

Creating a Committed Workforce

**Using Social Exchange and Social Identity to enhance
Psychological Attachment within an ever-changing Workplace**



Ali Fenwick

CREATING A COMMITTED WORKFORCE

Using Social Exchange and Social Identity to enhance Psychological Attachment within an ever-changing Workplace

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NYENRODE BUSINESS UNIVERSITEIT

CREATING A COMMITTED WORKFORCE:

*Using Social Exchange and Social Identity to enhance Psychological Attachment
within an ever-changing Workplace*

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in accordance with the Doctorate Committee.

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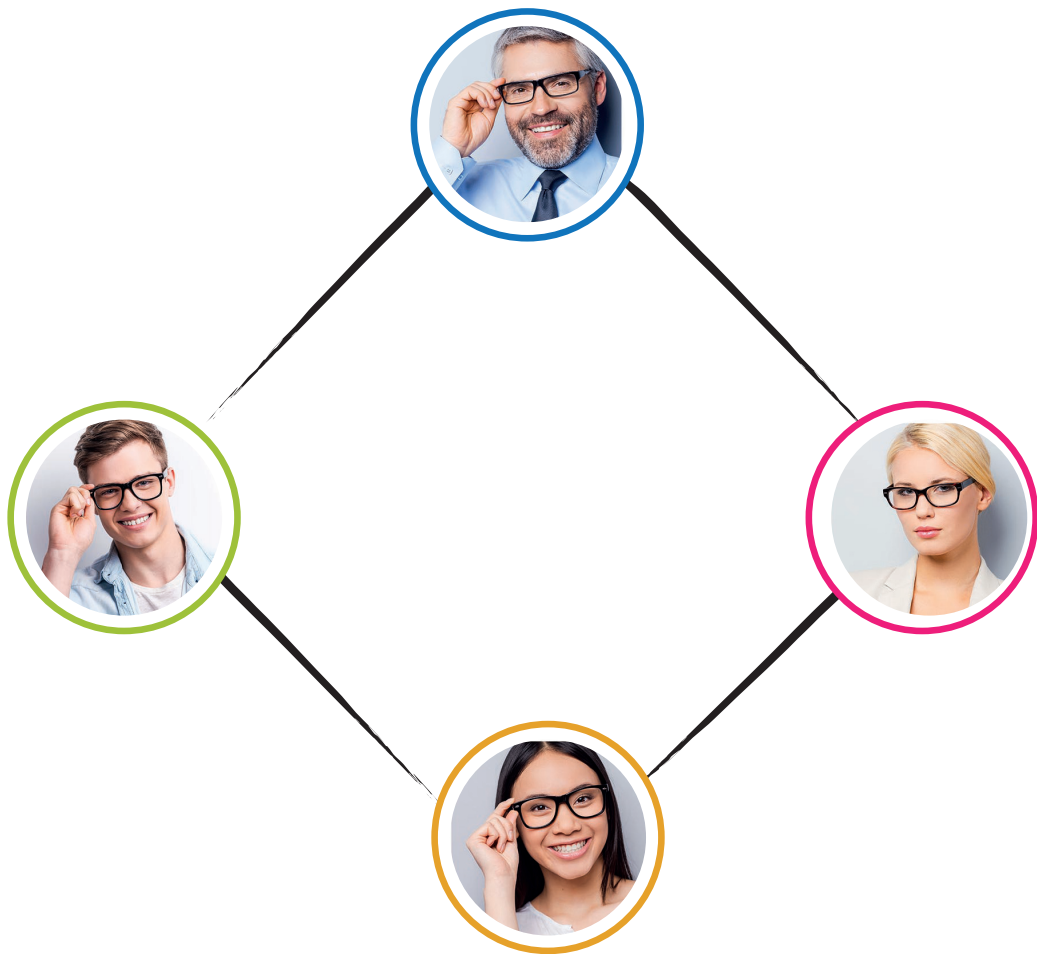
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Abbreviation List

AC	Affective Commitment
CC	Continuance Commitment
HC	Horizontal Collectivism
HI	Horizontal Individualism
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
Locus	Locus of Control
Locus EXT	Internal Locus of Control
Locus INT	External Locus of Control
NC	Normative Commitment
NCP	Normative Commitment Propensity
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OCB-Altruism	Organizational Citizenship Behavior - Altruism
OCB-Compliance	Organizational Citizenship Behavior - Compliance
OI	Organizational Identification
SOC	Sense of Coherence
VC	Vertical Collectivism
VI	Vertical Individualism



