
The Influence of Ethical leadership and Organizational Culture on Employee Commitment in the South Africa Local Government Municipality

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Abstract:

Purpose: This study aims to determine the influence of ethical leadership and organisational culture on employee commitment in a South African local government municipality in Gauteng Province.

Design/methodology/approach: The authors adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Primary data was gathered by administering a five-point Likert scale questionnaire to respondents online. Respondents were selected through the probability simple random sampling technique. Field data were analysed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27) aided by descriptive tools of standard deviation, mean and frequency while the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), correlation analysis, and structural equation model (SEM) were used to make inferences from the data. The authors employed correlation to assess the relationship between ethical leadership, organisational culture, and employee commitment.

Findings: The outcomes of the study indicated positive correlations between the variables. This implies that an increase in one variable means a similar increase in the other. However, it emerged that organizational culture influences employee commitment more than ethical leadership.

Practical implications: Regarding the influence of ethical leadership, it is recommended that organisations such as the local municipalities need focus on human resource development programmes, institute mentorship, and training initiatives to assist managers. The municipalities must further reinforce empowerment traits, and establish staff development centres to enhance existing the performance of municipal leaders in management positions. Besides, it is recommended that the management of municipalities practice “the leading by example phenomenon” and “the role modeling culture” to improve employee performance and commitment.

Originality/value: Though there has been several empirical studies on ethical leadership and organisational culture, the analytical framework adopted outlines practical approaches that municipal managers need to adopt to enhance ethical leadership and culture in organisations.

Keywords: Ethical leadership, organisational culture, employee commitment.

JEL codes: M14, L81.

Paper type: Research Paper

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1. Introduction

South Africa's democracy was established in 1994 following years of struggle (Van Vollenhoven, 2015). Since 1994, various government administrations embarked on programmes pursuing ethical leadership (EL) to fight against corruption and address the poverty trap in which the poorest of the poor find themselves. A civil service with an ill-defined or negative culture is usually a breeding ground for corruption, indolence, nepotism, inefficiency, lack of accountability/ transparency, low productivity, misappropriation, and waste of public funds (Agwu, 2013).

Referring to the South African public sector, unethical behaviour can be categorised according to the three government spheres, namely national, provincial, and local. This study focuses on the local sphere of government. The City of Johannesburg has been in the spotlight recently in terms of unethical behaviour by some members of senior management, which was widely reported in various media. According to the former chairperson of the City Power Board, Chikane (2017), in *BusinessTech*, 2017 February 15, more than 874 cases were registered with the South African Police (SAPS) Services and National Prosecution Authority (NPA).

Subsequently, 813 arrests were registered, and 274 successful convictions were secured. In addition, nine cases of unethical behaviour by management have also been recorded; six of these cases are in progress, while three have been finalised. Of the nine cases relating to supply chain management irregularity, six have been finalised, while one case is still under investigation. Thirteen staff members have been dismissed so far. According to Ngubane (2021), the current spate of unethical behaviour and corruption in the number of both public and private sector organisations requires highly moral and ethical leaders.

2. The Background of the Research

Chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) stipulates those democratic values and principles must be applied at all levels of public administration. These values and principles demand that a high standard of professional ethics be promoted and maintained (Thonzhe and Doorgapersad, 2017). Alongside chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (which regulates public administration and therefore ethical leadership in the public service), various other Acts and papers have been put in place to reinforce ethical conduct in the public sector, such as the White Paper on transforming public service delivery (Batho-Pele), published on 1 October 1997, the Municipal Finance Management Act and Public Finance Acts.

In addition, the Public Service Commission (PSC), an independent body, monitors and arbitrates the activities, ethos, and conduct of the public service (Constitution, 1996, Section 196). Other acts developed to promote ethical conduct in the public sector are the Municipal Finance Management Act and Public Finance Act. South

African local government is not short of legislation and mechanisms to deal with unethical behaviour (Ngubane, 2021).

The lack of ethical leadership in the South African public sector can therefore not be attributed to a lack of regulations, but rather to a lack of implementation of these regulations in the public sector. Despite numerous Acts and established institutions to promote ethical conduct in the public sector, South Africa is still inundated by reports of unethical conduct by public officials. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index (2018), corruption is getting worse in South Africa, with the country remaining in ninth place in sub-Saharan Africa, suggesting that perceptions of corruption in the country remained high.

