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ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, PERCEIVED SUPERVISOR SUPPORT,
AND PERFORMANCE: A FIELD STUDY

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts Degree
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Sarah K. Soulen

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Abstract

This study examined the relationships among supervisor support, organizational commitment, and job performance in a work environment. Specifically, differential relationships between supervisor support, affective commitment, and continuance commitment were explored. The relationship between commitment dimensions and job performance in the presence of supervisor support was also investigated.

A sample of 96 social workers completed measures of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and perceived supervisor support. Participants' supervisors provided ratings of job performance and withdrawal behaviors. Results indicated that affective commitment is positively related to supervisor support ($r = .42, p < .01$) and performance ($r = .18, p < .05$). Continuance commitment was unrelated to any measured variable. When added to the model, affective commitment did not predict performance ($\hat{\alpha} = .11, SE = .17, p > .05$), but perceived supervisor support did significantly predict performance ($\hat{\alpha} = .38, SE = .16, p < .05$).

Results support past research and extend current knowledge on the relationship between organizational commitment, supervisor support, and job performance. Findings from this study also highlight the importance of supportive treatment by a supervisor on employees' commitment and job performance.

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I. Introduction

The commitment of employees to the organization has been given a great deal of attention in research (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Practitioners commonly associate high commitment with increased productivity and decreased withdrawal behaviors such as turnover and absenteeism. However, over the past years research has yet to demonstrate a strong and consistent relationship between organizational commitment and performance outcomes. In an effort to gain a more thorough understanding of the relationship between commitment and performance outcomes, recent research has increasingly focused on the facets of commitment and their differential relationships to both antecedents and outcomes (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Rhoades, Eisenberger, Armeli, 2001). The present field study attempts to address this relationship through an examination of how the dimensions of organizational commitment may differentially relate to supervisor support and job performance.

Related Research & Theory

Organizational commitment has been defined and measured in various ways (Becker, 1960; Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Wiener, 1982). The common theme among these definitions is that organizational commitment is a bond or linking of the employee to the organization. The definitions differ, however, in their explanation of how the bond or link to the organization develops. Most commitment studies can be categorized as assuming either an attitudinal or behavioral perspective (for a comprehensive review, see Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

One of the most commonly studied types of organizational commitment has been *attitudinal* commitment. Attitudinal commitment has been defined as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday et al., 1982, p.27). It is characterized by at least three factors: 1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; 2) a willingness to exert effort on the organization’s behalf; and 3) a desire to maintain membership (Mowday et al., 1982). Attitudinal commitment is most commonly measured with the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Mowday and his colleagues (Mowday et al., 1979).

The second most commonly studied type of organizational commitment has been *calculated* commitment. Calculated commitment, as defined by Becker (1960), is a disposition to engage in “consistent lines of activity” (p.33) as a result of the accumulation of “side bets” that would be lost if the activity were discontinued. The term *side bet* refers to anything of value the individual has invested that would be lost if he was to leave the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984). The valuable investment is anything deemed valuable by the employee and can include time (tenure), money, training, and/or effort. Logically then, employees become bound to an organization because they have side bets (e.g., a 401K, a pension plan, or extensive training, etc.) invested in the organization that would lose value if the employees separated themselves from the organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Calculated commitment is most frequently measured using a scale developed by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972).

Recent research focuses on a multi-dimensional approach to organizational commitment that includes both attitudinal and calculated aspects of the construct. Meyer

and Allen (1984), drawing on the earlier works of Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974), Becker (1960), and Weiner and Vardi (1980), suggested that organizational commitment consists of three distinguishable components: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. *Affective commitment (AC)* is defined as an individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (i.e., individuals stay with the organization because they *want* to). This form of commitment is most similar to the attitudinal approach discussed above. *Continuance commitment (CC)* refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization and perceived lack of alternatives (i.e., individuals stay because they *need* to), and is most similar to the calculated commitment approach previously discussed. Normative commitment refers to a perceived obligation to remain with the organization. However, the strong correlations found between the Affective Commitment Scale and the Normative Commitment Scale have led a great deal of the research using Meyer and Allen's measures to focus primarily on the constructs of affective and continuance commitment (Coleman, Irving, & Cooper, 1999).

Antecedents of Organizational Commitment

Due to the increasing consensus on definitions and dimensions of organizational commitment, the antecedents of commitment have become the focus of the most recent research. A number of important antecedents of organizational commitment such as age, role conflict, skill variety, leader initiating structure, group cohesiveness, and organizational size have been studied (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Building on the work of Weiner (1982), Luthans, Baack, and Taylor (1987) found strong support for their proposed model of antecedents of organizational commitment consisting of three main

groups: 1) personal and demographic variables; 2), person-organization fit; and 3) organizational relationships. The personal and demographic variables included locus of control, age, educational level, organizational and position tenure, and time spent with supervisor. The person-organization fit variables were locus of control and initiating structure interaction. Organizational relationship variables included leader initiating structure behaviors and satisfaction with supervision, and exhibited the strongest relationship with organizational commitment ($r=.22$ and $r=.20$, respectively).

Consistent with the results of Luthans et al. (1987), several studies have found significant relationships between commitment and supportive or caring treatment by employees' supervisors, including supervisor feedback (Dunham, Grube, & Castaneda, 1994), supervisor support (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1994), and leader communication and participative leadership (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). In their meta-analysis, Mathieu and Zajac found that the group-leader relations dimension yielded some of the most consistent and robust correlations with organizational commitment.

However, the definition of commitment utilized in these studies was from the attitudinal or affective approach and the two-dimensional approach to organizational commitment was not considered. Therefore, no research on the relationship between supportive supervisor behaviors and the two dimensions of organizational commitment is available. In general, few studies have differentiated between affective and continuance commitment when researching antecedents of organizational commitment. In fact, only 28 of 124 studies included in Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis measured continuance commitment. Moreover, most of the studies that measured continuance commitment did so using Hrebiniak and Alutto's (1972) scale. In 1984, Meyer and Allen

found that Hrebiniak and Alutto's scale actually measures aspects of affective instead of continuance commitment, and is therefore an inappropriate scale with which to measure continuance commitment.

Outcomes of Organizational Commitment

The outcomes of organizational commitment have also become the focus of a great deal of recent research. Commitment to organizations has been positively related to such desirable outcomes as job satisfaction (Bateman & Stasser, 1984; Mowday, et al., 1982), motivation (Mowday et al., 1979), and effort (Chelte & Tausky, 1986; Weiner & Vardi, 1980). The relationship between organizational commitment and job performance and withdrawal behaviors, however, is more vague.

