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# Psychological contract breach and affective organizational commitment in small-sized hotels

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## ABSTRACT

Our paper develops and tests a research model that proposes that job satisfaction (JSAT), career satisfaction (CSAT) and work engagement (WENG) mediate the effect of psychological contract breach (PCB) on affective organizational commitment (AOC). Data were collected from small-sized hotel employees who occupy frontline positions in three waves in four cities in Ghana. The hypothesized linkages were assessed via structural equation modelling. The empirical data confirmed all the hypothesized relationships. Specifically, PCB had a negative impact on AOC. Additionally, JSAT, CSAT and WENG mediated the effect of PCB on AOC. Discussion of implications of the findings are included in the paper.

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## KEYWORDS

Affective organizational commitment; career satisfaction; job satisfaction; psychological contract breach; work engagement

## Introduction

Considering the intense competition characterizing the hospitality industry, companies are interested in hiring the services of employees who would help them to remain competitive in the industry (cf., Ampofo, Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021). Affective organizational commitment (AOC) is one of the most powerful tools that hospitality companies utilize to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Boğan & Sarıışık, 2020). AOC refers to employees' "... emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization" (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 1). In the hospitality literature, affectively committed employees have demonstrated positive behavioural outcomes such as diminished inclination to leave, increased customer orientation and enhanced knowledge sharing behaviours (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022; Lombardi et al., 2019).

Psychological contract breach (PCB) has been recognized as a workplace behaviour that impairs employees' AOC in the hospitality literature (e.g. Li et al., 2016). PCB represents "... the perception that one's organization has failed to fulfill one or more obligations composing one's psychological contract" (p. 230). PCB is generally considered as an undesirable treatment that elicits a negative response (Ampofo, 2021). A cautious search in the hospitality literature shows that no study has empirically examined the effect of PCB on AOC in small-sized hospitality firms. Furthermore, there appears a dearth of empirical piece on how PCB

predicts AOC via work engagement (WENG) and career satisfaction (CSAT). Lastly, the hospitality literature shows no empirical evidence of job satisfaction (JSAT) as a mediator in the PCB-AOC linkage.

Against this background, our paper is aimed at examining the impact of PCB on employees' AOC in small-sized hotels in four cities in Ghana. Like many other countries, the hospitality industry in Ghana makes substantial contribution to the national economy (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022). Specifically, it was reported in 2020 that the hospitality industry injected about 640 million USD into the economy of Ghana (Sasu, 2021). Also, hospitality jobs in Ghana often attract individuals with low academic qualification due to the poor conditions of service like low salary and limited career advancement opportunities (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022; Goh & Baum, 2021). Such employees tend to easily accept job offers based on what their employers tell them (Ampofo, 2021).

Furthermore, the generally high rate of limited employment opportunities in the external labour market in Ghana causes most employers, particularly those in the hospitality industry, to feel hesitant in honouring their promises or meeting the expectations of employees (Ampofo, Owusu et al., 2021; Odame et al., 2021). Our paper also explores JSAT, CSAT and WENG as mediators in the impact of PCB on AOC. JSAT represents "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (Locke, 1969, p. 316). WENG denotes employees' positive and fulfilling state of mind (Schaufeli et al., 2002), while CSAT refers to employees' gratification with the intrinsic and extrinsic facets of their career (Kong et al., 2012).

There are at least two reasons that make our paper relevant and important. First, employees who perceive failure to receive promised work resources can demonstrate emotional detachment from the company (Li et al., 2016; Ng et al., 2010). However, a careful search conducted in the pertinent literature indicates that no empirical piece has examined the impact of PCB on AOC among employees in small-sized hotels. Our paper expands knowledge on PCB and AOC to small-sized hotels. This is important because the hospitality industry in Ghana is dominated by small-sized hotels and makes substantial contributions to the country's economic growth (Sasu, 2021; Seidu et al., 2021). Additionally, PCB appears to be relatively high in small-sized hotels because of their fewer resources (Sharma & Sneed, 2008).

