

Full Length Article

How does the career commitment of hospitality employees change across career stages? A multilevel investigation into occupational self-efficacy and family support

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Career commitment
Occupational self-efficacy
Family support
Longitudinal data
Multilevel analysis
Time-varying effect

ABSTRACT

This study examined how and why hospitality employees' occupational self-efficacy and family support influence their career commitment over time. Longitudinal data was collected from 310 hospitality employees at three different points of time, with a three-month lag between them, exploring the differences in the employees' career commitment growth trajectories between early and mid-to-late career. Results from growth modeling revealed that career commitment declines over time for early-career employees but increases for their mid-to-late career counterparts. The findings also indicated that organizational commitment mediates the relationships of career commitment with occupational self-efficacy and family support at both between- and within-person levels. Furthermore, time-varying effect analysis captured significant changes in the magnitude of antecedents over time across the different career stages. Implications drawn from the findings are discussed for both hospitality researchers and practitioners.

1. Introduction

The task of recruiting and retaining talent in hospitality vocations has always been difficult. Research undertaken by Richardson (2008) revealed that more than half of the participants were already seeking jobs in non-hospitality fields, and that around 40 % noted that they would not choose hospitality as a career. Similar percentages have frequently been detected since then (Lv et al., 2022; Neequaye and Armoo, 2014), with less than half of respondents intending to pursue a hospitality career. Studies on early-career hospitality employees show that over 30 % leave the sector within the first five to six years (Brown et al., 2014). High turnover rates and labor shortages have been chronic issues challenging hospitality operators. Attention to hospitality employees' career commitment is therefore needed from both researchers and practitioners (Lin et al., 2020).

Lent et al.'s (1994) social cognitive career theory (SCCT) has long highlighted the crucial influence of psychological characteristics (e.g., self-efficacy) and broader environmental factors (e.g., social support) on career decision and persistence. However, previous empirical studies on career commitment have predominantly focused on predictors within the workplace, specifically job- and organization-related factors. Hiring

workers with strong occupational self-efficacy (a domain-specific efficacy) is believed to be vital to the hospitality industry, an environment where customer experience is significantly influenced by the attitudes and behavior of service providers (Xiang et al., 2023). Empirical hospitality research has found that employees with strong self-efficacy beliefs tend to demonstrate higher levels of work engagement (Wang and Tseng, 2019) and better service performance (Kale, 2020) than those who are less self-efficacious. These findings corroborate SCCT theory, which argues that psychological factors (e.g., personality, values, and beliefs) arise from within, and play a crucial role in human functioning, by shaping and directing thinking styles and behavioral choices. However, there is less information available as to whether self-efficacy can make a difference to individuals' willingness to remain in their chosen occupational fields.

Guided by both SCCT and spillover theory (Crouter, 1984), the rationale for investigating the impact of family factors on career commitment is grounded in the premise that there are no distinct boundaries between the two most crucial dimensions of individual lives—work and family. Just as workplace factors influence life outside of work, family and household factors also exert an influence on organizational and vocational attitudes. A recent survey revealed that over

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2024.103748>

Received 17 September 2023; Received in revised form 13 February 2024; Accepted 9 April 2024

Available online 17 April 2024

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70 % of participants considered their families an important factor when making career decisions (Abe and Chikoko, 2020). Indeed, managing the work-family interface is a significant concern for hospitality employees, many of whom work long hours with unpredictable schedules and struggle to balance work demands and family duties. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the factors contributing to healthy interactions between family and vocation.

Moreover, research on the determinants of career commitment has tended to focus on its direct impact; only a handful of studies have explained why these factors influence career commitment (Akbiyik, 2016). A deeper understanding of the mechanisms behind such causal relations is also required. Accordingly, the present work investigated the progressive effects of the antecedents on career commitment, proposing organizational commitment as a latent mediating mechanism based on signaling theory (Chang and Busser, 2019; Goffman, 1959). Organizational commitment represents an employee's emotional attachment to their employer. From another perspective, and informed by signaling theory, it also mirrors the extent to which an employee's career needs are fulfilled by an organization, and sends employees signals around whether they are valued by management and whether they are on a positive career path (Chang and Busser, 2019). Thus, organizational commitment is believed to play a critical role in shaping career development confidence and vocational commitment.

Previous research on the antecedents to commitment also suffer from methodological limitations. Considering that vocational attitudes are affective and cognitive evaluations, these attitudes may vary considerably over time in relation to changes in work or life events. In general, psychologists do not usually deem work commitment and its antecedents to be static (Maia et al., 2016). What is known about the relationships between the antecedents and career commitment is largely based on cross-sectional studies in which data was gathered using one-shot surveys, and where the relationships were examined by analyzing interindividual differences (between-person level). One of the major limitations of these types of studies is that failing to account for the variance that occurs within a subject (within-person level), limits the ability to examine how the career commitments of a person unfold over time, and to ascertain whether the findings hold true as time passes (Lan et al., 2021). This inhibits research results relating to causality between variables (see Tremblay, 2021). For this reason, a more nuanced examination of the antecedents of career commitment, i.e., an examination based on longitudinal multilevel data, is needed.

Despite decades of research, the temporal nature of career commitment remains inadequately understood, and the static perception of 'career commitment' has created a theoretical gap concerning its initial development and subsequent progression (Nägele and Neuenschwander, 2014). Vocational theories and empirical research both suggest, however, that the concept of a career is widely considered to be dynamic, and in addition, developmental patterns in career attitudes may differ for early-career employees and old-timers. Chang and Tse's (2015) findings revealed that a significant number of hospitality employees exited the industry during their early career stages. A possible explanation could be that their initially high expectations shifted to a 'reality shock' upon entering the field (Boswell et al., 2005). Other studies (e.g., Son and Ok, 2019) suggested that job satisfaction increased with career progression, as old-timers gained competence and autonomy. Despite these insights, there have been no prior studies to examine the developmental trajectories of career commitment, especially at differing career stages. This lack of understanding has produced a practical challenge, as it hinders hospitality practitioners from clearly identifying those who may be prone to commitment changes, and when and how such changes may manifest themselves.

Extant research has reported inconsistent findings relating to the relationships between the antecedents and career commitment. This suggests that it would be fruitful to examine the factors moderating the influence of antecedents; such boundary conditions, however, have been rarely examined. The moderating role of time, in particular, has received

little attention. Career development models have suggested that different career stages are characterized by distinct work concerns and motives; therefore, vocational perceptions related to the antecedents of career commitment may fluctuate as time passes. For instance, Socio-emotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al., 1999) implies that support from family is more crucial during the initial phases of a career, in comparison with later stages. In other words, the emphasis employees place on such antecedents may change over time, resulting in shifts in the predictive power of these antecedents. While a number of cross-sectional studies have explored the moderating role of age or tenure (as a proxy for time) in the relationship between antecedents and work commitment (e.g., Kim et al., 2019), their findings are considered relatively inconclusive. Scholars have thus called for further research based on repeated measurements, recognizing that the influence of time is a longitudinal phenomenon (Dobrow Riza et al., 2018).

Cognizant of these research gaps, the main purpose of this study was to examine how the career commitment of hospitality employees changes over time. First, drawing on SCCT, this study examined the impact of self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., occupational self-efficacy) and family (i.e., family support) on career commitment, complementing existing research that predominantly focuses on the predictive role of job and organizational factors. It also extends prior cross-sectional studies by demonstrating these effects at both between- and within-person levels. Additionally, the aim of the study was to inform practitioners about the reasons why these factors influence the career commitment of hospitality employees, through the integration of aspects of SCCT and signaling theory. The findings are intended to provide hospitality managers with a more holistic understanding of career commitment, its antecedents, and its mediators, thereby laying the foundation for more targeted and effective interventions.

Moreover, this study aimed to reveal the trajectory of hospitality employees' career commitment through the use of growth modeling. Using the 'honeymoon-hangover' effect as a reference, this study hypothesized and then detected different patterns of career commitment development between early-career and mid/late-career employees. An understanding of these developmental patterns will assist hospitality practitioners to proactively manage employee turnover, enabling them to more effectively tailor employee management programs based on career stages. Additionally, guided by human development theories, time-varying effect analysis was conducted to examine how the relationships between career commitment and the antecedents changed over time, and across different career stages. This nuanced longitudinal approach further enabled the identification of precise employee engagement/retention initiatives that would align with evolving career dynamics.

2. Literature review

2.1. Career commitment

Career commitment, as a concept, is not a recent development. Blau (1985b) offered the first definition, as, "one's attitude toward one's profession or vocation" (p. 278) and initially developed a robust measure of career commitment that exhibited discriminant validity from other forms of work commitment. Indeed, while various forms of work-related commitment are theoretically interconnected, numerous occupational psychologists have highlighted the fact that career commitment stands apart fundamentally from others, due to its inherently self-interested nature (Hall, 1971). For example, career commitment should be distinguished from 'organizational commitment', which pertains to emotional connection to a person's current employing organization, rather than the occupation itself.

Moreover, job involvement refers to being committed to a comparatively immediate set of objective work tasks, while career commitment, "involves a longer perspective and is related to the subjective (or internal) career envisioned by the individual" (Colarelli and Bishop, 1990,

p. 159). Goulet and Singh (2002) agree, stating that an individual can feel committed to a job and not have an emotional attachment to their career. An employee may, for example, enjoy a food operation role, but envisage being a chef as their lifelong vocation.

Drawing upon [Blau \(1985b\)](#) work, [Carson and Bedeian \(1994\)](#) conceptualized career commitment as the motivation that drives individuals to remain in their chosen careers, while [Meyer et al. \(1993\)](#) defined career commitment as an individual's connection to their occupation. It can be seen that while the specific definitions may vary slightly, these researchers hold a common understanding of career commitment. They perceive it as a person's attitude toward their profession, and the emotional bond they have with their career; their willingness to remain in their chosen vocational field. In the present work, the researchers' views are in line with those of these vocational psychologists.

2.2. The effect of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment

The expectations of consumers can vary, and are often vague and changeable. Because of this, the 'boundary-spanning' workers who directly interact with customers, are expected to exhibit a 'can do' attitude, and a degree of flexibility when resolving service issues under uncertain and unfamiliar circumstances ([Raub and Liao, 2012](#)). The recruitment and retention of employees with strong career resilience (confidence, persistence, and commitment to their chosen career) has therefore become an important task for hospitality human resource managers wishing to maintain service quality and customer satisfaction. Employees who are high in occupational self-efficacy are able to meet the above-mentioned criteria.

