

The Effect of Organizational Commitment on the Adoption of Digitalization of Teaching within Cameroonian Public Universities

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ABSTRACT

Information and communication technologies are now essential in all sectors of life, including education, but the adoption of institutional digital learning environments remain a challenge for lecturers of Cameroonian universities. Several studies on adoption have been carried out, but those that highlight the relationship between employees and their organizations have not yet been adequately explored in African context. This study therefore aims to determine the influence of organizational commitment on the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian public universities. To attain this objective, data were collected from 359 lecturers through a questionnaire in five Cameroonian public universities selected by random sampling and analyzed through multiple regression. Results of the quantitative study reveal that at 95% confidence level, there is a significant influence of organizational commitment on adoption of digitalization of teaching. They also reveal that affective commitment, normative commitment, and calculated commitment have significant levels of influence of .000, .000, and .000, respectively. This implies that organizational commitment significantly determines the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian public universities. It is therefore recommended that the needs of lecturers be taken into account in order to strengthen their attachment to their professional identities within their university. Furthermore, lecturers should be better considered in order to see leaving their universities costlier and therefore remain in their organization and digitalize their courses out of love and not obligation.

Keywords: organizational commitment, digitalization of teaching, adoption, university, Cameroon

INTRODUCTION

Although Cameroon has made considerable efforts to integrate and adopt technologies, it remains a challenge in the education sector today. The change brought about by technology has become irreversible, forcing countries to adapt, which is becoming a major issue for all African countries. The digitalization of teaching, specifically blended learning recommended by top management in Cameroonian higher education, took off in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and was reinforced by the Higher Education Orientation Law in 2023. To ensure its implementation, governmental measures have been taken in all areas of higher education. Even though insufficient, those measures include, increasing internet connection speeds through various partnerships, creating platforms for online academic resources (some free), establishing institutional digital learning environments, building digital development centers, etc. A study conducted in 2023 at the University of Yaoundé I revealed that the adoption of digital teaching remains insufficient, with an adoption rate of only 29% for synchronous and asynchronous communications and assessments via the university teaching platform. This low level of adoption prompted the raise of questions about the adoption of this technological innovation. The question motivating this research is therefore, what is the influence organizational commitment on the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities?

Organizational commitment is the nature of the relationship an individual has with an organization, such that a highly committed person will demonstrate a strong desire to remain a member of that organization, a high willingness to make efforts on behalf of the organization, and a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's values and objectives (Porter & Smith, Note 3 cited by Baba & Jamal, 1979, p. 124). It is also the sense of attachment and loyalty an individual feels toward the organization to which he is committed (Cohen, 2013). The concept of organizational commitment has three dimensions. Notably affective commitment, linked

to the individual's attitude where the latter persists in the profession out of love for the job. Normative commitment, which is manifested by attitudes of loyalty and duty (Tamghe & Essomme, 2020), and continuance commitment according to which the decision to continue in the profession is justified by the costs and benefits associated with the job (Barroso da Costa & Loye, 2017).

Digitalization comes from the word "digital" which is used to describe anything based on digital technology and that uses computers, smartphones, software, networks, and electronic devices (Abosson Koll & Nneme Nneme, 2023, p. 665). Digitalization consists not only of digitizing information but also of storing it on a page accessible via the internet, which can be consulted anytime, anywhere. In an organizational context, the word "digitalization" has two conceptual meanings. First, it is the physical process of converting individual analog information streams into digital bits (Brennen and Kreiss, 2016). Secondly, it is the acceptance or increased use of digital technologies by organizations, industries and countries (Gorenšek & Kohont, 2019, p. 95). The digitalization of education, or the use of digital technology in education in general and teaching in particular, is an aspect of industrialization that can guarantee the sustainability of education and facilitate the achievement of United Nations resolutions. Among these resolutions is Resolution 70/1, dedicated to the creation of a new development agenda entitled "Transforming the World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Among the seventeen (17) goals of this agenda, one stands out: Goal 4, which aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities." At the African level, the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) in 2021 highlights the fact that CESA Strategic Objective 3 is included in the first target of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG). This strategic objective aims to "harness the potential of ICTs to improve access to and the quality of education and training, as well as the management of education systems" (UNESCO, 2021, p. 12). Analysis of these resolutions and strategies reveals that the United Nations and the African Union consider ICTs as a tool capable of ensuring the sustainability, quality, and access to education at several levels.

Digitalization takes place in various forms within education, depending on whether it is face-to-face, distance, or hybrid. Some authors, such as Averseng (2019), believe that in face-to-face settings, digitalization can be achieved through Learning Management Systems (LMS) like Moodle or the use of immersive 3D platforms, which can be used at the beginning, middle, or end of a course, although these ideas remain debatable. In distance learning, it occurs through: MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), which are characterized by being accessible to thousands of participants, requiring no enrollment in an institution, and not resulting in a diploma; and FOADs (Open and Distance Learning), which are e-learning platforms enabling in-depth training remotely or partially remotely with personalized tutoring provided by an instructor. FOADs require enrollment in a training program and lead to the awarding of a diploma upon completion.