Second, an extensive search made in the relevant literature reveals that the linkage between PCB and AOC has been expanded via mediating mechanisms such as violation and reciprocity (Cassar & Briner, 2011; Quratulain et al., 2018). Antonaki and Trivellas's (2014) empirical study revealed that PCB predicted organizational commitment via JSAT. However, Antonaki and Trivellas (2014) included sample from the banking industry. Our paper draws sample from the hospitality industry to investigate JSAT as a mediator in the association between PCB and AOC. This is important because JSAT is a crucial factor for hospitality firms in achieving competitive advantage (Chan & James, 2020). JSAT increases among hospitality employees with several work-related resources (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022). Considering their critical role in helping the hospitality company gain competitive advantage, frontline employees expect several work resources from the hospitality company, which if denied can influence their emotional ties with the company (Peng et al., 2021).

Furthermore, prior studies have failed to include WENG and CSAT as mediators in the PCB-AOC linkage. Such void is important to fill, since desired or expected resources can help employees to be involved in their task, and enjoy and love their career (Ampofo, 2020; Lee & Eissenstat, 2018). In addition, hotel jobs are unlikely regarded as long-term careers for most employees, especially graduates, which is reflected in their behaviours such as changing careers or jobs over time (Chang & Busser, 2020; Lu & Adler, 2009).

## Literature review

Meyer et al. (2002) grouped organizational commitment into three: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment highlights employees' emotional ties with the company, while continuance commitment denotes employees' perceived

loss of benefits upon quitting the company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment represents employees' feeling of duty to continuously attach themselves with the company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Our paper concentrates on only AOC, since it provides a better explanation of the entire organizational commitment construct than the remaining two dimensions of the construct (Lombardi et al., 2019). Furthermore, it seems affectively committed employees tend to have a longer stay in the company (cf., Appaw-Agbola et al., 2021). Previous empirical studies indicate that employees who are emotionally attached to their company report positive work outcomes, including lower turnover intentions and enhanced customer orientation (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022; Lombardi et al., 2019). On the other hand, PCB occurs when employees perceive that the employer has failed to honour his or her obligations in the mutual exchange relationship (Ampofo, 2021; Kaya & Karatepe, 2020). Research indicates that PCB engenders negative outcomes such as increased organizational distrust, augmented emotional exhaustion, and diminished task performance (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020; Said et al., 2021).

Social exchange theory (SET) is utilized to explain the impact of PCB on AOC. SET proposes that employer and employees build a trusted and loyal relationship over a period if they both obey the rules governing the exchange relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). An important tenet of SET is the norm of reciprocity, which proposes that one party feels obliged to recompense the other party with a similar treatment (Cropanzano et al., 2017; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Hence, employees receiving favours from their employers may feel obliged to demonstrate desired behaviours, and vice versa is true (Ampofo, 2021; Wu et al., 2021). SET is important, since employees in frontline roles in hotels offer much to the company, and expect appropriate resources in return (Ampofo, 2021). Additionally, the notion of reciprocity within SET is essential to psychological contract as both employer and employees build a mutual bond if their prospects are satisfied (Said et al., 2021). A breach occurs when one party perceives the other party's failure to fulfil its part of the obligation in the exchange relationship, leading to a weak mutual bond (Ampofo, 2021; Quratulain et al., 2018).

In congruence with SET, employees who perceive that the hotel company has denied them promised work resources are likely to feel unfairly treated by the hotel company. Under such circumstance, those employees may feel compelled to recompense with undesired behavioural outcomes such as decreased AOC (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Employees who feel that the hotel employer has not rewarded them accordingly as promised may feel unappreciated in the company (Ampofo, 2021). Morrison and Robinson (1997) asserted that "... violation involves disappointment, frustration and distress stemming from the perceived failure to receive something that is both expected and desired" (p. 231). Thus, employees who do not receive promised resources may express feelings of duty to respond to the company with unsuitable consequences such as reduced AOC (Guan et al., 2020). Empirically, PCB has been identified as a predictor of AOC (Li et al., 2016). Based on the preceding reasoning and the finding of past empirical piece, we hypothesize the following relationship:

*Hypothesis 1.* PCB is negatively related to AOC.