Chapter 1

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Organizational commitment is probably the most researched construct in organizational behavioral research to date. In the last 50 years, research in organizational commitment has made huge advancements in terms of its definition, conceptualization and application. Organizational commitment is generally defined as a psychological state or mindset that binds an employee to an organization (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1997). Both researchers and practitioners have found much value in understanding how organizational commitment develops to create practical methods and policies to enhance commitment in the workplace. Organizational commitment has been linked to various work outcomes such as turnover (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), absenteeism (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), productivity (e.g. Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Riketta, 2008), well-being (e.g. Meyer & Maltin, 2010) and counter-productive behaviors (e.g. Spector & Fox, 2002) that influence organizational performance.

Due to the changing nature of work and market dynamics such as virtual working environments, contingent workers, temporary contracts, global assignments and work-life balance labor set-ups, some scholars have challenged the value of organizational commitment for businesses in today's day and age (e.g. Becker, Klein, & Meyer, 2009; Hirsch & Shanley, 1996; Wallace, 1993). However, these external factors have only led to the increased and diversified focus of organizational commitment as an important factor for organizational success today and in the future (e.g. Becker, Klein, & Meyer, 2009; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010).

As organizational commitment research has evolved to address new working conditions (e.g. Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman, & Garden, 2005), focus areas (e.g. Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) and environments (e.g. Chen, 2009; Stanley et al., 2007), there appears to be a need to re-evaluate existing conceptualizations and measurements of the organizational commitment construct. Commitment scholars have addressed inconsistencies and methodological flaws in current mainstream conceptualizations and models of organizational commitment (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Jaros et al., 2007; Klein et al., 2012; Ko et al., 1997; Solinger et al., 2008). These deductions can be attributed to both theoretical and empirical findings reflecting an enriched understanding of both the conceptualization and the mechanisms governing commitment development. Moreover, the sheer complexity and diversity of the extant research are demanding parsimonious approaches and simpler models to reflect organizational commitment in a modern world (e.g. Solinger et al., 2008). One could argue that the evolution of organizational commitment research, relative to other disciplines within organizational

behavior research, has matured to such an extent that converging insights from existing commitment research (or other similar areas of organizational inquiry relating to the employee-organizational relationship) could generate more inclusive results.

1.2 Research Aims

To answer recent calls in the commitment literature for re-assessment of the organizational commitment construct, and to broaden the general understanding of how employees become attached to the organization, this research aims to address pressing theoretical and empirical related issues connected to the dominant view of commitment development in the workplace. This study aims to achieve this by proposing an improved conceptualization of organizational commitment and combining it with other organizational behavior constructs.

The main assumptions underlying this research are first that the current commitment literature is in need of re-assessment of the organizational commitment construct. And second, other theories related to commitment development should be considered to better understand the development of psychological attachment within the employee-organizational relationship. Therefore, the main research questions to be answered are:

- I. "Which main theoretical and methodological issues need to be addressed when reconceptualizing the dominant view of organizational commitment?"*
- II. "Which other organizational theories can be assessed to provide a richer perspective to the development of psychological attachment within the employee – organizational relationship?"*

Addressing these two main questions within this research provide advancement to both theory and practice. First, by reviewing the extant literature and addressing theoretical and empirical inconsistencies this study highlights the most critical issues pertaining to the dominant approach of organizational commitment investigation. Second, theoretical advancements can be proposed to existing conceptualizations of organizational commitment and empirically tested, either in the current study or in future research. Third, other theories might provide a richer perspective to the development of psychological attachment within the employee – organizational relationship, enabling new model development and testing. Though a trend in many other disciplines, little research has been devoted to doing so within the commitment literature due to the breadth and depth of the extant literature. Last, findings from combined efforts could provide practitioners with new insights and tools to foster stronger attachment between