Job Performance. In a meta-analysis, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reported that the confidence interval around the mean correlation between commitment and performance included zero, and thus concluded that commitment and job performance are generally unrelated. This conclusion is based on the more conventional attitudinal approach to organizational commitment. Over the last several years, however, research has demonstrated that organizational commitment is a multi-dimensional construct and the distinctions among the bases of commitment may be crucial to understanding the relationship between commitment and performance (Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Meyer et al., 1989; Somers & Birnbaum, 1998).

In 1991, Meyer and Allen proposed that employees' willingness to contribute to organizational goals would be influenced differentially by the nature of their commitment. Those wanting to belong (AC) would be more likely to exert effort to perform than those needing to belong (CC). Consistent with this proposition, Meyer et al.

(1989) found that affective commitment was positively related to performance, while continuance commitment was negatively related to performance. Konovsky and Cropanzano (1991) and Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) have reported a similar pattern of findings.

Although these previous studies report a significant relationship between organizational commitment dimensions and job performance, a great deal of research has been unable to replicate these results (Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994; Mayer & Schoorman, 1992; Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993). Shore and Barksdale (1991), for example, found a negative relationship between performance ratings and continuance commitment only, with no significant relationship to affective commitment. Randall (1990) reported a significant positive relationship between affective commitment and job performance, but concluded that continuance commitment is unrelated to job performance. Angle and Lawson (1994) found affective commitment to be positively related to ratings of dependability and initiative with inconclusive results on the relationship between continuance commitment and performance ratings. In addition, Somers and Birnbaum (1998) found no significant relationship between either dimension, affective or continuance commitment, and job performance.

Withdrawal Behaviors. The relationship between organizational commitment and withdrawal behaviors appears to be similarly tenuous. Based on the proposition by Meyer and Allen (1991) that the nature of employees' commitment will differentially influence their willingness to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals, one might expect continuance commitment to relate to increased withdrawal behaviors such as increased tardiness and absence. By the same token, employees who are more affectively

committed and, in theory, more willing to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals should exhibit less withdrawal behaviors. In fact, some research has found results consistent with this theory, reporting that one-dimensional measures of organizational commitment are positively related to attendance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Zahra, 1984) and punctuality (Randall, 1990), and negatively related to lateness (Clegg, 1983; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Much like the research on the relationship between organizational commitment and performance, research on the commitment – withdrawal behavior relationship has been inconsistent. For example, Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) reported that AC negatively relates to absenteeism and tardiness, while CC demonstrated no relationship. Similarly, Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994) reported a negative relationship between AC and absence with no significant relationship between CC and absence. However, consistent with the above-mentioned proposition, Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) found a positive correlation between CC and neglect (passive withdrawal responses), and a negative correlation between AC and neglect.

Gap in Current Knowledge & Hypotheses

Research has linked AC and supportive supervisory treatment such as leader consideration (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; DeCottiis & Summers, 1987) and high-quality leader-member exchanges (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). In addition, Meyer and Allen (1997) noted that work experiences such as organizational rewards, procedural justice, and supervisor support have demonstrated stronger associations with AC than have structural features of the organization or

personal characteristics of the employee. However, the possible relationship that may exist between supervisor support and continuance commitment has yet to be examined.

Beneficial treatment by supervisors should increase affective commitment by strengthening employees' sense of belonging and identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Due to this heightened sense of belonging and identification with the organization, continuance commitment should decrease because an employee's desire to maintain membership in an organization should override the feeling of needing to maintain membership. In other words, an increased affective response of *wanting* to be part of the organization should outweigh the feeling of *needing* to be a part of the organization due to any lack of alternatives or cost associated with leaving. Based on this discussion, one purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between supervisor support and affective and continuance commitment.

H1. Perceived supervisor support correlates: a) positively with affective commitment; and b) negatively with continuance commitment.

Organizational commitment is typically assumed to relate to enhanced performance outcomes and decreased withdrawal behaviors. In fact, some research based on the traditional view of organizational commitment supports this belief (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday, et al., 1982; Randall, 1990; Weiner & Vardi, 1980). However, recent research focusing on the multi-dimensional view of organizational commitment has produced mixed results (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Hackett, Bycio, Hausdorf, 1994).

In 1991, Meyer and Allen asserted that the nature of employees' commitment would differentially influence their willingness to exert effort on behalf of organizational

goals. Based on this notion, one would expect employees that are more affectively committed to exhibit enhanced performance and lower withdrawal behaviors than those employees who feel more continuance commitment. The inconclusive results of past research on the relationship between organizational commitment dimensions and performance outcomes necessitate future examination of this topic. Following upon this discussion, a second purpose of this study is to further examine the nature of the relationship between affective and continuance commitment, job performance, and the withdrawal behaviors of absenteeism and tardiness.

H2. Supervisor ratings of performance correlate:

- a. positively with continuance commitment.***
- b. positively and more strongly with affective commitment than continuance commitment.***

H3. Withdrawal behaviors correlate:

- a. negatively with continuance commitment***
- b. negatively and more strongly with affective commitment than continuance commitment.***

Social exchange theory assumes that the reciprocation of valued resources fosters the initiation, strengthening, and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (Lynch, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 1999). Gouldner (1960) claimed that the exchange process is governed by a norm of reciprocity obligating individuals receiving benefits to compensate the donor. The benefits exchanged could involve such resources as money, services, and information or such socioemotional resources as approval, respect, and liking (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Batson, 1993; Blau, 1964; Foa & Foa, 1974).

By extending this approach to organizations, employee – employer relationships may be viewed as the trade of employee effort and loyalty for socioemotional benefits and tangible resources (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Etzioni,

1961; Kotter, 1973; Levinson, 1965). The norm of reciprocity obligates employees receiving increased benefits from their organization to compensate their employer with higher work performance (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). Meeting obligations helps employees maintain the positive self-image of those who repay debts, avoid the social stigma associated with the reciprocity norm's violation, and obtain favorable treatment from the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Hence, employees that receive beneficial treatment are motivated to compensate the organization in ways that are valued by the organization.