Hospitality companies greatly depend on employees who are high on JSAT to obtain competitive advantage (Chan & James, 2020). Research has evidenced that satisfied employees demonstrate positive behaviours such as diminished turnover intentions, and elevated levels of job performance (Koo et al., 2020). Our paper employs SET to explain JSAT as a mechanism through which PCB affects AOC. Consistent with SET, employees who do not receive resources via PCB are likely to feel unhappy with the hotel company and therefore develop feelings of duty to respond with negative attitudinal outcomes such as lowered JSAT (Ampofo, 2021; Cropanzano et al., 2017). In turn, employees with decreased JSAT may have the feeling that the hotel company does not care about their wellbeing (Ampofo, 2020). Hence, dissatisfied employees are likely to feel obliged to repay the company with unfavourable behaviours such as decreased AOC. A recent empirical writing in the

hospitality literature shows that PCB decreased hotel employees' JSAT (Ampofo, 2021). Also, previous studies have found that employees who are high on JSAT reported augmented AOC (Ampofo, 2020; Lee & Ok, 2016). In accordance with the reasoning stated above and the findings of prior studies, we propose that:

*Hypothesis 2.* JSAT mediates the relationship between PCB and AOC.

In the hospitality context, CSAT has been linked to important work outcomes, such as future intention to stay (Zopiatis et al., 2018) and job performance (Karatepe, 2012). Employees obtain satisfaction from the accrual of their career-related experiences over a period (Zopiatis et al., 2018). Employees usually spend an extended time in a company to build their career. By so doing, they offer their energy and time to the company and expect that the company recompenses them with development opportunities like sponsorship for further education, and promotional opportunities to increase their CSAT. The distinction between JSAT and CSAT is that the former denotes employees' overall satisfaction derived from different aspects of their job, while the latter highlights employees' overall satisfaction derived from various facets of career trajectories (Wassermann et al., 2017).

According to SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), employees who perceive that the company has failed to deliver promised resources to them may feel displeased and disappointed. In realization of the breach, those employees may feel compelled to display undesired behaviours like diminished CSAT. Because a company can significantly contribute to one's career development, employees may attribute their diminished CSAT to the company's failure to provide them with promised resources (Huang & Baker, 2021; De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Consequently, employees are likely to demonstrate their displeasure and anger by responding with unfavourable behaviours such as decreased AOC. Consistent with the aforesaid reasoning, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 3.* CSAT mediates the relationship between PCB and AOC.

WENG is represented by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Vigour denotes energy, determination and persistent efforts at work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Absorption represents employees' full concentration in a job to the degree that they are generally unaware about the amount of time spent on the job, while dedication highlights employees' enthusiasm, inspiration, and high involvement in a work (Ampofo, 2021; Schaufeli et al., 2006). It is documented in the hospitality literature that engaged employees exhibited positive attitudes such as decreased proclivity to leave and reduced absenteeism (Karatepe et al., 2020).

SET is utilized to explain WENG as a mediator in the association between PCB and AOC. Employees who have inadequate work resources via unfulfilled employer's promises may feel obliged to display various behaviours (Ampofo, 2021; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). More specifically, employees may consider broken promises from the employer as unfair and therefore repay in a similar way by demonstrating unpleasant behaviours such as diminished WENG. In turn, employees who are low on WENG due to insufficient company-provided resources are likely to feel distressed, angry and frustrated (Ampofo, 2021; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Saks, 2006). In response, those employees may display negative attitudinal outcomes such as decreased AOC. Ampofo's (2021) recent empirical writing revealed that PCB impaired hospitality employees' WENG. Other empirical studies in hospitality literature demonstrate that WENG positively influenced AOC (Ampofo, 2020; Lee & Ok, 2016). Based on the preceding reasoning and the findings of previous empirical studies, the following hypothesis is formulated

*Hypothesis 4.* WENG mediates the relationship between PCB and AOC.

