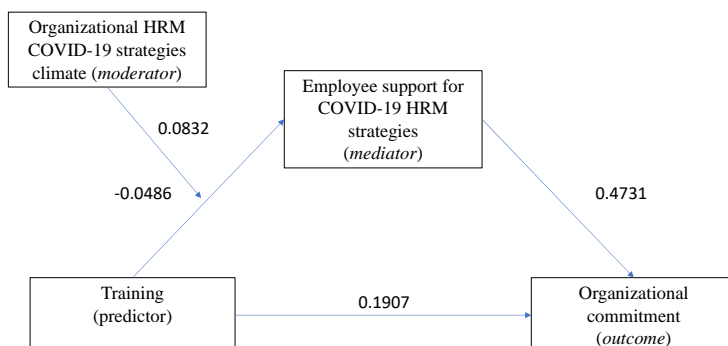
Table 4 | Results of regression analysis with mediator

Mediator	Direct effect value	Indirect effect value	BootLLCI	BootULCI	R ²
Employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies	0.1907	0.1616	0.1372	0.2875	0.3753

Source: Own elaboration

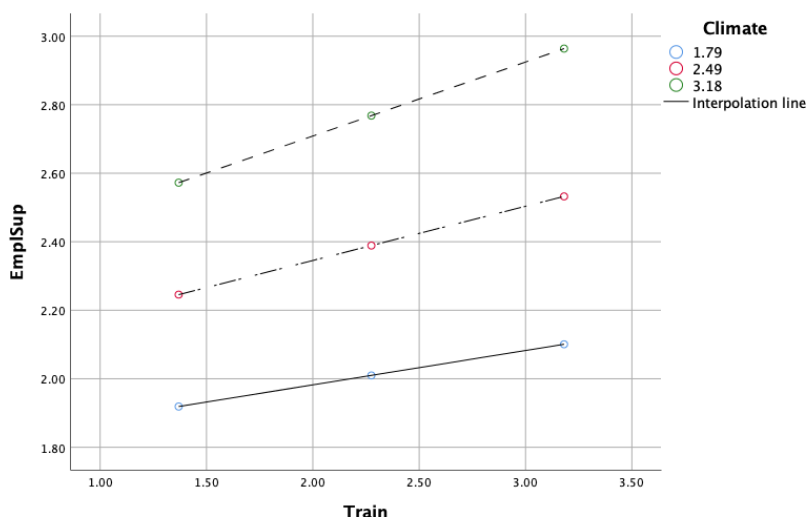
3.3 Moderator analysis for organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate

In the next step, we analyse the mediation model obtained (hypothesis H4) in the context of the climate of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategies. It was intended to test the theoretical model with organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate as a moderator of the relationship between training and employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies, which was placed as a mediator of the relationship between training and organisational commitment. The hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis with the moderator. We introduced the moderator as a new variable in the relation that was built as a product of two independent standardised variables. The first one was a baseline for comparison (and only independent variables were added as predictors). The second one used independent variables and also the moderator as predictors. The aim was to verify the occurrence of the moderating influence in the entire sample. To confirm this, we introduced the third model using only the moderator and one independent variable as predictors. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 | Moderated mediation effect of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 3 shows different levels of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate. As the organisation provided support to shape new skills during COVID-19, the employees were more willing to support other HRM strategies. However, the relationship between training and support is different when considering the climate of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategies. When an organisation ensures a proper climate for HRM COVID-19 strategies, then the support for training increases to a greater extent than when the climate of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategies is low or moderate (Figure 4).

Figure 4 | Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate fit moderated effect between employee engagement in COVID-19 strategies and training

Source: Own elaboration

The research results obtained show that there is, in fact, a cause-and-effect relationship between training, employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies and organisational

commitment, which is another way to verify the proposed model (H4) (Table 5). Furthermore, the results obtained show clearly that the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate is a statistically significant moderator for the entire model (Table 6). Hypothesis H5 can be accepted, stating that the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate is a moderator in each mediation model.