Unlike the big five traits, self-efficacy is not a type of personality; rather it is a self-judgment about a person's capability to take control over their own emotions, motivations and behavior, in order to form reality in the fashion they desire ([Wang et al., 2022](#)). [Bandura \(1986\)](#) defined self-efficacy as a person's beliefs in their ability or competence to perform an act, or to cope with an unexpected challenge; in his social cognitive theory, he emphasized that an individual's attitudes and behavior could be significantly incited by self-influence. Specifically, prior to commencing a given task, a person will first cognitively process the challenges related to the task, and then consider their abilities to deal with them. Hence, people are likely to evade or renounce tasks that they sense to be beyond their abilities but will be willing to accept and carry out tasks they feel they can handle.

Built on [Bandura's \(1986\)](#) social cognitive theory, the SCCT theory ([Lent et al., 1994](#)) posits that occupational self-efficacy can determine how much effort people are prepared to apply in pursuing their careers and how long they will persist when encountering difficulties ([Park and Jung, 2015](#)). Employees with the same levels of career expertise, may still demonstrate different attitudes toward their careers, contingent on whether their self-assessment of efficacy improves or diminishes their enthusiasm. For instance, it could be argued that people with high levels of occupational self-efficacy may feel more confident in their career choice, devote more effort, and be more persistent and optimistic ([Clements and Kamau, 2018](#)).

Indeed, a wealth of research has identified the beneficial impact of occupational self-efficacy (as a vital personal resource) on individual career-related outcomes. First, occupational self-efficacy has been found to predict proactive career attitudes and behaviors. For example, [Hartman and Barber \(2020\)](#) discovered that people high in occupational self-efficacy expressed more desire to advance their careers (i.e., career aspirations), and [Hirschi and Jaensch \(2015\)](#) found that self-efficacious individuals engaged in more career engagement behaviors (e.g., gathering information about career advancement opportunities in the desired field). It can therefore be predicted that hospitality professionals with greater levels of occupational self-efficacy, will be more willing to set occupational goals, will constantly develop vocational skills, and will remain in their chosen field to pursue their careers, even when faced

with obstacles.

2.3. The effect of family support on career commitment

In comparison with workers in other industries, hospitality professionals tend to have to work in shifts, and are busier during public holidays; this reduces the time they can spend with family members and, in turn, can cause elevated levels of role stress and an increase in staff turnover ([Liu et al., 2022](#)). Professionals in non-service sectors are often able to work some of the time from home, reducing their time away from family members, but this is nearly impossible for most hospitality employees. With the increase in dual-earner families, work-family issues require additional consideration. The notion of family support has been touched on by [Hobfoll \(1988\)](#), when he wrote on the topic of 'social support'. Social support can be viewed as the comfort, help and support provided to individuals through formal or informal social contacts with other individuals or groups, that enables individuals to handle challenges and stress in their social roles. In vocational settings, family support is described as 'the cross-domain social support that a person obtains from closest relatives when coping with occupational demands and strains' ([Ocampo et al., 2018](#)).

SCCT acknowledges the susceptibility of individuals to social influences, such as family members who offer encouragement, feedback, and career-related support, all of which can significantly affect their career persistence. Spillover theory ([Crouter, 1984](#)) also provides insight into why family support may have a critical influence on a person's profession. It suggests that employees transmit the feelings and behaviors they generate at the workplace into their off-work life intra-personally, and vice versa, implying that the work world and family life have a circular spillover impact on each other. Such spillover effects can be either positive or negative. For example, when an employee is struggling with childcare in the family domain, they may have no choice but to apply less effort to their career; in such a situation, issues such as a depressed mood, or low affection to their chosen career, may present themselves in the workplace, and this may in turn have impact in the family domain ([García-Cabrera et al., 2018](#)). In contrast, an employee with lighter levels of family demands will have more energy to shoulder duties at work. This will result in reduced levels of work stress and enhanced career satisfaction, which may lead to a sense of wellbeing in the family domain.

Results from several works suggest that there is a significant relationship between family support and career outcomes. For example, both [Ocampo et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Amin et al. \(2017\)](#) identified that spousal understanding was effective in helping employees achieve work-life balance, leading to more subjective career success. Therefore, it is believed that instrumental family support (e.g., assistance with household activities) can provide a person with more time and energy to concentrate on the development of career expertise. In addition, emotional support (e.g., spousal encouragement for the pursuit of career goals) can facilitate the development of a 'career identity' and occupational self-esteem, thereby providing the worker with more faith and passion to conquer any career obstacles they may be facing ([Arjona-Fuentes et al., 2022](#)).

2.4. The mediating role of organizational commitment

Although talent management is applied by firms to achieve business objectives, it is important to keep in mind that employees enter organizations to realize their own career aspirations. While some researchers argue that an individual's loyalties toward their employer and career may conflict under certain circumstances (e.g., [English, 2008](#)), others hold the view that there is a substantial likelihood that organizational commitment and career commitment are compatible, and can develop simultaneously based on common experiences at work ([Lee et al., 2000](#)). Drawing upon signaling theory ([Goffman, 1959](#)), the researchers believed that it would be possible for managers to boost hospitality

employees' career commitment by enhancing their emotional attachment to an organization.

According to Porter et al. (1974), organizational commitment can be viewed as the bond a worker has with the employer; this mirrors devotedness and obligation to the organization. From a psychological perspective, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) defined it as 'the degree to which an individual identifies with a group or an organization'. Meyer and Allen (1991) portrayed organizational commitment as a 'willingness to devote loyalty'. The rationale behind the assumption that organizational commitment is positively related to career-related outcomes can be captured in signaling theory. This theory is mainly concerned with communications between employees and establishments, and posits that there is usually an information asymmetry between an employee and a larger entity. It asserts that signaling can reduce any asymmetry between two parties as it helps the signal receiver to better interpret the characteristics of the signal giver. It is logical to assume that when employees have inadequate knowledge about their careers, they may require signals to interpret and forecast information (Chang and Busser, 2019). In such cases, their experience at their current workplace can be regarded as a key signal to infer their future careers. Those who experience positive emotions at work and enjoy being a member of an organization are likely to be more willing to work hard and to achieve professionally. They will also be more likely build a strong occupational identity and believe that having a career in the current field is promising (Yoo et al., 2019).

A person's self-belief in their own competence significantly affects the extent of their internal work motivation (Lent et al., 1994). Occupational self-efficacy thus determines how much time and effort a person is willing to invest in their place of work (Park and Jung, 2015). Specifically, a person who is confident in their work abilities may have stronger intrinsic job motivation, and set higher performance standards; they are more likely to experience a greater sense of achievement at work, and to form increased emotional attachment to their job. In contrast, less self-efficacious employees (who do not believe in their ability to satisfy their job requirements) could easily experience greater anxiety and helplessness, and put less effort into work tasks (Law and Guo, 2016). In this way, employees who already expect to fail in their endeavors, are less likely to develop emotional bonds with an organization.

According to SCCT and spillover theory, there is no boundary between the working world and family. Thus, drawing upon social exchange theory (Homans, 1961), it can be extrapolated that when employees receive support and help from the family domain, they would, in response, display positive attitudes and behaviors toward both their families and their workplace. Emotional support (e.g., compassion and empathy) from their families provides service workers with a haven where they can be themselves and evade emotional labor, allowing them to refresh and cope better with daily job demands (Zhou et al., 2020). In addition, those who obtain instrumental support from their families, are believed to have more energy and enthusiasm in dealing with challenging work tasks and taking up advancement opportunities, leading to stronger connections within the organization.

In summary, it was hypothesized that occupational self-efficacy and family support would enhance the organizational commitment of hospitality employees, which in turn, would improve their career commitment.

H1 (a). : Organizational commitment will mediate the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and career commitment.

H1 (b). : Organizational commitment will mediate the relationship between family support and career commitment.

2.5. The trajectory of career commitment

Career development has been viewed as an ongoing process of adaptation to the social environment, with the aim of attaining person-

environment integration (Becker et al., 2022; Savickas, 2005), and it is logical that a person's perception of their career may vary at different career stages. An understanding of how career commitment develops over time is therefore of value. The 'honeymoon-hangover effect' and 'uncertainty reduction' theories (Boswell et al., 2005, and Kramer, 1999, respectively) offer theoretical lenses through which the different developmental trajectories of career commitment at the various career stages can be examined.

The honeymoon-hangover effect theory and several organizational studies have revealed that newcomers typically have more positive work attitudes closer to the commencement of their employment, followed by a decrease in work engagement and deterioration in job satisfaction (Maia et al., 2016). It is therefore expected that early-career employees will display relatively high levels of career commitment at the initial stage of their employment. According to the honeymoon-hangover effect theory, this assumption can be explained from both situational and dispositional perspectives. From a situational perspective, when recruiting new staff members, employers are likely to stress the positive side of the job and outline a promising career path for their potential employees. The anticipation of such positive attributes may temporarily fulfil the employee's need for self-esteem, leading to positive feelings and initial commitment to the chosen career. This phenomenon is especially pertinent to early-career workers who possess limited vocational experience and an incomplete understanding of their careers (Boswell et al., 2005; Willson and Given, 2020).

From a dispositional perspective, post-decision dissonance is likely to prompt an inclination to minimize or rationalize unfavorable attributes. Psychological discomfort occurs when people hold two or more conflicting thoughts at the same time, and in order to reduce this dissonance, people tend to seek consistency within their perceptions (Harmon-Jones et al., (2022); Lee et al., (2016); Levinson (1978); London (1983); Niu (2010); Park et al., (2021b); Sirgy et al., 2020; Jarcho et al., 2011). This phenomenon is likely to occur when a person has just entered a new occupational field. Choosing a vocation is generally considered to be a significant decision in life—a wrong choice, therefore, could equate to a huge cost for an early-career employee, (e.g., the effort spent on career preparation). In this situation, there is a tendency for newcomers to develop a sense of affection and belonging to their careers, regardless of the reasons for the career choice. Despite any negative characteristics that early-career employees may find in their new career, they may still pay more attention to the favorable aspects in order to rationalize their career choices. Integrating the situational and dispositional perspectives, it was predicted that:

H2 (a). : Early-career employees will display relatively high levels of career commitment at the initial stage of their employment.

Unfamiliarity with a new situation may cause newcomers to overestimate the promises of their new employer, and to experience a feeling of newness, leading to highly positive attitudes early on. However, the honeymoon-hangover effect theory (Boswell et al., 2005) also suggests that the 'magic of the new' only lasts for a limited time, and that the optimistic work attitudes are likely to be followed by a deterioration in an employee's job evaluations over time, a phenomenon referred to as the 'hangover' effect. Indeed, increased tenure is likely to bring a greater recognition of any less attractive elements; as newcomers become settled and engage in more routine daily activities, their jobs gradually lose the ability to evoke enthusiasm.

