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The Relationship Between Organizational Commitment and Position in PostSecondary Education

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND
POSITION IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Linda Brewer Keller

May 2012

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND
POSITION IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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I dedicate this work to my family: to my husband, Ken, who listened to me worry about a host of unfamiliar concerns; to my older son, Ben, who often asked, perhaps with sympathy, if I was done yet and how much longer it would be; to my daughter, Danielle, who would sit and chat with me for a few minutes while I was at the computer; and to my younger son, Michael, who would run in, give me a hug, and dash away again. While I tried to minimize the impact of pursuing this degree on you, that became more difficult as I proceeded. I hope that someday you understand my desire to complete this program. I also dedicate this to my parents, Ben and Mickey Brewer, who instilled in my sisters and me the importance of education at an early age.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND POSITION IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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Organizational commitment has been linked to important employee behaviors and perceptions, including turnover, intent to turnover, absenteeism, and job satisfaction. In spite of its important outcomes, the formation of commitment is not well documented and research concerning antecedents has provided inconsistent results. Little of this research has involved the postsecondary education field and characteristics unique to it. This study investigated the relationship between employee position and organizational commitment in the postsecondary education setting. The model of organizational commitment utilized was the three-component concept developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) composed of affective, continuance, and normative commitment.

Research participants were 2,914 university employees. Using an online survey, participants responded to personal and position-related items and the organizational commitment assessment. The personal variables included were gender, age, and education level. The position-related variables were position as faculty, staff, or administration; full or part-time employment; tenure status; salaried or hourly pay status; years of employment at the university; retirement plan participation; and campus location. The survey also included a free-response item that asked participants why they responded as they did to the commitment items.

As demonstrated by analysis of variance, position had a significant influence on affective, continuance, and normative commitment. For each commitment component,

staff had significantly higher commitment than faculty. A difference was also found between staff and administration for continuance commitment. Hierarchical regression analysis for the personal and position variables yielded significant results for each of the commitment components as well. The block of position variables demonstrated a significant relationship with affective and normative commitment. The blocks of position and personal variables were significantly related to continuance commitment. The study findings concerning the lower organizational commitment of faculty, combined with the body of research demonstrating the outcomes associated with organizational commitment, should indicate to institutional leaders the need to be aware of and focus on organizational commitment as an important employee attitude.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Why does one employee work for an organization for 20 years while another employee of the same organization leaves after only 3 months? Why does one employee work harder and longer than another who does only the minimum required to maintain employment? Productivity and turnover are two important aspects of organizational success. Employee turnover is an expensive event on several levels, and higher turnover is associated with lower financial performance (Huselid, 1995). Direct costs associated with turnover may include the expense of recruitment advertising, travel-related expenses, pre-employment screening, and training. Indirect costs may include the time spent to review applications, interview candidates, and negotiate a hire as well as losses in productivity from position vacancies and the orientation and training of new employees. When an employee leaves an organization, the knowledge and experience of that employee is lost to the organization as well. Cascio (1991) developed an arithmetic model to estimate the costs of turnover, and others (Tziner & Birati, 1996) have suggested improvements to the model. Estimates of turnover costs range from 50% to 200% of a position's annual compensation (Emmerich, 2001), although the cost of turnover has received little attention from researchers (Bruce, 2005). As the annual turnover rate for the United States was 37% in 2009 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010), turnover is an expensive as well as a pervasive issue for organizations.

With the extent and expense of turnover, researchers have investigated the sources and causes of turnover. Among other factors and concepts, turnover has been linked to organizational commitment (e.g., Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). In one of the seminal works on organizational commitment, *commitment* was defined as the measure of an employee's

identification and involvement with an organization (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Rooted in motivation theory, Porter's conceptualization of organizational commitment included a belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals, a willingness to exert considerable effort for an organization, and a desire to remain a member of an organization. Organizational commitment was later re-conceptualized as a three-component construct composed of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Under the Meyer and Allen (1991) framework, commitment was composed of an employee's emotional connection and identification with an organization (i.e., affective commitment), an employee's recognition of the costs of leaving an organization (i.e., continuance commitment), and an employee's feelings of obligation to remain with an organization (normative commitment).

In addition to turnover, organizational commitment has been linked to important employee attitudes and behaviors. These include withdrawal cognitions (e.g., Fuller, Hester, Barnett, Frey, & Relyea, 2006), intent to turnover (e.g., Aryee, Wyatt, & Min, 1991; Bedeian, 2007), intention to search (e.g., Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), tardiness (e.g., Dishon-Berkovits & Koslowsky, 2002), and absenteeism (e.g., Hausknecht, Hiller, & Vance, 2008). A strong relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction has also been indicated (e.g., Aryee et al., 1991; Bedeian, 2007; Boehman, 2007; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), but the nature and causality of the relationship between the two remain unclear (Meyer, 1997). These and other studies have established the importance of organizational commitment as a concept of interest to organizational leaders.

Problem Statement

Research concerning the outcome effects or consequences of organizational commitment has provided significant results. As such, researchers have investigated the conditions or qualities associated with organizational commitment. These studies have explored the relationship between organizational commitment and a wide variety of antecedent variables, including but not limited to personal, position, and organizational characteristics (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Research concerning the formation of organizational commitment has resulted in inconsistent findings. Possible explanations for this include the wide variety of antecedent variables that have been proposed and researched and the inability to interpret research results unequivocally (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Some studies have found a relationship between organizational commitment and personal characteristics of the employee, such as gender (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), age (Goulet & Frank, 2002; Morris & Sherman, 1981), and education (Morris & Sherman, 1981). However, other research has not supported these conclusions (Bedeian, 2007; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Boehman, 2007; Giffords, 2003). Some research has found a relationship between organizational commitment and position characteristics, such as salary (Schroder, 2008) and employment length (Fuller et al., 2006; Marchiori & Henkin, 2004; Porter et al., 1974), while other research has not (Bedeian, 2007; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Wallace, 1995). Some studies have found a relationship between commitment and organizational characteristics, such as organizational size (Su, Baird, & Blair, 2009) and organizational type (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002), while other research has not (Al-Qarioti &

Al-Enezi, 2004). With these conflicting results, additional research is needed concerning the antecedent variables of organizational commitment.

While some characteristics can be found in many organizations, some organizations have unique qualities that set them apart from other organizations. Institutions of postsecondary education have distinctive cultures (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008) and features (Kezar, 2001) that differentiate them from other organizations. These differences present additional opportunities for inquiry into organizational commitment exclusive to the field of postsecondary education. Features of postsecondary schools may include the employment of faculty, a tenure system, and policies related to academic freedom and shared governance. Unlike most businesses, most postsecondary education institutions do not hold a for-profit disposition, but rather are public or not-for-profit (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Such unique qualities may influence the organizational commitment of employees of postsecondary educational institutions and therefore provide additional variables for study.

While much research has been conducted on organizational commitment, less research has been conducted exploring organizational commitment in the unique setting of postsecondary institutions. Due to their unique nature, employees of these institutions may experience commitment differently than employees of other organizations. Two studies (Fuller et al., 2006; Schroder, 2008) have indicated that a relationship between organizational commitment and position (i.e., faculty, staff, or administration) may exist. Using only the affective commitment component of organizational commitment, Fuller et al. (2006) reported a significant relationship between affective commitment and position for employees of a university. Faculty had significantly lower affective commitment

scores than the staff and the administrator groups. The difference between the staff and administrator groups was not significant. In a study designed to investigate predictor variables of organizational commitment for university faculty and administrators, Schroder (2008) found a different set of predictors for faculty and for administrators. As this study used the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Porter et al., 1974) as the organizational commitment measure, investigation into the components of commitment was not undertaken. While these two studies have begun the investigation into the relationship between organizational commitment and position, additional research is needed.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and position within the field of postsecondary education. The effect of position on organizational commitment has received little attention in the literature; however, two studies (Fuller et al., 2006; Schroder, 2008) have provided support for the existence of a relationship between the two variables. Neither of these studies explored the relationship between position and the three components of organizational commitment (i.e., affective, continuance, and normative commitment).

An employee's position as faculty, administration, or staff may differentially influence the formation of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. As the three components were designed to assess different aspects of commitment, employees in these groups may experience the components of commitment differently. The current study continued and expanded the investigation into the relationship between organizational commitment and position in the field of postsecondary education.

Research Questions

1. Does the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
2. Does the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
3. Does the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
4. Is the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
5. Is the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
6. Is the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

General Methodology

This section provides a brief overview of the methodology utilized for this study. It includes information concerning the research participants, survey instrument, and data collection methods. A more detailed description of the methodology can be found in the third chapter of this work.

Employees from a large, public university in the southern United States participated in the study. After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, an email was sent to university employees briefly describing the study and its voluntary nature and inviting them to participate. The email noted that participants would be offered a chance to win a prize in a drawing. The email contained a hyperlink to the online survey

instrument. Reminder emails containing the same information as the initial email were sent 7 and 14 days after the initial email. The online instrument was deactivated 21 days after the initial email.

The survey instrument for this study was placed on a Web-based online survey platform. Organizational commitment was assessed using the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scale (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This scale is well established in the organizational commitment literature (see Allen & Meyer, 1996 for a discussion on construct validity). As demonstrated through meta-analysis, the reliability of each of the three components is high: .82 for the affective commitment scale (ACS), .76 for continuance commitment scale (CCS), and .73 for normative commitment scale (NCS; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002). Permission was obtained from the authors of the instrument for use in this study. Based on previous organizational commitment research, the survey instrument also contained items related to personal and position characteristics, including position, and a free-response item which asked participants to describe why they answered to the commitment items as they did.

After the deactivation of the online instrument, the data were downloaded into a statistical analysis program and reviewed for missing data and outliers. To create a score for affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, the scores from the six scale items were averaged. For analysis, the components of organizational commitment were the dependent variables while the position and other personal and position characteristics were the independent variables. To compare affective, continuance, and normative commitment across position (Research Questions 1, 2, and 3), data were analyzed with a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for each

of the component scales. Multiple regression analysis for personal and position characteristic variables were used to ascertain their impact on the commitment components and the amount of variance accounted for by the variables (Research Questions 4, 5, and 6).

Definitions

Administration: employees who “plan, direct, or coordinate research, instructional, student administration and services, and other educational activities at postsecondary institutions, including universities, colleges, and junior and community colleges” (United States Department of Labor, 2011).

Affective commitment: a component of organizational commitment reflecting “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Continuance commitment: a component of organizational commitment reflecting the employee’s “awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Faculty: “Persons identified by the institution as such and whose assignments include conducting instruction, research, or public service as a principal activity (or activities). Faculty may also include [administrative positions] if their principal activity is instruction combined with research and/or public service” (United States Department of Education, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary.asp>).

Normative commitment: a component of organizational commitment reflecting the employee’s “feeling of obligation to continue employment” with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Organizational commitment: a psychological state concerning an employee's relationship with the employing organization based on the employee's affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs of leaving the organization, and sense of obligation to remain with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Position: categorization of non-student employees of postsecondary education institutions as faculty, administration, or staff.

Postsecondary education: "a formal instructional program whose curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school [including] programs whose purpose is academic, vocational, and continuing professional education, and excludes avocational and adult basic education programs" (United States Department of Education, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary.asp>).

Staff: employees of postsecondary education institutions who are not primarily faculty, administration, or students.

Assumptions

In conducting this study, the researcher assumed that the participants responded to the survey in an honest and accurate manner. As the research investigated an employee's relationship with the employing organization, participant responses may have been influenced by response bias and therefore indicated more positive responses than were accurate. Assurances of confidentiality and anonymity and the brevity of the survey instrument may have helped to dissipate these concerns. It was assumed that the data were accurately transferred from the research participants' keystrokes or mouse-clicks to the online survey platform to the retrieval site for data accumulation. Researchers have

found support for the use of Web-based surveys for data collection (Cobanoglu, Warde, & Moreo, 2001; Sills & Song, 2002).

Limitations and Delimitations

The non-experimental design of this study made it susceptible to internal validity threats. As random assignment of research participants to a particular type of position was not feasible, differences due to extraneous variables may exist among these employee groups. Additionally, due to the voluntary nature of the study, employees that chose to participate in this study may not be representative of all employees at the postsecondary institution.

This study included a limited selection of personal and position-related characteristics. Inclusion of all such variables was not feasible as including all such variables would have required an extensive survey, the length of which would have been arduous for participants. The study was also limited to the employees of one institution. Organizational characteristics have been shown to influence organizational commitment (Buka & Bilgic, 2010; Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002). By limiting the study to one postsecondary education institution, effects due to organizational differences were minimized.

As the study was conducted with the employees of one public university, the results may not be generalizable to other types of postsecondary institutions. As organizational type has been shown to impact organizational commitment (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002), this may be particularly true for for-profit postsecondary institutions. The degree to which this institution is dissimilar to other institutions will affect the generalizability of the results.

Significance of Study

Previous research has linked organizational commitment to important employee attitudes and behaviors, including turnover, job satisfaction, and absenteeism. Less is known about the formation and antecedents of organizational commitment. While some studies have demonstrated a relationship between organizational commitment and personal, position, and organizational characteristics, more research is needed. Additionally, little research has focused on the unique environment of postsecondary education.

This study investigated the relationship between the components of organizational commitment and position in the field of postsecondary education. The knowledge gained contributed to the understanding of the formation of organizational commitment in postsecondary education. Additionally, differences found in affective, continuance, and normative commitment by position may indicate to educational leaders the most appropriate places to direct organizational resources in order to increase the commitment in its employees. Increases in commitment could lead to higher employee satisfaction as well as lower absenteeism and turnover.

In this chapter, the concept of organization commitment was introduced. Its relationship with several important employee outcome variables, including turnover, was briefly discussed, as was the general methodology of this study. The next chapter delves more deeply into the development of the organizational commitment construct, its relationship with other variables, and provides a review of the literature related to these topics.

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

In this chapter, the previous research and literature related to organizational commitment is reviewed and the relationship to the theoretical framework of motivation theory is outlined. The development of the construct of organizational commitment is examined, as is the development of its measurement. Following this, research that links organizational commitment to employee outcomes as well as personal, position, and organizational characteristics is reviewed. The chapter is concluded with a section focusing on the study of organizational commitment within postsecondary education.

Motivation Theory

Organizational commitment has a foundation in organizational behavior and motivation theory. Organizational behavior, or the study of human behavior in an organizational setting, has long been interested in what motivates people at work. Many theories have been developed to explain motivation, including theories by Maslow, Alderfer, Herzberg, Vroom, and many others.

Maslow (1970) developed a hierarchy of needs to explain human motivation. According to the theory, humans were motivated from within to reach their full potential, which Maslow called self-actualization. To reach this goal, people progressed through five levels of needs: basic physiological, safety and security, social affiliation or belonging, esteem, and self-actualization or self-realization. Under this hierarchy, lower level needs had to be satisfied before higher-level needs could be addressed. This was referred to as prepotency. Although the needs were arranged hierarchically, often depicted as a pyramid, people could progress forward or move backward through the levels. In the lower four levels, motivation was created because the needs specific to

each level were not met. These were therefore referred to as deficiency needs. Needs in the self-actualization fifth level were called growth needs because they result from the need of a person to develop rather than from a deficiency.

From Maslow's hierarchy, a related theory of motivation was developed by Alderfer called ERG Theory, standing for *existence, relatedness, and growth* (Jex, 2002). Instead of five levels, Alderfer's model had three, in which physiological and safety needs were combined to form existence needs, social affiliation was represented by relatedness needs, and esteem and self-actualization were combined to form growth needs. Unlike Maslow, Alderfer's theory did not require needs to be met in a hierarchical manner, but rather allowed that persons could focus on needs from multiple levels at the same time.

Herzberg (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) proposed a two-factor theory of motivation called the motivation-hygiene theory. Based on interviews with accountants and engineers in Pennsylvania, Herzberg theorized that the presence of certain characteristics led to satisfaction (i.e., motivators), while the absence of a different set of characteristics led to dissatisfaction (i.e., hygiene factors). This was a marked departure from the traditional viewpoint that satisfaction was the opposite or lack of dissatisfaction and vice versa. Under Herzberg's theory, satisfaction and dissatisfaction were separate concepts created by different factors.

According to Herzberg's theory, motivators or motivating factors stemmed from characteristics of the job, including the work itself, competency, achievement, recognition, and advancement. These have also been called intrinsic factors. Their presence contributed to satisfaction; however, their absence did not create dissatisfaction.

Rather, dissatisfaction was related to the hygiene or maintenance factors, which stemmed from the work environment. These included characteristics such as working conditions, salary, benefits, supervision, relationships with supervisors and coworkers, and organizational policies and have been called extrinsic factors. The absence of these factors created dissatisfaction; however, their presence does not create satisfaction. Herzberg also theorized that a minimum level of maintenance factors had to be present in order for motivating factors to be effective.

In contrast to need-based theories, Vroom's Expectancy Theory was based on the linkages between employee effort, performance, and outcomes (Jex, 2002). Under this model, employee effort was a function of the degree to which employees perceived that effort would lead to successful performance (i.e., expectancy), that performance would lead to an expected outcome (i.e., instrumentality), and the employee's value of the expected outcome (i.e., valence). Therefore, employees directed their efforts to tasks they believed they could perform and for which they would obtain outcomes that they valued.

Motivation theories have attempted to explain employee motivation and satisfaction at work and have contributed to the understanding of these phenomena. In addition to the work by Maslow, Alderfer, Herzberg, and Vroom, other theories include Adam's Equity Theory, Homan's Social Exchange Theory, Likert's Management Systems Theory, Locke's Goal-Setting Theory, and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (Jex, 2002). Researchers continue to explore employee motivation and satisfaction. Over time, one concept that has demonstrated a strong relationship with employee

satisfaction is organizational commitment (e.g., Boehman, 2007; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Porter et al., 1974).

Organizational Commitment

While organizational commitment has a foundation in motivation theory, it is a separate construct, with a complement of research on which it is based. The following review into the development of the construct begins with the work of Porter et al. (1974) and highlights the development of the construct. The three-component theory of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) is discussed.

Construct development.

In one of the seminal works on organizational commitment, Porter et al. (1974) defined organizational commitment as the measure of a person's identification and involvement with an organization. Porter et al. further characterized the construct as comprising three components: "(a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a definite desire to maintain organizational membership" (p. 604). For the study, Porter et al. compared the ability of organizational commitment and job satisfaction to predict turnover. It was theorized that commitment would be related to job satisfaction, but that commitment would represent a more comprehensive connection between the employee and the organization (Porter et al., 1974). In the study, organizational commitment and job satisfaction were assessed at multiple points over time rather than a single measurement. This allowed the researchers to explore the relationship of organizational commitment and job satisfaction to turnover as employment progress and turnover occurred.

To assure that turnover occurred during the study, Porter et al. (1974) chose a subject pool with a historically high turnover rate, psychiatric technician trainees from a state hospital. Sixty trainees from two training classes were included in the study. The classes did not differ significantly on gender or education and their selection method, training, assignments, and instructors were the same. Therefore, the two classes were combined into one group for analysis.

To measure organizational commitment, Porter et al. (1974) created the OCQ. The 15-item questionnaire included items designed to measure the employees' perceptions of their loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization's goals, and acceptance of the organization's values. Subjects responded on a 7-point Likert scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The Cronbach alpha for the measure over the four testing periods ranged from .82 to .93 (Porter et al., 1974). Job satisfaction was measured with the Job Descriptive Index, which was composed of five subscales based on satisfaction with supervision, co-workers, work, pay, and promotion. Subjects completed the measures voluntarily and in person on four different occasions: 10 weeks before the end of the training, 2 weeks before the end of the training, 2 weeks after the end of the training, and 6 weeks after the end of the training. Information on the subsequent turnover was gathered from the employing organization for 8 months after the training was complete.

Data were divided into two groups according to the subjects' continuance or termination of employment. The comparison of the demographic characteristics of the groups revealed a significant difference due to age. This variable was controlled for in subsequent analyses. Discriminant analysis showed significant differences between the

continuing and terminating subjects at the third and fourth measurements, 2 weeks after the end of the training and 6 weeks after the end of the training, respectively. For both of these periods, organizational commitment and job satisfaction factors accounted for 21% of the variance in turnover. Of this, organizational commitment was a primary contributor. The difference between the groups was not significant at the first and second measurements, 10 weeks before the end of the training and 2 weeks before the end of the training, respectively.

Porter et al. (1974) conducted additional analysis to examine the relationship of organization commitment to turnover without the effects of job satisfaction. Partial correlations between organizational commitment and turnover, when holding overall job satisfaction constant, were significant for the latter three of the four testing periods. These findings support the unique contribution of organizational commitment to turnover.

The research of Porter et al. (1974) demonstrated that organizational commitment is not static but changes over time. It also demonstrated that the inverse relationship between organization commitment and turnover grows stronger as the employee approaches turnover. The study's results also supported the distinction between organizational commitment and job satisfaction as related but separate constructs.