The Corruption Perceptions Index (2018) reported that more than two-thirds of countries scored below 50, with an average score of 43. South Africa had a score of 43 in 2018, down from 45 in 2017. Seychelles, with a score of 66, was ranked 28th worldwide and the highest in the region, followed by Botswana, Cape Verde, Rwanda, Namibia, Mauritius, São Tomé, Príncipe, and Senegal.

Moreover, Transparency International (2018) ranked South Africa 73rd of the 180 countries and territories surveyed. The civil society organisation, Corruption Watch (2019), mentioned that South Africa's unchanged score indicated that perceptions of corruption remained high and that the country needed to make serious inroads against corruption.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Ethical Leadership

Extant literature on the phenomenon of ethical leadership is replete with diverse definitions of the term. According to Mitonga-Monga, Flotman and Moerane (2019) ethical leadership refer to the demonstration of normatively suitable behaviour through personal actions and interpersonal relationship, as well as the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making. Furthermore, Jaoudi and Lakhali (2020) mention that the ethical leadership concept represents two main facets namely, a moral person and a moral manager.

Furthermore, according to Jaoudi and Lakhali (2020), a leader should act normatively appropriately to be a moral person and also to be a moral manager, a leader regulates followers' ethical actions by addressing ethical issues, and encouraging the ethical conduct of followers and restraining their unethical conduct. Additionally, these leaders demonstrate concern for their followers and behave ethically in their professional and personal life. Additionally, Khuong and Dung (2015) posit an ethical leader as a person with the right ethics besides a strong personality that set examples for others and resists temptations. In addition, Ngubane (2021) argues that

ethical leaders become exemplary to other workers and consequently influence them to be ethical. Similarly, in encouraging ethical behaviour, a leader needs to grow into a role model for the workers.

3.2 Organisational Culture

Organisational culture has been defined separately by various researchers besides in most of these the shared point is the notion that culture is something that is shared between memberships of an organisation (Brenyah and Obuobisa-Darko, 2017). Organisational culture includes the norms that the members of an organisation experience and describe their work settings (Scheider, Ehrhart, and Macey, 2013), while, Simoneaux and Stroud (2014) explain organisational culture as to how members of an organisation interact with each other and other stakeholders. Organisational culture plays an important part in shaping the paradigm of thinking and refining the business process that will result in a favourable working situation with a great level of trust, and communication skills in addition to organisational commitment (Sutanto and Nugroho, 2021).

3.3 Employee Commitment

Organisational commitment is one of the most fashionable variables to be studied in the last three or four decades. Similar to every other psychological construct, it is quite difficult to provide a universally accepted definition of organisational commitment (Suma and Lasha, 2013). According to Hakim and Msi (2015), commitment means that employees wish to retain their membership in the organisation and are willing to do business to achieve organisational goals. Commitment is said to be displayed through individuals' attitudes, behaviour and beliefs regarding the organisation.

Adanse, Yamga and Atinga (2017) have reported that organisational commitment has been conceptualised from the perspectives of behaviour and psychology. The behavioural approach to organisational commitment concerns the interaction between employers and workers about rewards. On the other hand, the psychological perspective regards organisational commitment as affiliation to an individual employee's job. Mohamed, Ahmed, and Shaimaa (2013), however, state that the major drivers of organisational commitment are a psychological state that reflects a high sense of belonging, acceptance, identity, loyalty, support, passion and feelings of pride towards an organisation.

According to Jeremy and Cilliers (2016), organisational commitment is based on the following three components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative continuance. According to Antilla (2014), affective organisation commitment is an individual's emotional attitude toward his/her organisation. However, Suntanto and Setiadi (2021) posit that workers who have a normative commitment or are more worried about big pay will be likely to look out for certain

categories or else are constantly looking for jobs besides businesses that can afford to pay great salaries.

Moreover, Tamer and Akyurek (2021) argue that in continuous commitment, members do not want to leave the company, since they are escaping confronting to some extent problems after leaving. Furthermore, mention that they cannot try this since they assume it may result in a difficult situation. Based on the existing literature the following null and alternate hypotheses were designed for th study.

3.4 Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1:

H₀: There is no relationship between ethical leadership, organisational culture and employee commitment.