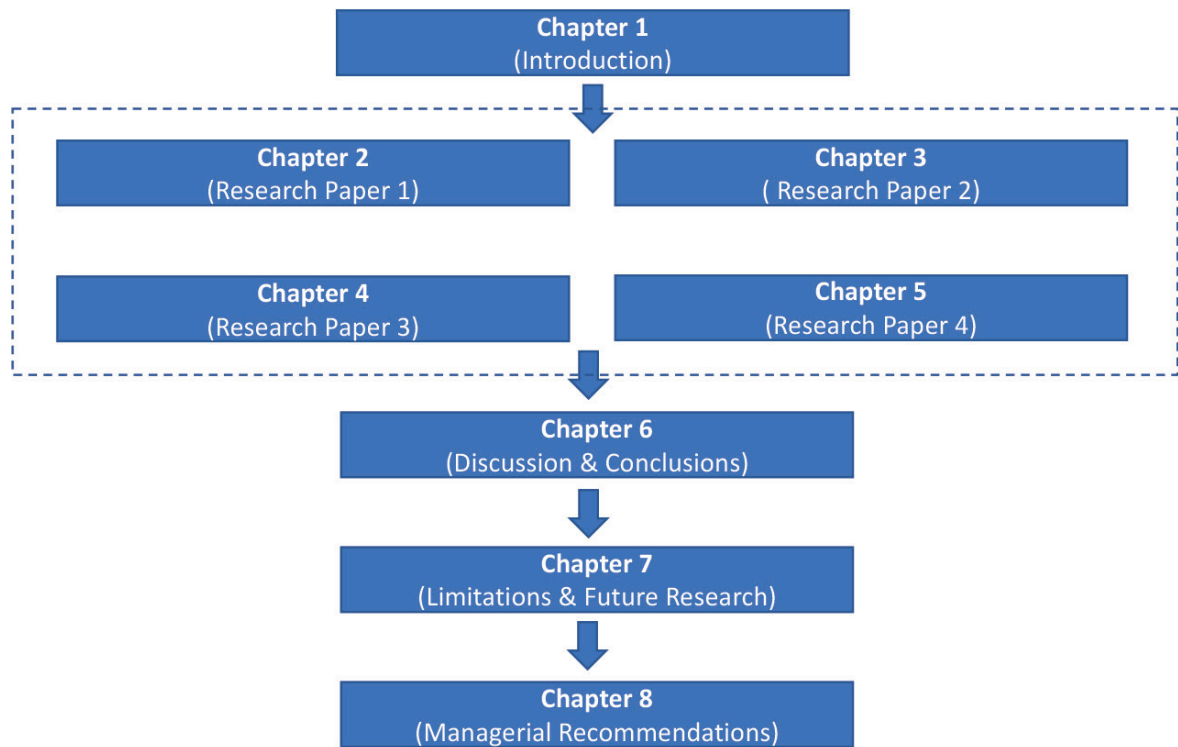
employees and organizations in various organizational settings and conditions in today's changing nature of work.

1.3 Research set-up

Seeing the two-sidedness of this research approach, one focusing on the re-assessment of the organizational commitment construct and the other on the investigation of combined organizational theories, it is proposed that this thesis takes the form of a collection of research papers as the core part of this study addressing the main research questions. The following will describe the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2 will be the first research paper and will be an exploration of the literature around psychological attachment within the employee – organizational relationship and a proposal of a theoretical framework for further empirical investigation. It will provide a review of the development of organizational commitment since its inception up to the current conceptualization of the dominant view of organizational commitment. It will then address the main issues pertaining to the dominant model of organizational commitment. Furthermore, in this chapter Social Identity Theory will be introduced to serve as an enriched perspective to commitment development in the workplace. Combining both organizational theories, a new theoretical model will be proposed together with accompanying propositions toward the development of commitment in the workplace. **Chapter 3** will be the second research paper and will address one of the main propositions from Chapter 2 through a longitudinal study. This study re-establishes the importance of normative commitment within the commitment literature by reconceptualizing normative commitment as a base commitment mindset and investigating the development of normative commitment over time. **Chapter 4** is the third research paper and investigates through a cross-sectional design the impact of organizational exchange and organizational identification-based factors on work attitudes and behavior. This study will investigate the effect of Leader-Member Exchange and Organizational Identification on Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. **Chapter 5** tests the full theoretical model of commitment development and key propositions based on social exchange and social identity theory and proposes an improved conceptual framework based on structural equation modeling. **Chapters 6** covers overall conclusions and discussion of the empirical findings to address the main research questions. **Chapter 7** addresses limitations of the current study and suggests future research approaches. Finally, **Chapter 8** makes managerial recommendations based on the research findings from this study.