As organizational commitment continued to be researched, the construct was further tested, defined, and compared to other related concepts. Morrow (1983) examined the theoretical development and measurement of work commitment, in which organizational commitment was included. In a review of the literature, Morrow found 30 forms of work commitment. Based on their higher frequency of use in a social science

citation index, Morrow concentrated on five focus areas for work commitment and their related constructs: Protestant work ethic endorsement for value focus, career salience for career focus, job involvement and work as a central life interest for job focus, organizational commitment for organizational focus, and union commitment for union focus.

Based on a literature review and utilizing facet design, Morrow (1983) examined similarities and differences among the foci for work commitment based on how the concept of commitment had previously been used in the literature. Using previous studies, each form of work commitment was compared with the others based on definition, measurement, reliability, impact from and on other variables, and permanence over time. To assess the concept redundancies among the measures, Morrow also examined the intercorrelations between them from earlier research. Due to a lack of data and the range of intercorrelations found, the analysis was inconclusive.

In the examination of organizational commitment as one conceptualization of work commitment, Morrow (1983) selected the definition and measure developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). Of the forms of work commitment included, Morrow determined that organizational commitment had the least amount of overlap with the other work commitment measures and strong reliability. The antecedents of organizational commitment appeared to be personal characteristics and job setting factors. Morrow noted a lack of research involving the impact of socialization and culture on organizational commitment. Of the work commitment measures included, Morrow found the organizational commitment measure the most likely to change over the span of a lifetime, changing as the employer changes, as the employer implements

changes, and as the employee makes a personal investment in the organization. As such, it was deemed manipulatable.

Based on the examination of previous research, Morrow (1983) concluded that the measures of work commitment considered had some degree of construct contamination. In making recommendations to improve future research, Morrow suggested that work commitment be re-configured with different concepts for different work focus areas. A similar suggestion for organizational commitment was recommended by Reichers (1985).

Like Morrow (1983), Reichers (1985) examined the previous organizational commitment research in an attempt to arrive at consensus concerning the development of the concept. Using previous research as a foundation, Reichers developed a new theoretical framework for organizational commitment that incorporated multiple commitment foci. The foci were based on multiple constituencies both inside and outside the organization.

In reviewing the organizational commitment literature, Reichers (1985) found a consistently demonstrated relationship between organizational commitment and turnover as well as other withdrawal behaviors. She questioned whether these results were due in part to the inclusion of items related to intentions to quit in the commonly used OCQ (Porter et al., 1974). If the measure and the outcome to which it is being related are redundant, the findings could be artifactual. Reichers suggested that future assessments of organizational commitment should remove redundancies regarding turnover.

Reichers (1985) noted that the previous research on organizational commitment had not taken into account the nature of the organization. Rather, the studies had focused on intra-personal or personal variables in examining organizational commitment.

Reichers observed, “Because it is the organization that is presumed to be the focus of the individual’s commitment, attention to the nature of the organization seems warranted” (p. 469).

Based on the review, Reichers (1985) proposed that organizational commitment would be more accurately defined and measured as a compilation of several different commitments to various groups that make up an organization and with whom the organization is involved. These groups included those within the organization as well as groups external to the organization. This suggestion reflected the viewpoint that an organization was not a single entity, but instead was composed of constituencies or coalitions that can have multiple and sometimes competing goals and values. Reichers’ model of organization commitment included such constituencies as top management, co-workers, community, clients and customers, professional associations, and unions.

Morrow (1983) and Reichers (1985) suggested that organization commitment was inadequately conceptualized and defined. Reviews indicated a lack of consistency and systematic study in the organizational commitment literature. Thus, the basis for the re-development and refinement of the organizational commitment concept was presented. Meyer and Allen (1991) responded to this with their influential, three-component theory of organizational commitment.

In light of the criticisms of organizational commitment in the late 1970’s and the 1980’s, Meyer and Allen (1991) developed a three-component theory of organizational commitment. Based on previous research and theoretical inference, this proposed model of organizational commitment was composed of the following: affective commitment,

continuance commitment, and normative commitment. These three components were not different types of commitment, but interrelated components of one construct.

Affective commitment was “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). Meyer and Allen identified three antecedent categories of affective commitment: personal characteristics, organizational structure, and work experience. This component was very similar to the Porter et al. (1974) definition of organizational commitment and the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974).

Continuance commitment was “an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). This component involved the benefits derived from continuing with an organization and the recognition of the costs associated with leaving an organization. Antecedents of this commitment component included any benefit or feature the employee valued that would be lost if his or her employment was terminated and was influenced by the employee’s perception of alternative employment opportunities.

Normative commitment was “a feeling of obligation to continue employment” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). This feeling of obligation stemmed from socialization factors and in recognition of the organization’s investment in the employee. The least amount of research was found for this component, so it was the most theoretical of the three.

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), much research had focused on the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover or turnover intentions. They suggested that commitment should also be studied in terms of other work-related

variables, such as attendance, effort, and performance. They also noted a lack of research investigating the development of organizational commitment within employees.

Several years later, Allen and Meyer (1996) examined the construct validity of the three-component theory of organizational commitment and of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales. In their review of the performance of the ACS, CCS, and NCS in research studies, Allen and Meyer gathered information on the scales concerning their reliability, their factor structures, and their relationship with other variables. Their review focused on these three areas in order to provide different types of support for construct validity. As there were not a sufficient number of studies utilizing this specific measure of organizational commitment in most instances to conduct a meta-analytic review, they instead explored patterns of evidence across studies.

Allen and Meyer (1996) conducted a literature review for research studies involving at least one of the three component measures of organizational commitment. The median reliability across studies included was .85 for the ACS, .79 for the CCS, and .73 for the NCS, including both the six and eight item scale measures. While only a limited number of studies involved repeated testing over time, those studies that involved multiple administrations of the component scales showed test-retest reliabilities ranging from .38 to .94. According to Allen and Meyer, the four lowest test-retest reliabilities involved assessments that were taken on employees' first day at work. "Employees may find it difficult to respond meaningfully to commitment items when they have almost no experience with the organization" (Allen & Meyer, 1996, p. 255).

In considering studies that examined the factor structure of the component scales, Allen and Meyer (1996) found that most studies supported the distinction of the ACS,

CCS, and NCS. Through factor analysis, several studies suggested the existence of two constructs within the CCS, one based on employment alternatives and the other based on employee sacrifices if the he or she left the organization. While acknowledging the two-factor CCS provided a better fit to the data, they argued that the increase in fit was modest. As the two factors were highly related, they suggested that considering them as two separate factors may have little practical meaning.

In reviewing the relationship between the components of organizational commitment and other related variables, Allen and Meyer (1996) sought to construct a nomological net to support construct validity. Overall, the results provided evidence supporting the construct validity of the measures of ACS, CCS, and NCS. For example, ACS and the OCQ were strongly related, as expected. The ACS also correlated significantly with work attitude measures of job satisfaction and job involvement. The relationships between the three scales and other work-related characteristics exhibited the pattern of results expected for the commitment components. Correlations for the commitment components were generally significant for turnover and turnover intentions, as theorized. From their analysis, Allen and Meyer concluded that the findings “suggest that the three commitment measures are distinguishable from other commonly used work attitude measures and related to measures of ‘antecedent’ and ‘consequence’ variables largely in accordance with theoretical predictions” (p. 271).

In this section, the conception and definition of organizational commitment has been reviewed. Porter et al. (1974) demonstrated the inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover and that this relationship changes over time and as the employee approaches turnover. Morrow (1983) and Reichers (1985) considered

the foci of work commitment and suggested that organizational commitment was not based on a single factor but rather a culmination of multiple commitments. Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a model of organizational commitment that provided an expanded conceptualization of organizational commitment. While embracing the Porter et al. (1974) concept of organizational commitment, they also included additional elements in their three-component model. As the definition of organizational commitment has changed over time, so too, has its measurement.

Measurement development.

Just as the concept of organizational commitment has evolved through research, so has its measurement. Alutto, Hrebiniak, and Alonso (1973) created early measures of organizational and professional commitment. The two assessments were very similar, except one was directed toward the organization while the other was directed toward the occupation.

For the study, subjects were nurses employed by three state hospitals in New York and elementary and secondary teachers employed in two school districts in New York (n = 713). The questionnaire included the measures of commitment being tested, a measure of dissatisfaction with organizational recognition and rewards, and demographic information (i.e., age, years of experience, intention of seeking an advanced degree, marital status, and gender). For the organizational commitment measure, respondents were asked if they would leave their current organization for no increase, a slight increase, or a large increase in pay, status, freedom, or friendlier coworkers. Subjects selected a response of *yes*, *no*, or *uncertain*. For the occupational commitment measure,

subjects were asked the same questions, but directed toward the profession rather than the organization.

In the first step of data analysis, inter-item correlations were reviewed, as well as item correlations with the remainder of the scale items collectively. The inter-item correlations showed that overall the items were generally more highly correlated by the increase level (i.e., no, small, large) than by the benefit under consideration (i.e., pay, status, freedom, or friendlier coworkers). The highest reliability scores were for the items in the *slight increase* category. For subsequent data analysis, only the responses to the *slight increase* category were included. In the second step of data analysis, ANOVA demonstrated significant differences in organizational commitment for age, years of experience, intention of seeking an advanced degree, marital status, gender, and dissatisfaction. Data on post hoc testing were not included, so it is not known where the significant differences were, except that females reported higher organizational commitment than males. Significant differences in occupational commitment were found for all variables except marital status.

Alutto et al. (1973) developed a measure of organizational commitment that included the factors of compensation, status, freedom, and congeniality. However, it focused mainly on tangible benefits that employees received from their employment and on the employee leaving the employers. The scale developed by Porter et al. (1974) presented a measure that considered organizational commitment from a different perspective.

The OCQ by Porter et al. (1974) has been widely used in the literature. As referenced in the previous section, the questionnaire was designed to measure employee

perceptions of organizational loyalty, their willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization's goals, and acceptance of the organization's values. Of the 15 items, six were reverse worded. Subjects indicated their level of agreement or disagreement on a 7-point scale. Reliability scores in the study ranged from .82 to .93 (Porter et al., 1974).

In a test of commitment measures, Brierley (1996) conducted quantitative research to determine if commitment measures would retain their validity if used in a shortened format. The measures included were the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) and the Professional Commitment Questionnaire (PCQ) by Aranya, Pollock, and Armernic (1981). The PCQ was modeled after the OCQ with the items directed toward the profession rather than the organization. The results of other research (Angle & Perry, 1981; Mathieu, 1991; Tetrick & Farkas, 1988, as cited in Brierley, 1996) suggested the 15-item measures were composed of two factors rather than one and proposed shortening the measures to nine items each.

For this research (Brierley, 1996) assessment, 637 questionnaires were sent to chartered accountants in the United Kingdom. Of these, 191 were returned (response rate = 30%). Questionnaires included nine items from the OCQ and nine items from the PCQ. Subjects were also asked about their intentions to leave their organizations, intentions to leave their profession, and their job satisfaction.

Combining the nine items from each scale, the initial factor analysis of the 18 commitment items resulted in a four-factor solution. Four items, one from the OCQ and three from the PCQ, loaded on more than one factor and therefore were deleted from analysis. Subsequent factor analysis again yielded a four-factor solution. The first factor was composed of six items from the OCQ and had a Cronbach alpha of .864. The second

factor included four items from the PCQ and had a Cronbach alpha of .78. The third and fourth factors contained one item each from the OCQ and PCQ and had alpha scores of .64 and .74, respectively (Brierley, 1996).

Based on the results of the factor analysis, correlations were computed between the four factors and intent to leave the organization, intent to leave the profession, and job satisfaction. The OC and PC factors were significantly and negatively correlated with intent to leave the organization and intent to leave the profession. For intent to leave the organization, the correlation with the OC factor was significantly stronger than the correlation with the PC factor. For intent to leave the profession, the correlation with the PC factor was stronger but not significantly stronger than the correlation with the OC factor. All four factors were significantly and positively related to job satisfaction.

While recognizing the limitations of the study, Brierley (1996) suggested more research was needed on the OCQ and PCQ, as they did not result in a two-factor solution by questionnaire as expected. This study was conducted in the United Kingdom while most of the previous organizational commitment research took place in the United States. Differences in culture, organizations, and employee perceptions may affect commitment. However, this research on the validity of shorted forms of the OCQ and PCQ indicated that the nine item scales might not be as valid as the original form.

In a two-part study, Allen and Meyer (1990) conducted research to develop and then test a measure of organizational commitment that reflected their three-component model of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. For the first part, subjects were full-time, non-unionized employees from two manufacturing organizations and one university. A letter of explanation, the questionnaire, and a pre-addressed return

envelope were distributed by the organizations' personnel departments to approximately 500 employees. Subjects (n = 256) voluntarily completed and returned the questionnaires.

The questionnaire consisted of a pool of 66 items related to commitment, including the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979). Other items were adapted from existing scales or created by the authors for the purpose of scale construction and to reflect the three-component model of organizational commitment. Subjects responded to the items on a 7-point scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

After data analysis, items were selected from the initial pool based the individual item's endorsement proportion, item-total correlations, positive and negative keying, and non-redundancy (Allen & Meyer, 1990). While not a primary concern, equal measure length for each component scale was desired. After elimination of items, eight items for each component were selected. These eight items yielded reliability scores of .87 for the ACS, .75 for the CCS, and .79 for the NCS (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Subsequent factor analysis for the 24 items revealed that each item loaded highest on the component for which it was written. The affective scale accounted for 58.8% of the variance, while the continuance and normative scales accounted for 25.8% and 15.4% of the variance, respectively. Both the ACS and the NCS were significantly correlated with the OCQ. Inter-correlations between the three component scales revealed a significant correlation between the affective and normative scales.

In the second part of the study, Allen and Meyer (1990) tested their Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales and their relationship with proposed antecedents. Subjects were full-time, non-unionized employees from a department store,

a hospital, and a university library. A letter of explanation, the questionnaire, and a pre-addressed return envelope were distributed by the organizations' personnel departments to 634 employees. Three hundred thirty-three were voluntarily completed and returned. Questionnaires included the ACS, CCS, and NCS. Several one or two item scales were also included to measure theorized antecedents of each of the scales: job challenge, role clarity, goal clarity, goal difficulty, management receptiveness, peer cohesion, organizational dependability, equitable treatment, personal importance, feedback on performance, participation in decision-making for ACS; transferability of skills, transferability of education, likelihood of relocation upon leaving the organization, self-investment, reduction of pension, proportion of resident in the community, and employment alternatives for the CCS; and loyalty expectations for the NCS.

For the second part of the study, the reliabilities of the developed component scales were .86 for the ACS, .82 for the CCS, and .73 for the NCS (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The correlation ($r = .48$) between the ACS and NCS was again significant. The NCS also correlated significantly with the CCS, but the correlation was weak ($r = .16$). Canonical correlation analysis was used to examine the antecedent variables. Three canonical roots were produced, reflecting the three components. In general, results followed the hypothesized predictions of antecedents for ACS, as well as the CCS, although to a lesser degree.

Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a measure of organizational commitment reflecting their three-component theory of organizational commitment. While grounded in the earlier work of Porter et al. (1974), the scale expanded the measure to encompass

additional components. The three-component measure has been used in many research studies and subjected to testing by many researchers (e.g., Xu & Bassham, 2010).

Xu and Bassham (2010) conducted quantitative research to test the Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment. Specifically, they examined the factor structure of the scale as well as the inter-item correlations. From their results, they recommended the three-factor structure be retained and suggested revisions to some of the items.

Research participants for the study were president assistants from 4-year postsecondary educational institutions in the United States. From an initial pool of 1,334, 279 presidential assistants participated (response rate of 21%). Participants were contacted via email and sent a hyperlink to the online survey instrument. The survey instrument included the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Allen & Meyer; 1990) as well as demographic items (i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, degrees earned, salary, employment status, title, and employment region). As this study was part of a larger study, the instrument also contained items not of interest to this aspect of the research.

Data analysis revealed scale reliability scores of .85, .75, and .66 for the ACS, CCS, and NCS, respectively (Xu & Bassham, 2010). Based on lower correlations with the rest of the subscale, the authors recommended the removal of one continuance commitment item and one normative commitment item and noted weak correlations of two other NCS items. While a three factor, confirmatory factor analysis for the original scale produced significant results, the data-model fit was unacceptable. Xu and Bassham (2010) modified the scale data by removing the two items recommended for deletion and

moving the other two items from the NCS to the ACS based on the item correlations. Confirmatory factor analysis on the modified scales yielded significant results and a stronger fit. They also tested a four-factor model wherein the CCS was separated into two subscales. While this model yielded significant results with good fit, the high correlations between the two CCS subscales led the researchers to discard the four-factor model.

In this section, the measures of organizational commitment were reviewed. Early measures, such as Alutto et al. (1973) and Porter et al. (1974) approached the measure of organizational commitment from different perspectives. The OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) is prevalent in the literature and is still used by researchers (e.g., Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Schroder, 2008). The three-component model measure by Allen and Meyer (1990), while grounded in the work of Porter et al. (1974), expanded the measure of organizational commitment to encompass the components of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The three-component organizational commitment measure has continued to be researched and developed. While modifications have been suggested for the measure, support has been found for the three-factor model (e.g., Xu & Bassham, 2010). In the next section, these assessments of commitment are applied to research studies investigating the outcomes of commitment. This research underscores the importance of the commitment construct and its status as a variable of interest in organizational behavior.

Outcomes of organizational commitment.

In the previous sections, the development of the concept of organizational commitment was reviewed as well as its measurement. In this section, the outcomes of

organizational commitment, including tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover are discussed. Research investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and these employee outcomes has spanned decades and continues to be of interest.

Tardiness and absenteeism.

Research by Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002) investigated the relationship of organizational commitment, time urgency, and the age of the youngest child to employee tardiness. They hypothesized punctual employees would have higher levels of organizational commitment and time urgency and older children than employee who were tardy. Further, they hypothesized that these three variables would differentiate between punctual and tardy employees.

For the study, Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002) mailed questionnaires to 158 employees of an industrial organization in Israel. The questionnaire included the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974); a measure of time urgency; demographic questions, including the age of the youngest child; and the request for permission to obtain data from the employee's personnel file. Completed questionnaires and personnel data were available for 128 employees. Tardiness was measured by the incidences of the employee arriving to work one or more minutes after the scheduled start time. Data were gathered from the organization's time clock system for a 10-month period before questionnaire completion. Based on the organization's strict policy on tardiness, employees who were late one or more times over the 10-month period were categorized as tardy. Employees with no late clock-ins were categorized as punctual.

Data analysis revealed significant differences between the groups for all three variables. Three, independent sample *t* tests demonstrated that tardy employees had

significantly lower levels of organizational commitment and time urgency as well as younger children than employees in the punctual group did. Discriminant function analysis demonstrated that all three variables were predictors of punctuality; however, organization commitment was the strongest predictor.

The study by Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002) demonstrated the relationship between organizational commitment and tardiness. Other researchers have also investigated this relationship. Blau (1986) investigated the effects of organizational commitment and job involvement on employee absenteeism and tardiness. For the quantitative study, 82 staff nurses working at a Midwestern city hospital completed measures of organizational commitment and job involvement. The organizational commitment was measured using a shortened version of the measure by Porter, Crampon, and Smith (1976). Data were subsequently gathered for the subjects' absenteeism and tardiness for the 6-month period following the completion of the survey. For the study, unexcused absences and unexcused tardiness were defined as the frequency of reporting to work late or being absent without permission, respectively.

Through data analysis, Blau (1986) found that organizational commitment and job involvement were significantly and positively correlated. Factor analysis conducted on the two measures' items demonstrated that the measures of organizational commitment and job involvement were empirically independent. Organizational commitment was significantly and negatively correlated with unexcused tardiness; however, the correlation for unexcused absences was not significant. Job involvement did not significantly correlate with unexcused absences or unexcused tardiness. Hierarchical regression analysis showed that organizational commitment explained a significant portion of the

variance (3.7%) in unexcused tardiness but not for unexcused absences. Main effects for job involvement were not significant for either dependent variable. The interaction term of organizational commitment by job involvement was significant for tardiness and absences.

In a study involving turnover as well as absenteeism, Somers (1995) explored the relationship between organizational commitment and employee absenteeism, intent to remain, and turnover. Subject participants were staff nurses at a hospital in the northeastern United States. Affective, continuance, and normative commitment were measured with the Allen and Meyer (1990) scale. Intent to remain was measured on a scale devised by Bluedorn (1982, as cited in Somers, 1995). Absenteeism was assessed by two methods: the number of absences in a 12-month period (i.e., total absences) and the number of absences occurring before or after a weekend or holiday in a 12-month period (i.e., annexed absences). No distinction was made between voluntary and involuntary absences. Information on turnover was gathered from personnel records 12 months after survey completion. All turnover was voluntary. Due to the instances of missing data, analysis for intent to remain and turnover was based on 388 subjects while absenteeism was based on 303 subjects.