The research model guiding our paper is illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

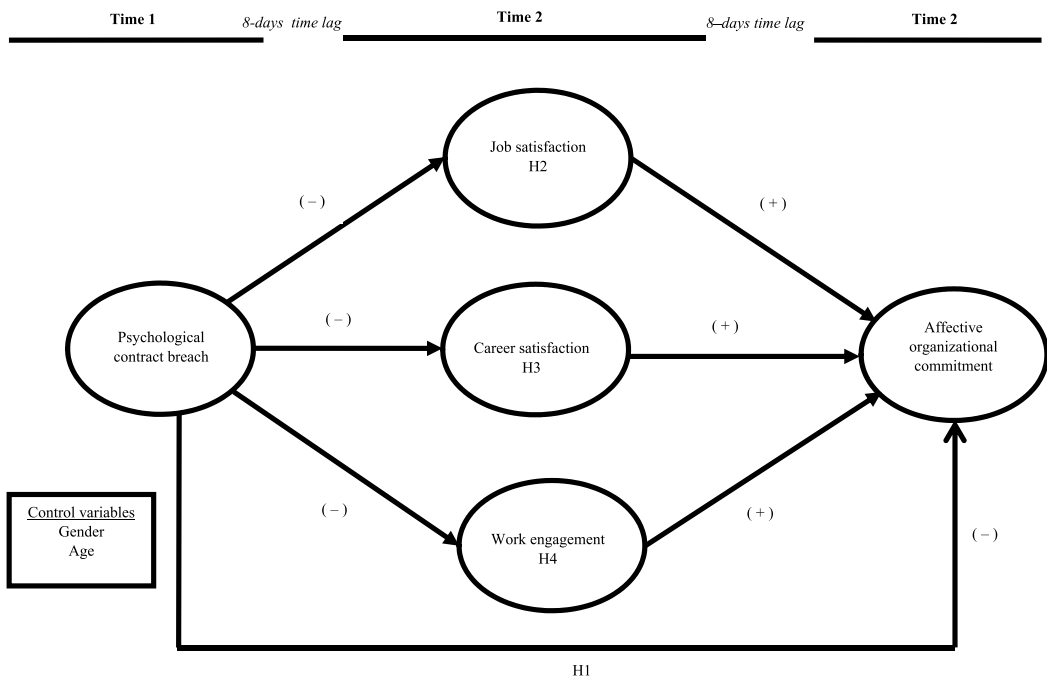


Figure 1. Research model

Figure 1. Research model.

## Methodology

Data were collected from frontline workers (i.e. receptionists and waiters) in 42 chosen small-sized hotels in four regional cities in Ghana: Accra, Kumasi, Tamale and Cape Coast. Our paper utilizes judgemental sampling technique to choose small-sized hotels and their employees (Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022). Our paper adopts Milohnić's (2006) definition that a small hotel is a facility with  $\leq 50$  rooms. In Ghana, hotels regarded as small firms by the Ghana Tourism Authority include budget hotels, one- and two-star rating hotels and guest houses. The study selected small-sized hotel because employers in the sector in Ghana likely renege on promises made to employees, particularly regarding rewards and compensation administration (Ampofo, 2021; Said et al., 2021). Participants were conveniently sampled because of the unpredictable working hours of hotel employees.

Prior to beginning the main data collection, we conducted a pre-test study with 12 employees who offer frontline services in two selected small-scale hotels in Kumasi in Ghana. The purpose was to assess participants' understandability and readability of the survey items. Respondents were granted personal interviews after completing the surveys. The wording of the items was not amended. In our study, we utilized procedural techniques to remedy the risk of common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Specifically, respondents were informed about their voluntary involvement in and withdrawal from the survey whenever they desire. Moreover, questionnaires were administered sealed in envelopes. Likewise, all completed questionnaires were returned in sealed envelopes. Data were also gathered employing three various questionnaires in three multi waves via eight-days time interval. The

operationalization of PCB was conducted in Time 1. Participants' views on CSAT, JSAT and WENG were assessed in Time 2, while their views on AOC were assessed in Time 3. Demographic features of participants were operationalized in Time 1.