Although past research indicates that beneficial treatment from supervisors is indeed related to commitment (Bycio et al., 1995; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996), no research has examined how supervisor support relates to job performance or how supervisor support may moderate the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance. Following upon this discussion, it is proposed that receiving beneficial treatment from a supervisor will not only relate to an increase in organizational commitment to the organization, but will also motivate the employee to enhance job performance and decrease withdrawal behaviors. In the presence of supervisor support, the relationship between the dimensions of organizational commitment and job performance should increase. However, the relationship between continuance organizational commitment and job performance should be weaker than that between affective commitment and job performance.

H4. *Supervisor support will moderate the relationship between continuance commitment and performance such that the relationship will be stronger as supervisor support increases.*

H5. *Supervisor support will moderate the relationship between affective commitment and performance such that the relationship will be stronger as supervisor support increases.*

- a.** *The relationship between affective commitment and performance will be stronger than that of continuance commitment and performance in the presence of supervisor support.*

II. Method

Design

This field study examined the relationships among supervisor support, organizational commitment, and job performance in a work environment. The measured variables were participants' affective commitment, continuance commitment, perceived supervisor support, job performance, and withdrawal behaviors. The commitment and supervisor support measures were gathered through the administration of self-report questionnaires. The measures of job performance and withdrawal behaviors were gathered through the administration of a performance assessment scale (12 items-Nielsen, 2000) to the participants' supervisors. Data was then analyzed and hypotheses were tested using hierarchical moderated regression analysis (Aiken & West, 1991).

Participants

The sample for this field study was comprised of social workers from an East Tennessee regional non-profit mental health agency. The participants were chosen from two departments within this non-profit agency – one focusing on alcohol and drug rehabilitation and one focusing on community based social services. The alcohol and drug services participants in this sample worked at an adult residential rehabilitation center. Typical jobs within this sample group included Rehabilitation/Dependency Counselors and Program Coordinators. The majority of these jobs are day shift and 40 hours per week. However, some positions are night shift and PRN.

Participants from the community based social services worked in a variety of grant-funded programs focusing on the social, emotional, and medical welfare of adults and children. Typical jobs from this sample group included Case Managers, Vocational

Counselors, and Program Coordinators. These positions have traditional schedules of day shift and 40 hours per week, with occasional on-call or PRN schedules.

A total of 124 surveys were returned. Of these, 96 were complete and matched with a performance rating form from a supervisor. A completed self-report survey and a matching completed rating form from a supervisor were required for inclusion in this study. Of the 96 participants, 20.8% were male and 79.2% were female. The average age of participants was 32 years, the average level of education was a 4-year college degree, and the average tenure at this organization was three years and four months.

Procedure

Upon organizational approval for project participation, participants were notified of impending data collection. The directors of the participating departments then provided the researcher with a list of all participating programs. Following notification, the researcher individually met with all participating programs at their weekly meetings and all participants were informed of the general purpose of the project, that the results would be kept strictly confidential with their identities remaining completely private, and that no one from their organization would have access to their responses.

Participants were then informed of the benefits of participation: 1) Results may facilitate the identification of strengths or developmental opportunities for supervisors of the organization; 2) Results may facilitate the identification of participants' performance strengths and/or deficits; 3) Insight into participants' overall commitment to the organization and how commitment is enhanced/reduced by supervisor support would be gained.

Participants: Each participant was given a 16-item survey designed to assess affective organizational commitment, continuance organizational commitment, and perceived supervisor support (Please see Appendix 1). The researcher at weekly program meetings individually distributed most participant surveys and a select few were distributed via internal company mail due to scheduling difficulties or the lack of a program weekly meeting. The surveys included detailed instructions displayed at the top of each page stating in part, that each question should be answered as honestly as possible, that all results would be kept strictly confidential, that completing the survey indicated their informed consent to participate, and that participants were free to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. An employee identification number instead of individuals' names identified surveys in order to facilitate the matching of participant survey data with performance ratings provided by supervisors. A return envelope affixed with the researcher's name and address was included with each participant survey.

Supervisors: Each participant's supervisor was given a 12-item survey designed to assess job performance, absenteeism, and tardiness (Please see Appendix 2). The researcher at weekly program meetings individually distributed most supervisor surveys and a select few were distributed via internal company mail due to scheduling difficulties or the lack of a program weekly meeting. A return envelope affixed with the researcher's name and address was also included with these surveys.

Debriefing: Following the completion and return of all surveys, all participants were again informed of the purpose of the research, possible outcomes, potential benefits of the research findings, and thanked for their time and assistance with this project. After the

data was analyzed, each participant who indicated interest received a written report based on research results.

Measures

Meyer, Allen, and Smith's (1993) 6-item measures of affective and continuance commitment with a modified response format were administered to all participants. The response format for these measures included a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). These measures have been established as reliable with reported coefficient alphas of .87 for the AC scale and .85 for the CC scale. Sample items from the affective commitment scale are:

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
3. I do not feel a sense of "belonging" to my organization. (Reverse coded.)

Sample items from the continuance commitment scale are:

1. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
2. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
3. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.

To measure perceived supervisor support, Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli's (2001) 4-item survey was administered to all participants. The responses to these items were on a 5-point scale (1=strong disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). This measure has been established as reliable with a coefficient alpha of .90. The items on this survey are:

1. My supervisor cares about my opinions.
2. My work supervisor really cares about my well being.
3. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values.
4. My supervisor shows very little concern for me. (Reverse coded.)

Supervisors evaluated participants' job performance using a performance assessment measure (Nielsen, 2000). The responses to these items are on an 8-point scale (Performance: 1=does not meet standards, 2=is less than satisfactory, 3=is satisfactory in most respects, 4=is satisfactory in all respects, 5=above average, 6=superior in almost all respects, 7=definitely superior in all respects, 8=the single best performance). There are 8 items, each one tapping the dimensions of productivity, quality, openness to new learning, relationships with other associates, dependability and reliability, ability to function under stress, attendance and timeliness, and overall job performance. This measure has been demonstrated as reliable with a reported coefficient alpha of .88 (Nielsen, 2000).

In addition to performance ratings, supervisors also rated participants' withdrawal behaviors on a 5-point scale (1=always, 2=most of the time, 3=sometimes, 4=rarely, 5=never). Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001) demonstrated this 4-item measure to be reliable with a coefficient alpha of .85. Survey items include:

1. Exhibits punctuality in arriving at work.
2. Attendance at work is above the norm.
3. Begins work on time.
4. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.