H₁: There is a relationship between ethical leadership, organisational culture and employee commitment

Sub-Hypotheses 1:

H_{1a}: There is a relationship between ethical leadership and employee commitment.

H_{1b}: There is a relationship between organisational culture and employee commitment

H_{1c}: There is a relationship between ethical leadership and organisational culture

Hypotheses 2:

H₀: Ethical leadership and organisational culture do not have an impact on employee commitment

H₁: Ethical leadership and organisational culture do not have an impact on employee commitment

Sub-Hypotheses 2:

H_{2a}: Ethical leadership does not have an impact on employee commitment

H_{2b}: Organisational culture does have an impact on employee commitment

4. Research Methodology

A cross-sectional quantitative research was conducted among local government employees in a selected local municipality in Gauteng Province South Africa. The justification for using the quantitative approach of the authors was to guard against biases in the final research outcomes and to generalise the findings (Brenyah and Obuobisa, 2017). Empirical data was collected through an online survey using five-point Likert scale questionnaires ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agreed. The study research scales were adopted and adapted from previous work to ensure reliability. The study population comprised employees from the selected local municipality.

According to O'Sullivan *et al.* (2013), the population is the “total set of units in which the investigator is interested”. The research population of this empirical study consists of all the employees from different departments of the municipality. The authors chose the local municipality where it was possible to access credible information to locate the research population (Berg and Lune, 2014). The sample for this study was drawn from the main population that the authors were prepared to study (Babbie, 2013). To attain maximum information from the population, the authors used the probability simple random sampling.

The participants from the population were randomly selected to develop an accurate sampling frame (Neuman, 2006; Vogt *et al.*, 2012). As the study continued, the authors identify the unique person to assist participants of the research population (Jackson, 2006). A total of 400 online questionnaires were distributed for participants' input from various departments. Out of the total number of questionnaires, 234 were completed and returned, and 14 questionnaires were invalid resulting in a response rate of 55%. Primary data for this study were analysed using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. The study also uses both descriptive and inferential statistics to summarise the set of scores that were obtained.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted in this study as a factor validity technique. Factor validity is the degree to which the measure of a construct conforms to the theoretical definition of the construct (Esquivel, 2011). Exploratory factor analysis is a statistical method used to increase the reliability of the scale by identifying inappropriate items that can be removed and the dimensionality of constructs by examining the existence of a relationship between items and factors when information on the dimensionality is limited (Yu and Richardson, 2015).

Before performing factor analysis, Bartlett's test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) were performed to check the factorability of the data. Specifically, the KMO test was utilised to check the sampling adequacy of the data, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett 1950) was used to check if correlations between items were sufficiently large enough for EFA to be performed.

Bartlett's test of Sphericity should reach a statistical significance of less than 0.05 for factor analysis to be suitable (Yu and Richardson, 2015). The KMO value ranges from 0 to 1 with 0.6 considered the minimum value for exploratory factor analysis to be appropriate (Awang, 2010; 2012; Hoque and Awang, 2016; 2017). The KMO and Bartlett's test results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's test results

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.939
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6327.119
	Df	703
	Sig.	.000

Source: Authors own compilation

It can be seen from Table 1 above that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis with the KMO value = 0.939 above the minimum value of 0.6 (Awang, 2010; 2012; Hoque and Awang, 2016; 2017). The Bartlett Test of Sphericity was statistically significant (p-value < 0.05) indicating that correlations between items were sufficiently large for conducting the test of EFA on the data.

Table 2. Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

FACTOR(S)		Factor loading	Eigenvalues	Variance explained (%)
FACTOR 1:	ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE			
OC7	People at my organisation work as if they part of a team	0,803	16,276	42,831
OC9	Work in my organisation is organised so that each person can see the relationship between his or her work and the goals of the organisation.	0,764		
OC11	There are a characteristic management style and a distinct set of management practices.	0,753		
OC15	In my organisation there is an ethical code that guides our behaviour and help us tell the right from wrong	0,734		
OC4	Everyone at my organisation believes that he or she can have a positive impact.	0,727		
OC8	Teams are our primary building blocks	0,727		
OC6	Cooperation across different parts of the organisation is actively encouraged.	0,725		
OC16	In my organisation there is a strong culture	0,718		
OC12	There is a clear and constant set of values that governs the way we conduct business.	0,718		
OC17	In my organisation it is easy to reach consensus, even on difficult issues.	0,705		
OC10	In my organisation leaders and managers practice what they preach.	0,704		
OC13	In my organisation ignoring the core values of the organisation will get one into trouble	0,688		
OC2	Decisions at my company are usually made at the level where the best information is	0,685		