The main data collection took place between March 2021 and May 2021. Three hundred and four frontline employees completed and returned the questionnaires in Time 1. We recontacted these participants in Time 2. Of this number, 281 respondents returned the completed surveys. Sixteen of the employees who completed the questionnaires in Time 1 decided on personal grounds not to complete the questionnaires in Time 2. In Time 3, 12 participants in Time 2 failed to complete the Time 3 surveys. They attributed this to private reasons. Therefore, 269 questionnaires were completed and returned in Time 3. This denotes 88.5% (269/304) response rate. We tracked all returned questionnaires via hotel, location, number, or initial names of participants.

### **Instrumentalization**

PCB ( $\alpha = 0.889$ ) was assessed with five items from Robinson and Morrison (2000). A sample item is "I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions". JSAT ( $\alpha = 0.874$ ) was assessed via Mitchell et al. (2001) three items. A sample item includes "All in all, I am satisfied with my job". We gauged CSAT (0.897) via five items developed by Greenhaus et al. (1990). A sample item is "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career". WENG ( $\alpha = .891$ ) was operationalized via nine items from Schaufeli et al. (2006). A sample item is "I am immersed in my work". In this paper, two items ("At my work, I feel bursting with energy", and "I get carried away when I am working") were removed from the analysis because of poor factor loadings (Hair et al., 2010). AOC ( $\alpha = .892$ ) was operationalized via Meyer and Allen's (1997) six items. A sample item is "I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization". Age and gender were utilized as control variables because of their confounding effects on AOC (e.g. Wang, 2015).

Responses for CSAT, AOC and PCB were recorded via a five-point Likert scale which ranged from "1 = strongly disagree" and "5 = strongly agree". Responses for JSAT were recorded using a seven-point Likert scale which ranged from "1 = strongly disagree" and 7 = strongly agree". Responses for WENG were recorded using a seven-point Likert scale which ranged from "0 = never" to "6 = always". Cronbach's alpha scores for all the variables were above 0.70, which demonstrate evidence that the measures were reliable (Hair et al., 2010).

### **Data analysis**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) via Analysis of Moment Structures version 25 was utilized to gauge the measures' psychometric properties (Hair et al., 2010). After performing alternative assessment models, we matched their statistics to those of the hypothesized model with the purpose of determining the model with better statistics. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed to assess the hypothesized linkages. Sobel and bootstrapping tests were used to test the mediating effects. Our paper utilized 5000 bootstrapped sample and employed a 95 percent bias-corrected confidence lag. We considered a mediation effect as significant when values for lower bounds confidence interval (LBCI) and upper bounds confidence interval (UBCI) are both either positive or negative. We utilized the following indices assess the model fit: "root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI) and  $\chi^2/df$ " (e.g. Ampofo & Karatepe, 2022). Our findings from common latent factor analysis revealed that common method bias was not a problem in our paper (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

## Results

**Table 1** shows results for participants' demographic profile. The survey was dominated by males (61%) and singles (62%). Twenty-three percent of the participants had senior high school/national vocational training institute certificates, while 64% were first degree holders. The rest had second degree certificates. Thirty-six percent of the participants were younger than 30 years, while 41% were older than 30 years but younger than 40 years. The remaining participants were older than 40 years.

**Table 2** shows findings for CFA. The results indicate good fit statistics ( $\chi^2 = 468.364$ ,  $df = 275$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), CFI = 0.956, TLI = 0.948, RMSEA = 0.051). Furthermore, our findings showed adequate discriminant validity, since maximum shared variance were below average variance extracted (AVEs). Acceptable convergent validity was adequate, because factor loadings and AVEs were greater than 0.50, and composite reliabilities were greater than AVEs.