According to the theory of organizational commitment developed by Cohen (2013), an individual's attachment to their organization is a significant determinant of their attitudes, behavior, and even performance within that organization. Individuals committed to their organizations exhibit high performance, a strong work ethic, and low rates of absenteeism and lateness. Thus, organizational commitment predicts organizational outcomes better than job satisfaction and other work attitudes. It has three dimensions, including affective commitment, linked to an individual's attitude, where they persist in the organization out of love for it; normative commitment, manifested by attitudes of loyalty and duty (Tamghe & Essomme, 2020); and calculative commitment, according to which the decision to continue in the organization is justified by the costs and benefits associated with the job (Barroso da Costa & Loye, 2017). This theory is relevant for the present study given that an employee attached to its organization is likely to invest himself for the success of the said organization. Meaning, a lecturer attached to its university will go extra mile to attain the objectives of his university.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been conducted on organizational commitment. The majority of these studies examine the influence of variables such as digitalization on organizational commitment (Imass et al., n.d.), human resource management practices on organizational commitment (Gellatly et al., 2009), and professional involvement on organizational involvement or commitment (Gutiérrez-Martínez, 2006). Similarly, studies have been conducted on the influence of organizational commitment as an independent variable. These studies show that continuance commitment has a direct, significant, and positive effect on absenteeism due to illness (Safy-Godineau et al.,

2020). Also, there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and digital leadership (Hasanudin et al., 2025), as well as there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention (Parvari et al., 2015). The research of Alrowwad et al. (2019), entitled "The role of organizational commitment in enhancing organizational effectiveness," aimed at studying the role of organizational commitment (affective commitment, continuity commitment, and normative commitment) in improving organizational effectiveness. A questionnaire used to collect data from 266 employees in Jordan lead to the results through multiple regression analysis that revealed significant positive impacts of continuity commitment and normative commitment on organizational effectiveness, while affective commitment had no significant impact. Furthermore, the results showed no significant difference in the impact of organizational commitment on organizational effectiveness attributable to gender. Additionally, the ANOVA results indicated no significant difference in the impact of organizational commitment on organizational effectiveness with respect to age, experience, or academic rank. The study Alrowwad et al. (2019) adds to the existing research by presenting the impact of organizational commitment on organizational effectiveness, whereas the present study focuses on a specific aspect of the organization: the adoption of a technological innovation within the organization.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective of this research, which is to determine the influence of organizational commitment on the adoption of digitalization of teaching, data were collected through a questionnaire administered to 359 lecturers in five Cameroonian public universities: Yaoundé I, Douala, Buea, Dschang, and Bamenda. The questionnaire was adapted from instruments of authors like Allen et al. (1993), Stinglhamber et al. (2002) cited by (Djohossou & Houndekon, 2023, p. 476). The reliability coefficient for the construct of the instrument are as presented in the table below:

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the instrument

Construct	Number of items	coefficient
Affective commitment	6	.775
Normative commitment	6	.7
Continuance commitment	6	.8
Total	18	.76

Field results analyzed through SPSS

Lecturers were selected using cluster sampling from a population of 7,413, with a response rate of 94.72%, and analyzed through multiple regression. Measures of central tendency (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation) were used to answer the research question. The decision rule for determining the magnitude and direction of an item is based on the fact that the mean estimates of the items must be greater than the mean estimates of the criterion for it to be positively scaled. However, when the mean estimate of the criterion is less than the mean estimate of the items, the responses are interpreted as negatively scaled. When the mean is greater than 2.5 ($\bar{x} > 2.5$), this implies a positively scaled item. And when it is less than 2.5 ($\bar{x} < 2.5$), this implies a negatively scaled item. The standard deviation is the spread of responses across the item.

RESULTS

The result of the study is obtained through descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive aims at answering the research questions and the inferential statistic helps to validate the research hypothesis.

Table 1: Question: How does affective commitment influence the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities?

	Statement	N	Means	SD	Decision
1.	I truly feel a sense of belonging to my university because it is implementing hybrid teaching.	359	3.0251	.15655	Positive
2.	My home university means a lot to me because of hybrid teaching.	359	3.0279	.16479	Positive

3.	I am proud to belong to this university, which is implementing hybrid teaching.	359	3.0279	.16479	Positive
4.	I feel emotionally attached to my university because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.7298	.49802	Positive
5.	I feel like I "belong to the family" at my university because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.7437	.51898	Positive
6.	I really feel the problems my organization faces as if they were my own when it comes to hybrid teaching.	359	2.7437	.51898	Positive
Total affective commitment			2.8830	0.3370	Positive

Researcher, 2026.