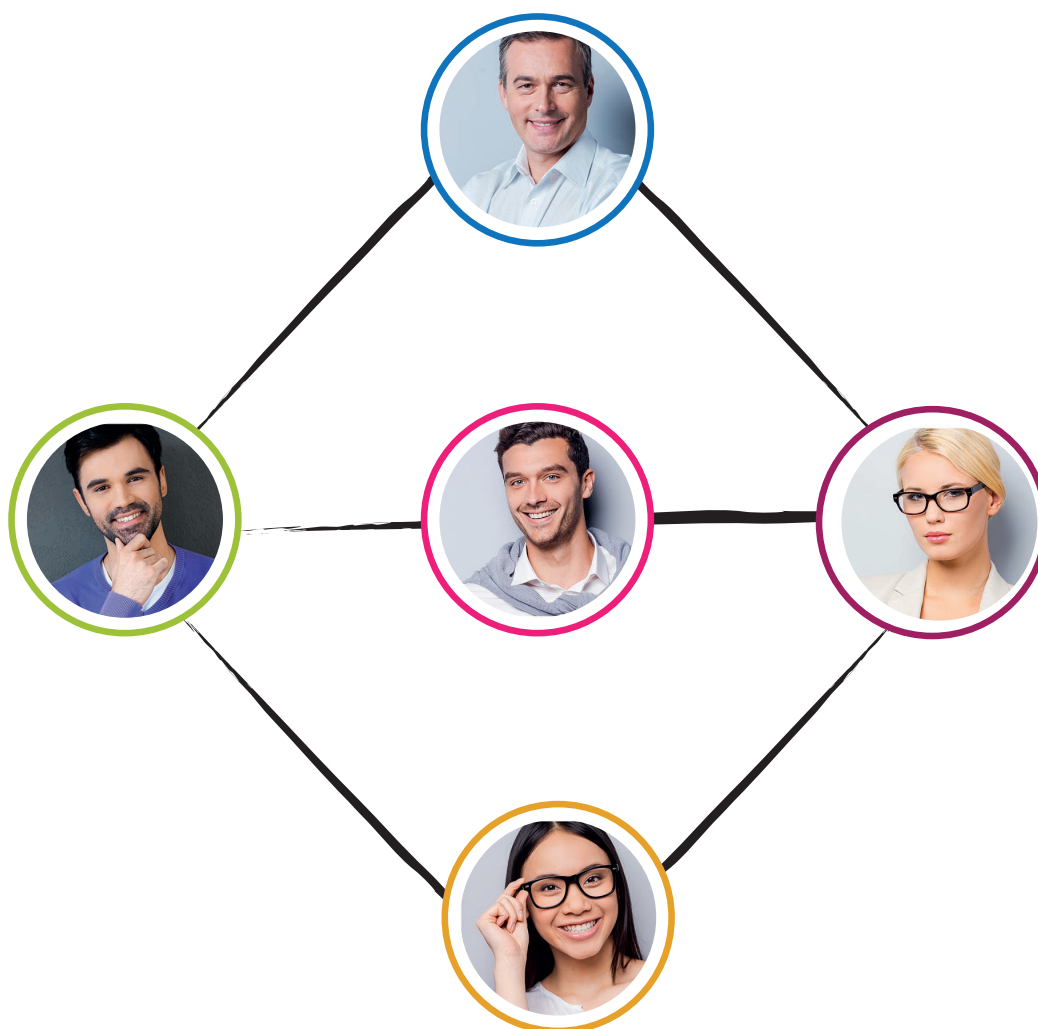
Research Set-up



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Chapter 2

Literature Review - Social Exchange and Social Identity: An integrative approach toward a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment

This chapter is submitted for publication as:
Fenwick, M. A. & Sluis, L. E. C. van der (2018). Social Exchange and Social Identity: An integrative approach toward a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment.

2.1 Abstract

Organizational commitment is one of the most studied concepts in the field of organizational behavior. However, not much is known about how commitment in the workplace evolves and little research has focused on examining the dynamics of organizational commitment development. The authors propose a socio-cognitive model of commitment development based on a reconceptualization of Meyer & Allen's three-component model using both a social exchange and social identity perspective. The proposed model (a) helps uncover underlying mechanisms governing the employee — organization relationship, (b) explains existing research findings within the commitment literature, (c) integrates two major perspectives affecting the psychological relationship between employee and organization, and (d) serves as a guide for future research in combined organizational commitment and organizational identification exploration.