In a similar vein, and from a career perspective, as the novelty of a vocation wears off, the unknown and negative aspects become clear. During this transition period, early-career employees who suffer reality shocks will gradually realize the differences between what was expected and what is experienced, and therefore may feel discouraged and disappointed. Such potential hangover patterns are supported by empirical evidence. For instance, Vandenberghe et al. (2011) surveyed 170 university graduates on their work attitudes at three different points in time, and reported that their affective commitment and job

satisfaction decreased over time. Moreover, [Dobrow \(2013\)](#) conducted a 4-wave study on ‘career calling’ using 450 respondents and found that while respondents expressed a comparatively high level of calling in their early career stage, they experienced a significant decrease in calling as time passed. Taken together, it was thus predicted that early-career hospitality employees’ career commitment may display a hangover pattern.

H2 (b). : *A decreasing trajectory of change will occur in the career commitment displayed by early-career employees.*

Being a newcomer in a company or an occupational field is a temporal experience. The pattern of ‘honeymoon-hangover’ in the attitudes of early-career employees may therefore not apply to employees who have relatively longer career tenure (i.e., ‘old-timers’) ([Boswell et al., 2005](#)). Drawing upon uncertainty reduction theory ([Kramer, 1999](#)) and existing empirical findings (e.g., [Mooney et al., 2016](#)), the authors surmised that the hangover pattern (deterioration in career commitment) would not be long-term, and that for old-timers, their career commitment would grow with longer career tenure.

As previously noted, early-career employees are likely to have limited knowledge about their chosen careers, and because of this, they may experience a decline in career commitment over time, as they become aware of unexpected factors. Uncertainty reduction theory claims that when a person enters a new field, they will suffer many cognitive uncertainties, leading to anxiety, and the motivation to seek more information about the environment. Logically, the more time people spend in an occupational field, the more access they have to information about that vocation—both negative and positive. For old-timers this means the development of more realistic expectations, and the ability to make objective evaluations, which will ultimately lead to resilience, the reduction of uncertainties, and a sense of belonging.

Moreover, empirical studies on hospitality careers have identified respect and autonomy as two crucial determinants influencing workers’ willingness to stay in the hospitality industry for the long term ([Mooney et al., 2016](#)). Industry experience is highly regarded in hospitality, and therefore, it is generally believed that old-timers are more likely to be considered reliable people who deserve to be trusted, empowered and promoted ([Keller and Semmer, 2013](#)). Therefore, for old-timers, career commitment is likely to be enhanced over time. Taken together, it was therefore, assumed that:

H2 (c). : *For old-timers (employees with relatively longer career tenure), will experience an increasing trajectory of change in their career commitment.*

2.6. Time-varying effect

Research conducted so far has presented conflicting findings in terms of the associations between antecedents and career commitment. For instance, [Deepak \(2016\)](#) identified a positive association between job involvement and career commitment, which contrasts with [Singh and Gupta’s \(2015\)](#) discovery of a negative correlation. Other examples are [Wang et al., \(2016\)](#) study which revealed a strong correlation between job satisfaction and career commitment, and that of [Shah \(2011\)](#) who found a comparatively weak correlation. According to SCCT theory, career development is an ongoing and evolving process. Thus, it is not surprising to see that many vocational studies (e.g., [Dobrow, 2013](#)) have suggested that the perceptions of these antecedents (e.g., perceived importance) may change considerably over time. In other words, time may act as a latent moderator in determining the strength of the associations between the antecedents and career-related outcomes. Hence, it is timely to examine how hospitality employees experience and respond to these antecedents over time, and how any changes in perceptions may affect their vocational attitudes.

2.6.1. The accelerating effect of occupational self-efficacy

It is logical that employees who feel confident about their

occupational competence are expected to be internally motivated to deliver their work to a high standard, and to seek ongoing professional advancement. Such employees are therefore more likely to realize their career aspirations, and in turn, become more committed to their careers.

However, according to career development models (e.g., [Super, 1957](#)), people generally undergo distinct stages in their career journeys. In the initial career stage, despite being self-efficacious, workers are less likely to achieve a high level of job performance due to a lack of work experience. This observation emphasizes the gradual nature of career development. Consequently, the confidence exhibited by early-career employees may not immediately translate into peak job performance and tangible career success. Human capital theory ([Becker, 1994](#)) also suggests that individuals vary in the investment they make to improve their competencies and capabilities. In comparison to early-career workers, the years of experiential learning of old-timers contribute to richer problem-solving skills and experience. Thus, as time passes, old-timers with high self-efficacy not only possess a can-do attitude, but also boast a larger repertoire of accumulated skills and knowledge. This enables them to provide a higher standard of performance and to achieve more fruitful career outcomes.

Taken together, compared to old-timers, early-career employees may have relatively less chance to attain their career goals (e.g., being recognized as an expert in the field), despite having high career-related efficacy and strong career motivation. This may especially hold true in the hospitality sector where work experience is highly regarded by practitioners ([Mooney et al., 2016](#)). Thus, even if early-career self-efficacious employees set high career aspirations for themselves, they may not develop that high level of affection or attachment towards their careers. It is therefore expected that the effect of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment may be stronger as time passes. In other words, time moderates the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and career commitment, and this time-varying (accelerating) effect should be more significant for old-timers.

H3 (a). : *For old-timers, the positive effect of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment will increase over time.*

2.6.2. The decelerating effect of family support

According to socio-emotional selectivity theory ([Carstensen et al., 1999](#)), temporal awareness plays a crucial role in shaping the motivational landscape for career development, impacting how individuals allocate their time and energy. For example, per the theory, when individuals deem their future to be open-ended, they are inclined to set up advancement goals. Thus, early-career employees are more willing to sacrifice their personal lives for career advancement and competition. This theory could be applied to explain the findings of [Labrague et al. \(2021\)](#), who discovered that employees in the initial career stage were more likely to experience work-family conflict.

Furthermore, employees in the initial career stage have been found to experience higher work pressure and possess fewer resources to maintain work-family balance ([Reichl et al., 2014](#)). Specifically, a lack of task-related expertise and experience compels them to exert extra effort in handling challenging work situations ([Matthews et al., 2010](#)). Additionally, being in a junior job position grants them less work independence and flexibility, resulting in increased inter-role conflicts. However, such work-family conflicts are expected to reduce over time as employees become more adaptable and obtain more control over their work; once this occurs, they will have more energy to shoulder family responsibilities ([Demerouti et al., 2012](#)).

In summary, both theoretical frameworks and empirical research suggest that early-career employees may need more family understanding to maintain work-life balance, making family support more significant at the start of a career than in later stages. Thus, the absence of family support at or near the beginning of a career is expected to have more detrimental effects on employees’ vocational attitudes, such as career commitment. Therefore, it was anticipated that the impact of

family support on career commitment would be stronger at the start of a person's career, and decrease as time progresses. In essence, time would moderate the relationship between family support and career commitment, and that such time-varying (decelerating) effects would be likely to be more profound in the group of early-career workers.

H3 (b). : For early-career employees, the positive effect of family support on career commitment will decrease over time.

2.6.3. The accelerating effect of organizational commitment

While human capital theory posits that as employees age, their knowledge and experience will be enhanced, life span theory (Kanfer and Ackerman, 2004) suggests that ageing is also associated with losses. As time passes, the biological abilities of employees will decrease, as well as their occupational future time perspective, which refers to their perceptions around the remaining time and opportunities in their occupational future. This latter theory to some extent explains the fact that old-timers tend to place more weight on job security and career stability (Morrison, 2014). In other words, according to life span theory, individuals progress through career stages with different priorities and goals; in the mid or later stages of a person's career, there is an increased focus on attaining a sense of fulfillment and rootedness, making the alignment between personal values and organizational values crucial.

Old-timers are thus more likely to consider person-organization fit as a signal that they have selected a correct career (Koo and Li, 2016), and several empirical studies have captured the positive relationship between tenure and decision-making authority (e.g., Hendrawijaya, 2019). An employee with greater tenure is believed to have more power to master work activities, as well as organizational skills; this results in a stronger need for a sense of psychological ownership. As there is more emphasis on emotional linkages with the organization, deficiencies in this area may have a more negative influence on old-timers' career attitudes. In contrast, employees at the initial career stage are actively experimenting with different jobs to identify themselves in the occupational field in which they are interested, and thus may be more willing to try different jobs in different organizations if the current one fails to meet their career expectations (Goh and Lee, 2018). Their career commitment is therefore less likely to be influenced by their emotional attachment toward the current organization.

Consequently, it was expected that the effect of organizational commitment on career commitment would be stronger as time passes. In other words, time would moderate the relationship between organizational commitment and career commitment, and that this time-varying (accelerating) effect would be more significant for old-timers.

H3 (c). : For old-timers, the positive effect of organizational commitment on career commitment will increase over time.

Fig. 1 demonstrates the research model of the present work.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research sample

Participants in the current study were hospitality workers employed in divergent departments of various hotels in Kaifeng, Northern China. Kaifeng, a mid-sized city, stands out as a popular tourist destination with a rich historical background. To ensure that respondents had a basic understanding of the hospitality industry, only employees with a minimum of one-month's experience working in a hospitality establishment, were accepted.

In order to compare the career commitment trajectories of early-career employees with those having greater workplace experience, and guided by extant vocational studies in high-impact journals (e.g., Lam et al., 2012; Stumpf, 2014), individuals with seven or fewer years of experience were regarded as 'early-career' employees, and those with eight or more years, as 'old-timers'. It should be noted that while there is no agreement regarding how career stages should be operationalized, career tenure is a more appropriate indicator of career stages in a particular occupational field, than age, or job tenure (Lam et al., 2012). This is because workers can be at a particular career stage, at any age, and may also cycle through career stages when they change their occupations.

Shi et al. (2021) suggest that in order to avoid poor model fit, the sample size should be larger than 60 for research using growth modeling and in practice, and that clusters of 100–200, are preferable. For this research, and drawing on previous longitudinal multilevel studies (e.g., De Cuyper et al., 2012; Park et al., 2021b), the expected size of the sample was 200; however, taking attrition into account, the targeted sample size for the baseline survey was above 300.