Overall regression analysis showed the three components of organizational commitment accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in intent to remain (22%) and annexed absences (27%; Somers, 1995). Affective commitment was a significant predictor for intent to remain (positive relationship), turnover (negative relationship), and annexed absences (negative relationship). Normative commitment was a significant predictor for intent to remain (positive relationship). In examining the

interaction effects among the three components of commitment, the term of affective commitment by continuance commitment was significant for intent to remain and annexed absences. According to Somers, the relationship between affective commitment and intent to remain and affective commitment and annexed absenteeism was tempered at high levels of continuance commitment.

While the previous studies by Blau (1986), Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002), and Somers (1995) have considered absenteeism on the individual level, Hausknecht et al. (2008) investigated absenteeism at the unit level, such as a department or division. They hypothesized that organizational commitment and job satisfaction would be negatively related to absenteeism at the unit level. They also examined the effect of local unemployment rates on organizational commitment and job satisfaction in predicting absenteeism.

Employees of a large state transportation department served as subjects for the Hausknecht et al. (2008) study. Using a repeated measures design, data were collected from subjects at five intervals over a 6-year period. Initial surveys were performed on paper but were gradually transferred to an online survey site. Response rates were not significantly different between the two methods. The surveys consisted of measures of organizational commitment (adapted from Meyer & Allen, 1984) and job satisfaction. To aggregate individual level data to the unit level, the average value for the subjects in a unit was used. Data concerning absenteeism were gathered from the organization. Absenteeism was expressed as a percentage of work hours missed due to absences of less than three consecutive workdays. Unemployment rates at the county level were collected from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

After building a longitudinal model of absenteeism and after controlling for unit size, unit type (i.e., maintenance or office), and unemployment, data analysis revealed organizational commitment and job satisfaction were each negatively related to absenteeism. The interaction between organizational commitment and job satisfaction for absenteeism was also significant. Lower levels of absenteeism were found for units with high organizational commitment and high job satisfaction. Further analysis demonstrated that the unemployment rate moderated the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism as well as between job satisfaction and absenteeism. The study by Hausknecht et al. (2008) showed the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism found at the individual level also extended to the unit level.

The studies by Blau (1986), Dishon-Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002), and Somers (1995) demonstrated a relationship between organizational commitment and tardiness and absenteeism. In addition, this relationship may exist on the unit level as well as on the individual level (Hausknecht et al., 2008). Research has also explored the relationship between organizational commitment and another important outcome variable, turnover.

Turnover.

Two of the studies previously discussed in this chapter included turnover and turnover-related variables. The research of Porter et al. (1974) demonstrated a significant, inverse relationship between organization commitment and turnover and that this relationship grows stronger as the employee approaches turnover. Somers (1995)

also found support for the relationship between organizational commitment and intent to remain.

To amalgamate the prior research results concerning organizational commitment, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) conducted a meta-analysis on the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment. For the analysis, studies that measured organizational commitment on an individual level and presented empirical findings between organizational commitment and another variable were included. To be included in the analysis, Mathieu and Zajac set a three-correlation minimum threshold for variables. These parameters yielded correlations between organizational commitment and 48 variables from 124 published studies and 174 independent samples.

For the 48 variables included in the meta-analysis, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) categorized them as antecedents, correlates, or outcomes. Categorization as an antecedent was based on the framework of others (Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977) and included personal, job, and organizational characteristics as well as group-leader relations and role states. Correlates were so designated because, like organizational commitment, they reflect a psychological reaction or response to the organization and its environment. Consequences included behavior or behavioral intentions. The authors acknowledged that a certain amount of reciprocity likely existed among the variables; however, the classification provided a framework to discuss the analysis results.

The meta-analysis by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) included an analysis of eight outcome variables of organizational commitment. Of these, large, negative correlations (i.e., above .40), corrected for sampling error and attenuation, were found for intention to search and intention to leave. A medium, negative corrected correlation (i.e., between

.21 and .40), was found for turnover. Small, corrected correlations (less than .21) were found for attendance and lateness (negative) in addition to others' ratings of job performance, output measures of job performance, and perceived job alternatives (negative). Results for antecedent and correlates are discussed in the sections of this chapter.

Lambert and Hogan (2009) examined the impact of personal characteristics, work environment, employment opportunities, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment on intent to turnover. Research subjects were the staff, excluding upper administration, of a private, maximum-security prison in the Midwestern United States. Two hundred surveys with postage-paid return envelopes were distributed to employees. Incentives were offered to participants in the form of cash awards via a raffle drawing. One hundred sixty employees completed and returned the survey. In addition to items related to a larger study, the survey instrument contained measures of turnover intention, organizational commitment (adapted from Mowday et al., 1982), job satisfaction, perceived job dangerousness, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, input into decision-making, and organizational fairness, as well as items for gender, age, tenure, position (i.e., correctional officer or not a correctional officer), education level, race, and perception of external employment opportunities.

Using multivariate ordinary least squares regression analysis, 61% of the variance in turnover intent was accounted for by the variables collectively (Lambert & Hogan, 2009). Organizational commitment had the greatest significant impact on the intention to turnover, followed by job satisfaction and age, respectively. None of the remaining variables achieved significance. In a secondary analysis to consider the indirect impact

of personal characteristics and work environment variables on turnover intent through organizational commitment and job satisfaction, another multivariate ordinary least squares regression analysis was conducted. For organizational commitment, 71% of the variance was accounted for by the personal and work environment variables. Significant relationships were found for job satisfaction, input into decision-making, organizational fairness, and role conflict. For job satisfaction, 57% of the variance in job satisfaction was accounted for by the variables collectively, with significant findings for organizational fairness, role ambiguity, role overload, and gender.

The studies by Lambert and Hogan (2009), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), Porter et al. (1974), and Somers (1995) are a few examples of research demonstrating an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover. In addition, the study by Porter et al. demonstrated that the relationship between commitment and intent to turnover grew stronger as the employee approached turnover. As previously discussed, other studies have also demonstrated a relationship between organizational commitment and other outcome variables, including tardiness and absenteeism. Job satisfaction, as discussed in the next section, has also been considered an outcome variable of organizational commitment. It has also been considered an antecedent and a correlate. While that nature of the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction has been a source of divergence among researchers, the existence of the relationship is well researched.

Relationship with job satisfaction.

Many studies have investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (e.g., Aryee et al., 1991; Bedeian, 2007; Billingsley &

Cross, 1992; Boehman, 2007; Brierley, 1996; Buka & Bilgic, 2010; Hausknecht et al., 2008; Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Porter et al., 1974; Schroder, 2008). As noted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990), “The influence of job satisfaction and its components is one of the more thoroughly investigated topics in the [organizational commitment] literature” (p. 183). The exact nature of the relationship is a subject of debate among researchers (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Some research has supported organizational commitment as an antecedent of job satisfaction while other research has supported job satisfaction as an antecedent of organizational commitment.

While causality remains unresolved, research has demonstrated that organizational commitment and job satisfaction are related concepts. As discussed in previous sections within this chapter, significant results between organizational commitment and job satisfaction have been found by Brierley (1996), Hausknecht et al. (2008), and Lambert and Hogan (2009). Additional studies with results supporting this relationship are included in following sections of this chapter as well.

In addition to the outcome variables already discussed, the meta-analysis by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) included an analysis of 14 correlates of organizational commitment. Of these, eight were related to satisfaction. Large correlations, corrected for sampling error and attenuation, were found for overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with supervision, and satisfaction with the work itself as well as motivation, internal motivation, job involvement, and occupational commitment. Medium corrected correlations were found for intrinsic job satisfaction, satisfaction with coworkers, promotion satisfaction, pay satisfaction, stress (negative), and union commitment. A small, corrected correlation was found for extrinsic job satisfaction.

Due to its strong relationship with job satisfaction, researchers have also investigated whether organizational commitment and job satisfaction were measurements of the same construct. Research has demonstrated their distinctiveness. Hausknecht et al. (2008) found that a two-factor model results in a better fit than a one-factor model for measures of organizational commitment and job satisfaction. While other studies found significant correlations between measures of organizational commitment and job satisfaction, they did not indicate multicollinearity (e.g., Boehman, 2007) or construct redundancy (Meyer et al., 2002). Porter et al. (1974) also found that organizational commitment exhibited a significant relationship with turnover even when job satisfaction was held constant.

While the nature of the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction may be undetermined, the existence of a relationship is supported by the literature. Furthermore, organizational commitment has been shown to be related to important outcome variables as well, such as turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism. The discovery of how organizational commitment is formed and what factors influence its formation would be pivotal in an attempt to direct resources to increase employees' commitment and thereby benefit from the positive consequences of such in an organizational setting. The next section will review research on antecedents of organizational commitment, including personal, position, and organization characteristics.

Antecedents of organizational commitment.

Given the important outcomes that have been associated with organizational commitment as discussed in the previous section, researchers have investigated the

development and antecedents of organizational commitment. Research on antecedent variables has been “characterized by a ‘laundry list’ of significant antecedent or correlate variables” (Reichers, 1985, p. 467), a comment echoed by Meyer and Allen (1991). While the variables can often be grouped into three broad categories of personal, position, and organization characteristics, most studies investigated variables from more than one category. Organizational characteristics have received less attention in the commitment literature than the other two categories, a lack that has been noted by researchers (e.g., Glisson & Durick, 1988; Meyer & Allen, 1991). For this reason, the organizational characteristics are discussed separately.

Personal and position characteristics.

In a two-part study, Morris and Sherman (1981) studied the antecedents of organizational commitment and then tested the generalizability of the results. Based on earlier research, seven variables previously found to be related to organizational commitment were selected: age, education, sense of accomplishment, role conflict, role ambiguity, initiating structure, and supervisor consideration. After arriving at a prediction model based on the entire sample, the data were re-analyzed to check for model differences based on job level, job focus, and organizational membership.

For the study, questionnaires were administered to employees at three care and training facilities for developmentally disabled people. The facilities were located in the same state and operated by the state government. Across the three facilities, 506 employees voluntarily completed the questionnaire for a 35% response rate. The questionnaire included the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) as well as items related to age,

education, role conflict, sense of accomplishment, role ambiguity, initiating structure, and supervisor consideration.

Data analysis revealed significant zero-order correlations between organizational commitment and all of the other study variables (Morris & Sherman, 1981). Most of the variables were inter-correlated as well. Stepwise multiple regression resulted in a seven-predictor model that explained 47% of the variance in organizational commitment. The six variables of age, education, role conflict, sense of accomplishment, initiating structure, and supervisor consideration made significant contributions in the model. The only variable that did not achieve significance was role ambiguity. To test the generalizability of the model, subsequent regression analysis was conducted including nuisance variables. Separate analysis for job level, job focus, and employing organization had no significant effects on the original seven variables and failed to increase the proportion of variance explained by the original model.

As discussed in a previous section, the meta-analysis by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) also included an analysis of 26 antecedent variables of organizational commitment. Of these, large correlations, corrected for sampling error and attenuation, were found for perceived personal competence, job scope, and leader communication. Medium corrected correlations were found for age, Protestant work ethic, skill variety, challenge, task interdependence, leader initiating structure, leader consideration, participative leadership, role ambiguity (negative), role conflict (negative), and role overload (negative). Small corrected correlations were found for gender, education (negative), marital status, position tenure, organizational tenure, ability, salary, job level,

task autonomy, group cohesiveness, organizational size (negative), and organizational centralization (negative).

Like Morris and Sherman (1981), Aryee et al. (1991) explored predictor variables for organizational commitment as well as turnover. In addition, they sought to discover if the antecedents were the same across professional versus non-professional employment settings. The study was conducted in Singapore to investigate if the observed relationship from a newly industrialized country differed from results found in earlier studies conducted in established industrialized countries.

Seven hundred surveys were mailed to a random sample of certified public accountants in Singapore. Two hundred forty-five usable surveys were received. The survey instrument included the 15-item OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) which had a .89 alpha coefficient for this subject sample. To measure professional commitment, Aryee et al. (1991) modified the OCQ by substituting the word *profession* for *organization*. Measures of skill utilization, realization of professional expectations, professional-organizational conflict, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions were also included.

Aryee et al. (1991) found significant and positive zero-order correlation between organizational commitment and professional commitment, skill utilization, and job satisfaction. Significant and negative correlations for commitment were found with realization of expectations and turnover intentions. The correlation with the professional-organizational conflict variable was not significant. Stepwise multiple regression for organizational commitment yielded three significant predictor variables: job satisfaction, realization of professional expectations, and professional commitment. Together, these accounted for 55% of the variability in organizational commitment. Regression analysis

for turnover intentions yielded two significant predictor variables, organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which accounted for 36% of the variability.

To examine the predictors of organizational commitment by employment setting, Aryee et al. (1991) analyzed data after grouping data by professional and non-professional employment setting. The employment setting distinction was based on whether the accountant worked in an accounting firm (professional) or not (nonprofessional). For both groups, job satisfaction, realization of professional expectations, and professional commitment were again significant predictors for organizational commitment. For the nonprofessional group, skill utilization was also significant. The amount of variance account for was the same, 55%. For turnover intentions, the predictor variables of organizational commitment and job satisfaction were significant for the professional and non-professional settings, accounting for 38% and 37% of the variance, respectively.

In a study focused on general and special education teachers, Billingsley and Cross (1992) studied the relationship of personal and work-related variables to commitment and job satisfaction. The measures of commitment included both organizational commitment and professional commitment. The relationship among commitment, job satisfaction, and the teachers' intent to stay in teaching was examined.

From the Virginia State of Education personnel database, a random selection of general and special educators ($n = 1147$) were drawn and were mailed questionnaires at their work addresses at three intervals. The response rate was 83% ($n = 956$). The questionnaire included the demographic and work-related characteristics of interest, three measures of commitment (one organizational and two professional), and one measure of

job satisfaction. The first measure of professional commitment was an adaptation of the 15-item OCQ (Porter et al., 1974), altered to focus on the profession rather than the organization. The second measure of professional commitment was the scale developed by Alutto et al. (1973). The correlations between the two professional commitment measures were .53 and .54 for general and special educators, respectively. The organizational commitment measure was based on a modification of the Alutto et al. scale with alterations to focus the scale on the school rather than the profession. To assess job satisfaction, teachers were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with various satisfaction statements. Other existing measures were used to assess job involvement, stress, role conflict, role ambiguity, and leadership support. Questions relating to demographic variables included gender, age, race, number of years in teaching, number of years teaching in the current school division, education level, and primary breadwinner status.

Analysis on the descriptive statistics of general and special educators showed significant differences between the groups' means on their commitment to the school, role conflict, role ambiguity, stress, and job involvement (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Separate regression analyses were used to predict the three commitment variables and job satisfaction from the 12 demographic and work-related variables. In general, the work-related variables were better at predicting organizational commitment, professional commitment, and job satisfaction than were the demographic variables for both general and special educators. Regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between the commitment and satisfaction to the intention to remain in teaching. For general and special educators, the two measures of professional commitment contributed significantly

to the prediction of intention to stay in teaching, but organizational commitment and job satisfaction did not.

Similar to Billingsley and Cross (1992), Wallace (1995) studied variables that influenced organizational commitment and professional commitment; however, their research focused on lawyers rather than teachers. Variables related to authority and autonomy, career opportunities, specialization, and collegiality were included. The research also encompassed two different employment settings, professional and non-professional organizations. A professional work setting was described as one in which the majority of the employees are professionals, the professional work is central to the mission of the organization, and the goals of the organization and the professional are consistent with one another (e.g., law firms). In nonprofessional organizations, professionals work in sub-units of a larger, bureaucratic organization (e.g., lawyers serving as counsel for corporations or in government agencies).

Questionnaires were mailed to the work addresses of all lawyers in a city in Western Canada from a professional organization's mailing list ($n = 1,155$). Of those returned complete, only lawyers who indicated that they practiced in a private practice law firm and government or corporate lawyers were included ($n = 730$). The sample was similar to the population on the characteristics of gender and work setting. The questionnaire consisted of a 3-item measure of organizational commitment adapted from the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) and a matching, 3-item measure of professional commitment also adapted from Porter et al. (1974). The items dealt with the degree to which the respondents felt loyal, cared about, and were proud of their employing organization. Other measures included authority and autonomy, career opportunities,

specialization, collegiality, and various control variables (i.e., perceived labor market conditions, employer size, earnings, tenure, years of previous legal experience, education, gender, kinship responsibilities, and work motivation).

Data were categorized according to the professional or nonprofessional work setting. Significant differences were found between the groups for both organizational and professional commitment, with employees of professional organizations having higher commitment means than employees of nonprofessional organizations (Wallace, 1995). After the data were adjusted for structural characteristics (i.e., authority and autonomy, career opportunities, specialization, and collegiality), the differences were no longer significant for organizational commitment, but they were for professional commitment. After the means were adjusted for the structural characteristics and the control variables (i.e., perceived labor market conditions, employer size, earnings, tenure, years of previous legal experience, education, gender, kinship responsibilities, and work motivation), the differences were no longer significant for either commitment measure.

For organizational commitment, regression analysis produced significant results for the nonprofessional group for legitimacy of criteria used in distributing rewards, autonomy, promotions, and specialization. Regression for the professional organizations yielded results for legitimacy of criteria used in distributing rewards, fairness or rewards, autonomy, promotions, task variety, and co-worker support. For professional commitment, regression analysis produced significant results for the nonprofessional group for participation, co-worker support, and motivation. Regression for the professional organizations yielded results for legitimacy of criteria used in distributing

rewards, autonomy, formalization, specialization, task variety, co-worker support, and motivation were significant.

The results found by Wallace (1995) initially indicated that the work setting, in this case professional versus nonprofessional, influenced organizational commitment. After controlling for authority and autonomy, career opportunities, specialization, and collegiality, the differences were no longer significant. However, the study measured commitment by a 3-item scale adapted from the Porter et al. (1974) 15-item scale. No reliability or validity data of this shortened form were supplied. Brierley (1996), as discussed previously in this chapter, found a shortened, 9-item scale to have questionable validity.

In their research, Chang and Choi (2007) investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and professional commitment, and how this relationship changed over an employee's tenure. They theorized that organizational commitment would be high during the introductory period, decline, and then increase, creating a "u" shape. For professional commitment, they theorized that the inverse would happen. As one type of commitment decreased, the other would increase, and thus they would complement each other.

Questionnaires were mailed to 310 research and development employees at two electronics firms in Korea. The response rate was 66% ($n = 204$). The questionnaires included a 5-item organizational commitment measure adapted from Mowday et al. (1979). The measure of professional commitment was comprised on these same items with the word *profession* substituted for *company*. Demographic items included were tenure, gender, educational attainment, and previous number of employers.

To avoid the challenges of longitudinal research, Chang and Choi (2007) partitioned the data into seven groups based on employee tenure to show changes in commitment over employee tenure. Groupings covered shorter spans of time for more recent hires and longer spans of time for longer-term employees, with time ranges from 1 month to 12 years. Significant differences were found between organizational and professional commitment in the second group (3 to 6 months of tenure) and in the third group (7 to 12 months of tenure). Overall, the levels of organizational commitment followed a u-shaped pattern. The pattern for professional commitment was more erratic. Focusing on just employees with less than 12 months of tenure, the theorized u-shape for organizational commitment and inverse u-shape for professional commitment were found. Exploratory post hoc regression analysis limited to the first 14 months of tenure revealed curvilinear patterns for organizational and professional commitment with comparable effect sizes in opposite directions.

As Chang and Choi's (2007) research was limited to research and development professionals at electronics firms in Korea, it may not be generalizable to other environments. However, it does suggest that an employee's length of employment may be a mitigating factor that should be considered when investigating organizational or professional commitment. Some studies have found significant effects for tenure/employment length (Fuller et al., 2006; Marchiori & Henkin, 2004; Porter et al., 1974) while other studies have not (Bedeian, 2007; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Giffords, 2003; Wallace, 1995).

Research has demonstrated a relationship between organizational commitment and a variety of personal and position characteristics (Aryee et al., 1991; Mathieu &

Zajac, 1990; Morris & Sherman, 1981). Billingsley and Cross (1992) found that organizational commitment was more influenced by work-related variables than by personal demographics. In a study focusing length of employment, Chang and Choi (2007) found that organizational commitment may change over time, as also demonstrated by Porter et al. (1974).

Organizational characteristics.

Unlike personal and position characteristics, organizational characteristics have received little attention in the organizational commitment literature, a lack that has been noted by researchers (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Support for a relationship between organizational commitment and organizational size (Su et al., 2009) as well as organizational type (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002) has been found.

Goulet and Frank (2002) studied the impact of organizational type on organizational commitment. The study included public, for-profit, and not-for-profit organizations. Demographic variables included age, gender, marital status, caring for a child or elderly parent, educational level, employment sector, years of service in current position, years of service with current employer, and current or previous supervisory experience.

Full-time employees of 16 organizations took part in the study. Paper surveys were distributed and collected by managers or key work-group members. No information was given regarding the organizations' field or their location; they were listed as businesses, agencies, and offices. Surveys were completed at the work site and sealed in envelopes by the respondent. Of 375 employees, 228 completed the survey (response rate of 61%). The surveys included the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979), three items related

to hours worked, and demographic variables. In this study, the OCQ had a reliability alpha of .91 (Goulet & Frank, 2002).