Variables

Affective Commitment

This variable was measured with the 6 items from Meyer et al.'s (1993) scale for affective commitment. This scale was demonstrated to be reliable with a coefficient alpha of .85. All responses were scored from 1 to 5, with a maximum averaged score of 5

(representing the highest level of affective commitment) and a minimum averaged score of 1. The participants' scores ranged from 1.67 to 5.00 with a mean of 3.69.

Continuance Commitment

This variable was measured with the 6 items from Meyer et al.'s (1993) scale for continuance commitment. This scale was demonstrated to be reliable with a coefficient alpha of .66. All responses were scored from 1 to 5, with a maximum averaged score of 5 (representing the highest level of continuance commitment) and a minimum averaged score of 1. Participants' scores ranged from 1.33 to 4.50 with a mean of 2.93.

Perceived Supervisor Support

Measured using Rhoades et al.'s (2001) scale with a total of 4 items and a response range from 1 to 5 per item, a maximum averaged score of 5 (representing the highest level of perceived supervisor support) and a minimum averaged score of 1 is possible. Participants' scores ranged from 1.0 to 5.0 and exhibited a mean of 4.24. This scale was demonstrated as reliable with a coefficient alpha of .93.

Performance

This variable was measured using an 8-item survey (Nielsen, 2000) and was demonstrated to be reliable with an alpha of .94. A total of 8 items with a response set from 1 to 8 yields a maximum averaged score of 8 (representing the highest level of job performance) and a minimum averaged score of 1. Participants' scores ranged from 2.13 to 7.38 with a mean of 5.48.

Withdrawal Behaviors

This variable was measured using the 4-item survey developed by Eisenberger et al. (2001) and was demonstrated to be reliable with a coefficient alpha of .81. A total of 4

items with a response set from 1 to 5 yields a maximum averaged score of 5 (representing the most frequent occurrence of withdrawal behaviors) and a minimum averaged score of 1. Participants' scores ranged from 1 to 3.25 with a mean score of 1.58.

III. Results

Data Analysis

Internal consistency analyses were performed to determine if each measure was reliable with a coefficient alpha of at least .70 (Nunnally, 1978).. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were tested using the Pearson r correlation coefficient (Pearson, 1951). Hypothesis 5 was tested using hierarchical moderated regression analysis (Aiken & West, 1991). Main effects were entered into the regression first, followed by the addition of the hypothesized interactions to test whether the addition of the interaction term added a statistically significant increment to R^2 . Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all study variables, as well as the coefficient alpha estimates of reliability for each scale.

Hypothesis 1a and 1b

Hypothesis 1a proposed that perceived supervisor support correlates positively with affective commitment. This prediction was supported. Perceived supervisor support was related to affective commitment ($r = .42, p < .01$).

Hypothesis 1b proposed that perceived supervisor support correlates negatively with continuance commitment. This prediction was not supported. No significant relationship was found between perceived supervisor support and continuance commitment ($r = .04, p > .05$).

Hypothesis 2a and 2b

Hypothesis 2a proposed that performance ratings correlate positively with continuance commitment. This prediction is not supported. No significant relationship was found between continuance commitment and performance ratings ($r = -.13, p > .05$).

Table 1.

Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Scale Reliabilities

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	32.3	10.9									
2. Gender	.8	.4	-.24*								
3. Education Level	2.1	.7	-.08	.10							
4. Tenure (Months)	40.1	36.4	.21*	-.23*	-.18*						
5. AC	3.7	.8	.24**	.00	-.07	.37**	(.85)				
6. CC	2.9	.7	-.07	.08	.09	.12	.12	(.66)			
7. SS	4.2	.9	.11	-.15	.01	.21*	.42**	.04	(.93)		
8. Perf. Ratings	5.5	1.2	-.10	-.08	.14	.17*	.18*	-.13	.29**	(.94)	
9. Withdrawal Behav.	1.6	.6	-.11	-.01	-.12	-.08	-.06	-.02	-.14	-.36**	(.81)

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, one-tailed. () = Diagonal entries are coefficient alpha reliability estimates.

Hypothesis 2b proposed that performance ratings correlate positively with affective commitment and the relationship would be stronger than that between continuance commitment and performance ratings. This prediction was partially supported. A significant relationship was found between affective commitment and performance ratings ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). However, due to the lack of any significant relationship between CC and performance ratings in this study, it is impossible to make a comparison between the relationships of AC, CC, and performance ratings.

Hypothesis 3a and 3b

Hypothesis 3a proposed that withdrawal behaviors correlate negatively with continuance commitment. Hypothesis 3b proposed that withdrawal behaviors correlate negatively and more strongly with affective commitment than continuance commitment. These predictions were not supported. No significant relationship was found between

either affective ($r = -.06$, $p > .05$) or continuance commitment ($r = -.02$, $p > .05$) and withdrawal behaviors.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 proposed that supervisor support moderates the relationship between continuance commitment and performance such that the relationship strengthens as supervisor support increases. This prediction was not supported. Due to the insignificant relationship between continuance commitment and performance ratings, it was not possible to examine how continuance commitment might predict performance ratings.

Hypothesis 5a and 5b

Hypothesis 5a proposed that supervisor support moderates the relationship between affective commitment and performance such that the relationship strengthens as supervisor support increases. This prediction was not supported. Overall, the model predicting performance ratings (see Table 2) was significant, $F(2, 93) = 4.51$, $p < .05$, explaining 9% of the variance. Of the two predictors, affective commitment did not predict performance ratings ($\hat{\alpha} = .11$, $SE = .17$, $p > .05$). However, supervisor support did predict performance ratings ($\hat{\alpha} = .38$, $SE = .16$, $p < .05$). An individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization did not predict performance ratings. An employee's perception that his supervisor is supportive or caring does, however, positively predict performance ratings (see Figure 1).

Hypothesis 5b proposed that the relationship between affective commitment and performance is stronger than that of continuance commitment and performance in the presence of supervisor support. This prediction was not supported. Since no predictive

relationship was found between affective commitment or continuance commitment and performance ratings, it was not possible to make a comparison.

Table 2.