Table 5 | Regression model statistics

Model description	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Delta R</i> ²	<i>Moderator coeff.</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>t-stat</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Employees' support, Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate, Moderator <i>dependent v.: organisational commitment</i>	0.4640	0.0088	0.0832	0.0336	2.4751	0.0138

**accepted level of significance 0.001*

Source: Own elaboration

Table 6 | Index of moderated mediation

	<i>Index</i>	<i>BootSE</i>	<i>BootLLCI</i>	<i>BootULCI</i>
Organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate	0.0394	0.0182	0.0014	0.0737

Source: Own elaboration

4 Discussion

The present study has shown that training has a significant effect on the organisational commitment of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consistent with previous research (Zaitouni et al., 2011; Suksod & Cruthaka, 2020; Bartlett, 2001), the more organisations support employees to cope with new working conditions by providing upskill or reskill training, the more organisational commitment individuals may be drawn to exert.

When examining the relationship between training and employees' organisational commitment, the study considered the organisational climate and employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies as potential predictors of the relationship. Consistent with the literature is the finding that supporting organisational change during a crisis results in positive outcomes, such as stress relief or improved employee well-being (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Therefore, the more an employee supports an organisation in implementing new COVID-19-related HRM strategies, the more he or she identifies with the organisation and its goals and feels committed to it. Moreover, various studies have discovered that there is a significant correlation between organisational commitment and organisational climate (McMurray et al., 2004). In the current pandemic, the climate is especially important for COVID-19 strategies; hence, when trained employees perceive organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate as valuable, they are more likely to be committed to the organisation.

Therefore, the objective of this paper, namely, to demonstrate the mechanism between training and organisational commitment, has been achieved. The study confirmed that the mediation effect of employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies between training and

organisational commitment would be moderated by the quality of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate.

Conclusions

Human resource management is a critical function to ensure organisational effectiveness and create a competitive advantage. However, during COVID-19, the HRM practices faced many challenges. Employee performance has been affected by radical changes. Therefore, organisations have considered developing new strategies to manage human resources effectively.

The managers tried to help employees adapt to the current situation and cope with changes by offering them various training. One of the main challenges was creating organisational commitment of employees. This article revealed that increased commitment is related to the successful implementation of HR practices, in particular employee training, and enhanced by employees' support for the HRM COVID-19 strategies and the quality of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate. The results of the study indicate that increased organisational support for skill development through training and other methods lead to higher employee commitment to the organisation and greater support for other HRM COVID-19 strategies. When the organisation provides support to shape new skills during COVID-19, the employees are more willing to support other HRM strategies. Moreover, when an organisation fosters a strong climate for HRM COVID-19 strategies, support for training significantly increases compared to when the organisational climate for these strategies is low or moderate.

Due to research conducted among organisations in Poland, there is scope for studying factors that affect organisational commitment in other geographic regions affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The responses could vary according to geographical location outside of Poland. Although the focus of this research was to study the role of training, employee support for HRM COVID-19 strategies and the quality of organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate, there is also the possibility that other factors could influence organisational commitment.

Several extensions of this study can provide additional insights into the complex nature of the organisational commitment of employees. An obvious extension is to consider other than HRM training practices that may influence organisational commitment during the pandemic.

This paper makes an important contribution to the management literature by testing HRM practices that could influence organisational commitment. In general, the results of this study offer several implications for establishing employee commitment practices. Managers must provide employees with constant training to adapt to changing situations. To increase the influence of training on organisational commitment, it is necessary to focus on building the quality of the organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and employees' support for the company's HRM COVID-19 strategies. Individuals may be drawn to exert more organisational commitment when the organisation creates an environment that enables employees to support HRM COVID-19 strategies.

The key practical implication of our study is that exploring factors influencing organisational commitment is particularly intriguing in today's dynamic work environment. Given the ongoing evolution of work structures and the increasing importance placed on employee engagement

and retention, understanding the determinants of organisational commitment is of significant relevance. By identifying the key factors driving organisational commitment, such as training, organisational HRM COVID-19 strategy climate and employees' support for the company's HRM COVID-19 strategies, companies can tailor their strategies to foster a more committed workforce.

Ultimately, by addressing the factors identified in the study, organisations can cultivate a more engaged and dedicated workforce, leading to improved performance, reduced turnover and greater resilience in the face of change.

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