2.2 Introduction

Investigating the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization has been an important contributor toward understanding and predicting organizational behavior (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rousseau & Parks, 1993). For decades, the most dominant approach in the literature assessing the strength of the employee — organization work relationship has come from a micro-perspective. The industrial-organization (I/O) psychology and organizational behavior/human resource management (OB/HRM) literatures have largely sought to explain variation in employee commitment toward the organization (Coff & Raffee, 2015; Herda & Lavelle, 2015; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). Conversely, from a macro-perspective, the strategy literature seeks to understand retention and commitment because human capital may be instrumental in explaining firm-level competitive advantage (Campbell, Coff, & Kruscynski, 2012a). In both perspectives, commitment serves as a foundation for work relationships (Hogg & Terry, 2001) that guide career and organizational development. The concept reflects the extent to which an employee is attached to an organization through identification with an organization's goals and values, and through one's involvement (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Empirical evidence has repeatedly shown that employees with a high level of commitment in the workplace exhibit better performance, increased citizenship behaviors, less absenteeism and less turnover than employees who have a low level of commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

The past 25 years, organizational commitment has received a lot of attention from both scholars and practitioners alike due to the changing nature of careers and work, and advancements made in its theoretical conceptualization. One of the major developments in commitment theory has been the development of a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), which is still considered to be the most dominant model of commitment in the workplace. However, the most widely accepted conceptualization of organizational commitment to date is not without its critics. Organizational researchers have called for re-assessment of this model to advance its design and suggest applying more dynamic research methods in research to better understand the mechanisms underlying commitment development in the workplace (Cohen, 2007; Jaros, 2007; Klein et al., 2012; Ko et al., 1997; Solinger et al., 2008). This makes sense in a world of work characterized by shorter time horizons of work relationships in organizations and with workplaces increasingly transcending outside the company premises.

Current research is in need of redefining and reconceptualizing '*commitment*' in general to address the changing nature of work in today's business world. The old paradigm

in which employee commitment was exchanged for job security is rapidly being replaced by a belief that there is an end to '*loyalty*', suggesting that a new employee-organizational attachment paradigm be sought. The existing definition of commitment based on social exchange processes alone does not seem to be psychologically resilient enough to withstand rapid organizational change and multiple-working identities corroborating toward extreme work mobility. Flexible working conditions, contingent work, organizational agility and organizational change have made it close to impossible to provide a perceived *balanced, fair* and *supportive* environment to its employees (Becker et al., 2009). What is needed is to establish a deeper psychological attachment within the employee-organizational relationship that is robust enough to deal with perpetual change and flexible conditions.

2.3 Research Aim

This paper seeks to reconcile some of these issues by investigating the development of commitment in the workplace from a socio-cognitive perspective and proposes a new theoretical model of commitment development in the workplace based on *social exchange theory* and *social identity theory*. The integration of two major theories of psychological relationships between the individual and the organization provides for a rich and dynamic understanding of how psychological attachment develops over time. Combining both social exchange and social identity to theorize commitment development, a better understanding of the psychological link between employees and organizations given the changing nature of careers and work can be gained. Uncovering the micro-structures of psychological attachment at work can provide organizational leaders and managers with better insights and tools to enhance employee engagement, organizational commitment, and work performance in a modern workplace.

As such, this paper is divided into five sections to cover the extent of this research objective. First, this paper introduces the concepts of social exchange theory and organizational commitment. What is organizational commitment and how has the organizational commitment construct developed since its first conceptualization? Second, Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment is introduced and some of the main issues pertaining to their model discussed. Third, a social identity perspective to organizational commitment is provided and discussed to explain how it affects the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization. What is social identity and how does it differ from organizational commitment? How can social exchange theory and social identity theory provide a better understanding of organizational attachment development? Four, a reconceptualization of Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment is proposed using both social

exchange and social identity theory. In this section, propositions are developed that serve as a basis for the newly proposed model of organizational commitment development. Lastly, the article ends with contributions made toward theory development and recommendations are provided for future research.