Regression Analysis for Performance Ratings

Independent Variables	$\hat{a}$	SE
Affective Commitment	.11	.17
Supervisor Support	.38*	.16
Model F (<i>df</i>)	4.51* (2, 93)	
R ²	.09	

Note. * $p < .05$, one-tailed

Illustration of Regression Line Based on Correlational Analysis of Supervisor Support and Performance Ratings Scores

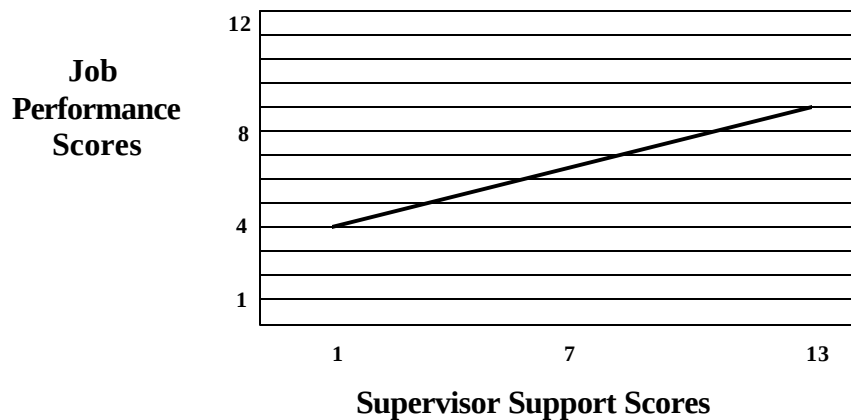


Figure 1. Relationship between perceived supervisor support and job performance.

Summary of Findings

In summary, results supported H1a and H2b. The research findings indicate that an increase in how supportive a supervisor is perceived by an employee is accompanied by an increase in the employee's affective commitment (H1a). In addition, employees' affective commitment to the organization was positively related to performance ratings (H2b). Results did not support hypotheses 1b, 2a, 3, 4, and 5. No significant relationships were found between continuance commitment and any of the measured variables.

Withdrawal behaviors were not related to either affective or continuance commitment. Neither affective nor continuance commitment predicted performance ratings. Increased perceived supervisor support, however, was associated with higher performance ratings.

IV. Discussion

Contribution to Current Knowledge

Antecedents of Organizational Commitment

Perceived supervisor support correlated positively with affective commitment. This supports previous findings suggesting links between AC and supportive supervisory treatment such as leader consideration (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; DeCottiis & Summers, 1987), high quality leader-member exchanges (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997), leader communication and satisfaction with supervision (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). This finding extends the research in this area by focusing exclusively on the relationship between perceived supervisor support, defined as a supervisor's positive valuation of the employees' contributions and care about the employees' well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2001), and affective commitment. The possible relationship between perceived supervisor support and affective commitment had not been addressed by previous research.

Results from the present study suggest that employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization is positively related to supervisors' care and concern about the employees' opinions, values, goals, and general well-being. Although a strong relationship between AC and perceived supervisor support was found in this study, little is known about the structure of the relationship and causality cannot be established due to the nature of a correlational analysis.

Recent research points to perceived organizational support (POS), an organizational valuation of the employees' contributions and concern for their general well-being, in an effort to clarify the relationship between affective commitment and

supervisor support. Meyer and Allen (1997) offer the explanation that beneficial treatment by supervisors should increase affective commitment by strengthening employees' sense of belonging and identification with the organization. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2001) found support for a relationship between supervisor support and affective commitment that is mediated by POS. According to this model, beneficial treatment received from a supervisor increases POS to the extent that the employees attribute the treatment to the organization's policies, procedures, or culture rather than to the supervisor's individual notion. Stemming from organizational support theory, a heightened sense of POS increases affective commitment by creating an obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to compensate the organization for receiving beneficial treatment. The fulfillment of this reciprocity norm leaves the employees emotionally satisfied and may lead the employees to identify the organization's well-being with their own.

No support for a continuance commitment – supervisor support relationship was found in this study. Previous research has not addressed a possible relationship between supervisor support and continuance commitment. Until the early-1990's the foremost definition of organizational commitment used in research was from the attitudinal or affective approach and the two-dimensional approach to organizational commitment was not considered. Therefore, no research on the relationship between supportive supervisor behaviors and the two dimensions of organizational commitment was available. In fact, most studies that did distinguish between the two dimensions of organizational commitment only gathered measures of affective commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Although the two-dimensional definition of organizational commitment has become more widely accepted, research continues to focus on the dimension of affective commitment, especially with regards to how work experiences may influence organizational commitment. Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994) reported that among the dimensions of commitment, affective commitment had the strongest positive correlation with the motivational scale of the MJDQ. This result reinforces Allen and Meyer's (1990) proposition that affective commitment is the dimension most affected by the nature of one's work experiences. The lack of evidence in support of a relationship between continuance commitment and supervisor support in the present study extends current knowledge on this topic and contributes to the notion that work experiences have a weaker relationship with continuance commitment than with affective commitment.

In addition to perceived supervisor support, the current study included measures of additional antecedents of organizational commitment. Age ($r = .24, p < .01$) and tenure ($r = .37, p < .01$) are both significantly correlated with affective commitment. No relationship was found between continuance commitment and age or tenure.

Interestingly, previous findings are mixed when the relationship between demographic antecedents and the dimensions of affective and continuance commitment are examined. For example, Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) found significant positive relationships between affective and continuance commitment, age and years in nursing. In contrast, Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994) found no relationship between affective commitment and either age or tenure. However, they did find significant and positive relationships between continuance commitment and both age and tenure. The results of the present study both support and contradict the previously mentioned findings.

The lack of evidence supporting a relationship between continuance commitment and age or tenure in the present study contradicts existing research and theory. One could expect that the costs associated with leaving an organization might be quite specific to the individual (e.g. moving into a new house; a slimmer job market). One could also expect that an employee's costs associated with leaving an organization would increase with age and tenure due to fears of a more competitive job market, time and effort investments within the organization, loss of bonuses or pensions, etc. These increased costs associated with leaving an organization would, in theory, lead to increased continuance commitment.

The inability of the present study to find a relationship among age, tenure, and continuance commitment does not support the prevailing theory. The age and occupation of the participants might provide some explanation for these results. For instance, the participants represent a relatively young population (between the ages of 24 and 34) with an average organizational tenure of roughly 3 ½ years. The proposition that increased age and tenure relates to increased continuance commitment is dependent upon an increase in perceived investments that would be lost if the employee was to leave the organization. However, the present participants may be too young or too new to the organization to have accumulated any valuable investments with the organization, which would lead to lower levels of continuance commitment.