3.2. Data collection

Employees who exhibited willingness to participate in the survey were required to sign consent forms and to return these in soft copy via WeChat (one of the most popular instant communication Apps in China). The consent form not only asked participants to provide their signatures, it also requested their contact details (e.g., WeChat ID); this enabled them to be sent the survey links. Online surveys were conducted at 3-month intervals over a 6-month period. This decision was made for the following reasons. First, three separate points of time are the minimum required for latent growth modeling (Walther et al., 2021; Xu and Martinez, 2018; Xia and Ha, 2023). Second, according to Bucy and Holbert (2010), as more waves of data are gathered, the sample attrition

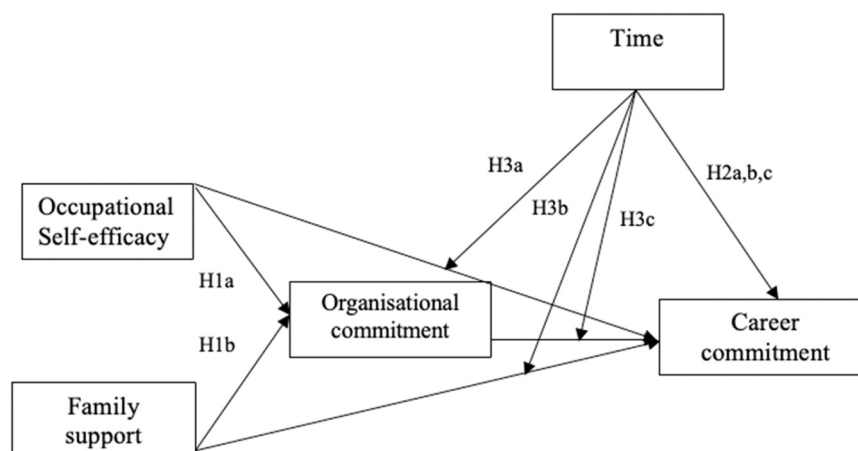


Fig. 1. Research model.

rate will increase, diminishing the representativeness and reliability of longitudinal data. The use of a 3-month time lag was consistent with existing career-related longitudinal studies (Autin et al., 2017; Xu and Tracey, 2017).

Respondents were first asked to complete the baseline online survey at Time-1. This measured career commitment and its antecedents (i.e., occupational self-efficacy, family support and organizational commitment) and demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender and civil status). Participants who completed the Time-1 survey were invited to participate three months later in the Time-2 survey, and after an additional three months (six months from commencement) in the Time-3 survey. The same questionnaires were used on each occasion. When completing each survey, respondents were asked to provide the last four digits of their mobile phone number as a personal code. This identification number allowed the researcher to match their responses over time. In compensation, participants received a financial incentive in the form of WeChat Red Packets (a digital currency equating to RMB 8 yuan) for every questionnaire completed).

The sample size across waves is displayed in Table 1. Regarding the total sample, of the 335 hospitality employees who signed the consent form, 310 participated in the Time-1 Survey. These respondents were then invited to join the Times- 2 and 3 surveys. From Time-1 to Time-3, the attrition rate was around 40 %, which was in the acceptable range (see Kristman et al., 2005; Yin et al., 2023). Respondents were distributed fairly between early-career employees (N = 154) and old-timers (N = 156).

3.3. Measurements

Occupational self-efficacy was captured utilizing a six-item scale developed by Rigotti et al. (2008). Respondents rated the items from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’, to 7 = ‘strongly agree’. Example of item: “Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.” The Cronbach’s alpha values for this scale were 0.93 at Time-1, 0.91 at Time-2, and 0.93 at Time-3.

Family support was examined utilizing seven items adapted from Boyar et al. (2014). Respondents rated the items from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’, to 7 = ‘strongly agree’. Example of item: “My family is willing to listen to me when I talk about my career.” The Cronbach’s alpha values for this scale were 0.91 at Time-1, 0.92 at Time-2, and 0.95 at Time-3.

Organizational commitment was examined utilizing a five-item scale developed by Lee et al. (2001). Respondents rated the items from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’, to 7 = ‘strongly agree’. Example of item: “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own”. The Cronbach’s alpha values for this scale were 0.95 at Time-1, 0.96 at Time-2 and 0.96 at Time-3.

Career commitment was captured utilizing seven items adopted from Blau (1985b) with wording adjusted slightly to be more pertinent to a hospitality context. Respondents rated the items from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’, to 7 = ‘strongly agree’. Example of items: “I never feel

disappointed that I ever entered the hospitality industry.” The Cronbach’s alpha values for this scale were at 0.94 Time-1, 0.96 at Time-2 and at 0.96 Time-3.

3.4. Data analysis

3.4.1. Longitudinal multilevel analysis (Between- and within-person perspectives)

Cross-sectional studies primarily focus on between-person variations in career commitment, revealing that individuals who rate above average on certain factors tend to display greater emotional attachment to their careers. However, this approach lacks the ability to explore within-person psychological processes (Wang and Maxwell, 2015). Longitudinal research, which utilizes within-person data, explores how the changing psychological traits within an individual can impact attitudes and behavior over time. Many psychological theories include assumptions from a within-person perspective (Galla et al., 2014). For example, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) posits that social cognition is a within-person process that develops over time, as individuals evaluate the challenges related to a task, consider their abilities to deal with these challenges, and then apply effort to solve them. Applying this perspective to career commitment, employees will devote more time and energy to their careers when they have higher occupational self-efficacy, than they will when their occupational self-efficacy is low. In such cases, employing a longitudinal design reveals valuable insights into the causal relationship between intra-person fluctuations in self-efficacy, and changes in career commitment.

In contemporary vocational research, longitudinal multilevel modeling (also known as hierarchical linear modeling) is highly recommended (Hoffman and Stawski, 2009), as it has the power to detect random variance due to the use of multiple sampling facets (e.g., across time and a range of individuals), allowing researchers to separate within- and between-person effects, and more importantly, to simultaneously examine both types of effects. The traditional longitudinal multilevel model is comprised of two levels: repeated measurements at Level-1 and individual attributes at Level-2. The equations below show a traditional longitudinal model. The Level-1 equation shows the ‘within-person’ effects of time-varying variables on the outcome, while the Level-2 equation exhibits the influence of ‘between-person/time-invariant’ variables.

Level-1:

$$Y_{it} = \pi_{0i} + \pi_{1i}*(Time_{it}) + \pi_{2i}*(X_{it}) + e_{it}$$

Level-2:

$$\pi_{0i} = \beta_{00} + \beta_{01}*(Covariates) + r_{0i} \pi_{1i} = \beta_{10} + \beta_{11}*(Covariates) + r_{1i} \pi_{2i} = \beta_{20}$$

This model, however, has been challenged by contemporary researchers (Zhang et al., 2009) who have pointed out that even the common time-invariant covariates are controlled (e.g., demographic variables), and within-person change at Level-1 can still be confounded by between-person differences at Level-2, such as the between-person effect of the variable X. This sets up barriers to capturing pure intra-person fluctuations.

To overcome such limitations, the longitudinal multilevel analysis in the present study was conducted following Zhang et al.’s (2009) approach. The equations below show the revised models. The time-varying variable ‘X’ is group-mean centred at Level-1, to subtract between-person variance from X, allowing a pure calculation of the within-person effect of X on Y. The Level-2 equation illustrates that apart from time-invariant covariates, Level 2 variables also include the group mean of X as a control variable. This improved model not only enables researchers to remove between-person confounds, it also allows a simultaneous examination of the within-person and between-person effects of X on Y. In the current research, when investigating the relationships of career commitment with its antecedents, occupational

Table 1
Sample size across waves.

	Time-1	Time-2	Time-3
Total sample			
Questionnaires distributed	335	310	310
Valid responses	310	215	184
Response rate	93 %	69 %	59 %
Early-career employees			
Questionnaires distributed	169	154	154
Valid responses	154	89	83
Response rate	91 %	58 %	54 %
Old-timers			
Questionnaires distributed	166	156	156
Valid responses	156	126	101
Response rate	94 %	81 %	65 %

self-efficacy, family support and organizational commitment were treated as X, whereas career commitment was used as Y (H1a, b).

Level-1:

$$Y_{it} = \pi_{0i} + \pi_{1i}(Time_{it}) + \pi_{2i}(X_{it} - Mean_X) + e_{it}$$

Level-2:

$$\pi_{0i} = \beta_{00} + \beta_{01}(Mean_X) + \beta_{02}(Covariates) + r_{0i} \quad \pi_{1i} = \beta_{10} + \beta_{11}(Mean_X) + \beta_{12}(Covariates) + r_{1i} \quad \pi_{2i} = \beta_{20}$$

3.4.2. Latent growth modeling

Latent growth modeling was employed to examine the trajectory of hospitality employees' career commitment (H2a, b, c). The equations are illustrated as follows. The Level-1 equation, of particular interest to researchers, centers on within-person change (i.e., changes in Y over time), allowing observation of the developmental trajectories of a time-varying outcome variable. Specifically, Y was modelled as a function of an intercept (i.e., π_{0i} , individual i 's initial value of Y), a slope (i.e., π_{1i} , growth rates of Y over time t), and an individual- and time-specific residual (i.e., e_{it} , within-person random error).

Level-1:

$$Y_{it} = \pi_{0i} + \pi_{1i}(Time_{it}) + e_{it}$$

Level-2:

$$\pi_{0i} = \beta_{00} + r_{0i} \quad \pi_{1i} = \beta_{10} + r_{1i}$$

The Level-2 equation reflects the influence of between-person heterogeneity on the Level-1 intercept and slope. Specifically, in the Level-2 equation, π_{0i} is modelled as a function of an intercept (i.e., β_{00} , grand mean of Y, that is population intercept) and a slope (i.e., r_{0i} , the difference between individual i 's intercept and population intercept). π_{1i} is modelled as a function of an intercept (i.e., β_{10} , mean growth rates of Y, that is population slope) and a slope (i.e., r_{1i} , the difference between individual i 's growth rates and population slope). In the present study, career commitment, was treated as Y.

3.4.3. Time-varying effect analysis

Time-varying effect analysis was performed to examine whether the relationships between career commitment and its antecedents changed over time (H3a, b, c). Following Singer and Willett's (2003) instructions, the classic moderation model was converted into a time-varying effect model. Specifically, Y is the outcome variable; β_{00} as an intercept is the initial value of Y; β_{10} and β_{20} demonstrate the main effects of time and X on Y; Time*X is the cross-product of time and X. The parenthetical term entails the residuals at the within- and between-person levels. In the present study, career commitment was treated as Y, and occupational self-efficacy, family support and organizational commitment were utilized as X.

$$Y_{it} = \beta_{00} + \beta_{10}Time_{it} + \beta_{20}X_{it} + \beta_{30}Cross-product(Time*X) + [r_{0i} + r_{1i}Time_{it} + e_{it}]$$

4. Results

4.1. Respondent profile

As shown in Table 2, the mean age of participants was 38 years, with the youngest being 18 and the oldest being 60. On average, old-timer employees were ten years older than early-career employees. In terms of gender, female respondents accounted for 61 % of total participants. The majority of respondents (83.2 %) were either in a relationship or married. Most respondents (57.4 %) had one to three dependents. With

Table 2
Respondent profile.