Data were analyzed to discover possible demographic differences that might exist by organizational type. Employees of public organizations were significantly older than not-for-profit and for-profit employees. Not-for-profit organizations had a significantly higher proportion of female employees than for-profit organizations. Organizational commitment was significantly and negatively correlated with age. For organizational sector, organizational commitment was significantly lower for employees of public organizations. The difference between not-for-profit and for-profit organizations was not significant.

Giffords (2003) investigated the relationship of organizational type (i.e., public, not-for-profit, and proprietary) and demographic variables to commitment. This quantitative research included organizational commitment and professional commitment of social service employees. Based on previous research, the demographic variables included were age, length of service, gender, marital status, position, and education.

Participants were social service employees working for three different social service organizations in a New York county ($N = 207$). Participants were asked to participate in the research during business-related meetings. The survey instrument comprised the 15-item OCQ (Porter et al., 1974), the 15-item PCQ (Aranya et al., 1981), and items concerning type of employment setting, age, gender, employment status, marital status, education level, length of service, and position. Both the OCQ and the PCQ were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *highly dissatisfied* to 5 =

highly satisfied. The OCQ had a reliability coefficient of .90 and the PCQ, .87 (Giffords, 2003).

The data were analyzed using a one-way (ANOVA) for organizational commitment and organizational type. Results indicated statistically lower means for public employees than not-for-profit and proprietary employees (Giffords, 2003). The mean difference between not-for-profit employee and proprietary employees was not significant. The one-way ANOVA for professional commitment and organizational type did not yield significant findings. Multiple regression analysis showed no significant relationships between organizational commitment and any of the demographic variables. For professional commitment, significant results were found for age and position. Position was categorized as administrators or all others (i.e., groups collapsed across line workers, supervisors, and people who performed both of these tasks).

In a study outside the United States, Al-Qarioti and Al-Enezi (2004) examined the organizational commitment of middle level managers by organizational type. The four organizational types were government ministries, public institutions, private businesses, and nongovernment organizations. According to Al-Qarioti and Al-Enezi, ministries and nongovernment organizations are not profit or market oriented, but ministries are owned by the state while nongovernment organizations are owned by national associations. Public institutions are owned by the state and partially market oriented. Private businesses are primarily owned by the private sector and are profit and market oriented.

Using a stratified random sampling, 400 mid-level managers were selected from six ministries, six public institutions, six private institutions, and three nongovernment organizations in Jordan. Paper questionnaires were distributed to managers, who

completed and returned the questionnaires. The response rate was 83% with 332 questionnaires returned. Questionnaires consisted of the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979), which was modified and translated into Arabic. Items related to organizational type, age, gender, education level, marital status, and years of service were included.

Correlations with organizational commitment yielded significant results for age, educational level, and marital status. One-way analysis of variance for organizational commitment by organizational type yielded no significant results. The same was true for age, gender, and length of service. Significant results were found for education and marital status.

The findings by Al-Qarioti and Al-Enezi (2004) concerning organizational commitment and organizational type are contrary to the results of Giffords (2003) and Goulet and Frank (2002). The study was conducted in another country with different types of organizations (i.e., government ministries, public institutions, private businesses, and nongovernment organizations), which may have affected the results. “In the opinion of the present researchers the findings of the study can be understood in the Jordanian context, as no great differences [exist] in work conditions between types of organizations in Jordan” (Al-Qarioti & Al-Enezi, 2004, p. 343).

In a study conducted in Albania, Buka and Bilgic (2010) examined the differences in organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement for public and private teachers in Albania. Subjects were public and private high and secondary school teachers from various schools and cities in Albania. For data collection, the researcher explained in-person the purpose of the study and its voluntary nature, then distributed the questionnaires to the teachers. The researcher usually returned the next day to gather the

completed questionnaires. The questionnaire contained translated and revised measurements of job satisfaction, job involvement, and the organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Due to the translation into Albanian and to investigate the use of the scale in that country, an explanatory factor analysis was performed on the organizational commitment measure. The scree plot favored a one-factor solution that accounted for 31% of the variance, while the parallel test favored a two-factor solution. The reliability of the measure was .85 (Buka & Bilgic, 2010).

Due to correlation analysis and qualifying requirements, age was included in hypothesis testing as a covariate. A 2 x 2 multiple analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was performed for organizational type and gender on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement. No significant results were found for gender. Significant results for organizational type were found for organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement. Teachers working in the private schools had higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction than did teachers working at public schools. Teachers in public schools had higher levels of job involvement than their private school counterparts did.

The studies by Goulet and Frank (2002) and Giffords (2003) indicated that organization type has an impact on organizational commitment. In both studies, public sector employees had significantly lower organizational commitment than employees in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Goulet and Frank theorized that the lower organizational commitment found for public sector employees was due to their less attractive compensation package. Giffords suggested that the lack of promotional

opportunities could account for the lower organizational commitment of employees of public institutions. Research by Buka and Bilgic (2010) outside the United States provided support for difference in organizational commitment according to organization type for public and private school teachers. Al-Qarioti and Al-Enezi (2004) did not find differences in commitment for organizational type in Jordan. Differences in countries and organizational types may account for these conflicting findings.

Much research has been undertaken to explore the construct of organizational commitment. Research has demonstrated its relationship with important outcome variables, including turnover and absenteeism, and has attempted to identify antecedent variables. Previous research has taken place in different organizations, with many different employees. The current research is focused on employees of higher education institutions. Previous research concerned with organizational commitment and conducted in similar institutions is of particular interest to this study.

Organizational commitment and higher education.

Boehman (2007) researched the predictor variables for organizational commitment for student affairs professionals. The organizational variables included were job satisfaction, organizational support, organizational politics, and work/nonwork interaction variables (measured in this study as gender, marital status, and provider role). Only the affective commitment component of organizational commitment was used.

Subjects were randomly sampled from members of a national association of student affairs professionals. Selected professional were sent an email that explained the purpose of the research as well as the hyperlink to the Web-based survey. The survey hyperlink was closed 15 business days after the email was sent. Of the 1,450 emails sent,

644 surveys were completed (response rate of 44%). The survey included measures of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1984), job satisfaction, organizational politics, and organizational support.

Significant, positive correlations were found between affective commitment and job satisfaction, organizational support, and marital status as well as significant, negative correlations with organizational politics and provider role (Boehman, 2007). No high levels of collinearity between the predictors were found. No significant relationship was found for gender and it was removed from subsequent analysis. Multiple regression analysis for the five remaining variables (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational support, organizational politics, marital status, and provider role) accounted for 45% of the variance in affective commitment. Marital status and provider role did not contribute significantly to the regression equation.

For student affairs professionals, Boehman (2007) found antecedents of affective commitment were job satisfaction, organizational support, and organizational politics. The researcher noted that these variables were based on the perceptions of the employee. Therefore, the affective commitment of the employees could change as their perceptions of satisfaction, support, and politics changed.

Buck and Watson (2002) explored the relationship between Human Resources (HR) management strategies and organizational commitment. Recognizing the cost and disruption of employee turnover and that turnover had been inversely related to commitment, their research sought to determine if HR practices influenced the commitment of staff employees at public institutions of higher education in the United States. The research included the assessment of eight HR management strategies:

benefits, due process, employee participation, employee skill level, general training, job enrichment, social interactions, and wages.

Data collection was conducted in two separate phases. In the first phase, a survey instrument was mailed to the chief HR employee at all 84 public higher education institutions in the continental U.S. that were Carnegie classified Research I or Research II institutions. The survey contained items related to the eight HR management strategies of interest. Of these 34 returned surveys, six institutions were included in the second phase of data collection. Institutions were dropped from subsequent inclusion due to unusable responses, inability to attain Institutional Review Board approval to participate in the study, unwillingness to provide a list of staff employees meeting study criteria, or unwillingness to allow direct access to employees via email.

In the second phase of data collection, staff employees with 16 to 22 months of continuous employment from the six remaining institutions were asked to complete the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). The employment period was specified in an attempt to reduce confounds due to employment length. Employees completed the questionnaire through an online site after gaining access through a provided password. Within the 8-day timeframe given, 130 employees completed the questionnaire (response rate = 29%).

Regression analysis for each of the commitment scales scores was computed separately. Results showed no statistically significant relationships between HR management variables and the individual organizational commitment components. Correlation coefficients between certain HR management variables and two of the commitment components were significant. Wages were significantly correlated with

affective commitment. General training and job enrichment were significantly related to normative commitment. There were no significant findings for continuance commitment.

While it appears from the research of Buck and Watson (2002) that HR management strategies overall have little impact on employees' organizational commitment, there does seem to be some evidence that particular strategies may impact specific organizational commitment components. The HR strategies that were found to be related to affective and normative commitment were unique for each component.

Buck and Watson's (2002) inclusion of staff employees with between 16 and 22 months of continuous employment may have influenced the results. Chang and Choi (2007) found a significant decrease in organizational commitment at 7-12 months of tenure, which began to increase after 3 years. It is possible that by selecting employees in the early, disillusionment phase, organizational commitment was too low to find results for HR strategies.

In a quantitative study involving faculty, Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, and Staples (2006) investigated how productivity and commitment were impacted by appointment type and years of experience in teaching. Appointment type was categorized as tenured or tenure-track versus other appointments (i.e., not on tenure-track in institutions with or without a tenure system). Only full-time faculty were included.

Data for the Bland et al. (2006) study were a subset of the data collected during the 1999 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. From the sampled U.S. postsecondary institutions, data for full-time faculty from Research and Doctoral institutions were included (n = 5,226). Research productivity was captured in the dataset through items related to publications (articles,

books, and software), presentations, patents or products, funded research, grant amounts, and hours spent on research. Educational productivity was captured through items related to number of classes taught, hours spent teaching, hours spent advising, number of committees served on, and number of committees chaired. Three items were used as a proxy for organizational commitment likelihood of leaving current academic position, likelihood of choosing an academic career again, and hours worked per week.

A three-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted for appointment type on research productivity, educational productivity, and commitment while controlling for educational degree and role focus (i.e., differentiated or comprehensive). One MANOVA was run for all faculty within the study's parameters and a second, separate MANOVA was run with only new hires, operationalized as faculty with less than seven years of experience. Overall, results indicated that tenured and tenure-track faculty were more productive in terms of research and teaching productivity. Commitment, as measured, was significantly higher for tenured and tenure-track faculty than for non-tenure-track faculty. Similar results were found for faculty with less than 7 years of experience (subset of faculty group) although fewer of the differences were significant.

Based on the research of Bland et al. (2006), it may be important to include the type of faculty appointment in research concerning organizational commitment. However, due to the use of an existing dataset, Bland et al. devised a 3-item proxy for organizational commitment (i.e., likelihood of leaving current academic position, likelihood of choosing an academic career again, and hours worked per week). While organizational commitment and intent to leave have been found to be related (Aryee et

al., 1991; Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Porter et al., 1974), it is unknown if these items were an accurate assessment of organizational commitment.

Bedeian's (2007) research focused on the creation of a measure of faculty cynicism and explored its relationship with other employee-organization variables, including organizational commitment, organizational identification, job satisfaction, and turnover. The study population was the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting participants as listed in the meeting's published program. This population was restricted to those holding terminal degrees, affiliated with an educational institution in the U.S., and having an email address ending in a U.S. extension or non-commercial domain name. From those, every third name from an alphabetical listed was selected. Participants were emailed a cover letter and the link to an online survey. A reminder email was sent one week later. The online survey was available for 10 days. The survey consisted of the measures of cynicism developed by the researcher for this study, affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), organizational identification, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and demographic information. After the elimination of unusable responses, 379 surveys were used in the data analysis.

Intercorrelations between affective commitment and the study variables yielded statistically significant, positive results for organizational identification and job satisfaction. Significant, negative correlations were found with cynicism and intended turnover. Affective commitment did not relate to years at the current university, years with the highest degree, academic rank, age, or gender. The composite reliability of the affective commitment scale was .88 (Bedeian, 2007).

Marchiori and Henkin (2004) assessed the organizational commitment of chiropractic faculty in the United States and Canada. The researchers requested that the 16 chiropractic colleges in the U.S. and the one chiropractic college in Canada distribute and collect surveys on their behalf. Surveys consisted of an organizational commitment measure (Meyer & Allen, 1984), personal characteristics (i.e., age, gender, years with current institution, and years in higher education), and workplace variables (i.e., employment status, academic rank, assignment, and chiropractic college). Two institutions did not participate. Of the remaining institutions, 609 surveys were completed and returned (response rate of 54%).

Correlations for the three commitment components and age, academic rank, years at the current institution, and years in higher education yielded different significant results for each component. Continuance commitment correlated with all four variables. Affective commitment correlated with rank and year in higher education. Normative commitment correlated significantly with years at current institution. Regression analysis for each commitment component yielded different predictor variables for each. Continuance commitment had the highest number of significant predictors as well as the most variance explained (12.2%). Its predictors included rank, years at current institution, employment status, and employing institution. The only significant predictor variable for affective commitment was years in higher education, and for normative commitment, gender. Both results were modest (1.1% and .8% of variance explained, respectively).

The research by Marchiori and Henkin (2004) demonstrated that the different components of organizational commitment are related to and predicted by different

characteristics of employees and their work environment. Years at the current institution was not related to affective commitment, but was to continuance commitment. The high degree of normative commitment indicated by the faculty of the chiropractic colleges may indicate that different professions experience commitment differently. This may be of particular importance when considering service professions. In addition, the organization may also influence how employees of that organization experience commitment.

Schroder's (2008) quantitative research focused on predicting organizational commitment for faculty and administrators at the university level through job satisfaction factors and religious commitment. It also sought to discover if faculty and administrators had different predictors for organizational commitment. The job satisfaction factors included were achievement; recognition; advancement; growth; responsibility; work itself; organizational policies and administration; interpersonal relationships with supervisors, peers, and students; working conditions; salary; supervision; status; and job security.

A survey questionnaire was mailed to full-time and half-time employees of a private Christian university ($N = 835$). The questionnaire contained the Professional Satisfaction Scale (Blank, 1993, as cited in Schroder, 2008), the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974), and the Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale (Hoge, 1972, as cited in Schroder, 2008). Subject responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *highly dissatisfied* to 5 = *highly satisfied*. The response rate was 67%.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and stepwise regression analysis. A model of six predictors explained 55.6% of the variance in organizational commitment

for the faculty. Organizational commitment was predicted by organizational policy and administration, work itself, religious commitment, salary, working conditions, and achievement. A model of five predictors explained 70.8% of the organizational commitment for university administrators. The predictors were growth, religious commitment, responsibility, job security, and relations with students.

Fuller et al. (2006) examined the interaction among organizational attachment, perceived organizational support, and perceived external prestige of postsecondary employees. Although the study used the term *organizational attachment*, the measure employed was of the affective commitment component of organizational commitment. They hypothesized that perceived organizational support and perceived external prestige would be positively related to organizational attachment (i.e., affective commitment). To investigate the effect of a cosmopolitan or local social-role orientation, they also included it as a moderating variable.

Study participants in Fuller et al. (2006) were employees of a university in the southern United States. Surveys were mailed to all employees. The response rate was 26% ($n = 325$). The survey included measures of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997), perceived organizational support, perceived external prestige, cosmopolitan/local role orientation, as well as several demographic variables (i.e., gender, educational level, and years with the current employer).

In Fuller et al. (2006), correlations showed significant, positive relationship between affective commitment and perceived organizational support and perceived external prestige. A significant, negative relationship was found between affective commitment and withdrawal cognitions, perceived external prestige, employee status

(faculty, administrators, or staff), and years of service. Analyses of variance with post hoc Scheffe tests to compare the means of the employee status groups on affective commitment revealed that faculty had significantly lower commitment than staff and administrators. The difference between the staff and administrators was not significant. The results for perceived organizational support followed the same pattern. Withdrawal cognition scores for faculty were significantly higher than the scores for staff. For perceived external prestige, administrator means were significantly higher than the faculty means. Other differences between employee groups were not significant.

The importance of organizational commitment has been demonstrated across organizations, including postsecondary education institutions. Previous studies have investigated the antecedents for affective commitment for staff (Boehman, 2007) as well as correlates of affective, continuance, and normative commitment for staff (Buck & Watson, 2002). Using a proxy measurement of organizational commitment, Bland et al. (2006) offered some indication that commitment for faculty may be related to tenure status. For faculty, Bedeian (2007) found a relationship between affective commitment and job satisfaction and intended turnover. Marchiori and Henkin (2004) found different predictor variables for each of the three components of organizational commitment for faculty.

In research involving both faculty and staff, Schroder (2008) found different predictors for organizational commitment by employee group. The only shared predictor for both groups was religious commitment, which may be due to the use of a religious-based university for subjects. These results highlight the importance of recognizing differences in faculty and administrators in terms of what predicts their organizational commitment

and suggest that different strategies for increasing organizational commitment based by employee group may be more helpful than one overall strategy.

In another study including both faculty and staff, Fuller et al. (2006) demonstrated that affective commitment was significantly higher for staff and administrators than for faculty. Continuance and normative commitment, the other two components of organizational commitment, were not included in the study. Based on the results for affective commitment, these other components could yield differences for position as well.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The current study investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and position (i.e., faculty, staff, administration) in postsecondary institutions. The literature has established the relationship between organizational commitment and important employee behaviors and attitudes, such as turnover, intent to turnover, job satisfaction, and absenteeism. Research has investigated the antecedents of organizational commitment, but the investigation has been unsystematic and has produced conflicting results. Additionally, little research concerning organizational commitment has been conducted in postsecondary education institutions, particularly with the three-component model of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The unique cultures and characteristics of these institutions set them apart from many organizations and offer variables for study that do not typically exist in other organizations.

In this chapter, the methodology for the current study is detailed. First, the research questions and related hypotheses are stated. Next, the research design is presented as well as information concerning the study participants and instrumentation. Lastly, the data collection procedures and approach to data analysis are discussed.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current study sought to answer six questions regarding the organizational commitment of employee of postsecondary education institutions. The research questions are presented below, followed by the related hypothesis.

Research Question 1: Does the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?

Hypothesis 1: The affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will differ according to position.

Research Question 2: Does the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?

Hypothesis 2: The continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will differ according to position.

Research Question 3: Does the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?

Hypothesis 3: The normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will differ according to position.

Research Question 4: Is the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

Hypothesis 4: The affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will be related to personal and position characteristics.

Research Question 5: Is the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

Hypothesis 5: The continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will be related to personal and position characteristics.

Research Question 6: Is the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

Hypothesis 6: The normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions will not be related to personal or position characteristics.

Type of Research

The research design for this study was a descriptive, non-experimental design using survey data. The study is subject to the weaknesses found in non-experimental research. Random assignment of research participants to a particular position was not feasible; therefore, differences may exist among the employee groups that are not related to their position. In addition, as participation was voluntary, employees who chose to respond to the survey may not be representative of all employees at the postsecondary institution. Furthermore, research subjects may feel compelled to respond in a positive manner. Significant differences indicate that a relationship or association exists, but causality cannot be inferred from the results.

The research participants for this study were the employees of a public university, selected for its size and convenience. As organizational type has been shown to impact organizational commitment (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002), the results may not be applicable to other types of postsecondary institutions, particularly for-profit ones. Since the results are based on a single institution, the results may only be generalizable to similar postsecondary institutions.

Research Context

Data for this study were collected over a 3-week period during the fall semester of 2011. Data were gathered from the employees of one postsecondary institution located in the southern United States. The Carnegie Foundation Institution Profile for the university described it as a large, public institution with graduate and undergraduate programs that was primary residential (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010).

Research Participants

Research participants were employees of a large, public university in the southern United States. The university selection was based on its large size and convenience. Approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A) was obtained before any data collection was initiated.

All university employees with an institutional email address were invited to participate in the study. The email invitation (see Appendix B) included a brief description of the study, offered an incentive for participation (i.e., a chance to win one of three gift cards valued at \$50 each), and contained a hyperlink to the online survey instrument. Offering a financial incentive to potential participants has been suggested as a means to increase participation (Dillman, 2007). After the initial email, reminders were by email after 7 days and after 14 days.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument (see Appendix C) was composed of three parts. The first section requested information related to personal and position characteristics, including position. Items in the first section were developed by the researcher to gather information on the variables of interest. These included gender, age, the highest level of education completed (i.e., less than high school, high school diploma or G.E.D., associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctoral degree), employment status (i.e., full-time or part-time), position (i.e., faculty, staff, or administration), tenure status (i.e., not applicable/staff position, non-tenure tack, tenured track, or tenure), pay status (i.e., hourly or salaried), length of employment at the university in whole years completed, retirement plan participation (i.e., Kentucky Employees Retirement System

[KERS] or Kentucky Employees Retirement System - Hazardous Duty[KERS-H], Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System [KTRS], Optional Retirement System [ORS], or none), and campus location (i.e., main campus or regional campus).