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	available.			
OC3	Information is widely shared so that everyone can get the information he or she needs in time.	0,670		
OC1	Most employees are highly involved in their work	0,658		
OC5	Business planning is ongoing and involves everyone in the process to some degree.	0,657		
OC14	In my organisation there is an ethical code that guides our behaviour and help us tell right from wrong	0,638		
OC19	There is a clear agreement about the right or wrong way to do things	0,610		
FACTOR 2	ETHICAL LEADERSHIP			
EL6	My manager can be trusted	0,844	3,597	9,466
EL5	My manager makes fair and balanced decisions.	0,841		
EL9	My manager has the best interest of employees in mind.	0,828		
EL7	My manager discusses ethics or values with employees .	0,824		
EL8	My manager sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics.	0,819		
EL3	My manager listens to what employees has to say.	0,818		
EL2	My manager defines success not just by results but also by the way these are obtained.	0,796		
EL4	My manager disciplines employees who violate ethical standards	0,764		
EL10	My manager, when making decisions, asks "what is the right thing to do?"	0,759		
EL1	My manager conducts his or her personal life in an ethical manner.	0,744		
FACTOR 3	AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT			
AC4	I feel emotionally attached to this organisation	0,833	2,419	6,366
AC5	This organisation has a great deal or personal meaning to me.	0,782		
AC3	I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	0,758		
AC1	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.	0,734		
AC2	I feel that this organisation's problems are my own.	0,646		

FACTOR 4	CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT			
CC5	At this point, remaining with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire	0,862	2,078	5,468
CC4	I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.	0,854		
CC3	One of the few serious consequences of leaving my organisation is the scarcity of available alternatives	0,714		
FACTOR 5	NORMATIVE COMMITMENT			
NC1	I believe that these days, people move from one company to another too frequently	0,765	1,325	3,488
NC2	Things were better in the old days when people stayed with one organisation for most of their careers	0,625		

Source: Authors own compilation

Forty-four items relating to ethical leadership, organizational culture and employee commitment were factors analysed using the principal components analysis (CPA) with varimax rotation. Based on Kaiser's criterion, five factors were extracted from the factor solution as theoretically conceptualized (Table 2). *Factor 1* was called organizational culture. *Factor 1* had an eigenvalue of 16,276 and it explained 42,831% of the total variance explained. *Factor 2* was named ethical leadership. *Factor 2* had an eigenvalue of 3,597 and it explained 9,466% of the total variance explained. *Factor 3* was labelled affective commitment. *Factor 3* had an eigenvalue of 2,419 and it explained 6,366% of the total variance explained. *Factor 4* was called continuance commitment. *Factor 4* had an eigenvalue of 2,078 and it explained 5,468% of the total variance explained. *Factor 5* was entitled normative commitment. *Factor 5* had an eigenvalue of 1,325 and it explained 3,488% of the total variance explained.

The five factors had a total variance explained of 67,620% greater than the recommended value of 60% (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, and Mena, 2012b). The factor loadings range from 0,610 to 0,862 greater than 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2014) suggesting that they are strongly loading to their respective factors in this current study, six items were deleted from the factor solution due to low factor loadings below 0,5.

5.2 Reliability Analysis

The study employed the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for assessing the reliability of the scales in the instrument. The reliability of the instrument refers to the stability and consistency of the instrument developed (Creswell, 2010). Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.6 are considered highly reliable and acceptable (Duad, Khidzir,

Ismail, and Abdullah, 2018). Also, the reliability of constructs can be measured using composite reliability.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis Result

Construct	Conbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Affective commitment	0.894	5
Continuance commitment	0.766	5
Normative commitment	0.626	6
Ethical leadership	0.960	10
Organisational culture	0.954	19