		Total sample		Early-career		Old-timers	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Age (years)							
20 and under		10	3.2	10	6.5	-	-
21–30		74	23.9	67	43.5	7	4.5
31–40		80	25.8	33	21.4	47	30.1
41–50		97	31.3	25	16.2	72	46.2
51 and above		49	15.8	19	12.3	30	19.2
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
			Mean = 38, Median = 38, Min = 18, Max = 60		Mean = 33, Median = 31, Min = 18, Max = 55		Mean = 43, Median = 44, Min = 22, Max = 60
Gender							
Male		121	39.0	66	42.9	55	35.3
Female		189	61.0	88	57.1	101	64.7
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Civil status							
Single		52	16.8	36	23.4	16	10.3
In a relationship/ Married		258	83.2	118	76.6	140	89.7
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Number of dependents							
1		28	9.0	11	7.1	17	10.9
2		79	25.5	47	30.5	32	20.5
3		71	22.9	39	25.3	32	20.5
4		66	21.3	28	18.2	38	24.4
5 and more		66	21.3	29	18.8	37	23.7
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Highest qualification							
None		55	17.7	23	14.9	32	20.5
High School qualification		100	32.3	39	25.3	61	39.1
Certificate/Diploma		119	38.4	68	44.2	51	32.7
Bachelor's degree		35	11.3	23	14.9	12	7.7
Postgraduate degree		1	.3	1	.6	-	-
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Company size							
Less than 10		22	7.1	15	9.7	7	4.5
10–49		59	19.0	34	22.1	25	16.0
50–99		35	11.3	25	16.2	10	6.4
100 or above		194	62.6	80	51.9	114	73.1
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Sector							
Accommodation		206	66.5	91	59.1	115	73.7
Food and beverage		75	24.2	45	29.2	30	19.2
Travel		16	5.2	11	7.1	5	3.2
Other		13	4.2	7	4.5	6	3.8
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0
Position							
Entry level		226	72.9	131	85.1	95	60.9
Supervisor†/Manager		82	26.5	22	14.3	60	38.5
Senior Manager		2	.6	1	.6	1	.6
	Total	310	100.0	154	100.0	156	100.0

regard to educational background, the majority of respondents (88.4 %) did not have a degree qualification. In terms of company size, of the 310 respondents, the majority of respondents (73.9 %) were from mid to large-scale hotels. Regarding departments, 66.5 % were from the accommodation sector, while 24.2 % were from the food and beverage sector. The respondents comprised both entry-level employees (72.9 %) and their supervisors/managers (27.1 %)

4.2. Measurement model

To inspect the validity of the measures, multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted utilizing Mplus 8.0. The results (see Table 3) revealed that the proposed four-factor model obtained acceptable fit to data compared with other alternative models (χ^2 [294] = 1083.29, $P < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.05, CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90). Single-level CFA was conducted on the measures at each point of time. The

Table 3
Multilevel CFA - Comparison of measurement models.

Model	No. of factors	χ^2	d.f.	$\Delta\chi^2$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Baseline model	4 factors: OSE, FS, OC and CC	1083.29	294	N/A	0.91	0.90	0.05
Alternative 1	3 factors: OSE, FS, (OC + CC)	2340.43	297	1257.14	0.75	0.74	0.09
Alternative 2	2 factors: FS, (OSE + OC + CC)	3314.33	299	2231.04	0.64	0.61	0.11
Alternative 3	1 factor: (OSE + FS + OC + CC)	3994.57	300	2911.28	0.56	0.53	0.12

Note: OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment; d.f. = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = Incremental Fit Index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

results (see Appendix) show that all items loaded well onto their respective factors at each point, with factor loadings larger than 0.70. In addition, all AVEs were higher than 0.60, and the squared correlations and composite reliability were higher than 0.80, demonstrating the discriminant validity of the constructs at each measuring point.

Means, standard deviations and between- and within-person correlations among the constructs are presented in Table 4. As was expected, there were significant and positive correlations of career commitment with the antecedent variables (i.e., occupational self-efficacy and family support), at both levels. A relatively stronger correlation between organizational commitment and career commitment was also observed at both between- and within-person levels. Traditional Pearson correlations among the variables across the three points of time are shown in the Appendix section.

4.3. Hypothesis testing

Before testing the main hypotheses, unconditional models were estimated to check the intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) for each construct. The results show that the intercept of the focal construct (i.e., career commitment) was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), and the ICC for career commitment was 0.76. In addition, the ICC scores were 0.68 for occupational self-efficacy, 0.66 for family support, and 0.74 for organizational commitment. The ICC values for each construct were above 0.5, indicating good test-retest reliability among the three time-waves, thereby justifying the rationality of conducting multilevel analysis.

4.3.1. Longitudinal multilevel modeling

Longitudinal multilevel modeling was employed to examine the relationship between the antecedents and career commitment. As shown in Table 5, occupational self-efficacy and family support were positively related to career commitment at both the between- (OSE: $b = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$; FS: $b = 0.70$, $p < 0.001$) and within-person (SE: $b = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$; FS: $b = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$) levels.

The tables also indicate that occupational self-efficacy and family support were positively related to organizational commitment at both the between- (OSE: $b = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$; FS: $b = 0.67$, $p < 0.001$) and within-person (OSE: $b = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$; FS: $b = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$) levels, and that organizational commitment was positively related to career commitment at both the between- ($b = 0.70$, $p < 0.001$) and within-person ($b = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$) levels.

When organizational commitment was entered into the model, the

magnitude of the direct effects of occupational self-efficacy and family support were reduced at both the between- (OSE: from 0.55, $p < 0.001$ –0.28, $p > 0.05$; FS: from 0.70, $p < 0.001$ –0.44, $p < 0.001$) and within-person (OSE: from 0.34, $p < 0.001$ –0.18, $p < 0.05$; FS: 0.31, $p < 0.001$ –0.20, $p < 0.001$) levels. These findings revealed that organizational commitment mediated the effects of occupational self-efficacy and family support on career commitment at both levels (H1a, b supported).

4.3.2. Latent growth modeling

To begin with, a simple slope analysis was conducted to explore the statistical differences between the slopes of the career commitment strategies of early-career employees, and those of old-timers. As shown in Fig. 2, there was a significant interaction effect of time and career stage (early-career = 0, old-timers = 1, $b = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$), and the early-career employees had a relatively higher level of initial career commitment. Fig. 2 also demonstrates that the slope of career commitment change was negative for early-career employees, and positive for old-timers.

Unconditional latent growth analysis was then conducted to meticulously examine the trajectory of hospitality employees' career commitment. The results are presented in Table 6 and Fig. 3. For the total sample, the findings showed that while the intercept was significant (5.12, $p < 0.001$), time ($b = -0.01$, $p > 0.05$) was not a significant predictor of career commitment.

Regarding the trajectory of early-career employees' career commitment, the intercept was 5.16 ($p < 0.001$) on a seven-point Likert scale, revealing their mean career commitment level at the initial stage. The mean growth rate was -0.19 ($p < 0.001$), implying that early-career employees' career commitment decreased by 0.19 units at each point of time (H2b supported).

Regarding the trajectory of old-timers' career commitment, the intercept was 5.05 ($p < 0.001$) on a seven-point Likert scale, revealing their mean career commitment level at the initial stage. Compared with early-career employees (5.16, $p < 0.001$), old-timers (5.05, $p < 0.001$) reported lower initial career commitment (H2a supported). The mean growth rate was 0.12 ($p < 0.001$), implying that old-timers' career commitment increased by 0.12 units at each point of time (H2c supported).

4.3.3. The time-varying effect

Time-varying effect analysis was conducted to examine whether the effects of the antecedents on career commitment varied over time. The

Table 4
Between- and within-person correlations among main variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Between-person effects				Within-person effects			
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. OSE	5.66	0.84	1				1			
2. FS	5.52	0.93	.39***	1			.06**	1		
3. OC	5.60	1.01	.46***	.54***	1		.09***	.09**	1	
4. CC	5.09	1.20	.47***	.53***	.70***	1	.09***	.11***	.12***	1

Note: OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment.

** $p < 0.01$

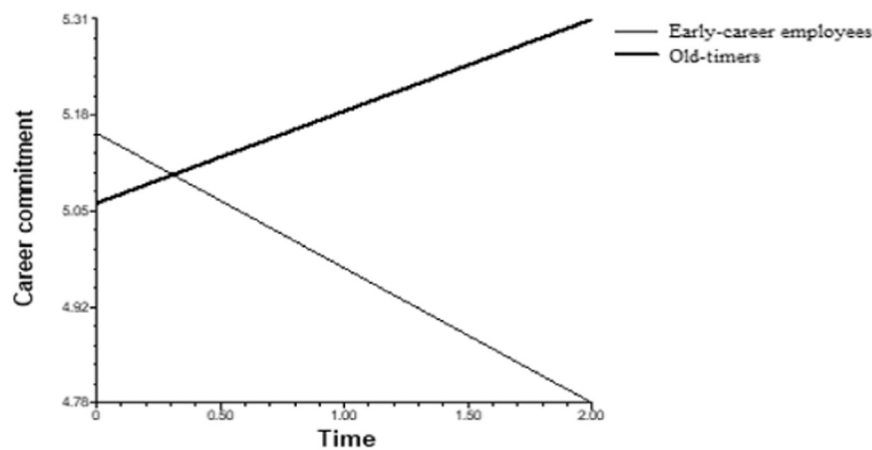
*** $p < 0.001$

Table 5

The Between- and Within-Person Relationship between the Antecedents and Career Commitment.