Outcomes of Organizational Commitment

Results yielded a significant, but relatively weak positive relationship between affective commitment and performance ratings in the present study. No significant relationship between performance ratings and continuance commitment was found. These

results support Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) conclusion that commitment and performance are generally unrelated. In their meta-analysis, Mathieu and Zajac reported that the confidence interval around the mean correlation between commitment and performance included zero. However, their conclusion is based on the attitudinal definition of organizational commitment and does not distinguish between the affective and continuance dimensions of commitment. Recent research has demonstrated that the distinctions among the bases of commitment may be crucial to understanding the relationship between commitment and performance (Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Meyer et al., 1989; Somers & Birnbaum, 1998).

Although the present finding is rather weak, a positive and significant relationship between affective commitment and performance exists. This finding partially supports Meyer and Allen's (1991) proposition that those employees wanting to belong (AC) to the organization would be more likely to exert effort to perform than those needing to belong (CC). Indeed some existing research supports this proposition (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993).

By and large, previous research on the relationship between commitment dimensions and performance is mixed and tenuous at best. Some studies report robust relationships between both dimensions of commitment and performance (Meyer et al., 1989; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Shore and Barksdale (1991) found a strong negative relationship between continuance commitment and performance, but no significant correlation with affective commitment. Comparable to the present findings, a few studies report positive relationships between affective commitment and performance with no significant results pertaining to continuance commitment (Angle & Lawson, 1994;

Randall, 1990). The inconsistent findings of previous research in combination with the relatively weak findings from the present study suggest that the dimensions of organizational commitment may have little to no *direct* influence on job performance. Rather than focusing on organizational commitment dimensions as predictors of job performance, future research and theory on this topic could possibly benefit from a focus on relationships *moderated* by organizational commitment. Moreover, research examining relationships between variables that are more proximal to employees such as supervisor commitment and job performance might also be valuable.

Due to the weak correlation found in the present study between affective commitment and performance, it is not surprising that affective commitment does not predict performance. An interesting finding that was not predicted, however, is that supervisor support does predict performance. Although supervisor support has been linked with commitment in past research (Bycio et al., 1995; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996), no previous research has examined how supervisor support may relate to job performance.

Social exchange theory offers insight into the relationship between supervisor support and job performance. Gouldner (1960) asserted that a norm of reciprocity obligates individuals receiving benefits to compensate the donor. When applied to employee – employer relationships this exchange may be viewed as the trade of employee effort for socioemotional benefits and tangible resources (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Gouldner's norm of reciprocity, the increased benefits received from an organization obligate the employee to compensate the employer in ways that are valued by the organization. Based on this notion, perceived increases in supervisor

support obligate employees to compensate their employers/supervisors in ways that are valued by the organization with increased job performance. The predictive relationship between supervisor support and job performance in the present study provides some support for the social exchange research as it is applied to work settings.

In addition to performance, measures of withdrawal behaviors were gathered. No significant relationships were found between withdrawal behaviors or any other measured variable. Much like the existing research on the relationship between organizational commitment and performance, previous research on the organizational commitment – withdrawal behavior relationship has yielded inconsistent results. Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) found significant negative relationships between affective commitment and withdrawal behaviors, and a significant positive relationship between continuance commitment and neglect. Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994), however, were unable to replicate these results.

According to Meyer and Allen's (1991) proposition that the nature of employees' commitment will differentially influence their willingness to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals, continuance commitment should relate to increased withdrawal behaviors and affective commitment should relate to decreased withdrawal behaviors. However, previous research examining the relationship between commitment dimensions and withdrawal behaviors has yielded inconsistent results. The inconclusive results of the present study, coupled with the tenuous results of previous research provide a level of support for the notion that commitment has little to no direct influence on withdrawal behaviors.

Implications

Research and Theory

In the last twenty years, the construct of organizational commitment has received a great deal of empirical study both as a consequence and an antecedent of other work-related variables. A variety of organizational commitment models have been offered to explain how work-related variables influence employees' commitment and how commitment may, in turn, influence variables such as performance, turnover, and withdrawal behaviors. Organizational commitment has most commonly been represented in causal models as a mediator of the influences of personal characteristics and work experiences on employee turnover processes. Organizational commitment has been depicted as a mediator between job satisfaction and employees' intention to remain in the organization (Dougherty, Bluedorn, & Keon, 1985; Lachman & Aranya, 1986). In addition, support was found for models depicting organizational commitment as a mediator between employee personal characteristics and work-related experiences, and intentions to remain (Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Bluedorn, 1982; Michaels & Spector, 1982; Stumpf & Hartman, 1984).

More recently, research has pointed to organizational support theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995) to help explain employees' emotional commitment to their organization. Researchers contend that employees reciprocate favorable treatment with greater commitment and performance (Eisenberger et al.; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Shore & Shore; Wayne et al., 1997). In 2001, Rhoades and Eisenberger found that favorable work conditions such as organizational rewards,

procedural justice, and supervisor support operate via perceived organizational support to increase affective commitment, which, in turn, decreases employee withdrawal behavior.

The relationship that perceived supervisor support has shown with both affective commitment and performance outcomes in the present study lends support to the organizational support model of organizational commitment. In addition, supervisor support predicted less than 10% of the variance in performance ratings, which suggests that although supervisor support and performance are related, other variables are working on the relationship between supervisor support and performance. Future research should explore how perceived organizational support might influence the relationships between supervisor support, affective commitment, and performance.

Eisenberger et al. (1997) reported that favorable work experiences were associated with perceived organizational support to the extent that employees attributed them to the organization's voluntary control. The need for the favorable treatment to be discretionary in order to have any influence on employees' perceived organizational support suggests that some work experiences may shape affective commitment by means other than perceived organizational support. For example, intrinsic job conditions (e.g. autonomy, variety, and challenge) have been positively related to affective commitment (Dunham, Grube, & Casteneda, 1994; Hackett et al., 1994), and might be attributed more to the job's nature than to organizational support. Future research and theory should address how intrinsic job factors may differentially influence both organizational commitment dimensions and perceived organizational support.

Another future implication for research in this area involves the issue of establishing causality. The present study was correlational in its nature and, therefore,

unable to establish causality. Although supervisor support and affective commitment are positively related, it is unknown as to whether supervisor support leads to affective commitment or if commitment leads to a supervisor becoming more supportive. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2001) found that perceived organizational support was positively related to temporal changes in affective commitment, which suggests that perceived organizational support leads to affective commitment. Following upon organizational support theory, one could postulate that since supervisor support is a component of organizational support, supervisor support leads to affective commitment. However, no research has addressed this specific and important issue that could lead to a more complete understanding of the organizational commitment construct.