**Table 3** provides details on alternative CFA models. The five-factor model ( $\chi^2 = 468.364$ ,  $df = 275$ , TLI = 0.948; CFI = 0.956; RMSEA = 0.051) recorded statistics that were better than the three-factor model ( $\chi^2 = 1091.696$ ,  $df = 282$ , TLI = 0.787; CFI = 0.815; RMSEA = 0.104), two-factor model ( $\chi^2 = 1630.074$ ,  $df = 284$ , TLI = 0.648; CFI = 0.692; RMSEA = 0.133), and one-factor model ( $\chi^2 = 2111.140$ ,  $df = 285$ , TLI = 0.524; CFI = 0.582; RMSEA = 0.155). Thus, the five-factor assessment model was utilized for other analysis.

**Table 4** presents findings for summary statistics, correlations and linearity. Data were normally distributed for all the constructs, because values for kurtosis were below 8.00, while those for skewness did not exceed 3.00 (Kline, 2011). PCB was negatively correlated with JSAT, WENG, CSAT and AOC. Moreover, JSAT, WENG and CSAT had positive correlations with AOC.

**Figure 2** presents direct path findings for the partly-mediated model. The direct path from PCB to AOC was significant and negative ( $\beta = -0.067$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), which verified hypothesis 1. This denotes that PCB diminishes frontline employees' AOC.

Our results show a significant indirect impact of PCB on AOC ( $\beta = -.117$ , LBCI =  $-0.143$ , UBCI =  $-0.094$ ). **Table 5** shows the results relating to Sobel test. JSAT mediated PCB's association with AOC ( $Z = -2.218$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), CSAT ( $Z = -1.991$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and WENG ( $Z = -2.238$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which confirmed Hypotheses 2, 3 and 4, respectively. This denotes that PCB influences AOC via the mechanisms of JSAT, CSAT and WENG.

**Table 1.** Demographic profile.

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	164	61%
	Female	195	39%
Age	< 30 years	97	36%
	31–40 years	110	41%
	41–50 years	51	19%
	51–60 years	11	4%
Marital status	Married	102	38%
	Single	167	62%
Education	SHS/NVTI certificate	62	23%
	Diploma	172	64%
	Degree	35	13%



**Table 2.** Results for confirmatory factor analysis.

	Factor loading	CR	AVE	MSV
Job satisfaction		0.877	0.704	0.166
Item 1	0.844			
Item 2	0.761			
Item 3	0.906			
Affective organizational commitment		0.887	0.571	0.116
Item 1	0.719			
Item 2	0.610			
Item 3	0.812			
Item 4	0.829			
Item 5	0.675			
Item 6	0.857			
Work engagement		0.882	0.521	0.166
Item 2	0.556			
Item 3	0.619			
Item 4	0.827			
Item 5	0.829			
Item 6	0.793			
Item 7	0.713			
Item 8	0.670			
Psychological contract breach		0.891	0.622	0.064
Item 1	0.661			
Item 2	0.839			
Item 3	0.794			
Item 4	0.833			
Item 5	0.804			
Career satisfaction		0.896	0.633	0.133
Item 1	0.757			
Item 2	0.837			
Item 3	0.821			
Item 4	0.776			
Item 5	0.784			

Notes: AVE = average variance extracted; MSV = maximum shared variance; CR = composite reliability.

**Table 3.** Results of assessing alternative models.

Models	Components	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2_{dff}$	df <sub>dff</sub>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Five-factor	PCB, JS, AOC, WE, CS	468.364***	275	–	–	0.956	0.948	0.051
Three-factor	PCB, AOC, combined JS, CS, WE	1091.696***	282	623.332	7	0.815	0.787	0.104
Two-factor	combined PCB, WE, and combined AOC, CS, JS	1630.074***	284	1161.710	9	0.692	0.648	0.133
One-factor	combined PCB, JS, AOC, WE, CS	2111.140***	285	1642.776	10	0.582	0.524	0.155

PCB = psychological contract breach; JS = job satisfaction; WE = work engagement; AOC = affective organizational commitment; CS = career satisfaction; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation;  $\chi^2$  = chi-square; df = degrees of freedom; *dff* = difference. \*\*\* $p < .001$  (two-tailed).