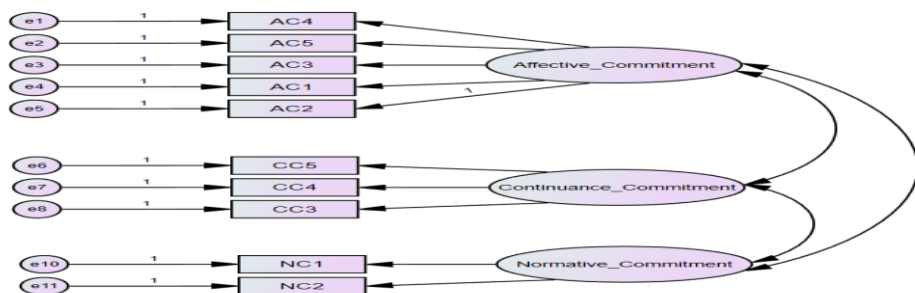
Source: Authors' own compilation.

Table 3 indicates that the study scales namely affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, ethical leadership, and organisational culture had Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.626 to 0.954, which are all greater than the 0.6 recommended value (Duad, Khidzir, Ismail and Abdullah, 2018). These results suggest that the study instrument was highly reliable.

5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted in this study to validate the factor structure of employee commitment established by Jeremy and Cilliers (2016) and exploratory factor analysis in Table 2 above. IBM Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 27 was used to perform the CFA. Figure 1 presents the CFA model for employee commitment. This model seeks to confirm if the employee commitment scale is composed of three sub-factors, namely affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Before model interpretation, it is ideal to use the most widely used absolute and relative fit indices to assess how well the model fits the sample data. The model fit indices used to confirm the factor structure of the employee commitment is discussed in detail below.

Figure 1. Unidentified CFA for Employee Commitment



Source: Authors' own compilation.

Table 4. Absolute and Relative Fit Indices Recommended and Study Results

Model Values	Recommended Values	References	CFA Model Results
Chi-Square p-value	p-value > 0.05	(Barrett, 2007)	p-value = 0.358
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.06	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.021
The root measure square residual (RMR)	< 0.05	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.021
Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI)	< 0.95	(Civelek, 2018)	0.992
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	< 0.95	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.999
Comparative fit index (CFI)	< 0.95	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.999
Normed-fit index (NFI)	< 0.95	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.993
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	< 0.95	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.984
Incremental fit index (IFI)	< 0.95	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.999

Source: Authors' own compilation.

It is evident from Figure 1 above that employee commitment is only measured by affective commitment as indicated by the absolute and relative fit indices which are within the recommended threshold values suggested by Barrett (2007) and Hu and Bentler (1999) in Table 4 above. The CFA model with the three sub-factors, namely affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment was unidentified (Refer to Figure 1).

After improving the CFA model fit with the assistance of the modification indices, it was then found that employee commitment is measured by 5 items of affective commitment only. Hence, in subsequent analysis employee, commitment will be used as 5 items of affective commitment.

5.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was employed in this study to measure the relationship between ethical leadership, organisational culture, and employee commitment. Samuel and Okey (2015) describe correlation as a statistical measurement of the relationship between two continuous variables using the correlation coefficient (ρ). The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. A correlation of -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation, meaning that as one variable goes up, the other goes down. A correlation of +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, meaning that both variables move in the same direction together.

A zero correlation indicates that there is no relationship between the variables. Now it is important to interpret the magnitude of the correlation coefficient values between -1 and 0 or between 0 and 1 by following guidelines from different authors (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. Correlation Coefficient Effect Sizes

Little correlation	$r = 0.10$ to 0.29
Low correlation	$r = 0.30$ to 0.49

Moderate correlation	r = 0.50 to 0.69
High correlation	r = 0.70 to 0.89
Very high correlation	r = 0.90 to 1.0

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis and Discriminant Validity Results

Correlations		Ethical Leadership	Organisational Culture	Employee Commitment
Ethical Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.864		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	220		
Organisational Culture	Pearson Correlation	.600**	0.762	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	220	220	
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.501**	.564**	0.837
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	220	220	220

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Authors' own compilation

Tables 7 and 8 below illustrate a statistically significant (p-value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation (r = 0.60) between Organisational Culture and Ethical Leadership. The relationship between ethical leadership and employee commitment was also found to be statistically significant (p-value < 0.05), with a moderate positive correlation coefficient (t of 0.501).