The second section contained the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) to assess the three components of organizational commitment. Permission to use the instrument for the current study was obtained from the authors prior to its use (see Appendix D). Participants responded to each item on a 7-point scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *somewhat disagree*, 4 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 5 = *somewhat agree*, 6 = *agree*, and 7 = *strongly agree*.

The third section of the survey instrument was composed of one, free-response item. The item informed research participants that the purpose of the measure was to assess organizational commitment and then asked participants to provide their thoughts as to why they responded to the commitment items as they did. So that this free-response item would not dissuade employees from responding, it was clearly marked as optional. Participants were able to skip any item they wished to skip. The response area was a text field with no maximum or minimum length.

Reliability.

To test the reliability of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) within the field of postsecondary education, reliability analysis was performed. Reliability was demonstrated by the statistic Cronbach's alpha. The alpha for the 18 item Meyer and Allen scale for this study was .87. Cronbach's

alpha was also computed for each of the three component scales, which were composed of six items each. These were .87 for the ACS, .75 for the CCS, and .86 for the NCS.

Validity.

To investigate the validity of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) within the field of postsecondary education, factor analysis was conducted. The dimensionality of the 18 items of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) was investigated using a principal components confirmatory factor analysis. For this analysis, a three-factor solution was rotated using Varimax rotation. The resultant three factors accounted for 58% of the common variance.

The first factor accounted for 30% of the common variance and had an eigenvalue of 5.34. According to the item factor loadings, the first factor was highly associated with the six ACS items as well as three NCS items. In addition to the six ACS items, the three specific NCS items associated with this factor were 1. "This organization deserves my loyalty." 2. "I owe a great deal to my organization." and 3. "I do feel an obligation to remain with my current employer." This last NCS item was also highly associated with the third factor.

The second factor had an eigenvalue of 2.72 and accounted for 15% of the common variance. The second factor was highly associated with five of the six CCS items. The only CCS item not included in this factor was "If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere." This item loaded on the third factor.

The third factor accounted for 13% of the common variance and had an eigenvalue of 2.40. The third factor was composed of three remaining NCS items and the one remaining CCS item. These four items were 1. “Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.” 2. “I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.” 3. “I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.” 4. “If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.” Two NCS items from this third factor were also associated with the first factor.

Procedures Used to Collect Data

With approval from the institution, an email and two reminder emails were sent to all university employees with university email addresses to invite them to participate in the research. The email contained a brief description of the research, the offer of an incentive to participate, and a hyperlink to the online survey instrument. Reminder emails were sent to all employees 7 days after the initial email and 14 days after the initial email. Due to restrictions established by the institution on sending email to institution-established employee groups, the dissertation committee chair sent the invitation and reminder emails on behalf of the researcher. Twenty-one days after the initial email, the online survey instrument was deactivated.

The survey instrument was designed and distributed through an online survey platform called SurveyMonkey. The instrument was created in SurveyMonkey by the researcher and tested for accuracy and ease of use prior to the start of the study. The instrument was activated the same day that the invitation email was sent to the subject

pool. After 21 days, the instrument was deactivated by the researcher and the data were downloaded for analysis.

Data Analysis

After deactivation of the online survey instrument, the data were downloaded from the online survey platform and imported into the statistical data analysis program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were reviewed for outliers. One research participant indicated her years of age as 1949; this number was changed to 63. The plan for data analysis is summarized in Table 1. For all analysis, 95% confidence intervals were utilized.

Table 1

Plan for Data Analysis

Research Question	Analysis	IV	DV
1. Does the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?	ANOVA	Position	Affective commitment
2. Does the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?	ANOVA	Position	Continuance commitment
3. Does the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?	ANOVA	Position	Normative commitment

Research Question	Analysis	IV	DV
4. Is the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?	Hierarchical regression	<u>First block</u> : employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KERS or KERS-H retirement, KTRS retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location <u>Second block</u> : gender, age, and education	Affective commitment
5. Is the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?	Hierarchical regression	<u>First block</u> : employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KTRS retirement, KERS or KERS-H retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location <u>Second block</u> : gender, age, and education	Continuance commitment
6. Is the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?	Hierarchical regression	<u>First block</u> : employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KTRS retirement, KERS or KERS-H retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location <u>Second block</u> : gender, age, and education	Normative commitment

Note: For regression analysis, the position, tenure status, and retirement plan variables were dummy coded.

Description of variables.

The survey instrument for this research was designed to gather information from research participants on the personal and position variables of interest, as well as on

affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Regarding the personal variables, gender was categorical and provided nominal level data, with 1 = *male* and 2 = *female*. Age was expressed in whole numbers, was numeric, and provided ratio level data. Education, expressed as the highest level completed, was ordinal and provided nominal level data. For education, 1 = *less than high school*, 2 = *high school diploma or G.E.D.*, 3 = *associate's degree*, 4 = *bachelor's degree*, 5 = *master's degree*, and 6 = *doctoral degree*.

For the position attributes, employment status was categorical and provided nominal level data, with 1 = *full-time* and 2 = *part-time*. Position was categorical and provided nominal level data. For position, 1 = *faculty*, 2 = *staff*, and 3 = *administration*. Tenure status was categorical and provided nominal level data, with 1 = *not applicable/staff position*, 2 = *non-tenure track*, 3 = *tenure track*, and 4 = *tenured*. Pay status was categorical, providing nominal level data, where 1 = *hourly* and 2 = *salaried*. Length of employment was expressed as a whole number of years completed, was numeric, and provided ratio level data for analysis. The retirement plan variable was categorical and provided nominal level data. Retirement plan was coded as 1 = *KERS or KERS-H*, 2 = *KTRS*, 3 = *ORP*, and 4 = *none*. Campus location was categorical and provided nominal level data, with 1 = *main campus* and 2 = *regional campus*.

While most of the personal and position variables are self-explanatory, the retirement plan variable may require additional information. All full-time employee and certain part-time employees, as noted below, are required to participate in the KTRS, KERS, KERS-H, or ORP plan. The KTRS plan is a defined benefit plan for full-time positions requiring certification or a 4-year degree and for similarly situated part-time

employees whose positions equal 70% time or greater. The KERS and KERS-H plans are also defined benefit plans, but for positions which do not require certification or a 4-year degree. These plans are available to full-time employees and to those working an average of 100 hours or more per month over a calendar or fiscal year. The ORP plan is a defined contribution plan that is offered as an alternative to the KTRS.

For the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997), research participants responded to 18 statements, indicating their level of agreement with the statement. Responses were made on a 7-point scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *somewhat disagree*, 4 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 5 = *somewhat agree*, 6 = *agree*, and 7 = *strongly agree*. These responses were numeric and provided interval level data.

Four items on the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) required reverse coding. Three of these were on the ACS and one was on the NCS. For these items, a response of 1 = *strongly disagree* became 7 = *strongly agree* and vice versa, a response of 2 = *disagree* became 6 = *agree* and vice versa; and a response of 3 = *somewhat disagree* became 5 = *somewhat agree* and vice versa. A response of 4 = *neither agree nor disagree* remained the same. All analyses were conducted with the recoded item scores.

For analysis, it was necessary to create a component score for affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) contained 18 statements to which subjects respond to on a 7-point scale. Of these items, six assessed affective commitment, six assessed continuance commitment, and six assessed normative commitment. To create a

score for each of these three components, the applicable item scores were averaged. These scale scores were numeric and provided interval level data for analysis.

ANOVA.

The first three research questions investigated the relationship between position and each of the three organizational commitment components. These questions were

1. Does the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
2. Does the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
3. Does the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?

For each of these questions, data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA. This analysis is appropriate for research designs with one independent variable with two or more groups and one dependent variable (Shavelson, 1996). This design is reflected in the first three research questions. In each, the independent variable was position, which had three levels (i.e., faculty, staff, or administration). For each question, the dependent variable was a commitment component (i.e., affective commitment, continuance commitment, or normative commitment, respectively).

The assumptions of ANOVA include independence, normality, and homogeneity of variance (Shavelson, 1996). When the assumption of independence is met, the score for any research subject is independent from the scores of all other participants. Independence was logically assumed. Each participant selected his or her response to the position item and multiple responses for this item were not possible. When the

assumption of normality is met, scores on the dependent variable are normally distributed. To determine if this assumption was met, the frequency distributions of the commitment component scores were inspected. When the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance is not significant. To determine if the assumption was met, the Levene test of homogeneity of variance was evaluated.

Multiple regression.

The last three research questions examined the relationship between the personal and position variables and each of the three organizational commitment components.

These research questions were

4. Is the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
5. Is the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
6. Is the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

For these investigations, data were analyzed using multiple regression. Multiple regression is an appropriate analysis to explore the relationships between one dependent variable and each of two or more independent variables (Shavelson, 1996). For the fourth, fifth, and sixth research questions, the independent or predictor variables were the personal and position attributes (see Table 1). For each question, the dependent or outcome variable was a commitment component (i.e., affective commitment, continuance commitment, or normative commitment, respectively).

Dummy coding.

For regression analysis, the independent or predictor variables were the personal and position attributes. However, for this analysis, the three multiple category variables of position, tenure status, and retirement plan had to be converted into dichotomous variables, which are also known as dummy variables. The recoding of the position variable resulted in two new dummy variables: one for faculty status and one for staff status. The tenure status variable was re-coded into three new dummy variables: one for tenured, one for tenure track, and one for non-tenure track. The retirement plan variable was re-coded into three new dummy variables, one for KTRS retirement, one for KERS or KERS-H retirement, and one for ORP retirement. For all of these new dummy variables, a response of 0 = *no* and 1 = *yes*.

In addition to the dummy coding for position, tenure status, and retirement plan, the previously existing dichotomous variables also had to be recoded. These variables were gender, employment status, pay status, and campus location. The responses for these variables were coded as a 1 or a 2. For example, for the gender variable, 1 = *male* and 2 = *female*. For the regression analysis, the responses for these variables were re-coded as a 0 or a 1. For example, gender was re-coded as 0 = *male* and 1 = *female*. This pattern of recoding (i.e., 1 recoded as 0 and 2 recoded as 1) was used consistently with this group of dichotomous variables.

Sample size.

With regression analysis, the number of research participants or the sample size is an important consideration. An adequate number of participants must be obtained in order to achieve a reliable equation and generalizable results. According to Tabachnick

and Fidell (2007), the sample size for regression analysis should be greater than the number of independent variables times eight plus an additional 50, or $N > 50 + 8m$, where m is the number of independent or predictor variables. The evaluation of this equation for the current study demonstrated that an adequate number of research participants was obtained for the regression analysis.

Assumptions of regression.

The assumptions of regression include independence, normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity (Shavelson, 1996). As with ANOVA, the assumption of independence was logically concluded. Assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity were checked by examining the scatterplot of the predicted and residual scores (Shavelson, 1996) for affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. On the scatterplots, the predicted scores were on the abscissa and the residual scores were on the ordinate. When the assumption of normality is met, data points should be clustered at the center of the plot for each increment of the predictor score with fewer points farther from the center (Shavelson, 1996). According to Shavelson (1996), when the assumption of linearity is met, the data points should form a horizontal scatter of residual scores. When the assumption of homoscedasticity is met, the scatter of the data points about the center of the plot should be same for all predicted scores (Shavelson, 1996). The scatterplots for each commitment component was examined to determine if these conditions were met.

Multicollinearity.

Multicollinearity is the existence of a moderate to strong relationship between two or more predictor variables in multiple regression analysis. When multicollinearity

exists, it can limit the size of the multiple correlation coefficient, mask the true importance of a predictor, and increase the instability of the predictor equation (Stevens, 2007). To investigate the multicollinearity between the predictor variables in this study, the intercorrelations among the predictor variables and the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each predictor were examined. While correlations can be used to investigate multicollinearity, they may not be an accurate indicator (Stevens, 2007). For this reason, VIF scores were also used. A VIF of more than 10 indicates that multicollinearity may exist among predictors (Stevens, 2007). VIF scores were evaluated against this threshold.

Selection of regression model.

This study utilized hierarchical regression analysis. Predictors were entered into the regression analysis in two blocks. The first data entry block contained the position attributes and included employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KERS or KERS-H retirement, KTRS retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location. The second data entry block contained the personal attributes and included gender, age, and education. Under this model, the significance of each block could be examined as well as the incremental prediction power of the subsequent block. The personal variables were entered in the second block as previous research has shown that these type of variables overall tended to have a weak relationship with organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

In this chapter, the methodology for this study was presented in detail. The six research questions and the related six hypotheses were stated. The research design was

detailed, as was information regarding the research participants and the survey instrument. The data collection procedures and data analysis plan were explained. In the next chapter, the results of the data analysis for the research questions are presented. The results of these analyses are discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter 4 Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and position within the field of postsecondary education. Two previous studies (Fuller et al., 2006; Schroder, 2008) explored organizational commitment in a postsecondary setting. However, neither study examined the relationship between position as faculty, staff, or administration and the three components of organizational commitment (i.e., affective, continuance, and normative commitment) in a postsecondary setting. The current study added to the body of knowledge on organizational commitment and position in the field of postsecondary education.

The previous three chapters introduced the concept of organizational commitment, reviewed the literature concerning organizational commitment, and outlined the methodology utilized in the current study. In this chapter, the analysis of the research data is presented from a statistical perspective. Descriptive statistics are presented first, followed by the results as they relate to the research questions. This study investigated six questions.

1. Does the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
2. Does the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?
3. Does the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differ according to position?

4. Is the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
5. Is the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?
6. Is the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions related to personal or position characteristics?

The results of the statistical analyses related to each question are presented in the order of the research questions. The results are discussed in the next chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

At the time of data collection, the participating institution employed 2,914 people (P. Booth, personal communication, December 13, 2011). Of these, 681 research subjects responded to the survey, for a response rate of 23%. Missing data accounted for less than 4% of participant responses.

The descriptive statistics for the personal variables are presented in Table 2 for the research participants responding. The majority of the research participants were female ($n = 438$ or 64%). Participants ranged in age from 20 to 79 years old, with an average age of about 46 years ($M = 45.54$, $SD = 12.80$). For the survey item regarding the highest level of education completed, no participants chose the response for less than high school or G.E.D.; therefore, it does not appear in the results section. Most participants reported holding some type of college degree, with 4% indicating an associate's degree, 22% a bachelor's degree, 38% a master's degree, and 31% a doctoral degree.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Personal Variables

Variable	Response	<i>N</i> (%)
Gender	Male	241 (35)
	Female	438 (65)
Age (years) ^a	20 - 29	97 (15)
	30 - 39	124 (19)
	40 - 49	165 (25)
	50 - 59	175 (26)
	60 - 69	87 (13)
	70 - 79	13 (2)
Education	High school diploma or GED	31 (5)
	Associate's degree	29 (4)
	Bachelor's degree	150 (22)
	Master's degree	259 (38)
	Doctoral degree	210 (31)

^a For presentation purposes, age was categorized.

For the position variables, Table 3 contains the descriptive statistics for the research participants responding. Most research participants were full-time employees ($n = 563$ or 83%) and reported working at the main campus ($n = 602$ or 89%). The majority held salaried positions ($n = 571$ or 85%). Half of the participants identified themselves as holding staff positions ($n = 341$ or 50%), while slightly less than half identified themselves as faculty ($n = 300$ or 44%). A slight majority of research participants indicated that tenure status did not apply to their position ($n = 351$ or 53%), while 21% ($n = 139$) indicated they were tenured and 9% indicated they were on a tenure track ($n = 63$). The average length of employment at the institution was 10 years ($M = 9.60$, $SD = 9.42$), with a range of less than 1 year to 46 years. The distribution for length of employment was positively skewed, with many participants reporting lower years of employment and a few participants reporting higher years of employment. Responses for retirement plan participation indicated that almost half of the subjects ($n = 314$ or 47%)

participated in the KTRS, followed by the ORP retirement plan at 24% (n = 165), and the KERS or KERS-H plan at 18% (n = 120) of responses. Eleven percent of participants indicated that they did not participate in any of these retirement plans.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Position Variables

Variable	Response	N (%)
Employment status	Full-time	563 (83)
	Part-time	114 (17)
Position	Faculty	300 (44)
	Staff	341 (50)
	Administration	37 (6)
Tenure status	Not applicable/Staff	351 (53)
	Non-tenure track	116 (17)
	Tenure-track	63 (9)
	Tenured	139 (21)
Pay status	Hourly	102 (15)
	Salaried	571 (85)
Length of employment (years) ^a	0 - 4	256 (38)
	5 - 9	172 (25)
	10 - 14	101 (15)
	15 - 19	34 (5)
	20 - 24	50 (7)
	25 - 46	64 (10)
Retirement plan	KERS or KERS-H	120 (18)
	KTRS	314 (47)
	ORP	165 (24)
	None	77 (11)
Location	Main campus	602 (89)
	Regional campus	73 (11)

^a For presentation purposes, length of employment was categorized.

The item responses for the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) were examined. The full range of responses, from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*, were used for all items. Table 4 provides the means and standard deviations for each of the scale items. The item with the lowest mean score for research participants ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.51$, $n = 646$) was the continuance

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Commitment Items

Scale	Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Affective commitment scale				
	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.22	1.63	655
	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	3.56	1.73	643
	I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.	4.69	1.83	655
	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.	4.83	1.76	654
	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	4.78	1.71	644
	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	4.69	1.74	645
Continuous commitment scale				
	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	4.29	1.85	654
	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.	4.63	1.90	655
	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	4.55	1.78	654
	I believe that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	3.58	1.79	644
	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	4.53	1.91	655
	If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.	3.26	1.51	646
Normative commitment scale				
	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	4.21	1.73	641
	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	3.45	1.81	655
	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.	3.75	1.85	649
	This organization deserves my loyalty.	4.88	1.66	656
	I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	4.19	1.75	644
	I owe a great deal to my organization.	4.32	1.68	640

commitment item “If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.” The item with the highest mean score for all participants ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 1.63$, $n = 655$) was the affective commitment item, “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.”

Affective, continuance, and normative commitment were each assessed by six items. To create a commitment component score, the means of the responses for the six items of each scale were computed. The component scores for affective, continuance, and normative commitment ranged from 1.00 to 7.00, with lower scores indicating a lower degree of the specific commitment and higher scores indicating a higher degree of the specific commitment. For research participants, the mean score for affective commitment was 4.63 ($n = 656$, $SD = 1.34$), for continuance commitment was 4.15 ($n = 656$, $SD = 1.21$), and for normative commitment was 4.13 ($n = 656$, $SD = 1.33$).

The correlations between the component scores were computed. Affective and normative commitment were significantly correlated, $r(654) = .72$, $p < .001$. There was also a significant correlation between continuous and normative commitment, although it was not as strong, $r(654) = .22$, $p < .001$. The correlation between affective and continuance commitment was not significant, $r(654) = .06$, $p = .133$.

Analysis for Research Question 1

For the first research question, the effect of position on the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions was investigated. ANOVA was used to evaluate this relationship. In this analysis, the independent variable was position, categorized as faculty, staff, or administration. The dependent variable was affective commitment.

Analysis was conducted to determine if the assumption of normality and homogeneity of variance were met. To determine if the assumption of normality was met, the frequency distribution of affective commitment scores was examined (see Figure 1 in Appendix E). The distribution revealed that the affective commitment scores were not normally distributed. However, ANOVA is robust to violations of normality when the independent variable has a fixed number of levels (Shavelson, 1996). As the independent variable, position, in this analysis had three levels, ANOVA was robust to this violation. The Levene test of homogeneity of variance was utilized to determine if the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met. For this analysis with affective commitment, the Levene test was significant, indicating that this assumption was violated. Therefore, post hoc testing was conducting using a method appropriate for when this assumption is violated.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine the effect of position on affective commitment. The results of ANOVA, displayed in Table 5, indicated a statistically significant difference in affective commitment scores based on position, $F(2, 651) = 10.86, p < .001$). Position explained 3% ($\eta^2 = .03$) of the variance in affective commitment.

Table 5

ANOVA Results for Affective Commitment

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	37.81	2	18.91	10.86	.000
Within Groups	1133.54	651	1.74		
Total	1171.35	653			

Based on the significant results of ANOVA, post hoc comparisons were conducted to determine where the differences in affective commitment were. As the

Levene test for homogeneity of variance was significant ($p = .035$), post hoc testing was conducted with Dunnett's test. The results showed a significant difference between staff ($M = 4.84, SD = 1.25$) and faculty ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.39$) on affective commitment (see Table 6). Differences in affective commitment between the administration group ($M = 4.91, SD = 1.36$) and the other two groups were not significant.

Table 6

Dunnett Post Hoc Comparisons for Affective Commitment

Position	Position	Mean Difference	SE	p
Staff	Faculty	.48	.11	.000
Administration	Faculty	.54	.24	.084
Administration	Staff	.07	.24	.988

Analysis for Research Question 2

The second research question investigated if the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions differed according to position. ANOVA was used for this analysis. The independent variable in the ANOVA was position as faculty, staff, or administration. The dependent variable was continuance commitment.