Analysis of the items in the first research question in table one above reveals a positive finding that affective commitment influences the adoption of hybrid or bimodal teaching ($\bar{x}=2.89$, $\sigma=0.33$). Participants thus positively stated that there is an improvement in the adoption of the bimodal teaching following their perception of belonging to their universities ($\bar{x}=3.02$; $\sigma=.16$) and what their home university represents to them ($\bar{x}=3.03$; $\sigma=.16$). Similarly, participants positively affirmed that there is an improvement in the adoption of the bimodal teaching following their pride in belonging to their universities, ($\bar{x}=3.02$; $\sigma=.16$), their sense of attachment to their university, ($\bar{x}=2.72$; $\sigma=.5$) and their sense of belonging to the university family, ($\bar{x}=2.74$; $\sigma=.52$). Also, teachers positively affirmed that there is improvement in hybrid teaching following their perception of the university's problems as if they were their own, ($\bar{x}=2.74$; $\sigma=.52$) and following their perception of whether it is correct for them to leave their university, ($\bar{x}=2.98$; $\sigma=.307$).

Table 2: Question: How does normative commitment influence the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities?

Statement	N	Means	SD	Decision
1. It wouldn't normally be right to leave my university because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.9833	.30772	Positive
2. It wouldn't be right to leave my university now, even if I were to benefit from it while hybrid teaching is being implemented.	359	2.9749	.33748	Positive
3. I would feel guilty if I left my university now because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.9554	.39298	Positive
4. I would be betraying the trust placed in me by my university for hybrid teaching if I was leaving now.	359	2.9554	.39298	Positive
5. If I were offered a position in another organization, I wouldn't feel right leaving my university because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.9582	.36759	Positive
6. I wouldn't leave my university now because I feel I have obligations to the people who work there because of hybrid teaching.	359	3.0279	.60658	Positive
Total normative commitment		2.9758	0.4008	Positive

Researcher, 2026

Findings from the second research question reveals that there is a positive response on the influence of normative commitment on the adoption of digitalization of teaching from the participants ($\bar{x}=2.97$; $\sigma=.41$). Specifically, lecturers agreed on the fact that it wouldn't be right to leave their universities now, even if they were to benefit from it, while hybrid teaching is being implemented ($\bar{x}=2.97$; $\sigma=.34$). They positively teachers positively responded that there is an improvement in the adoption of the bimodal system thanks to their feeling of guilt if they now left their university because of hybrid teaching, ($\bar{x}=2.95$; $\sigma=.39$), because of their feeling of betrayal of the trust placed in them if they now left their university, ($\bar{x}=2.95$; $\sigma=.39$) or the feeling of if it is right for them to leave their university if they were offered a position in another organization, ($\bar{x}=2.95$; $\sigma=.37$). In addition, teachers positively affirmed that there is an improvement in the adoption of the bimodal teaching through the perception of whether they would not leave their universities now because they feel they have obligations to people who work there, ($\bar{x}=3.02$; $\sigma=.61$).

Table 3: Question: How does continuance commitment influence the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities?

	Statement	N	Means	SD	Decision
1.	I wouldn't want to leave my current university because I would have a lot to lose, especially regarding hybrid teaching.	359	2.9387	.43791	Positive
2.	For me personally, leaving my current university would have far more disadvantages than advantages because of hybrid teaching.	359	2.9387	.43791	Positive
3.	I continue to work for this university because I don't think another one could offer me the same advantages in terms of hybrid teaching.	359	2.9276	.44256	Positive
4.	I have no other choice but to stay at my current university because of hybrid teaching.	359	3.0641	.27729	Positive
5.	I am staying at my current university because I don't see where I could go to implement hybrid teaching.	359	3.1309	.35394	Positive
6.	I consider my options for digitalization too limited to leave my current university.	359	3.1699	.39066	Positive
	Total continuance commitment		3.0283	.3900	Positive
	Overall Total	359	2.9623	.37598	Positive

Researcher, 2026

Findings reveal that the fact that lecturers' perception of not wanting to leave their current university because they would have a lot to lose, positively affect hybrid teaching ($\bar{x}=2.93$; $\sigma=.44$). They also reveal that their perception that their perception of leaving their current university would have many more disadvantages than advantages because of hybrid teaching, ($\bar{x}= 2.94$; $\sigma=.44$). Furthermore, lecturers positively indicated that there is improved adoption of bimodal teaching due to their perception of continuing to work for their current university because they do not believe another university could offer them the same advantages ($\bar{x}= 2.92$; $\sigma= .44$), and to their perception that they have no other choice but to remain at their current university ($\bar{x}= 3.06$; $\sigma= .28$). Similarly, teachers positively indicated improved adoption of bimodal teaching due to their perception of remaining at their current university because they do not see where else they could go ($\bar{x}= 3.13$; $\sigma= .35$), or to the fact that they consider their options too limited to consider leaving their current universities ($\bar{x}= 3.17$; $\sigma= .39$).