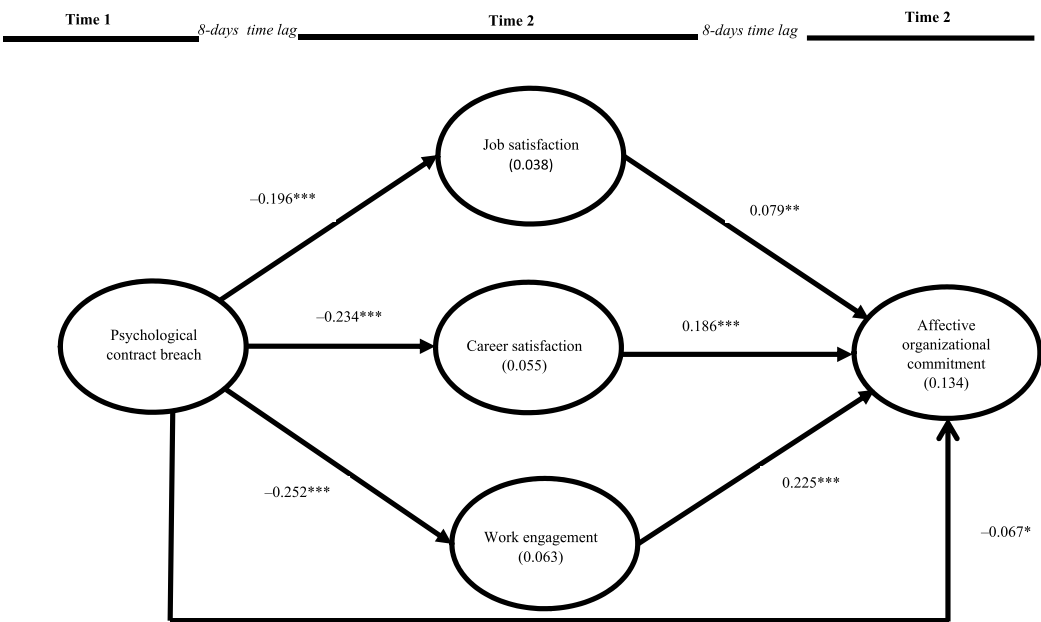
## Conclusion and implications

Our paper makes substantial addition to the hospitality literature by investigating the effect of PCB on AOC. Our paper further tests JSAT, WENG and CSAT as mediators in the nexus between PCB and AOC. There are a few key observations emerging from the aforesaid findings.

**Table 4.** Summary statistics and correlations.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	1.989	0.879							
2. Gender	1.387	0.488	0.025						
3. Psychological contract breach	3.882	1.081	0.184**	0.109					
4. Job satisfaction	4.420	1.640	-0.019	0.094	-0.157*				
5. Work engagement	4.274	1.232	0.007	0.053	0.192**	0.364***			
6. Career satisfaction	3.125	0.997	0.043	0.193	0.196**	0.325***	0.314***		
7. Affective organizational commitment	3.442	0.978	0.028	0.166	-0.141*	0.223***	0.269***	0.294***	
Skewness					0.086	-0.663	-0.591	-0.189	0.849
Kurtosis					-0.821	-0.526	-0.210	-0.646	0.016

SD = standard deviation; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed).

**Figure 2.** Direct path estimates.**Table 5.** Results: Sobel test.

	Mediating effect
Psychological contract breach → Job satisfaction → Affective organizational commitment	-2.218*
Psychological contract breach → Career satisfaction → Affective organizational commitment	-1.991*
Psychological contract breach → Work engagement → Affective organizational commitment	-2.238*

Notes: \* $p < .05$  (two-tailed).

First, PCB decreases employees' AOC. The finding is in consonance with the notion of SET that employees who receive undesired treatments from their employer may feel obliged to reciprocate with unsuitable behavioural outcomes (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Wu et al., 2021). Specifically, frontline employees who perceive that the hotel company has failed to honour promises made to

them are likely to feel disappointed, frustrated and angered by this gesture. In response, employees are likely to display negative attitudinal outcomes like decreased AOC. The finding is congruent with Ampofo's (2021) assertion that, "... most employers in Ghana are noted of engaging in 'big talk' to get work completed, but fail to honor their part of the bargain" (p. 298). In addition, the finding is in accordance with the findings of prior empirical pieces that PCB decreased hotel employees' AOC (Ampofo, 2020; Li et al., 2016).