Finally, there was a statistically significant (p-value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation (r = 0.564) between Organisational Culture and Ethical Commitment. The implications are that the variables relate to each other; meaning a positive increase in one variable results in a similar increase in the other variable.

Table 7. Correlation Analysis Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	R	p-value	Decision
H _{1a}	There is a relationship between ethical leadership and employee commitment.	0.501	0.000	Supported
H _{1b}	There is a relationship between organisational culture and employee commitment.	0.564	0.000	Supported
H _{1c}	There is a relationship between ethical leadership and organisational culture.	0.600	0.000	Supported

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Table 8. Structural Equation Model Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path-Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Decision
H _{2a}	Ethical Leadership -> Employee Commitment	0.257	3.410	0,001	Supported
H _{2b}	Organisational Culture -> Employee Commitment	0.423	6.023	0,000	Supported

Source: Authors' own compilation.

5.5 Structural Equation Model

To measure the impact of organisational culture and ethical leadership on employee commitment a structural equation model was constructed. Based on the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) methodology, the measurement model was assessed first followed by the structural model.

5.5.1 Assessment of the Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed by evaluating the reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the items and constructs. The measurement model seeks to describe how well the observed indicators serve as a measurement instrument for the latent variables (Amin *et al.*, 2013). To assess the reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the Composite Reliability were evaluated. For a construct to be considered reliable, the composite reliability value must be at least 0.6 (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.6 are considered highly reliable and acceptable (Duad *et al.*, 2018).

As shown in Table 3 above the Cronbach's Alpha values were greater than 0.6. The composite reliability values were 0.961 for organisational culture, 0.963 for ethical leadership, and 0.921 for employee commitment. The Cronbach's Alpha values and composite reliability values were all greater than 0.6 showing high reliability among indicators and constructs. Furthermore, table 2 shows that the factor loadings were all greater than 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2014), and the average variance extracted values (AVEs) were 0.581 for organisational culture, 0.746 for ethical leadership, and 0.701 for employee commitment above the recommended threshold value of 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

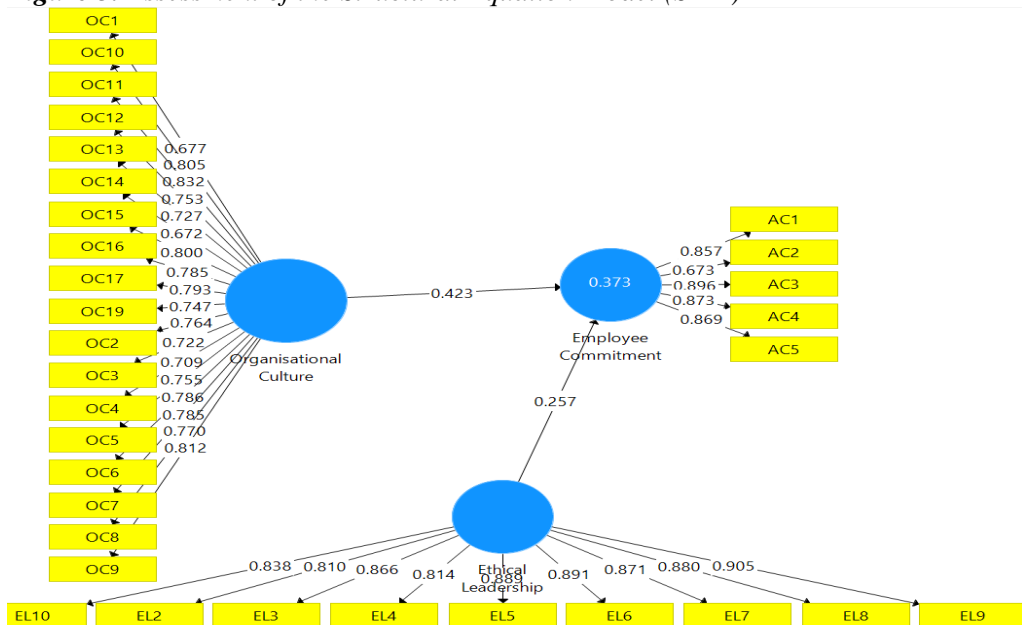
These results suggest good convergent validity of the study items and scales. Discriminant validity was evaluated by comparing the correlation between the constructs and the square root of the AVEs as shown in Table 2 above depicts the the diagonal shows that the square root of the AVEs between each pair of factors was higher than the correlation estimated between factors, thus ratifying its discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

5.5.2 Assessment of the Structural Equation Model (SEM)

The structural model was assessed using SMART-PLS 3.0. The structural model was assessed using the t-values, path coefficients, and coefficient of determination (R^2) as presented in Figure 3 and Table 9 on the following page.