2.4 Social Exchange Theory and Organizational Commitment

Social exchange theory is a notion derived from social psychology that posits that human interaction between people is based on mutually negotiated exchanges. This suggests that within the employee — organization relationship, trade-offs are made between effort and loyalty from the employee for benefits like pay, support, and recognition from the organization (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Etzioni, 1975; Gould, 1979; Levinson, 1965; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rousseau & Parks, 1993). Social exchange theory from a work perspective postulates that employee attitudes and behaviors are contingent with employee evaluations of the quality of their exchange relationship (economic and socio-emotional exchanges) with the organization and its representatives (supervisor, management team, etc). The higher the quality of the exchange relationship, the more effort or commitment is exerted by the employee toward the organization or its constituents. Employee evaluations of the exchange relationship are reflected on the basis of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) or via mutual obligations conceptualized by researchers as the psychological contract (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995, 1998). Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), commitment becomes an exchange commodity when both employee and employer feel that their expectations and perceived obligations are being met and high-quality exchanges are made. Commitment is thus an outcome of a positive and mutually beneficial employee — organization relationship.

The concept of commitment has often been used interchangeably with loyalty. Though commitment and loyalty seem to be similar in meaning, in the literature there is a difference to be found in their meaning. James & Cropanzano (1994, p.179) defined dispositional loyalty as an “*adherence to a social unit to which one belongs, as well as its goals, symbols, and beliefs*”. Other researchers have defined loyalty as being a devoted member promoting group goals and welfare (Scott, 1965), adhering to group norms and favoring the in-group above the out-group (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Burton, 1990). What all definitions have in common is the promotion of group welfare at the cost of personal welfare entailing a level of personal loss or sacrifice (Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001). This description of loyalty is what distinguishes it from the concept of commitment.

The term organizational commitment emerged in the literature about 50 years ago when the original conceptualization of organizational commitment was based on Howard Becker's *side-bets* theory (1960). This theory states that commitment is based on the amount of accumulated investments an employee has made in an organization by remaining in a specific organization (side-bets) and that these investments valued by the employee would be lost if an employee would leave the organization (Cohen, 2007). Various studies have tested organizational commitment using Becker's side-bets theory, but findings were unsatisfactory in terms of its relationship between commitment and its determinants and consequences. Later, organizational commitment was theorized as a psychological state, rather than a rational realization of accrued benefits potentially lost after leaving the organization. This new development gave rise to a new conceptualization of organizational commitment, namely a 'psychological attachment' toward an organization. O'Reilly & Chatman (1986, p.492) indicate that *"although the term commitment is broadly used to refer to antecedents and consequences as well as the process of becoming attached and the state of attachment itself, it is the psychological attachment that seems to be the construct of common interest amongst the various definitions of commitment"*. For this reason, organizational commitment is often defined as the psychological attachment to and involvement in an organization (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). The authors will focus in this research on this definition of organizational commitment to promote their research objectives.

Both Becker and Mowday et al.'s conceptualizations of organizational commitment were unidimensional in nature. Various researchers suggested that commitment can take on multiple forms and as such would be better defined as a multi-dimensional conceptualization of commitment rather than a unidimensional conceptualization (see Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001 for a detailed review of the different definitions of organizational commitment). This gave rise to a multi-dimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment proposed by O'Reilly & Chatman (1986) and Meyer & Allen (1991, 1997). Meyer & Allen's theoretical paper (1984), which was intended to improve the operationalization of Becker's side bet theory, received much interest as a multi-dimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment combining both instrumentality and affect as a form of psychological attachment in the workplace. In 1990, Allen & Meyer proposed the three-component model of organizational commitment, which quickly became the dominant view of organizational commitment in its field (Meyer et al, 2002). In the following section, Meyer & Allen's three-component model will be further elaborated and discussed.

2.5 Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment

The three-component model of organizational commitment (1997) is a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment consisting of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment (AC) is defined as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in an organization and encompasses a desire or want to be part of an organization. This is characterized by the statement '*I **want** to work for this organization*'. Continuance commitment (CC) involves the economic and socio-emotional costs perceived with leaving the company or the lack of alternatives to find another job. This is characterized by the statement '*I **need** to work for this organization*'. Normative commitment encompasses a sense of moral obligation to remain in an organization. This is characterized by the statement '*I **should** or **ought** to stay in this organization*'.