The lack of significant relationships found in this study between continuance commitment and supervisor support or performance outcomes suggests that further research should examine the antecedents and outcomes of continuance commitment. Theoretically, employees' willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization is differentially influenced by the nature of their commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Therefore, employees that *need* to belong to an organization because of any perceived lack of alternatives or cost associated with leaving the organization should exert less effort and contribute less to organizational goals resulting in lower performance ratings and increased withdrawal behaviors. However, the present study and past research have yet to provide consistent and significant results in support thereof.

Organizational justice research may provide some explanation of how work variables influence continuance commitment. Roch & Zlatoper (2001) found that among four types of organizational justice, distributive justice (feelings of fairness surrounding

the allocation of organizational resources; Adams, 1965) was the only significant predictor of continuance commitment. The researchers also found that distributive justice only predicted continuance commitment for certain types of workers, such as contract workers. The finding that distributive justice predicts continuance commitment is perhaps not as surprising when one considers that both distributive justice and continuance commitment are based on similar cost/benefit analyses. The differential prediction based on type of worker suggests that contract workers use different criteria than traditional employees in their cost/benefit analysis of whether to remain with the organization. The inconsistent results of the present study and past research in combination with the recent research on distributive justice and worker type indicate that the relationships between work variables, continuance commitment, and performance may be more complicated than once thought. Future research on these relationships should perhaps focus on the development of moderator models involving continuance commitment, organizational justice, and worker types.

Another avenue of future research involves clarification of the relationships between commitment, supervisor support, and performance within other occupational groups and organizations. The present study involved a sample comprised of social workers from a non-profit organization. The fields of social work and human services have historically high turnover and burnout rates (Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Martin & Schinke, 1998). The reported tenure for the present sample was an average of about 40 months with a standard deviation of about 36 months. This standard deviation creates a tenure range between 4 and 76 months. The large variation in tenure at this organization supports past findings on the turnover and burnout rates in the social work field and may

provide an explanation for the present study's inability to find significant results on continuance commitment, which requires feelings of investment in the organization. Further research should focus on commitment and performance relationships in organizations with less volatile turnover and burnout rates than the social work field.

Practical Application

Findings from this study raise many questions about the construct of organizational commitment and its relationship with perceived supervisor support, but also provide valuable information for practitioners. The significantly positive relationship between supervisor support and affective commitment confirms the hypothesis that an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in an organization increases with an increase in supervisor support. In addition, supervisor support is positively related to and, in fact, predicts performance. Although causality has not been established, these results provide insight as to the importance that supervisor support may have on an employee's emotional attachment to an organization and job performance.

In addition to the present results, research has shown that supportive and caring treatment by employees' supervisors such as leader consideration, leader communication, participative leadership, and high – quality leader – member exchanges have been positively related to employees' commitment (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Settoon et al., 1996). Moreover, it has also been suggested that favorable work conditions such as procedural justice and supervisor support operate via perceived organizational support to increase affective commitment, which, in turn, decreases employee withdrawal behavior (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2001). Supportive treatment

from supervisors is clearly related to an employee's commitment and performance. Developing supervisors' leadership skills, communication skills, and consideration for employees might have important commitment and performance consequences that should be considered by practitioners.

Limitations

Although this study supports past research and extends current knowledge on the relationships among organizational commitment dimensions, supervisor support, and performance, several limitations of this study need to be addressed.

Sample Size

This study had a sample including only 96 participants, which necessarily limits statistical power. A larger sample may have permitted the detection of relationships that were not found in the present results. This may have been an issue with regards to the weak scale reliability of the continuance commitment measure. Previous studies have reported strong coefficient alphas (i.e. α .79) when using the same continuance commitment measure used in this study (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1991; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). These studies, however, had much larger samples ranging from 337 to 2,301 participants. The lower statistical power resulting from a small sample might explain the unreliability of the continuance commitment measure in the current study and would provide some explanation for the inability to detect relationships between continuance commitment and any other measured variable.

Design

The correlational design used in this study naturally prevents the establishment of causation. Although the results provide insight, the ability to draw cause and effect

conclusions from the present study is not possible. The inherent inability to establish causation in correlational designs was traded for the greater generalizability to the empirical work arena that research gains from studies conducted in the field.

Measures

This study utilized self-report measures, which are inherently subjective. This subjectivity may have been an issue with respect to the performance ratings provided by supervisors. For example, some supervisors might consider organizational commitment a performance outcome in and of itself. Therefore, supervisors might inflate performance ratings for employees they perceive as very committed to the organization regardless of any objective measures of job performance. In addition, the reliability and validity of self-report measures are dependent upon the participants' accurate perception and interpretation of the questionnaire items, and honest responses. Misinterpretation or confusion over survey items as well as a social desirability response bias would contribute to any possible inaccuracies in results.

Population

The population and setting involved in this study may have reduced external validity. All participants are employed in the social work occupation and represent one non-profit organization. Therefore, results may not generalize to all occupations and all organizations. For example, different findings might emerge when studying team-based organizations or occupations compensated with bonuses or commissions in addition to a base salary. Moreover, almost 80% of the present sample is female with the majority of the participants between the ages of 24 and 34. The present results may not generalize well to male or elderly populations.

Conclusions

The present study attempted to investigate the relationships among organizational commitment dimensions, perceived supervisor support, and performance outcomes. Affective commitment was positively related to perceived supervisor support and performance ratings. Continuance commitment was not related to any measured variable. Although positively correlated, affective commitment did not predict performance ratings. Perceived supervisor support did, however, predict performance ratings. These results support past research and extend current knowledge on the relationships among organizational commitment dimensions, supervisor support, and performance. In addition, the present findings highlight the important influence supportive supervisor behaviors might have on an employee's organizational commitment and job performance.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Participant Survey

Thank you for participating in this project, your participation is crucial for its success. This study is about commitment and support and how they might be related to performance. Benefits of participation include: 1) The identification of performance strengths and/or deficits; and 2) If you choose, access to a written report summarizing all project results.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may decline to participate without penalty at any time. The information that you provide will be used for research purposes only and will not be revealed to other employees, supervisors, or management. These results will not appear in anyone's personnel file. At the completion of this project, we will destroy the names/identifiers of all participants. Returning this survey constitutes your authorization for your supervisor to rate your performance. In addition, returning this survey constitutes your agreement and informed consent to participate in this study.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Sarah K. Soulen, at (423) 954-1029. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research at (865) 974-3466.