Before considering the results of the ANOVA, testing was performed to determine if the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were met. The frequency distribution of continuance commitment scores was examined (see Figure 1 in Appendix F) to determine if the assumption of normality was met. While the distribution revealed that the scores were not normally distributed, ANOVA is robust to violations of normality when the independent variable has a fixed number of levels (Shavelson, 1996). As the independent variable for this analysis met this condition, ANOVA was robust to this violation. To determine if the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met, the

Levene test for homogeneity of variance was utilized. For continuance commitment, the Levene statistic was not significant, demonstrating the assumption was met.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine the effect of position on continuance commitment. As shown in Table 7, the results yielded a statistically significant difference in continuance commitment scores based on position, $F(2, 651) = 21.54, p < .001$. Position explained 6% ($\eta^2 = .06$) of the variance in continuance commitment.

Table 7

ANOVA Results for Continuance Commitment

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	58.88	2	29.44	21.54	.000
Within Groups	889.96	651	1.37		
Total	948.84	653			

To determine where the differences in continuance commitment were, post hoc comparisons were conducted. Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) post hoc analysis revealed significant differences between staff ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.13$) and faculty ($M = 3.85, SD = 1.19$) and between staff and administration ($M = 3.88, SD = 1.38$) for continuance commitment (see Table 8). No difference was found between the faculty and administration groups.

Table 8

Tukey Post Hoc Comparisons for Continuance Commitment

Position	Position	Mean Difference	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Staff	Faculty	.60	.09	.000
Staff	Administration	.57	.21	.015
Administration	Faculty	.03	.21	.986

Analysis for Research Question 3

For the third research question, the effect of position on the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions was examined. ANOVA was used in this analysis. As in the previous two research questions, the independent variable was position, which for the purposes of this study was employment as faculty, staff, or administration. The dependent variable was normative commitment as measured by the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were assessed for possible violations. To determine if the assumption of normality was met, the frequency distribution of normative scores was examined (see Figure 1 in Appendix G). This revealed that the normative commitment scores were not normally distributed. However, ANOVA is robust to violations of normality when the independent variable has a fixed number of levels (Shavelson, 1996), as it does in this study. Therefore, ANOVA was robust to this violation in this analysis. To determine if the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance was utilized. The Levene statistic was not significant, so the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore the effect of position on normative commitment. The results of the ANOVA, displayed in Table 9, demonstrated a statistically significant difference in normative commitment scores based on position, $F(2, 651) = 11.21, p < .001$. Position explained 3% ($\eta^2 = .03$) of the variance in normative commitment.

Table 9

ANOVA Results for Normative Commitment

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	38.01	2	19.01	11.21	.000
Within Groups	1104.32	651	1.70		
Total	1142.33	653			

Post hoc comparisons were performed utilizing Tukey's HSD Test. The results, presented in Table 10, showed a significant difference in normative commitment between staff ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 1.25$) and faculty ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.33$). No differences in normative commitment were found between the administration ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 1.51$) and the other two groups.

Table 10

Tukey Post Hoc Comparisons for Normative Commitment

Position	Position	Mean Difference	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Staff	Faculty	.50	.10	.000
Staff	Administration	.27	.23	.470
Administration	Faculty	.23	.23	.582

Analysis for Research Question 4

In the fourth research question, the relationship between the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions and personal or position attributes was explored. A hierarchical regression analysis using the enter method was conducted to evaluate this relationship. For this analysis, the dependent or outcome variable was affective commitment. The independent or predictor variables were gender, age, education, employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KERS or KERS-H retirement, KTRS

retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location. These independent variables were entered into the equation in two blocks. The first data entry contained the position attributes and included employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KERS or KERS-H retirement, KTRS retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location. The second data entry contained the personal attributes and included gender, age, and education.

To determine if the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity were met in this analysis, the scatterplot of the predicted scores and residual scores for affective commitment was examined. To demonstrate normality, the data points should be clustered at the center of the plot for each increment of the predictor score with fewer points farther from the center (Shavelson, 1996). To demonstrate linearity, the data points should form a horizontal scatter of residual scores (Shavelson, 1996). To demonstrate homoscedasticity, the scatter of the data points about the center of the plot should be same for all predicted scores (Shavelson, 1996). The scatterplot for affective commitment (see Figure 1 in Appendix H) demonstrated graphically that these criteria were met; therefore, the assumptions of regression analysis were not violated in this analysis.

To investigate the relationship among the personal and position variables, inter-correlations among predictor variables were examined. The predictors included in the correlation matrix were age, education, and length of employment. The correlation between education and age was significant, $r(606) = .20$, as was the correlation between education and length of employment, $r(606) = .11$. While significant, these correlations

were not strong. The correlation between age and length of employment was significant and strong, $r(606) = .60$.

Multicollinearity between the predictors was diagnosed by examining the VIF statistics for the predictor variables. For the model with the position predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.15 for campus location to 6.43 for faculty status. For the model including the position and personal predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.11 for gender to 6.46 for faculty status. All VIF statistics were less than 10; therefore, multicollinearity was not indicated in the analysis.

The block of position variables was significantly related to affective commitment, $F(12, 593) = 3.56, p < .001$, as shown for the first model in Table 11. The position variables were significantly related to affective commitment. In the second model, the personal variables were added to the analysis. The results for the second model were also significant, $F(15, 590) = 2.94, p < .001$, although the addition of the personal variables did not contribute significantly to the model.

Table 11

ANOVA Results for the Regression Model of Affective Commitment

	Model	SS	df	MS	F	p	ΔF	Sig. ΔF
1 ^a	Regression	73.17	12	6.10	3.56	.000 ^a	3.56	.000
	Residual	1016.41	593	1.71				
	Total	1089.58	605					
2 ^b	Regression	75.85	15	5.06	2.94	.000 ^b	.52	.668
	Residual	1013.72	590	1.72				
	Total	1089.58	605					

^a Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, and faculty status

^b Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, faculty status, gender, age, and education

The multiple correlation coefficient for the first block of predictors was .26, indicating that approximately 7% ($R^2 = .07$) of the variance in affective commitment was accounted for by the linear combination of the position variables. The addition of the second block of predictors, the personal variables, did not significantly increase the amount of variance accounted for in affective commitment.

The results of the predictors' effect on affective commitment are summarized in Table 12. The significant predictors of affective commitment in Model 1 were length of employment ($t = 2.37$), KTRS retirement ($t = 2.03$), and campus location ($t = 2.00$). These results indicate that these three predictors were positively related to affective commitment. Under this model, KTRS retirement ($\beta = .19$) made the strongest contribution to explaining the affective commitment score, followed by length of employment ($\beta = .12$) and campus location ($\beta = .09$), respectively.

Table 12

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Coefficients for Affective Commitment

Regression Model	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	Employment status	.09	.21	.02	.42	.676
	Faculty status	-.25	.27	-.09	-.93	.354
	Staff status	-.10	.26	-.04	-.38	.707
	Tenured	-.50	.26	-.15	-1.90	.057
	Tenure track	-.23	.30	-.05	-.78	.438
	Non-tenure track	-.43	.24	-.12	-1.80	.073
	Pay status	.04	.19	.01	.23	.816
	Length of employment	.02	.01	.12	2.37*	.018
	KERS or KERS-H retirement	.41	.28	.12	1.49	.136
	KTRS retirement	.52	.26	.19	2.03*	.043
	ORP retirement	.30	.27	.10	1.12	.264

Regression Model	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
2	Campus location	.37	.18	.09	2.00*	.046
	Employment status	.09	.22	.02	.40	.692
	Faculty status	-.23	.27	-.09	-.86	.390
	Staff status	-.11	.27	-.04	-.40	.688
	Tenured	-.47	.28	-.14	-1.72	.087
	Tenure track	-.22	.31	-.05	-.72	.475
	Non-tenure track	-.43	.24	-.12	-1.78	.076
	Pay status	.07	.19	.02	.38	.706
	Length of employment	.01	.01	.09	1.67	.096
	KERS or KERS-H retirement	.33	.28	.09	1.16	.246
	KTRS retirement	.50	.26	.19	1.91	.056
	ORP retirement	.29	.27	.09	1.08	.279
	Campus location	.33	.19	.08	1.78	.076
	Gender	.05	.12	.02	.44	.661
	Age	.01	.01	.05	.87	.383
	Education	-.06	.08	-.05	-.77	.444

* $p < .05$

Analysis for Research Question 5

The fifth research question investigated if the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions was related to personal or position attributes. Hierarchical regression analysis was utilized to evaluate this relationship. For this analysis, the outcome variable was continuance commitment. The predictor variables were entered into the regression in two blocks. The first data entry was composed of the position attributes and included employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KTRS retirement, KERS or KERS-H retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location. The second data entry was composed of the personal attributes and included gender, age, and education.

To determine if the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity were met in this analysis, the scatterplot of the predicted scores and residual scores for continuance commitment was examined (see Figure 1 in Appendix I). The scatterplot revealed the data points were clustered at the center of the plot for each increment of the predictor score with fewer points farther from the center, demonstrating normality (Shavelson, 1996). It also showed the data points formed a horizontal scatter of residual scores, demonstrating linearity (Shavelson, 1996). Finally, the scatter of data points about the center of the plot was about the same for all predicted scores, demonstrating homoscedasticity (Shavelson, 1996). Therefore, the assumptions of regression analysis were not violated in this analysis.

Inter-correlations among predictor variables were examined to investigate the relationship among the personal and position variables. Age, education, and length of employment were included in the correlation matrix. The correlations between education and age, $r(606) = .20$, and between education and length of employment, $r(606) = .11$, were significant, but not strong. The correlation between age and length of employment was significant and strong, $r(606) = .60$.

VIF statistics for the predictor variables were examined to examine if multicollinearity existed among the predictor variables. The regression analysis included two models based on the two blocks of predictors, and both models were examined. For the first model based on the block of position predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.15 for campus location to 6.43 for faculty status. For the second model based on the block of position and personal predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.11 for gender to 6.46 for

faculty status. As all VIF statistics were less than 10, multicollinearity was not indicated in the analysis.

For continuance commitment, the results of the multiple regression analysis yielded significant results for the block of position variables, $F(12, 593) = 8.52, p < .001$, as shown for the first model in Table 13. The position variables were significantly related to continuance commitment. The personal variables were added to the analysis in the second model. The results for the second model were also significant, $F(15, 590) = 7.64, p < .001$, demonstrating that the position and personal variables were significantly related to continuance commitment.

Table 13

ANOVA Results for the Regression Model for Continuance Commitment

	Model	SS	df	MS	F	p	ΔF	Sig. ΔF
1 ^a	Regression	125.59	12	10.47	8.52	.000	8.52	.000
	Residual	728.47	593	1.23				
	Total	854.06	605					
2 ^b	Regression	138.87	15	9.26	7.64	.000	3.65	.012
	Residual	715.19	590	1.21				
	Total	854.06	605					

^a Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, and faculty status

^b Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, faculty status, gender, age, and education

The multiple correlation coefficient for the first model with the position variables was .38, meaning that approximately 15% ($R^2 = .15$) of the variance in continuance commitment was accounted for by the linear combination of the position variables. The addition of the personal predictors in the second model significantly increased the multiple correlation coefficient, to .40. The combination of the position and personal

variables increased the amount of variance in continuance commitment accounted for to 16% ($R^2 = .16$).

The effect of the predictors on continuance commitment is summarized in Table 14. Employment status ($t = -5.45$) and education ($t = -3.16$) were significant predictors of continuance commitment in the second model. Both of the predictors were negatively related to continuance commitment. Under this model, employment status ($\beta = -.30$) made the strongest contribution to explaining continuance commitment, followed by education ($\beta = -.18$).

Table 14

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Coefficients for Continuance Commitment

Regression Model	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	Employment status	-1.04	.18	-.32	-5.80***	.000
	Faculty status	.22	.23	.09	.95	.345
	Staff status	.35	.22	.15	1.59	.113
	Tenured	-.48	.22	-.16	-2.18*	.030
	Tenure track	-.50	.26	-.12	-1.95	.052
	Non-tenure track	-.13	.20	-.04	-.66	.508
	Pay status	-.00	.16	-.00	-.02	.981
	Length of employment	.01	.01	.09	1.85	.065
	KERS or KERS-H retirement	-.08	.23	-.03	-.35	.728
	KTRS retirement	-.25	.22	-.11	-1.16	.246
	ORP retirement	-.48	.23	-.18	-2.15*	.032
	Campus location	-.03	.16	-.01	-.22	.829
	2	Employment status	-1.00	.18	-.30	-5.45***
Faculty status		.22	.23	.09	.94	.348
Staff status		.24	.22	.10	1.08	.279
Tenured		-.27	.23	-.09	-1.18	.239
Tenure track		-.33	.26	-.08	-1.28	.203
Non-tenure track		-.07	.20	-.02	-.32	.751
Pay status		.05	.16	.02	.34	.732

Regression Model	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Length of employment	.01	.01	.09	1.76	.080
	KERS or KERS-H retirement	-.19	.24	-.06	-.79	.428
	KTRS retirement	-.21	.22	-.09	-.96	.337
	ORP retirement	-.42	.23	-.15	-1.85	.065
	Campus location	-.07	.16	-.02	-.44	.661
	Gender	.06	.10	.03	.65	.513
	Age	-.00	.01	-.02	-.32	.748
	Education	-.22	.07	-.18	-3.16**	.002

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Analysis for Research Question 6

For the sixth research question, the relationship between the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions and personal or position attributes was explored. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to evaluate this relationship. For this analysis, normative commitment was the outcome variable. The predictor variables were entered into the regression in two blocks. The predictor variables for the first data entry were employment status, faculty status, staff status, tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, pay status, length of employment, KERS or KERS-H retirement, KTRS retirement, ORP retirement, and campus location. These were the position variables. The predictors for the second data entry were gender, age, and education. These were the personal variables.

To determine if the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity were met in this analysis, the scatterplot of the predicted scores and residual scores for normative commitment was examined (see Figure 1 in Appendix J). The assumption of normality was met as the data points were clustered at the center of the plot for each

increment of the predictor score with fewer points farther from the center (Shavelson, 1996). The assumption of linearity was met as the data points formed a horizontal scatter of residual scores (Shavelson, 1996). The assumption of homoscedasticity was met, as the scatter of data points about the center of the plot was the same for all predicted scores (Shavelson, 1996). Therefore, the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity were not violated in this analysis.

Inter-correlations among predictor variables were examined to investigate the relationship among the personal and position variables. The predictors included in the correlation matrix were age, education, and length of employment. Significant correlations were found between education and age, $r(606) = .20$; education and length of employment, $r(606) = .11$; and age and length of employment, $r(606) = .60$. While these were significant, the only strong correlation was between age and length of employment.

Multicollinearity between the predictors was diagnosed by examining the VIF statistics for the predictor variables. For the model including the block of position predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.15 for campus location to 6.43 for faculty status. For the model including position and personal predictors, VIF statistics ranged from 1.11 for gender to 6.46 for faculty status. Multicollinearity was not indicated in the analysis as all VIF statistics were less than 10.

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis for normative commitment yielded significant results for the block of position variables, $F(12, 593) = 2.85, p < .01$, demonstrating a significant relationship between the position variables and normative commitment (see Model 1 in Table 15). In second model, the personal variables were

added to the analysis. The results for the combination of position and personal variables were also significant, $F(15, 590) = 2.77, p < .001$.

Table 15

ANOVA Results for the Regression Model for Normative Commitment

	Model	SS	df	MS	F	p	ΔF	Sig. ΔF
1 ^a	Regression	58.88	12	4.91	2.85	.001	2.85	.001
	Residual	1022.82	593	1.73				
	Total	1081.70	605					
2 ^b	Regression	71.05	15	4.74	2.77	.000	2.37	.070
	Residual	1010.65	590	1.71				
	Total	1081.70	605					

^a Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, and faculty status

^b Predictors: campus location, KERS or KERS-H retirement, length of employment, tenure track, employment status, non-tenure track, ORP retirement, pay status, tenured, staff status, KTRS retirement, faculty status, gender, age, and education

For the first model with the position variables, the multiple correlation coefficient was .23, indicating that approximately 5% ($R^2 = .05$) of the variance in normative commitment was accounted for by the linear combination of the position variables. While the addition of the second block of predictors increased the multiple correlation coefficient, the increase was not significant. Therefore, the additional of the personal variables to the model did not add significantly to the variance accounted for in normative commitment.

A summary of the effect of the predictors on normative commitment is presented in Table 16. Significant predictors of normative commitment were tenured ($t = -2.65$) and non-tenure track ($t = -2.21$). Both were negatively related to the outcome variable. Under this model, tenured ($\beta = -.21$) made the strongest contribution to explaining normative commitment, followed by non-tenure track ($\beta = -.18$).

Table 16

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Coefficients for Normative Commitment

Regression Model	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	Employment status	.13	.21	.04	.61	.543
	Faculty status	.11	.27	.04	.41	.682
	Staff status	.09	.26	.03	.33	.745
	Tenured	-.40	.26	-.21	-2.65**	.008
	Tenure track	-.58	.30	-.18	-1.93	.055
	Non-tenure track	-.53	.24	-.15	-2.21*	.027
	Pay status	.08	.19	.02	.43	.665
	Length of employment	.00	.01	-.01	-.14	.893
	KERS or KERS-H retirement	.33	.28	.09	1.20	.233
	KTRS retirement	.38	.26	.14	1.49	.136
	ORP retirement	.19	.27	.06	.72	.474
	Campus location	.28	.18	.07	1.54	.125
	2	Employment status	.17	.22	.05	.79
Faculty status		.13	.27	.05	.47	.639
Staff status		.01	.27	.00	.02	.984
Tenured		-.55	.27	-.17	-2.01*	.045
Tenure track		-.49	.31	-.11	-1.57	.116
Non-tenure track		-.50	.24	-.14	-2.06*	.040
Pay status		.14	.19	.04	.75	.456
Length of employment		-.00	.01	-.02	-.41	.685
KERS or KERS-H retirement		.20	.28	.06	.40	.485
KTRS retirement		.39	.26	.15	1.51	.131
ORP retirement		.23	.27	.08	.87	.386
Campus location		.23	.19	.05	1.21	.226
Gender		.15	.12	.05	1.25	.212
Age	.00	.01	.03	.62	.539	
Education	-.18	.08	-.13	-2.19*	.029	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In summary, this study investigated the impact of position as well as other personal and position variables on affective, continuance, and normative commitment in the field of higher education. The data analysis for position produced significant results

for each of the three components of commitment. Subsequent analysis showed significant difference between the staff and faculty groups for affective, continuance, and normative commitment. A significant difference was also found between the staff and administration groups for continuance commitment. Hierarchical regression analysis for the personal and position variables yielded significant results for each of the commitment components. Length of employment, KTRS retirement plan, and campus location were significant predictors of affective commitment. Employment status and education were significant predictors of continuance commitment. Tenured and non-tenure track were significant predictors of normative commitment. In the next chapter, the implications of these results are discussed.

Chapter 5 Discussion

This research sought to explore the relationship of organizational commitment to employee position and to personal and position characteristics in the field of postsecondary education. Instead of a one-dimension measure of organizational commitment, this study utilized the three-component measure of commitment composed of affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997). The first chapter introduced the concept of organizational commitment and briefly discussed its relationship to several important workplace outcomes, including turnover. It also included a description of the purpose of the study and stated the research questions. Chapter 2 reviewed the literature on organizational commitment, from its origin in motivation theory through the development of the concept as an important employee attribute in its own standing. This review also included research on the relationship of organizational commitment with job satisfaction and employee outcomes, including employee turnover, intent to turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness. Previous research concerning the formation and antecedents of commitment was reviewed, with a separate section covering the study of organizational commitment in higher education. The third chapter provided the research plan for the current study, including a description of the survey instrument, the data collection procedures, and the plan for data analysis. The most recent chapter described the results in terms of statistical testing and significant findings. This final chapter presents an interpretation of the findings and offers suggestions for future research.

Discussion of Research Question 1

The first research question investigated the relationship between position as faculty, staff, or administration and affective commitment within the field of postsecondary education. It was hypothesized that the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would differ according to the type of position they held. The results of data analysis provided support for this hypothesis, as affective commitment differed according to position. Specifically, the affective commitment of staff was significantly higher than the affective commitment of faculty. The difference between faculty and administration also approached significance ($p = .08$), with the administration reporting higher affective commitment than the faculty.

The meaning of this difference in affective commitment can be interpreted based on the work of Meyer and Allen (1991). Staff members of the institution reported a greater “emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67) than the faculty did. Further, “employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they *want* to do so” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). The higher score of affective commitment for the staff could be interpreted as a stronger desire to stay with the organization.