Affective commitment develops primarily through positive work experiences and creates emotional ties between the employee and the organization. Research has shown that affective commitment, compared to continuance commitment and normative commitment, not only has a stronger negative relationship with turnover, but also the strongest impact on other work outcomes such as well-being, performance, productivity and citizenship behaviors (e.g. Kuvaas, 2006; Mercurio, 2015; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

Continuance commitment is also negatively associated with turnover. However, continuance commitment has been associated with work outcomes such as low performance and high absenteeism and tardiness (Meyer et al, 2002). This is due to the fact that leaving the organization has perceived costs associated with it, though the rationalization of remaining in the organization does not positively affect work outcomes other than turnover intentions and turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The term 'calculative commitment' has been used to describe commitment based on conscious thoughts of costs and benefits associated with organizational membership (Etzioni, 1975; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978), which is different from the affective mindset of organizational commitment developed through positive work experiences.

Normative commitment is the least understood component of the three-component model but was later added to Meyer & Allen's model as means of extending the model with a sense of moral obligation one may feel to remain a member of an organization. Meta-analyses have found that normative commitment has moderate positive effects on turnover and limited to no effect on other work outcomes (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). This psychological state of moral obligation is rooted in the norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960; Jaros, 2007). Employees are

believed to have normative commitment prior to entering a company and it is therefore not a psychological state that develops only during organizational life per se. According to researchers (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Wiener, 1982), normative commitment develops through means of socialization and early life experiences e.g. social networks, upbringing and cultural influences.

2.5.1 Issues relating to psychometric properties of the three-component model

Some of the major issues and inconsistencies found in empirical research pertaining to Meyer & Allen's three-component model are believed to be both conceptual and methodological. Researchers have pointed out that though Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment is deemed as the dominant perspective of commitment in the workplace, their model requires re-examination due to construct validity and measurement design issues (Jaros, 1997; Jaros, 2007; Ko et al., 1997).

2.5.2 Construct validity: Affective and Normative Commitment

In most of the empirical research applying the three-component model, the affective commitment component of the model was found to have the strongest effect on various work outcomes. The effects of normative commitment have been moderate on work outcomes (less than the effects of affective commitment on work outcomes), especially turnover intentions and actual turnover. Researchers have also found that there is considerable overlap in both the affective commitment and normative commitment constructs (Hackett et al., 1994; Jaros, 2007; Solinger et al., 2008). Meyer et al. (2002) in their meta-analysis found high correlations between normative and affective commitment demonstrating a lack of discriminant validity (a corrected correlation of .63, based on 54 studies). Consequently, many researchers in recent studies have focused solely on affective commitment as the only indicator of organizational commitment because of its strong reliability and validity as an organizational commitment component (Armstrong-Strassen, 2006; Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Kuvaas, 2006; Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Liefoghe, 2005; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Researchers Cohen (2007) and Ko et al. (1997) have therefore proposed that the role of normative commitment be re-examined in future commitment conceptualizations. As a response to the multiple calls to address issues pertaining the normative commitment component of the three-component model of organizational commitment, Meyer & Parfyonova (2010) proposed a reconceptualization of normative commitment to re-establish its theoretical and practical significance. More precisely, they postulated that normative commitment has significant value in explaining work behaviors in non-Anglo-Saxon cultural settings.

2.5.3 Measurement design issues: Attitudinal versus Behavioral Commitment

Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982) argue that attitudinal commitment is based on a mindset or process by which employees consider their relationship with the organization

to be congruent (in terms of goals and values). For this reason, the attitudinal approach predisposes an employee to different types of behaviors in various settings. Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, is more related to the activity of being an organizational member and how being an active member of the organization commits one to an organization (Cohen, 2007). Behavioral commitment is therefore more restricted in nature and is only associated with the activity in question or relevant to the situation. This distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment has caused for variation in the conceptualization of the organizational commitment construct and also has caused for confusion in its application. One of the major issues in measuring commitment has been the incorporation of behavioral outcomes within the scales of commitment measurement (Jaros, 2007). It is questionable if these scales can adequately test theory. It has therefore been recommended to focus on attitudinal commitment to prevent behavioral outcomes from contaminating the measurement of organizational commitment (Ko et al., 1997).