	Relationship of the antecedents to CC		Relationship of the antecedents to OC		Relationship of the mediator to CC	The mediating role of OC between the antecedents and CC	
	OSE	FS	OSE	FS	OC	OSE	FS
Intercept	5.12***	5.02***	5.73***	5.63***	5.01***	5.05***	5.01***
<i>Level 1</i>							
Time	0.02	0.08	-0.10	-0.05	0.10	0.09	0.11
OSE	0.34***		0.36***			0.18* (0.34***)	
FS		0.31***		0.26***			0.20*** (0.31***)
OC					0.43***	0.38***	0.38***
<i>Level 2</i>							
Age	0.01	-0.01	0.01*	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
Gender	0.03	-0.09	0.15	0.03	-0.12	-0.06	-0.12
Marital status	-0.03	0.18	-0.20	0.01	0.20	0.10	0.18
Number of dependents	-0.02	-0.04	0.02	-0.01	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04
OSE	0.55***		0.49***			0.28 (0.55***)	
FS		0.70***		0.67***			0.44*** (0.70***)
OC					0.70***	0.56***	0.45***
Deviance	1833	1802			1683	1673	1656

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.; OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment.

**Fig. 2.** Statistical differences between the slopes of early-career employees' and old-timers' career commitment trajectories.**Table 6**

Latent growth modeling (Unconditional growth model).

	Total (N = 310)	Early-career (N = 154)	Old-timers (N = 156)
Intercept	5.12***	5.16***	5.05***
<i>Level 1</i>			
Time	-0.01	-0.19***	0.12***
Deviance	1932 (1932)	907 (931)	992 (996)

Note. Deviances for the null model (in parentheses) are shown.

*** $p < 0.001$

means and standard errors of the antecedents and career commitment for both early-career and old-timer samples are shown in Table 7. The results of hypothesis testing are presented in Table 8.

First, a significant interaction effect of occupational self-efficacy with time on career commitment was observed in the old-timer sample ($b = 0.11$, $p < 0.05$), but not in the early-career sample ($b = -0.05$, $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 4). This indicates that the effect of old-timers' occupational self-efficacy on their career commitment varied over time; more specifically, for old-timers, the effect of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment increased over time (H3a supported).

In addition, a significant interaction effect of family support with time on career commitment was observed in the early-career sample ($b = -0.18$, $p < 0.01$); this was not evident in the old-timer sample ($b = 0.02$, $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 5). This indicates that the effect of early-career employees' family support on their career commitment varied over

time; more specifically, for early-career employees, the effect of family support on career commitment decreased over time (H3b supported).

Moreover, a significant interaction effect of organizational commitment with time on career commitment was observed in the old-timer sample ($b = 0.11$, $p < 0.01$); this was not evident in the early-career sample ($b = -0.01$, $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 6). This indicates that the effect of old-timers' organizational commitment on their career commitment varied over time; more specifically, for old-timers, the effect of organizational commitment on career commitment increased over time (H3c supported).

5. Discussion

5.1. Research and theoretical implications

Labor shortages and high turnover rates can appear to be a curse for the hospitality industry, and a body of research has explored the stories behind job/career changes. Despite this, empirical studies into the factors motivating hospitality employees to be committed to their vocation, and the importance of such commitment are scant. A number of recent hospitality works have revealed the positive relationship between hospitality employees' levels of commitment and feelings of job security (Akbiyik, 2016) and perceived organizational growth (Son and Kim, 2021). In contrast, and drawing on SCCT and spillover theory, the current study provides robust evidence regarding the influence of hospitality employees' occupational self-efficacy and perceived family

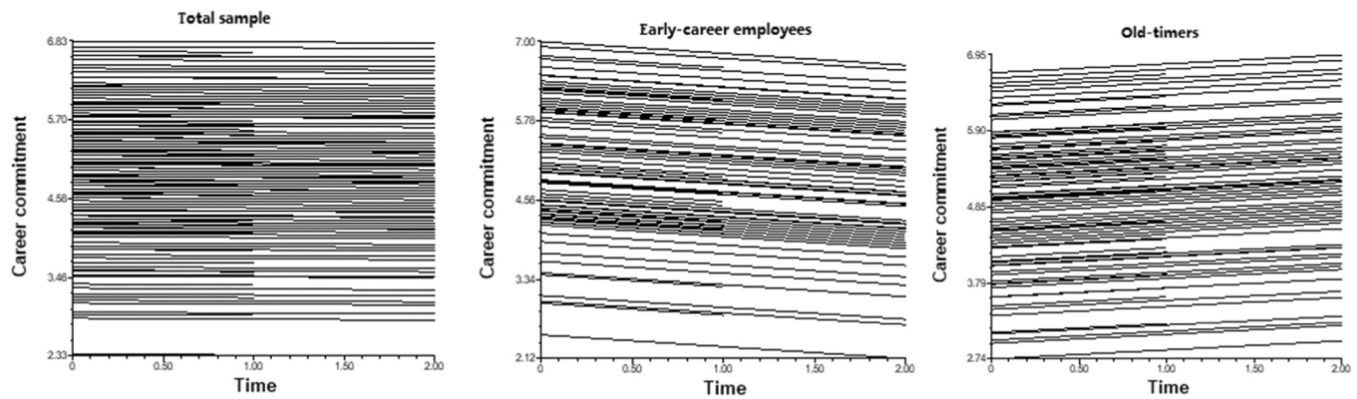


Fig. 3. Career commitment trajectories of the total sample, early-career employees and old-timers based on growth modeling.

Table 7
Means and Standard Errors of the Antecedents and Career Commitment.

Early-career									
	OSE		FS		OC		CC		
	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	
Time-1	5.59		5.49		5.48	0.08	5.15	0.09	
Time-2	5.53	0.07	5.44	0.07	5.47	0.11	4.98	0.13	
Time-3	5.49	0.08	5.43	0.09	5.41	0.11	4.89	0.14	
		0.09		0.10					
Old-timers									
	OSE		FS		OC		CC		
	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	M	S.E.	
Time-1	5.75	0.07	5.53	0.08	5.76	0.08	5.04	0.09	
Time-2	5.76	0.06	5.62	0.08	5.70	0.08	5.13	0.10	
Time-3	5.77	0.07	5.56	0.09	5.74	0.07	5.28	0.10	

Note. OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment; M = Mean; S.E. = Standard errors

Table 8
Time-Varying Effects of the Antecedents on Career Commitment.

	Relationship of SE to CC		Relationship of FS to CC		Relationship of OC to CC	
	Early-career	Old-timers	Early-career	Old-timers	Early-career	Old-timers
Intercept	5.36***	4.76***	5.28***	4.80***	5.33***	4.88***
Level 1						
Time	-0.14**	0.10**	-0.15**	0.11**	-0.12*	0.11***
OSE	0.53***	0.43***				
FS			0.63***	0.48***		
OC					0.62***	0.64***
Time*OSE	-0.05	0.11***				
Time*FS			-0.18**	0.02		
Time*OC					-0.01	0.11**
Level 2						
Age	0.02*	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Gender	-0.07	-0.02	-0.18	-0.02	-0.24	-0.13
Marital status	-0.24	0.34	-0.06	0.29	-0.07	0.27
Number of dependents	0.01	-0.09	-0.01	-0.11	0.01	-0.06
Deviance	871 (931)	947 (996)	855 (931)	923 (996)	827 (931)	851 (996)

Note: OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment. Deviances for the null model (in parentheses) are shown.

* $p < 0.05$
 ** $p < 0.01$
 *** $p < 0.001$

support on their career commitment, supplementing preceding works that have focused on the predicting role of job or organizational factors.

The current work also advances knowledge of the antecedents of career commitment at the within-person level. While the results of previous studies using between-person designs may suggest which employees are more committed to hospitality careers (e.g., Akbiyik, 2016; Okurame, 2012), within-person designs can answer the question of when workers are likely to change their emotional attachment to their hospitality careers. By investigating the antecedents and career commitment as time-varying covariates, the present study sheds light on the within-subject processes in which occupational self-efficacy and family support vary within individuals over time, and on how these fluctuations influence the development of career commitment. Taken together, the multilevel design offers a solid understanding of the causal relationships between the antecedents and career commitment, and responds to calls from hospitality researchers (e.g., McGinley and Martinez, 2018) who have recommended that both inter-individual differences and intra-individual change be taken into consideration when evaluating vocational behavior.

This study extends current knowledge by using SCCT and signaling theory to examine both the antecedents, and the explanatory mechanism for their relationships with career commitment. Both theories have previously been applied to the study of work commitment (e.g., Baidoun and Anderson, 2023; Klimchak et al., 2020), but an integration of the two theories has not been explored. By revealing the mediating role of organizational commitment, it lends support to the signaling theory and to previous studies that have used job attitudes as a proxy to predict vocational outcomes (e.g., Liu et al., 2020). The findings are consistent with the notion that positive emotions and a sense of belonging in the

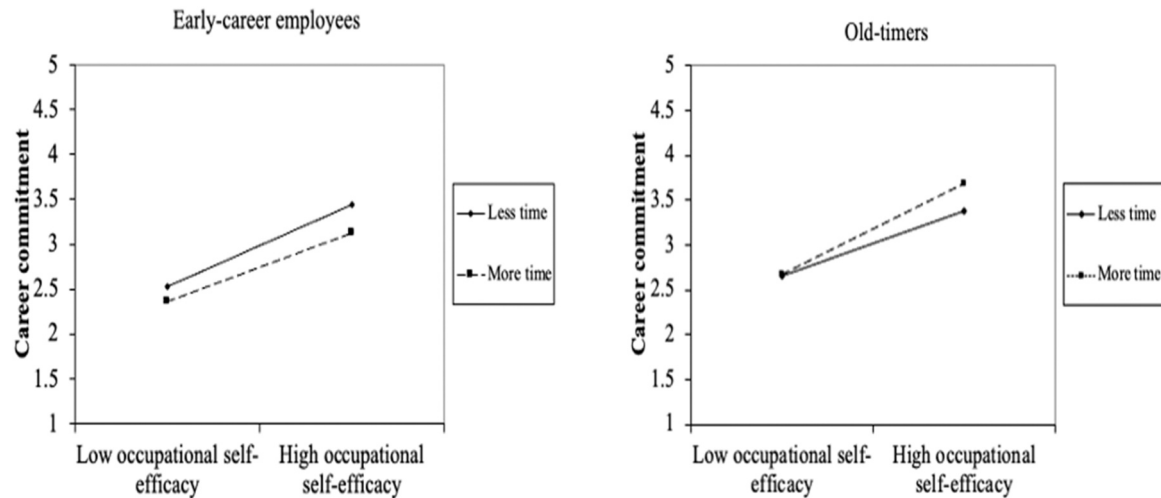


Fig. 4. The Time-varying effect of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment.