The multiple linear regression was used to validate the hypothesis stated as such:

H₁: Main alternative research hypothesis: organizational commitment significantly influences digitalization of teaching.

H₀: Main null research hypothesis: organizational commitment significantly influences digitalization of teaching.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.716 ^a	.513	.509	1.14254

a. Predictors : (Constant), continuance commitment, normative commitment, affective commitment

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to verify the significance level. The regression equation obtained was $F(3, 354) = 124.733$, $P < 0.05$.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	488.475	3	162.825	124.733	.000 ^b
	Residual	463.413	355	1.305		
	Total	951.889	358			
a. Dependent Variable : Adoption du système bimodal						
b. Predictors: (Constant), continuance commitment normative commitment, affective commitment						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	13.856	1.176		11.780	.000
	Affective commitment	-1.275	.087	-.1271	-14.623	.000
	Normative commitment,	.552	.057	.388	9.643	.000
	Continuance commitment	1.446	.078	.1597	18.436	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Adoption of hybrid teaching

The analysis of independent variables shows a negative β coefficient for affective commitment and positive β coefficients for normative and continuance commitment. Digitalization adoption will be 124.733 when all independent variables are constant at zero according to the established regression equation. The findings also reveal that each one-unit increase in affective, normative, and continuance commitment will result in a decrease of 1.275 and increases of 0.552 and 1.447, respectively, in the adoption of digitalization. At a significance level of 5% and a 95% confidence, affective, normative and continuance commitments have significant levels specifically of .000, .000, and .000, respectively. Multiple regression analysis yielded a significance level of (.000 < 0.05) for the combined indicators, as shown in the ANOVA table above. This implies that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the research hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed.

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis demonstrate that organizational commitment has a significant influence on the adoption of hybrid teaching in Cameroonian public universities. Specifically, results show that affective commitment negatively and significantly influence the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities. Almost as Alrowwad et al. (2019) who found that affective commitment has no significant influence on organizational effectiveness. In addition, normative commitment positively and significantly influences the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities and continuance commitment positively and significantly influence the adoption of digitalization of teaching in Cameroonian universities. These results align with those of Bentein et al. (2000), cited by Gagnon & Gosselin (2019), who found that engaged employees develop a positive attitude toward the university, encouraging them to contribute more actively to achieving its objectives. The same as Alrowwad et al. (2019), who found that organizational commitment significantly influence organizational effectiveness.

IMPLICATIONS

This study implies that there are three types of lecturers based on their commitment in implementing hybrid teaching in Cameroonian universities. The first category is those that teach face to face and online because of the affection they have for their universities, they are termed the affective adopters. This category of lecturers has effectively adopted hybrid teaching but an increase of one unit of their commitment lead to a decrease of the general adoption of hybrid teaching. The second category is made up of those that put in practice hybrid teaching because it is their duty, they are called the normative adopters. And the third category is made up of lecturers that digitalize their courses because not doing it, will make them loose finances or opportunities. They are called the continuance adopters. This study demonstrates that a thorough understanding of Cameroonian university lecturers' commitment profiles will help administrators categorize them by engagement profile, providing them with valuable information for better management and a successful implementation of digitalization in teaching within the university. This information can also be useful for university administrators as basic information for future recruitments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that incentives be developed to support the continuance and normative commitment profiles who will help in increasing the adoption level of hybrid Teaching. Nevertheless, a lecturer with a high level of affective commitment would be more receptive to emotional encouragement, while a lecturer with a high

level of continuance commitment would need more tangible incentives, such as a promise of a salary increase. Thus, lecturers should be made more aware of their rights and responsibilities within universities through consistent reminders and communication strategies tailored to their specific needs. Furthermore, moral and financial incentives, such as words of encouragements, awards, bonuses or salary increase related to the digitalization of teaching, should also be considered in order to increase the commitment of Cameroonian university lecturers.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of organizational commitment on the adoption of digitalization of teaching, and hybrid teaching or bimodal teaching particularly within Cameroonian public universities. Analysis of the data collected through surveys and analyzed by multiple linear regression revealed a significantly negative influence between affective commitment (-1.275) and significantly positive influence for continuance (0.552) and normative (1.447) commitment, respectively. These results suggest that university administrators should develop incentives for continuance and normative commitment.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that this study would have been more enriched and explored if a qualitative design was conducted beside the quantitative. Similarly, a longitudinal study would have provided a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

Suggestions for further research

A qualitative study on the effect of organizational commitment on the use of hybrid teaching in private universities, will give room to collect and analyze lecturers' opinions and will permit to have diverse information on the topic.

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