Discussion of Research Question 2

The second research question sought to explore the relationship between position and continuance commitment. It was hypothesized that the continuous commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would differ according to position as faculty, staff, or administration. Data analysis supported for this hypothesis. Statistical analysis

demonstrated that continuance commitment differed significantly by position. As demonstrated through post hoc testing, staff expressed higher levels of continuance commitment than both faculty and administration.

Following the framework of Meyer and Allen (1991), these results for continuance commitment suggest that the staff were more highly aware “of the costs associated with leaving the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). Therefore, staff members are more likely to “remain because they *need* to do so” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). The higher continuance commitment score could be interpreted as a stronger need to stay with the organization.

Discussion of Research Question 3

The third research question examined the relationship between position and normative commitment. The related third hypothesis was that the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would differ according to position as faculty, staff, or administration. The results supported for this hypothesis. Normative commitment was related to employee position. As with affective commitment, post hoc analysis revealed that the difference in normative commitment by position was between the staff and faculty groups, with staff reporting higher normative commitment.

The normative commitment of staff was significantly higher than the normative commitment of faculty. Staff had a greater “feeling of obligation to continue employment” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67) than the faculty. They “feel that they *ought* to remain with the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). The higher normative score could be interpreted as a stronger feeling of obligation to stay with the organization.

To summarize the results related to the first three research questions, postsecondary employees expressed different levels of organizational commitment according to the position held. Staff reported significantly higher levels of affective, continuance, and normative commitment than faculty. The significance and consistency of these findings across all three components of commitment provided strong evidence that the staff had higher organizational commitment than the faculty. In addition, staff expressed higher levels of continuance commitment than administration. The small size of the administration position category in this study may have limited the ability to find significant results for this group.

Discussion of Research Question 4

The fourth research question focused on the relationship between personal and position variables and affective commitment within the field of postsecondary education. The fourth hypothesis predicted that the affective commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would be related to personal and position characteristics. Data analysis provided partial support for this hypothesis. Hierarchical regression analysis for affective commitment demonstrated that the block of position variables were significantly related to affective commitment. The addition of the personal variables, however, did not add significantly to the model. Therefore, affective commitment of the postsecondary employees was related to the position attributes, but not the personal ones. Within the block of position variables, three demonstrated a significant relationship with affective commitment: length of employment, KTRS retirement, and campus location.

Discussion of Research Question 5

The fifth research question sought to explore the relationship between personal and position variables and continuance commitment. It was hypothesized that the continuance commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would be related to personal and position attributes. Data analysis provided support for this hypothesis. The results of hierarchical regression analysis for continuance commitment demonstrated that the block of position variables were significant predictors of continuance commitment. The addition of the personal variables significantly increased the variance accounted for in continuance commitment. Therefore, continuance commitment of the postsecondary employees was related to the position and personal attributes. The significant predictors from the blocks of position and personal variables were employment status and education, one predictor from each set.

Discussion of Research Question 6

The sixth research question examined the relationship of personal and position variables with continuance commitment. It was hypothesized that the normative commitment of employees of postsecondary institutions would not be related to personal and position characteristics. Data analysis provided partial support for this hypothesis. The block of position variables was a significant predictor of normative commitment, as demonstrated by the hierarchical regression analysis for normative commitment. While the combination of position and personal variables was also significant, the addition of the personal variables did not add to the model. Therefore, while the normative commitment of the postsecondary employees was not related to the personal attributes, it

was related to the position characteristics. There were two significant predictors of normative commitment: tenure and non-tenure track.

A summary of the findings for the hierarchical regression analyses for affective, continuance, and normative commitment is presented in Table 17. The block of position variables was significant for all three components of organizational commitment. The block of personal variables was a significant predictor for continuance commitment. No predictor variable was significant across all three models. In fact, none of the significant predictors was shared by any of the commitment components. As the components of commitment were theorized to stem from different antecedents (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997), this result is not unexpected.

Table 17

Summary of Regression Analysis Results for Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment

	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
Position variables	length of employment, KTRS retirement, and campus location	employment status	tenure and non-tenure track
Personal variables		education	

Discussion of Qualitative Responses

The survey instrument contained one open-ended response item, which appeared as the final item on the survey instrument. This item asked research participants to provide their thoughts as to why they responded to the organizational commitment assessment as they did. Of the 681 participants, 263 participants (39%) provided a response of some kind to this item. These open-ended responses were clustered into

groups through iterative readings of the responses by the researcher and letting categories emerge.

One of the repeated themes for the open-ended response item was the participants' status as alumni or former students of the institution where the research was conducted. Overall, based on the included comments, this prior relationship with the institution as a student seems to be related to a positive disposition toward the university. For example, one participant shared "I have a strong personal attachment to this university because it's my alma mater." For the most part, these participants expressed feeling a personal relationship with the institution that was generally positive. The status as a former student of an institution may influence the commitment an employee later feels as an employee and perhaps connects the employee to the institution in a more personal way. Inclusion of this variable in future organizational commitment research conducted in the education field may be an important consideration.

Several participants offered a distinction between the commitment they felt to the organization and the commitment they felt toward a certain segment of that organization. While the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) were intended and worded to measure organizational commitment, some participants noted that their feelings toward the organization were different from their feelings toward their department, office, students, or other more localized grouping. The response from one participant encapsulated this conflict well: "The issue is a complex one and the questions do not fully address this complexity. For example, I feel a great deal of loyalty to my unit within the organization, but little to the organization as a whole." This body of responses was reminiscent of the research of Reichers (1985) who

suggested that organizational commitment was a compilation of commitments to several different groups connected to an organization. This premise appears to be supported by the thoughts shared in this study by these responding participants. While the feeling expressed toward the smaller groupings were generally positive, this was not exclusively the case.

Another category of research participant responses to the open-ended item involved an evaluation of the reciprocal evaluation of the relationship between the employee and the institution as perceived by the respondent. As stated by one respondent, “[The institution] has not fully committed to me, so I have not fully committed emotionally to [the institution].” On a closely related theme, a few respondents stated within their responses that they were part-time employees and the lack of a full-time position and the benefits associated with a full-time position influenced the commitment they felt toward the organization. For example, one respondent offered the following: “Some of these responses are informed by my adjunct faculty status. Reflecting on the questions and my responses, I may have answered differently if I were a full-time faculty member.” This assessment of the employee’s commitment to the organization as a reflection of the organization’s commitment to the employee was demonstrated in the data analysis. Employee status as a full-time or part-time employee exhibited a significant relationship with continuance commitment in the regression analysis.

A few other themes emerged from the free-response item, although the number of responses or the information provided was more limited. Status as a newer employee was noted by some, with the related difficulty of responding to the survey due to a lack of

experience with the institution. This logical difficulty has been noted by researchers (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Recent or impending retirement was also mentioned as an influential factor in selected item responses, although the direction of effect as a positive or negative factor was not noted. Several respondents acknowledged that they felt a sense of commitment to the organization, but at the same time continued that those feelings were secondary to their commitment to their families or that those feelings would not prevent their decision to leave the institution for a better opportunity. As stated by one participant, “I enjoy working for [the institution] and am very committed to the institution, but that doesn't mean that I would not leave for the right position.” The juxtaposition of commitment to organization versus commitment to family would seem to have a negative impact on the evaluation of organizational commitment when they are evaluated in terms of parts of the overall commitment experienced by an individual.

Relationship with Previous Research

The Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) has been used with many different subject pools. This study utilized the measure with employees of a postsecondary institution. For this group of employees as well, the scales demonstrated adequate reliability across all three components. The scale reliabilities in this study were similar to the reliability results observed in the meta-analysis by Meyer et al. (2002).

Like the research of Xu and Bassham (2010), this study also found some item contamination for the factor analysis on the items of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997). As the current study utilized the 1997 version of the scale and Xu and Bassham utilized the 1990 version, a direct

comparison of the results is not possible, particularly with the extensive revisions to the NCS. In this study, the NCS was related to the ACS and to the CCS, both in terms of correlations and factor loadings from factor analysis. These results suggest that continued modification of the scale may be in order.

Two studies (Fuller et al., 2006; Schroder, 2008) previously explored the influence of organizational commitment in the postsecondary setting. Using the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974), Schroder (2008) found different predictor variables for organizational commitment for faculty than for staff. The results of the current study also demonstrated that organizational commitment differed according to position. Research by Fuller et al. (2006) demonstrated differences in affective commitment by position. In the Fuller et al. study, faculty scores of affective commitment were significantly lower than those of staff and those of administrators. The current study found similar results for affective commitment, with faculty reporting lower levels of affective commitment than staff. While the difference between the faculty and administration groups approached but did not reach significance, in the current study, the pattern of results was in the same direction as Fuller et al, with the faculty reporting lower affective commitment than the administration. The current study corroborated the results of Fuller et al. and extended the results by including and finding significant results for differences by position for continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Similar to the results of previous research, this study found few significant results for personal characteristics included in the study. Of the three personal attributes included in the regression analyses in this study, only education achieved significance and only for continuance commitment. This lack of results between personal attributes

and organizational commitment complements the finding of other research (Giffords, 2003; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997) and extended them into the postsecondary education field.

The results of the regression analyses in this study yielded different significant predictors for each of the three components of organizational commitment, as did the research by Marchiori and Henkin (2004). The lack of similar results across affective, continuance, and normative commitment provided additional support for the three-component commitment concept as developed by Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997). The three components were designed to assess different aspects of commitment and as such, were theorized to have different antecedents and sources. The lack of shared predictors across any of the three commitment components offered additional support for this conceptualization.

The open-ended item concerning why the participants responded in the way that they did was included for two purposes. First, this item added description and substance to the numerical responses. Second, as suggested by Reichers (1985), research on organizational commitment should attempt to include the perceptions and perspective of those experiencing the commitment. Information contained in this item seemed to indicate that responding participants made a distinction between their commitment to the organization and their commitment to a subpart of that organization. Some participants sensed and acknowledged this distinction in their written responses. Reichers (1985) suggested an approach to organizational commitment that included multiple commitments to different organizational groups. The responses received in this study

provided some indication that multiple focuses for commitment may be experienced by employees.

Implications

In the current study, faculty had significantly lower organizational commitment than staff. This lower commitment was not limited to one component of commitment, but was consistent across all three components. The lower commitment scores observed for the faculty may be a reflection of the perception of some faculty that they operate similar to independent contractors or that they are committed to their profession or discipline rather than to a particular institution. As research has consistently demonstrated a relationship between organizational commitment and turnover as well as intent to turnover, educational administrators and leaders concerned about the potential, negative impact of turnover on their organizations may want to consider means through which the commitment of faculty to their particular educational institution may be strengthened. The literature on organizational commitment includes a wide array of characteristics related to commitment, in addition to those in the current study. Administrators may want to discuss the plausibility and potential influence of certain interventions with their colleagues and their faculty in order to determine which interventions would be most beneficial to their institution.

Limitations

This study utilized a non-experimental design. Random assignment of research participants to a specific type of position was not feasible. Due to the nature of this study, causality cannot be inferred from these results.

While the sample size was adequate, it represented a small percentage of the employee population of the institution. The response rate to the survey was only 23%. While this provided an adequate sample for the statistical procedures utilized, it may limit the generalizability of the results and call into question the representativeness of the research participants.

The current research was limited to the employees of one public, postsecondary institution. As organizational type has been shown to impact organizational commitment (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank, 2002), the results found may not be generalizable to other types of postsecondary institutions. In addition, the unique nature of this particular organization in terms of its history and culture may also make it difficult to transfer the findings to other, dissimilar institutions.

For all hypotheses testing, a low proportion of the variance in the commitment components was explained by the independent variables. The position variable accounted for 3%, 6%, and 3% of the variance in affective, continuance, and normative commitment, respectively. The block of position variable accounted for 7% and 5% of the variance in affective and normative commitment, respectively, while the blocks of position and personal variables accounted for 16% of the variance in continuance commitment. While these results do not negate or dispute the statistical significance of the findings, they may raise an issue of meaningful significance. Additional research at other institutions may be necessary to determine if this is a valid concern.

Suggestions for Future Research

The current study selected a specific group of position and personal variables in order to explore their relationship with organizational commitment in the field of

postsecondary education. Future research should include different variables of interest. These could include items concerning faculty rank, years of employment in higher education across institutions, information on prior student status, employee satisfaction with the benefits offered by the institution, and the degree to which the employee takes advantage of the benefits offered. The distinction between satisfaction with benefits versus utilization of benefits may be an important distinction as they may not correspond and could differentially influence commitment, particularly continuance commitment.

The participant responses to the open-ended item suggested that an employee's status as a graduate or as a former student of the institution may have implications for research on organization commitment in the education field. This study did not include any items related to the prior student or alumni status of the employees. The connectedness and relationships experienced as a student may influence the employee's feelings toward the organization. If the experience as a student overall was positive, this may be carried over into that person's experience at the institution as an employee. Of course, a negative experience as a student may be transferred as well. In addition, an employee's status as the graduate of an institution may have an effect on the perception of that graduate employee by other employees. An employee who is also an alumnus may be treated differently from an employee who is not an alumnus.

From the open-ended responses, as well, it would seem that research participants had some difficulty responding to the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (Meyer & Allen, 1997) on an organizational level. It may be enlightening to investigate commitment on a more personal level or to multiple groups within the organization, as suggested by Reichers (1985). Particularly for larger

institutions, which often contain multiple colleges within the institution, a less macro-level measure of commitment could be more effective and meaningful.

Across the affective, continuance, and normative commitment scores, it is interesting to note the movement of the administrative group with respect to the other two groups. For affective commitment, the mean score for the administration was closer to the mean score for the staff than that for the faculty. For continuance commitment, the opposite was true, with mean for the administration almost matching the mean for the faculty. For normative commitment, the mean score for the administration score fell almost at the midpoint between the staff and faculty groups. This varied pattern is in contrast with the pattern of scores between the faculty and staff groups, which was consistent across the three commitment components (see Figure 1 in Appendix K). It may be interesting and informative to continue to investigate this group of employees as separate category from faculty and staff.

As the current study was conducted in only one institution, future studies may want to include multiple studies to assist with generalizability. In addition, it would be interesting to explore whether the organizational commitment of employees from different institutions varied according to the type of institution (i.e., public, private not for profit, and for profit). Other research (Giffords, 2003; Goulet & Frank; 2002) has found differences in organizational commitment by organizational type; however, that research was not conducted in the postsecondary education setting.

Summary and Conclusion

This study sought to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and position in the field of postsecondary education. Data analysis with

ANOVA yielded significant results for each of the commitment components by position. Specifically, the affective, continuance, and normative commitment of staff employees was higher than those of faculty employees. These significant and consistent findings between faculty and staff across all three, commitment components demonstrated that position had an impact on the organizational commitment of postsecondary employees. This difference in the organizational commitment of faculty and staff should continue to be investigated as it has important implications for field of the postsecondary education.

This study also examined the relationship between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and personal and position attributes using hierarchical regression analysis. These attributes were entered into the analysis in two blocks. The first block contained the position attributes, while the second block contained the personal attributes. Regression analysis for affective commitment yielded significant results for the block of position variables, with length of employment, participation in the KTRS retirement system, and campus location exhibiting a significant relationship with affective commitment. For continuance commitment, regression analysis yielded significant results for both blocks of predictor variables. Employment status and education were significant predictors of continuance commitment. Regression analysis for normative commitment yielded significant results for the block of position predictors, with status as tenured and in non-tenure track exhibiting a significant relationship with normative commitment.

In addition to the research questions specifically investigated, this study added to the body of knowledge concerning organizational commitment, both in general and in the context of the education field. This study provided additional support for the premise

that the three commitment components stem from different sources, as noted by their lack of similar predictor variables. It also mirrored the general lack of findings between organizational commitment and personal characteristics, and found such to be true of the postsecondary education field as well. The position attribute included in this study provided a starting point from which others can continue research for additional attributes that would be meaningful to the specific field of higher education. Institutions of higher education have many unique characteristics, which differentiate them from other organizations. The responses to the open-ended item suggested qualities of postsecondary institutions that might yield interesting results with further examination. In light of the important outcomes associated with organizational commitment, a better understanding of its antecedents and correlates would assist organizational leaders, including educational administrators, in directing resources, policies, and practices to support its development and growth.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval



A LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WITH INTERNATIONAL REACH
OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

DATE: November 22, 2011

TO: Linda Keller
FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [285767-2] The Relationship between Organizational Commitment and Position in Postsecondary Education

REFERENCE #: IRB12-107

SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: 11/22/11

REVIEW TYPE: Exempt - Modification

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Modification materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received an approval based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a *implied* consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be an approved project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of .

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Mooney at (270) 745-2129 or paul.mooney@wku.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB's records.

Appendix B

Email Invitation to Participate in Research Study

Dear WKU Faculty and Staff,

I would like to ask for your help in completing my WKU degree through the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program. My dissertation research involves organizational commitment, and the information collected through this survey will assist in the understanding of organizational commitment in the postsecondary setting.

Please complete the brief survey linked below. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes, and your response would be greatly appreciated. The survey will be available for three weeks, until 12/27/11.

Once you complete the survey, you will have the option of entering into a drawing for one of three \$50 Wal-mart gift cards. The information for the drawing will be submitted through a second hyperlink, found on the last screen of the survey. The information for the drawing will be separate from the survey and will not be linked to survey responses.

Your responses to the survey will be anonymous and confidential. The survey does not request personally identifying information. No attempt will be made to link any information to specific individuals.

Taking part in this research study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate by clicking the link below, you do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable, and you may stop taking part at any time. At any time prior to completing and submitting the survey, you may exit the survey (close or "x" out of the browser) and your answers will not be recorded. Opting not to participate in this study will not affect any future services you may be entitled to from WKU.

There are no known risks from participating in this research study. The study is being conducted under the guidance of Dr. Ric Keaster. If you have any concerns or complaints about it, you may contact him at 270-745-7088.

Your continued cooperation with the following research implies your consent.

The following link will take you to the survey:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/orgcommit>.

Thank you for your participation!
Linda Keller

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-6733

Appendix C

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age

In years

3. Education (highest level completed)

Less than high school Bachelor's degree
 High school diploma or G.E.D. Master's degree
 Associate's degree Doctoral degree

4. Employment status

Full-time Part-time

5. Position

Faculty Staff Administration

6. Tenure status

Not applicable/staff position Tenure-track
 Non-tenure track Tenured

7. Pay status

Hourly Salaried

8. Length of employment at the university

In whole years completed

9. Retirement plan participation

KERS or KERS-H (Kentucky Employees Retirement System, including Hazardous Duty Coverage)
 KTRS (Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System)
 ORP (Optional Retirement Plan; alternative to KTRS)
 None

10. Campus location where you work

Main campus Regional campus

11. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Somewhat disagree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 - Somewhat agree
- 6 - Agree
- 7 - Strongly agree

12. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Somewhat disagree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 - Somewhat agree
- 6 - Agree
- 7 - Strongly agree

13. This organization deserves my loyalty.

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Somewhat disagree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 - Somewhat agree
- 6 - Agree
- 7 - Strongly agree

14. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Somewhat disagree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 - Somewhat agree
- 6 - Agree
- 7 - Strongly agree

15. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Somewhat disagree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 - Somewhat agree
- 6 - Agree
- 7 - Strongly agree

16. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

17. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

18. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

19. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

20. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

21. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

22. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

23. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

24. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

25. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

26. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

27. I believe that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

28. I owe a great deal to my organization.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 - Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> 5 - Somewhat agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 - Disagree | <input type="radio"/> 6 - Agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 - Somewhat disagree | <input type="radio"/> 7 - Strongly agree |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 - Neither agree nor disagree | |

29. OPTIONAL: The statements above were designed to measure your commitment to this organization (WKU). Please offer your thoughts as to why you responded as you did in the box below.

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

If you would like to be entered into the drawing for one of three \$50 gift cards to Wal-mart, please use the link below to submit your entry. Copy and paste the link into your browser.

Thank you.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GQ2B57G7>

Thank you for your participation!

If you would like to be entered into the drawing for one of three \$50 gift cards to Wal-mart, please complete the information below.

1. Mailing address where you would like the gift card to be sent if you are drawn as a winner:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address (line 1)	<input type="text"/>
Address (line 2)	<input type="text"/>
City, state, & zip	<input type="text"/>

Appendix D

Permission to Use Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales

Re: Request to use the Measurement of Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment

John Meyer [meyer@uwo.ca]

Sent: Monday, October 24, 2011 8:16 AM

To: Keller, Linda, B

Dear Linda,

You are welcome to use our commitment measures in your research. I hope all goes well.

Best regards,
John Meyer

----- Original Message -----

From: Keller, Linda, B

To: meyer@uwo.ca

Sent: Sunday, October 23, 2011 5:15 PM

Subject: Request to use the Measurement of Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment

Dear Dr. John Meyer,

I am a doctoral candidate with Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA. I would like permission to use the revised Measurement of Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment from *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Applications* in my dissertation research study. My dissertation will investigate differences in affective, continuance, and normative commitment by position for postsecondary education employees.