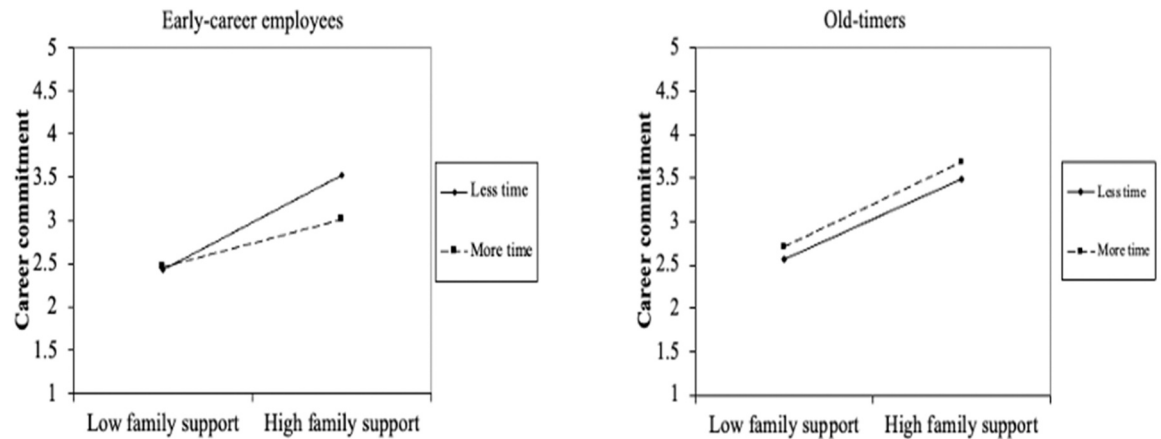


Fig. 5. The time-varying effect of family support on career commitment.

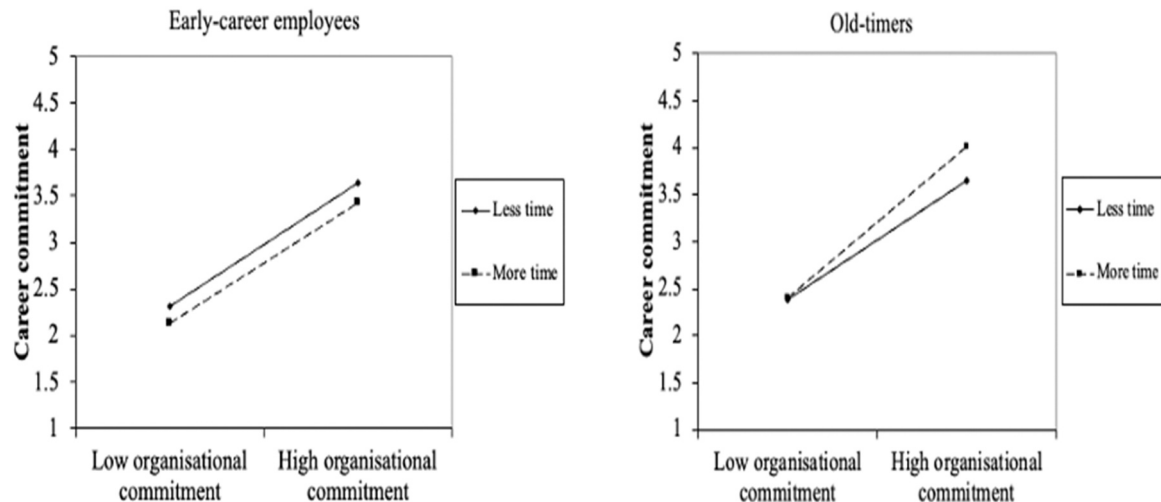


Fig. 6. The time-varying effect of organizational commitment on career commitment.

current workplace, signal the likelihood of the development of a strong occupational identity, which will foster confidence in career prospects (Rodrigues et al., 2020). This work is also the first study to explore the mediating role of organizational commitment in the associations of

career commitment with its antecedents at both the between- and within-person levels. Mediation analysis is used to demonstrate the causality that reflects change within a person, and therefore, combining between-person results with longitudinal evidence is more convincing.

This contributes to a robust understanding of the causal processes underlying the association between the antecedents and career commitment.

This research, rooted in the ‘honeymoon-hangover effect’ and ‘uncertainty reduction’ theories, is the first to empirically trace career commitment across various career stages. A noteworthy contribution of this work is to offer longitudinal evidence in support of previous cross-sectional results. Specifically, that although early-career hospitality workers initially exhibit a stronger passion for the industry, they often experience disillusionment over time (e.g., Mooney and Jameson, 2018). Additionally, the findings also resonate with the insights provided by Dobrow et al., (2018), who found a positive relationship between industry experience and career satisfaction. However, compared to these extant studies that utilized a between-person design, the current research method provided a rare opportunity to study the same individuals over time, and to precisely sketch a portrait of the developmental pattern of career commitment. These findings extend existing literature, and affirm the applicability of the mentioned theories in vocational research, providing a robust empirical foundation for future studies with similar themes in terms of research design or interpretation.

This study also represents the first attempt to examine the joint influence of antecedents and time on career commitment, complementing existing research (e.g., Okurame, 2012) that has predominantly focused on gender and culture as moderators. It challenges the implicit proposition in prior cross-sectional studies that the effect sizes of antecedents remain constant. The novel findings demonstrate not only the impact of certain antecedents and mediators on career commitment, but also reveal that the strength of their effects varies over time. Building on career development theories (e.g., socio-emotional selectivity theory and human capital theory), the results support the core idea in these theories, i.e., that tailored approaches, based on career stages, are essential in career management and employee retention. While the moderating role of time-related constructs (e.g., tenure and age) has been detected in hospitality research (Kim et al., 2019), most of the previous studies lack reliability without the support of longitudinal data. This study resonates with (and extends from) these studies by proposing a method for a more nuanced assessment of the moderating role of time, through repeated measurements and time-varying effect analysis.

This study also sets up a methodological example for future hospitality studies aiming to use longitudinal design on this career-related topic. For instance, the importance of appropriately using multilevel modeling in order to take full advantage of the longitudinal data, has been highlighted. While both the group-mean, or grand-mean centering strategies are accepted for time-varying variables (Level-1), the present study empirically reveals that group-mean centering should be given priority as it allows it to be methodologically possible to eliminate between-person confounds in the time-varying variable at Level-1. Such between-variance, calculated by the group-mean centering method, can be added back to the model at Level-2 and concomitantly examined with within-person variance, generating a comprehensive understanding of the predictive power of the variable. The methodological design also answers the call from Singer and Willet (2003) to treat time more flexibly in longitudinal research (e.g., as a predictor or a moderator). By doing so, the observation of the developmental trajectory of time-varying variables over time, as well as the change in the magnitude of effect sizes, are possible.

5.2. Practical implications

The current research reveals that the career commitment of hospitality employees is affected by their occupational self-efficacy. This finding will assist practitioners in extending the approaches they use to evaluate employee commitment. Particularly, when choosing job applicants, low occupational self-efficacy is recommended to be an exclusion criterion, as such employees may have low motivation to perform their job to a high standard, and may increase costs related to

turnover issues. Rigotti et al.’s (2008) self-assessment tool is frequently recommended as a concise and reliable measure of occupational self-efficacy for use in the recruitment and selection process. The observed ‘within-person’ fluctuations in occupational self-efficacy demonstrate its malleable nature. Methods to develop occupational self-efficacy thus require adequate attention from management. For instance, an error-tolerant work environment should be established to encourage employees with low occupational self-efficacy to attempt challenging tasks, develop ambitious career goals, and in turn, become more committed to their career choice. An error-tolerant environment can be created by encouraging open discussions about errors when they occur, and genuinely working together to help subordinates deal with service failures (Wang et al., 2021a).

Family support has a beneficial impact on career commitment. Proactively and openly pouring out true thoughts and work experiences (e.g., feelings of stressful work events) to family members on a regular basis will release pressure and enhance resilience. In this way, family members can also provide effective support to the worker. From an organizational perspective, with the aim of helping employees obtain more understanding from family, managers should implement policies that bring employees and their families closer together. Common family-friendly practices include, but are not limited to, flexible work arrangements, access to subsidized childcare services, and paid parental leave (Remery & Schippers, 2019). Another example could be the celebration of an employee’s achievements in front of their families. A social event such as this not only creates an opportunity to acknowledge the sacrifices a family makes in support of an employees’ work, but can also help family members to understand more about hospitality work, especially the difficulties associated with hospitality occupations.

The findings also reveal the influence of the antecedents on career commitment via organizational commitment. Organizational commitment thus should be considered a vital proxy and prerequisite for career commitment. Management is encouraged to transform the HRM system from a ‘control’ to a ‘people-oriented’ mode, to ensure that employees feel that they are seen by the company as being assets, rather than expenses, which in turn will enhance identification with the organization (Rossidis et al., 2021). According to social exchange theory (Homans, 1961), in order to sustain employees’ psychological contract with an organization, it is crucial to comprehend and satisfy their needs. Conducting anonymous surveys and having informal interviews with subordinates in out-of-work gatherings helps to capture the true needs of workers, and demonstrates personalized care for them, thereby building empathy and commitment between the two parties.

The observed ‘hangover’ effect in the career commitment of early-career employees needs special attention, as a reduction in commitment is a signal that there is an incongruence between the vocational expectations of the newcomers, and the reality of a hospitality career. To reduce this effect, institutions should ensure that students have a realistic knowledge of the industry’s conditions, which in turn, will shape realistic employment expectations. For example, apart from internships, institutions need to add more experiential learning to the curriculum and provide more chance for students to interact with industry professionals (e.g., inviting guest speakers and organizing networking events) (Brown et al., 2015). From an employer’s perspective, organizations should provide potential employees with adequate information about the nature of a hospitality role, rather than overstating the positive aspects. Managers may wish to proactively inform employees of the possibility of latent change in career attitudes in the early-career stage, and offer career planning assistance and skill development programs to underline the possibilities for professional advancement associated with the increase of tenure. Building mentorships between early-career employees and old-timers who are experiencing an upward career commitment trajectory may be another strategy to foster positive change in newcomers’ career development.

The findings also demonstrate that the predictive power of the antecedents varies across time. Practically, this implies that the

importance of an antecedent may increase or decrease if the weight an employee places on it changes. An understanding of how such weight changes over time can help practitioners implement the right HR interventions for the right person at the right time. The accelerating effects of organizational commitment and occupational self-efficacy exhibit that their importance to old-timers increases over time. Accordingly, managers are encouraged to provide old-timers with more empowerment over time, to make them feel valued, thereby boosting their psychological ownership toward the organization and commitment to the career. Leadership training is therefore necessary to help managers understand the importance of empowerment, enabling them to share power and demonstrate confidence in their subordinates.