It is evident from Table 9 that ethical leadership had a significant impact on employee commitment ($\beta = 0.257$, t-value = 3.410, p-value = 0.001) and organisational culture ($\beta = 0.423$, t-value = 6.023, p-value = 0.000). The R^2 value on employee commitment was 0.373, suggesting that 37.3% of the variance in employee commitment is explained by both ethical leadership and organisational culture. Given the statistical results, organisational culture and ethical leadership positively influenced employee commitment. However, organisational culture influences employee commitment more in contrast to ethical leadership.

Figure 3. Assessment of the Structural Equation Model (SEM)



Source: Authors' own compilation.

Table 9. Structural Equation Model Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path-Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Decision
H _{2a}	Ethical Leadership -> Employee Commitment	0.257	3.410	0,001	Supported
H _{2b}	Organisational Culture -> Employee Commitment	0.423	6.023	0,000	Supported

Source: Authors' own compilation.

6. Discussion

The study aims to determine the influence of ethical leadership and organisational culture on employee commitment in the South African local government municipality in Gauteng Province. The first hypothesis indicated that there is a relationship between ethical leadership and employee commitment. It can be seen from Table 7 and Table 8 that there was a statistically significant (p -value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.60$) between Organisational Culture and Ethical Leadership.

The relationship between ethical leadership and employee commitment was also found to be statistically significant (p -value < 0.05), with a moderate positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.501$). Finally, there was a statistically significant (p -value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.564$) between Organisational Culture and Ethical Commitment.

The study findings support previous research conducted by Siegel (2013) and Ismail and Daud (2014). The Second hypotheses mention that there is a relationship between organisational culture and employee commitment. Findings from the study support these hypotheses. It can be seen from Table 7 and Table 8 that there was a statistically significant (p -value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.564$) between organisational culture and ethical commitment and was statistically significant ($t = 6.023$). This study finding agrees with previous results findings for research carried out by (Jo and Hoove, 2015; Nongo and Ikanyon, 2012; Desselle, Raja, Andrews, and Lui, 2018). The third hypotheses mention that there is a relationship between ethical leadership and organisational culture. It can be seen from Table 7 and Table 8 that there was a statistically significant (p -value < 0.05) moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.60$) between Organisational Culture and Ethical Leadership.

7. Conclusion

The growing challenges of skills deficiencies, lack of ethical leadership and inability of employees to commit to tasks continue to be a major concern to the South African government and other authorities in developing countries. This implies that government need to search for alternatives to mitigate and curtail the harmful effects on communities. This study was geared toward finding lasting solutions to these challenges.

This empirical study aims to determine the influence of ethical leadership and organisational culture on employee commitment at a South African local municipality in Gauteng Province. This aim was realized through different credible statistical tools. The findings confirmed that ethical leadership and organisational culture largely influenced employee commitment in the local municipality in the research settings.

Statistical techniques such as the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), correlation and Cronbach alpha were applied to measure the research constructs and to determine how ethical leadership and organisational culture influence employee commitment in the local municipality. The authors explained and later provided recommendations based on the empirical outcomes. The measurement of the relationship between dependent and independent variables was ascertained by conducting a correlation study supported by the null and alternative hypotheses.

Through statistical tools, the influence of ethical leadership and organisational culture on employee commitment was explained and discussed at length. Future academics and researchers with vested interests in employee commitment to municipalities' sustainability in South Africa should design an inclusive research model to assist employers to gain better insights and broader views regarding the concept of employee commitment to the organization. Besides, a wider study should be conducted to gather qualitative and quantitative data country-wide in all the municipalities for the generalisation of the final research outcomes.

The present study explained the influence of three variables by collecting from a sample size of 400. As a result, future studies should employ a larger sample size for deeper exploration of the variables.

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