I would be happy to supply any additional information you would like on this proposed study. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Linda Keller
Ed.D. Candidate
Educational Leadership
Western Kentucky University

Appendix E

Frequency Distribution for Affective Commitment Scores

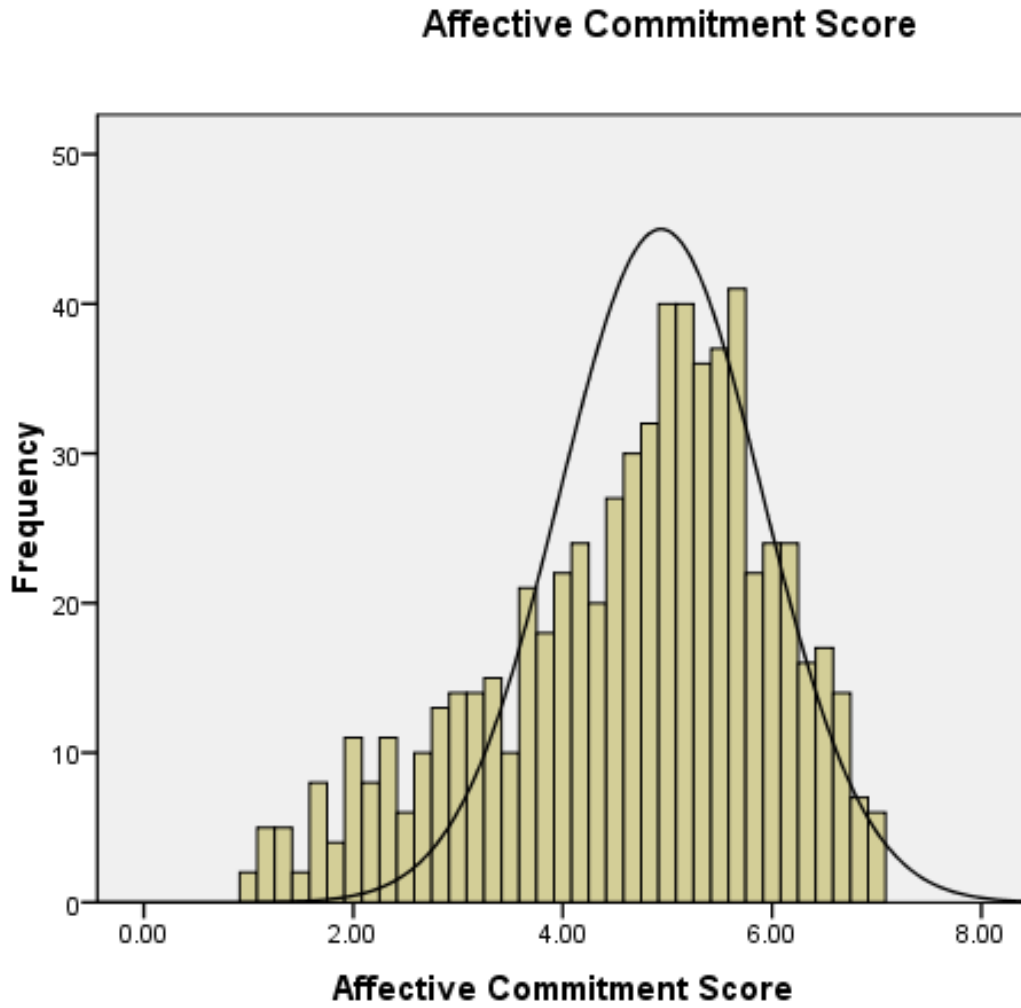


Figure E1. Frequency distribution of affective commitment scores.

Appendix F

Frequency Distribution for Continuance Commitment Scores

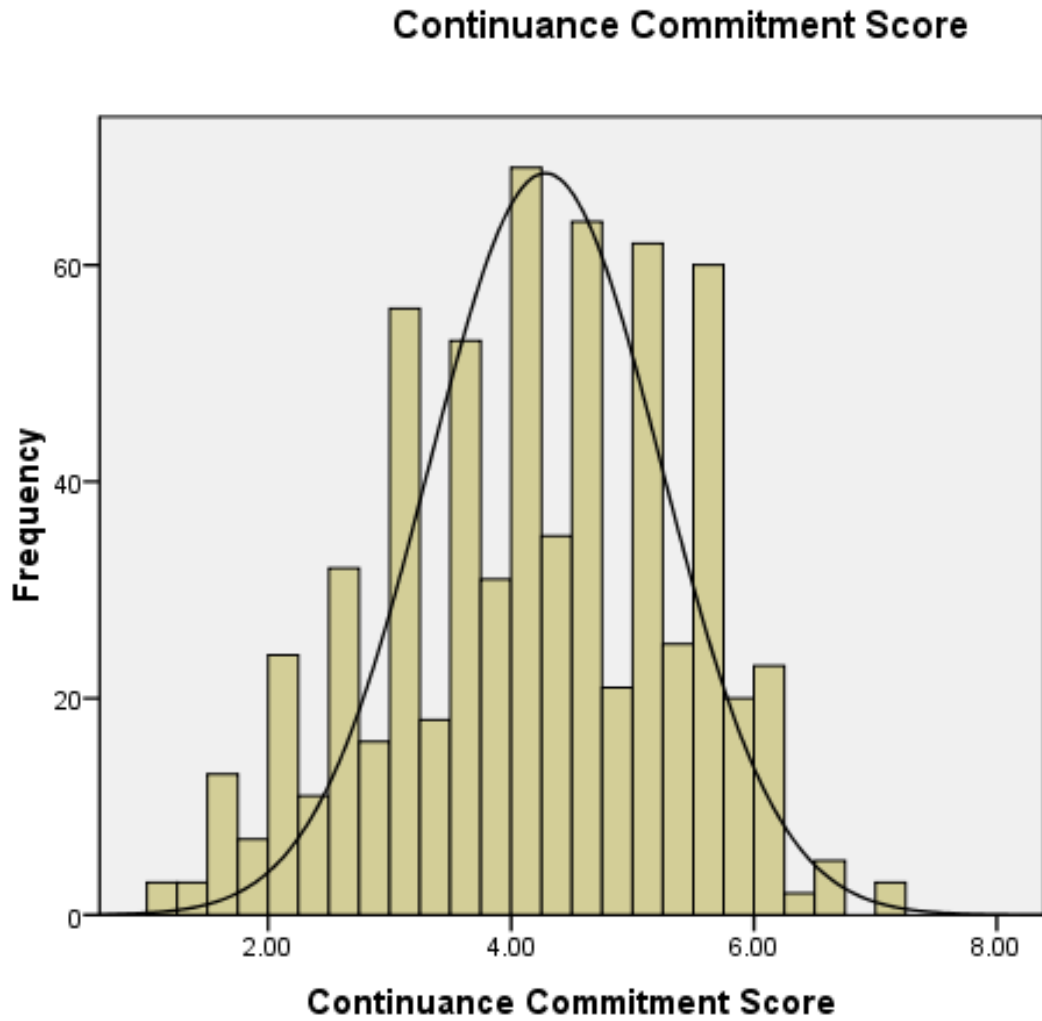


Figure F1. Frequency distribution of continuance commitment scores.

Appendix G

Frequency Distribution for Normative Commitment Scores

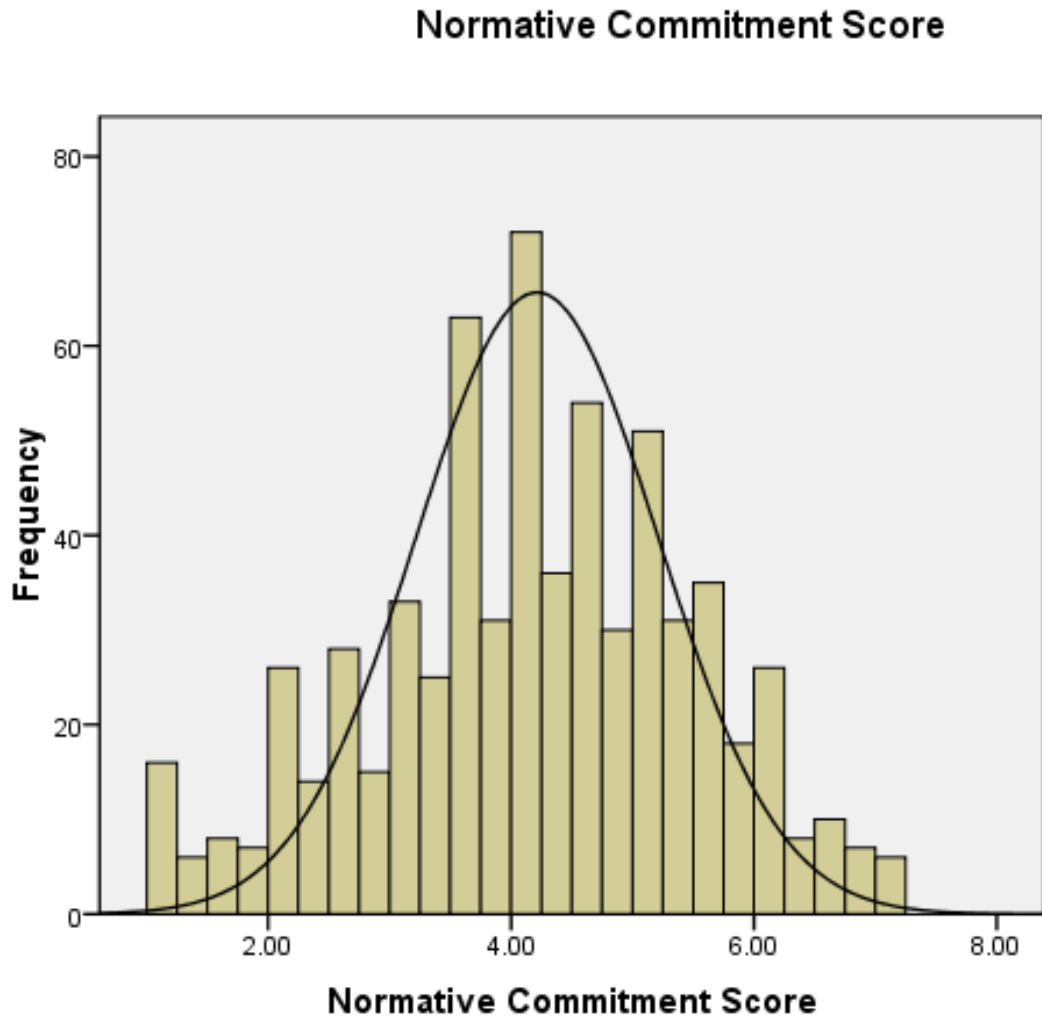


Figure G1. Frequency distribution of normative commitment scores.

Appendix H

Scatterplot for Affective Commitment

Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment Score

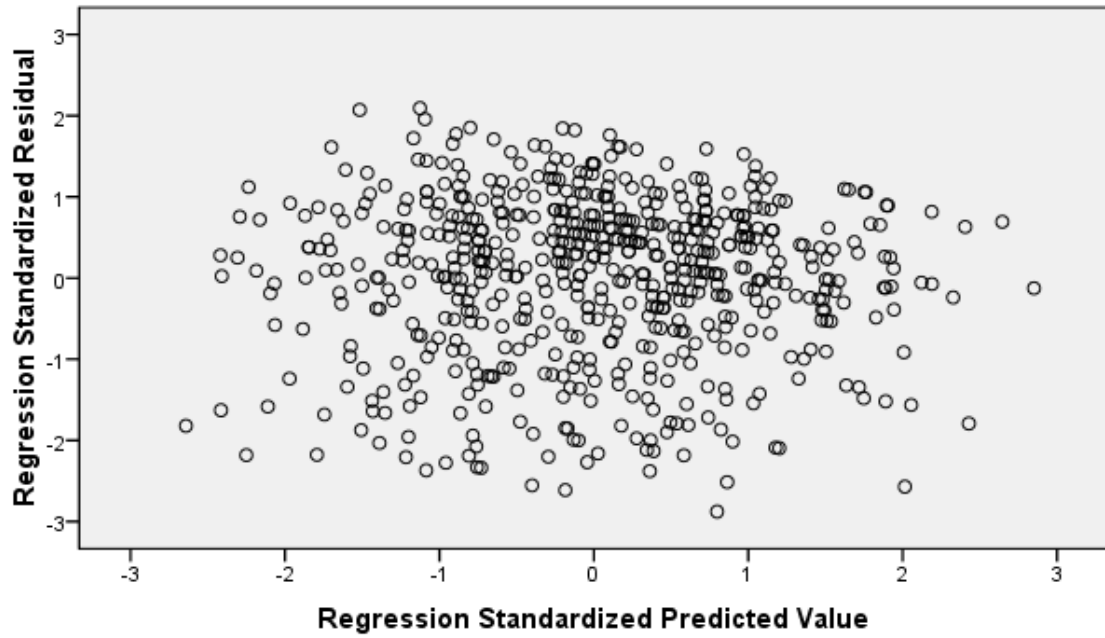


Figure H1. Scatterplot of predicted and residual scores for affective commitment.

Appendix I

Scatterplot for Continuance Commitment

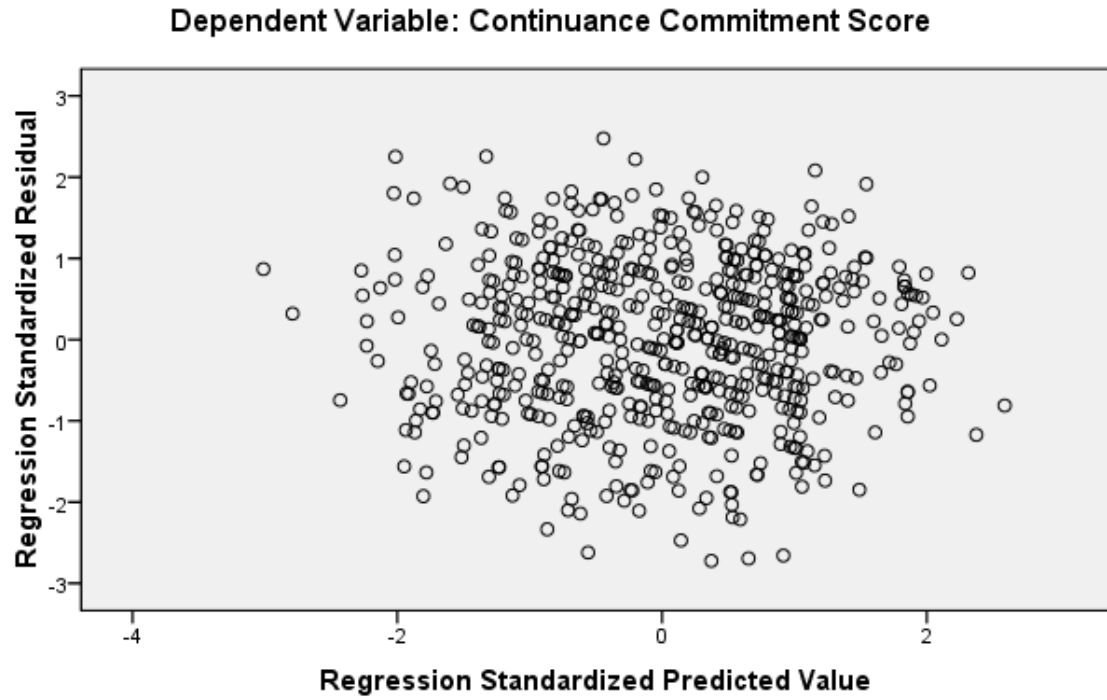


Figure II. Scatterplot of predicted and residual scores for continuance commitment.

Appendix J

Scatterplot for Normative Commitment

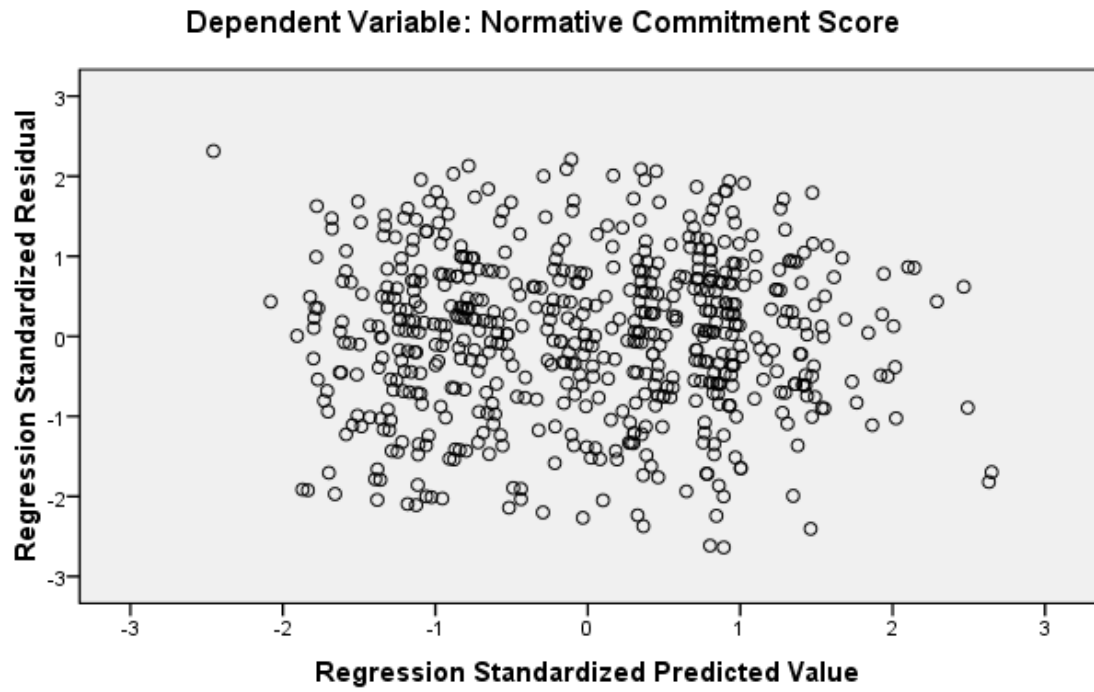


Figure J1. Scatterplot of predicted and residual scores for normative commitment.

Appendix K

Mean Scores for affective, continuance, and normative commitment by position

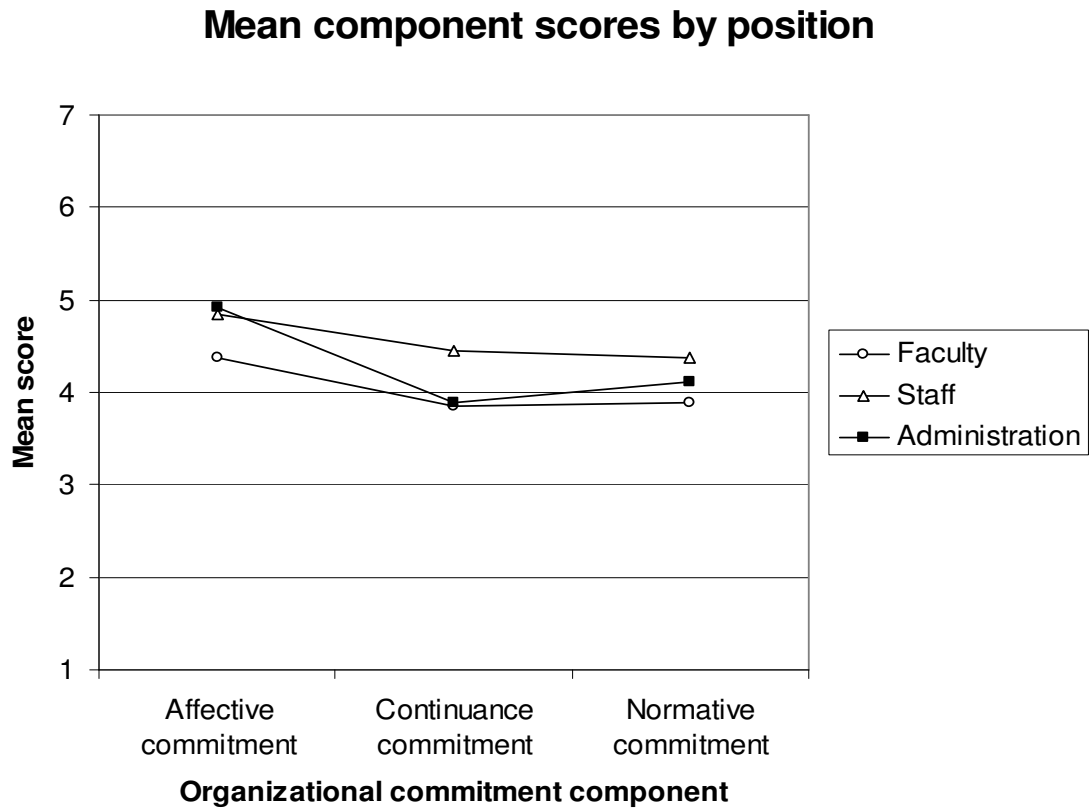


Figure K1. Mean scores for affective, continuance, and normative commitment by position.