Demographic Information:

1. Employee ID #: _____ (**needed to match you with performance ratings from your supervisor)
2. Age: _____
3. Gender: M F
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
Circle one:
a) Grade School
b) High School/GED
c) Undergraduate College Degree/Associates Degree
d) Graduate Degree
5. How long have you worked for this organization?
 _____ Years _____ Months
6. Please check one of the following:
_____ I would like to receive a written report summarizing all project results. Please send the report to the following address or company office:

_____ I would not like to receive a written report summarizing all project results.

There are a series of 16 statements below. Please read each statement and decide how much you agree or disagree with each statement. When you have chosen your answer, please circle the appropriate letters to the right of each statement. *Please answer as honestly as possible and circle only one answer per statement.*

SD = Strongly Disagree D = Disagree N = Neutral A = Agree SA = Strongly Agree

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	SD	D	N	A	SA
2. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	SD	D	N	A	SA
3. My supervisor cares about my opinions.	SD	D	N	A	SA
4. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	SD	D	N	A	SA
5. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	SD	D	N	A	SA
6. My work supervisor really cares about my well-being.	SD	D	N	A	SA
7. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.	SD	D	N	A	SA
9. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values.	SD	D	N	A	SA
10. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.	SD	D	N	A	SA
11. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	SD	D	N	A	SA
12. My supervisor shows very little concern for me.	SD	D	N	A	SA

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|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 13. I do not feel like “part of the family” at my organization. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 14. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 15. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 16. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives. | SD | D | N | A | SA |

Thank you! Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Appendix 2 – Performance Ratings Form

Directions - The following survey is designed to assess the performance of your subordinate(s). When responding to each statement, think about the typical performance of the employee.

When rating each employee please remember the following:

- Your rating should reflect a typical range of performance for the employee.
- When you are making ratings, try to think of specific examples of behavior that you have observed from actual job performance.
- Bear in mind that the lowest rating (1) on your form will be used for people who are performing so poorly that they are possibly going to lose their jobs or you wish they had never been hired.
- And, the highest rating (8) will be attained by only one person, if that many.

Here are the categories you will use to rate each employee:

PRODUCTIVITY

- Achieves a high level of productivity on the job.
- Puts forth a lot of effort.
- Accomplishes as much or more than what you expect.
- Makes effective use of his/her time even during “downtime.”
- Willing to work overtime when asked to do so.
- Works hard to meet deadlines.

QUALITY

- Is neat and orderly in his approach to tasks.
- Takes the time to understand what you mean by a high quality product.
- Looks after the little details of a task to make sure everything is done right.
- Is rarely sloppy or haphazard in approaching tasks.
- Tries to do the best possible work he/she is capable of -- doesn't settle for good enough.

OPENNESS TO NEW LEARNING

- Learns new job-related information quickly.
- Learns new job-related skills and practices quickly.
- Willingly tries out new procedures, practices, or equipment (does not show resistance, negativity, or opposition.)
- Views change positively -- recognizes that change leads to a better future in the long run.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ASSOCIATES

- Relates to people at work in a friendly, cordial manner.
- Develops friendships with workers in his team.
- Shows respect for individual differences/diversity.
- Does not talk about people in a negative manner behind their backs.

DEPENDABILITY AND RELIABILITY

- Keeps his/her word even when it is inconvenient / unpleasant to do so.
- Follows instructions fully even when he/she does not want to.
- Does not violate company rules or policies.
- Follows through on what he/she commits to do.
- Is honest -- does not lie or tell “half truths” to create the wrong impression.

ABILITY TO FUNCTION UNDER STRESS:

- Keeps cool when jobs are time-pressured.
- Stays reasonably calm when during crises.
- Maintains composure even under very demanding work conditions.

ATTENDANCE AND TIMELINESS

- Has a good attendance record.
- Has a valid excuse whenever he/she is absent.
- Gets to work a little early so that he/she can start work promptly.
- Does not take too long on breaks / lunch periods.

Directions - Please **rate each employee** on the previously described categories. Please use a new form for each employee you rate.

Person Being Rated: Employee ID #: _____

Here are the ratings you will use for each category of performance:

- 1 = Performance does not meet, or rarely meets, minimum job standards.
- 2 = Performance is less than satisfactory in many respects.
- 3 = Performance is satisfactory in most respects but not all.
- 4 = Performance is satisfactory in all respects.
- 5 = Performance is above average but not superior.
- 6 = Performance is superior in almost all respects.
- 7 = Performance is definitely superior in all respects.
- 8 = **Single best** performance I have ever observed or even hope to observe.

After reading the descriptions in each category, please provide ratings for this individual:

_____ Productivity	_____ Dependability and Reliability
_____ Quality	_____ Ability To Function Under Stress
_____ Openness to New Learning	_____ Attendance and Timeliness
_____ Relationships With Other Associates	_____ Overall Job Performance Rating

Directions – There are four statements listed below. Please read each statement and determine how often the employee that you are rating exhibits the described behaviors. When you have chosen an answer, please circle the appropriate number to the right of each statement.

	1 = Always	2 = Most of the time	3 = Sometimes	4 = Rarely	5 = Never
1. Exhibits punctuality in arriving at work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Attendance at work is above the norm.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Begins work on time.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you! Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Vita

Sarah K. Soulen was born in Caribou, Maine on September 11, 1976. Growing up in an Air Force family, she moved a great deal and spent several years each in Guam, Michigan, Texas, the Philippines, and Mississippi. She graduated in 1994 from Heritage Academy in Columbus, MS and graduated magna cum laude with a BA in psychology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1998. Upon completion of her BA, Sarah worked as a Job Placement Specialist for 1- $\frac{1}{3}$ years at an East Tennessee non-profit social services organization.

Sarah returned to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1999 to pursue a master's degree in industrial applied psychology. While in graduate school, she worked as a research assistant, a job placement specialist for a non-profit organization, and as a consultant with eGroup, Inc. and Resource Associates, Inc. In May 2003, Sarah completed requirements for the MA in psychology with a concentration in industrial applied psychology and a 3.98 GPA. Sarah plans on pursuing a doctoral degree in psychology with a concentration in industrial applied psychology followed by a career as a consultant or in academia in the field of industrial/organizational psychology.