The findings emphasize the importance of family support to the career commitment of early-career employees, but reveal that this importance diminishes as time passes. This to some extent reflects that the shorter the industry tenure, the more family conflicts early-career employees tend to experience, perhaps due to a lack of autonomy and flexibility in work (Reichl et al., 2014). While long and irregular working hours are inevitable for most hospitality jobs, organizations should strive to provide entrants with enough time (e.g., flexible working hours and leave policies) to spend with their family. This will assist them in obtaining more understanding and support from family members, which is critical if they are to stay in hospitality for the long-term. Taken together, the results of the time-varying analysis remind managers to avoid using 'one size fits all' human resource strategies. Rather, they should take time-related factors into account when tailoring their retention strategies and modify them according to the needs of employees with different ages and levels of industry experience.

5.3. Limitations and future research

As with all research, the current study has some limitations, and these will provide avenues for future studies. The measurement model tests indicate that the variables in this study have high reliability and validity across time, however, all samples were drawn from China. There has been growing interest in the impact of employees' cultural background on their work commitment (e.g., Wang et al., 2021b). It is possible that the relationships between the antecedents and work commitment can be moderated by culture. Western employees in low power distance cultures, unlike their Eastern counterparts, tend to feel more secure in taking on challenging tasks and are comfortable discussing career goals with management (see Hofstede, 2011). In this scenario, self-efficacious employees, with a 'can do' attitude, are likely to seize more career development opportunities. Consequently, the positive impact of occupational self-efficacy on career commitment is anticipated to be stronger in low power distance contexts. Future studies are required to test the research model on samples from other geographic areas.

Another concern arises from the current data, which, despite being collected from various hotel departments, still exhibits a bias toward accommodation employees, with the majority from mid-to-large scale hotels. Therefore, expanding the sample size to include a broader range of hospitality sectors (e.g., restaurants, clubs, casinos, etc.) is imperative to enhance the generalizability of the findings. The longitudinal study's results may also be influenced by attrition bias, another type of sampling bias. While the attrition rate was acceptable, it is notable that unsatisfied workers tend to drop out more in longitudinal studies (e.g., Jellic et al., 2010). This could affect the representativeness of findings if those experiencing a sharper decline in career commitment leave before completing follow-up surveys. Future studies could explore such methods as personalized survey invitations, shorter questionnaires, or increased incentives to reduce attrition.

In addition, the present study utilized a three-wave longitudinal design and was unable to test whether the developmental trajectory of career commitment could be portrayed in a non-linear fashion. Several existing studies (e.g., Son and Ok, 2019) have found that during the later

period of hangover, the deterioration rate of newcomers' work satisfaction will gradually become slower. Technically, the adoption of a time series approach with more than three survey waves and over a longer period of time, could help future researchers to scrutinize any curvilinear changes in career commitment. Such a research design would also allow the use of alternative methods for conducting time-varying effect analysis with stronger statistical power, such as Cox's (1972) survival regression method, and Hastie and Tibshirani's (1993) time-varying effect model.

In order to reduce respondent fatigue, only questions closely related to the variables of interest were asked. Future research is required to extend the research framework by integrating other antecedents of career commitment. Specifically, a within-person examination of the negative determinants (e.g., role ambiguity and customer mistreatment) would shed more light on the triggers for negative change in career commitment. For instance, role ambiguity induces uncertainty and stress, fostering a sense of disengagement and diminishing the emotional connection with the organization (Üngüren and Arslan, 2021). Consequently, this may impact a worker's long-term commitment to their career. Longitudinal qualitative research is called for, as this would juxtapose the narratives that detail the impact of both positive and negative antecedents on career commitment.

Another point for consideration is that the present study incorporated four control variables that have frequently been adopted by prior vocational research (Ayodele et al., 2020), to address potential confounding effects on career commitment. It is plausible, however, that other confounding variables could have influenced the findings. For instance, respondents' personality, emotional intelligence, and career competence were not assessed. Future studies could consider including these factors as control variables, as they could potentially impact the career commitment of hospitality employees (Sultana et al., 2016). Given the nesting of employees within teams or companies, another possible area for future longitudinal research would be to adopt a three-level design to examine the influence of group- (e.g., team cohesion) or organizational-level attributes (e.g., organizational career support) on career commitment. For example, when team cohesion is strong, team members may experience increased warmth and support (Jyoti, 2022), leading to a heightened sense of belonging and emotional connection to their work. This strengthened bond could be expected to contribute to their commitment to their careers.

Finally, because of the single-source nature of the study, the current findings may be susceptible to common method bias. For example, existing evidence (e.g., Khalid and Ali, 2005) indicates that self-rated work-related attitudes tend to be significantly higher than those of supervisors, due to an inclination toward organizationally desirable responses. This could potentially overvalue the positive effects of antecedents on career commitment. Future studies are recommended to validate the findings through the collection of data from diverse sources (e.g., colleagues or supervisors).

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Peter B. Kim: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Simon Milne:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft. **Dan Zhu:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **In-Jo Park:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial

interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. measurements

Occupational self-efficacy

1. I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.
2. When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions
3. Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.
4. My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.
5. I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.
6. I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job.

Family support

1. My family is willing to listen to me when I talk about my career.
2. My family understands how important my career is to me.
3. Someone in my family asks me regularly about my career progression.
4. When my work gets very demanding, someone in my family will take on extra household duties and/or childcare responsibilities.
5. If I need to work late as a result of my career role, I can count on someone in my family to take care of everything at home.
6. When I have career-related setbacks to overcome, my family tries to do more work around the house.
7. Family members adjust their schedules to meet my work needs.

Organizational commitment

1. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
2. I do feel like "part of the family" at my organization.
3. I do feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.
4. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
5. I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.

Career commitment

1. If I could go to a different job in an industry other than hospitality which paid the same, I would not do so.
2. I definitely want a career for myself in the hospitality industry.
3. If I could do it all over again, I would still choose to work in the hospitality industry.
4. If I had all the money, I needed without working, I would probably still continue to work in the hospitality industry.
5. I like this vocation too well to give it up.
6. This is the ideal vocation for a life work.
7. I never feel disappointed that I ever entered the hospitality industry.

Appendix B. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) at each point of time

CFA analysis (Time-1)				
Time-1 Variables	Standardised factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Occupational self-efficacy		0.93	0.93	0.70
OSE1	0.81			
OSE2	0.86			
OSE3	0.85			
OSE4	0.84			
OSE5	0.82			
OSE6	0.83			
Family support		0.91	0.94	0.70
FS1	0.77			
FS2	0.82			
FS3	0.88			
FS4	0.74			
FS5	0.83			
FS6	0.93			
FS7	0.88			
Organizational commitment		0.95	0.94	0.78
OC1	0.79			
OC2	0.86			
OC3	0.91			
OC4	0.94			
OC5	0.92			

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CFA analysis (Time-1)				
Time-1 Variables	Standardised factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Career commitment		0.95	0.95	0.72
CC1	0.74			
CC2	0.84			
CC3	0.88			
CC4	0.88			
CC5	0.92			
CC6	0.92			
CC7	0.76			

Note. OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment; CR = Composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

CFA analysis (Time-2)				
Time-2 Variables	Standardised factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Occupational self-efficacy		0.91	0.88	0.63
OSE1	0.77			
OSE2	0.76			
OSE3	0.82			
OSE4	0.76			
OSE5	0.79			
OSE6	0.84			
Family support		0.92	0.95	0.73
FS1	0.87			
FS2	0.89			
FS3	0.85			
FS4	0.77			
FS5	0.80			
FS6	0.94			
FS7	0.84			
Organizational commitment		0.96	0.93	0.83
OC1	0.86			
OC2	0.91			
OC3	0.93			
OC4	0.93			
OC5	0.92			
Career commitment		0.96	0.96	0.76
CC1	0.77			
CC2	0.84			
CC3	0.86			
CC4	0.90			
CC5	0.95			
CC6	0.93			
CC7	0.88			

Note. OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment; CR = Composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

CFA analysis (Time-3)				
Time-3 Variables	Standardised factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Occupational self-efficacy		0.93	0.90	0.70
OSE1	0.79			
OSE2	0.91			
OSE3	0.85			
OSE4	0.85			
OSE5	0.77			
OSE6	0.83			
Family support		0.95	0.97	0.81
FS1	0.92			
FS2	0.87			
FS3	0.87			
FS4	0.86			
FS5	0.90			
FS6	0.92			
FS7	0.95			
Organizational commitment		0.96	0.92	0.82
OC1	0.80			
OC2	0.88			
OC3	0.94			
OC4	0.93			
OC5	0.95			
Career commitment		0.96	0.96	0.79
CC1	0.77			
CC2	0.90			

(continued on next page)

(continued)

CFA analysis (Time-3)				
Time-3 Variables	Standardised factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
CC3	0.93			
CC4	0.90			
CC5	0.94			
CC6	0.93			
CC7	0.85			

Note. OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment; CR = Composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

Appendix C. Zero-order correlations among the main variables

Descriptive statistics and Bivariate correlations														
	M	SD	OSE.T1	FS.T1	OC.T1	CC.T1	OSE.T2	FS.T2	OC.T2	CC.T2	OSE.T3	FS.T3	OC.T3	CC.T3
OSE.T1	5.67	0.92	1											
FS.T1	5.51	0.94	.511**	1										
OC.T1	5.62	1.04	.489**	.565**	1									
CC.T1	5.10	1.17	.474**	.573**	.660**	1								
OSE.T2	5.66	0.75	.616**	.528**	.519**	.469**	1							
FS.T2	5.55	0.92	.369**	.668**	.507**	.421**	.604**	1						
OC.T2	5.60	1.02	.525**	.548**	.701**	.544**	.707**	.678**	1					
CC.T2	5.07	1.23	.396**	.421**	.617**	.720**	.570**	.557**	.699**	1				
OSE.T3	5.65	0.77	.584**	.449**	.434**	.417**	.666**	.457**	.513**	.389**	1			
FS.T3	5.49	0.94	.403**	.623**	.411**	.317**	.517**	.616**	.543**	.321**	.496**	1		
OC.T3	5.56	0.96	.473**	.695**	.549**	.622**	.493**	.747**	.531**	.693**	.589**	.396**	1	
CC.T3	5.09	1.20	.417**	.421**	.604**	.747**	.547**	.417**	.624**	.765**	.518**	.396**	.683**	1

Note. OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; FS = Family support; OC = Organizational commitment; CC = Career commitment.

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