Second, JSAT, CSAT and WENG mediated the linkage between PCB and AOC. The findings are consistent with the reciprocity norm within SET that employees unlikely develop a sense of obligation to demonstrate positive behaviours when they feel mistreated by their employer (Ampofo, 2021; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). More specifically, frontline employees who perceive unfilled promised resources tend to consider the exchange relationship as bias. Those employees may feel compelled to respond with inappropriate behaviours such as low levels of JSAT, WENG and CSAT. In turn, employees with diminished levels of JSAT, CSAT and WENG are likely to feel obliged to demonstrate unfavourable behaviours including emotional detachment from the company. Our findings are in line with the findings of earlier empirical studies that PCB negatively influenced JSAT, CSAT and WENG, while JSAT, WENG and JSAT positively influenced AOC (e.g. Ampofo, 2021, 2020; Lee & Ok, 2016).

Our findings set out to increase current knowledge on PCB in the relevant literature. First, the findings demonstrate that AOC is an outcome of PCB in small scale hotels. Our finding is imperative because past empirical writings did not extend knowledge on PCB and AOC to small-sized hotels. In addition, the relevant literature in hospitality and tourism shows only one empirical writing that has identified AOC as a consequence of PCB (Li et al., 2016). In Ghana, only one empirical piece has assessed the impact of PCB on hotel employees' work outcomes (Ampofo, 2021).

Second, the findings contribute to literature by highlighting WENG, JSAT and CSAT as the three mediating mechanisms in the PCB-AOC linkage. This is important, since the pertinent literature has failed to present a single empirical study that examines a mediator in the association between PCB and AOC. Our finding of three mediators in the linkage between PCB and AOC suggests that there are other mediators that can be explored.

Third, the findings of our paper contribute to the hospitality literature in Ghana. Possessing a broad understanding of employees' AOC via WENG, JSAT, CSAT and PCB is crucial, since the hospitality industry which is dominated by small-sized hotels contributes immensely to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (Seidu et al., 2021).

Strategies in reducing PCB can help small-sized hotel management to retain frontline employees who are high on WENG, CSAT, JSAT and AOC. First, managers of small-sized hotels should desist from making unrealistic promises to frontline employees, particularly during recruitment, performance appraisal, and private meetings (Shi & Gordon, 2019). Second, small-sized hotel management should organize workshops or meetings in a timely manner to furnish employees with relevant information to dispel wrong perceptions. Third, small-sized hotel managers can minimize employees' perceptions of contract breach when they communicate in a clear, transparent, and consistent way with employees. Managers should ask employees for feedback on what they communicate to them so that all misunderstandings can be cleared. Fourth, when small-sized frontline employees perceive a breach of their psychological contract, managers should provide a good explanation which is supported with credible evidence regarding why such a breach occurred.

In spite of the promising findings, our paper is coupled with several limitations. First, this paper selected participants via convenience sampling technique, which is commonly associated with the problem of sample bias. To minimize sample bias and generalize results, future empirical pieces should employ random sampling techniques. Second, there are several small-sized hotels in other cities in Ghana like Ho, Wa, and Sunyani, which can be included in future empirical studies. Third, future research can adopt other procedural techniques to further mitigate the risk of CMB. This may include complementing self-rating with supervisor rating. Fourth, future studies that employ qualitative techniques to delve deeper and unearth the experiences of frontline hotel staff regarding

the variables under study would be significant. Fifth, our study focused on only frontline employees like receptionists and waiters. A future survey could include other job positions and non-frontline staff to identify differences in their responses. Continuance commitment and normative commitment have been found to be correlated with AOC (Meyer et al., 2002). Therefore, future research can replicate our study by utilizing continuance and normative commitment as control variables.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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