In addition, Solinger et al. (2008) argued in their research that Meyer & Allen's model fails to qualify as a general model of organizational commitment, but rather reflects a model to predict turnover. They state that Meyer & Allen's model mixes both behavioral commitment with attitudinal commitment. This is highlighted by the fact that only affective commitment can be regarded as a form of attitudinal commitment because affective commitment is the only outcome of the process of attachment and identification with the organization. Moreover, affective commitment affects a variety of work outcomes and not just turnover alone. Normative commitment and continuance commitment, on the other hand, Solinger argues, is behavioral in nature, which relates to the activity of staying with or leaving the organization. In this article, an alternative theoretical interpretation of these findings is proposed using social identity theory. The following part will elaborate on the tenants of social identity theory and provide a theoretical framework for re-evaluating the inconsistencies found in organizational commitment research to date.

2.6 Social Identity Theory and Organizational Commitment

To investigate the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization we also look at commitment from a social identity perspective. Social identity theory has received a lot of attention the past 30 years in the field of organizational studies as an explanation of employee behavior within the employee — organization relationship (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). Recent research has attempted to combine both social identity and organizational

commitment to further examine the underlying mechanisms governing organizational attachment and to find ways to strengthen the employee – organizational relationship.

Social identity comprises salient group identities (Ashforth et al., 2008) and can be conceived as *“the part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”* (Tajfel, 1978, p.63). Different than social exchange, social identification is the classification of self and others into various social categorizations such as organizational membership, religious associations and gender (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The application of social identity theory in organizations has been pivotal in explaining how organizational attachment occurs and how it impacts work attitudes and behaviors.

Various psychological reasons have been identified why individuals integrate group identities into their own self-concept, such as the enhancement of self-esteem (Oaker & Brown, 1986), the reduction of uncertainty especially in newcomer situations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Abrams, 1993), a fulfilment of belongingness needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and a way to understand people, situations and environments (Tajfel, 1978). This notion of normatively influenced behavior provides a framework for exploring a reconceptualization of Meyer & Allen’s three-component model (1991).

2.6.1 Social Identity and Organizational Identification

Organizational identification can be considered a form of social identification. According to the premises of social identity theory, organizational identification is the process through which employees shape their identity through organizational membership. Organizational identification reflects the extent to which the organization and its prototypical characteristics are incorporated into the self-concept of the individual (Tajfel, 1978) and creates a sense of oneness with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Organizational identification has provided an essential framework for investigating the psychology of individuals in an organization and predicting work-related behaviors (Haslam, 2001; Haslam, Postmes, & Ellemers, 2003). According to Stryker & Burke (2000) organizational identification is not only derived from the organization itself or the collectives of an organization (e.g. department, workgroup, union, etc), but can also be derived from the role a member has in an organization (occupation, careers, relational network, senior manager, etc). Organizational identification has been found to be positively associated with various work behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Blader & Tyler, 2009), monetary donations (e.g. Mael & Ashforth, 1992), in-group favoritism (e.g. Brewer, 1979; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997), collective

actions (e.g. Blader, 2007b), and loyalty (e.g. Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001).

2.6.2 Social Identity and Group Engagement Model

Further application of social identity theory to organizational phenomena has been the widespread use of the group engagement model (Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003), which posits that social identity is core to understanding the psychological drive behind employee engagement within organizations (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Ellemers, de Gilder, & Haslam, 2004; Haslam & Reicher, 2006; Olkkonen & Lipponen, 2006). The group engagement model explains that individual behavioral effort on behalf of a group or collective to which an individual belongs to is influenced by how the group influences individual cognitions about oneself (Blader & Tyler, 2009). Strong social identities toward a specific group or collective are believed to evoke intrinsic motivational behavior toward that group to protect the group image, interests, welfare and success. Because group prestige is linked to personal prestige, individuals with strong social identities are concerned with meeting the group's needs and goals (Blader, Van Knippenberg, & Sleebos, 2008), which sometimes go beyond personal goals. In other words, when self-identification is mainly influenced by the group, the greater group norms guide individual behavior. This process of de-individualization allows for group characteristics, norms and values to be internalized and prescribes greater group effort as a consequence (Dutton et al., 1994; Haslam & Ellemers, 2005; Hogg & Terry, 2001; Van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 2003).

This paper attempts to expand the group engagement model by applying both theory and empirical findings from social identity theory to the field of organizational commitment. More specifically, the authors attempt to provide a theoretical framework that integrates both social identity theory and social exchange theory to better understand commitment development in a modern workplace. To further theorize the possible connection between social identity and social exchange within the proposed model, a comparison between social identity and social exchange concepts needs to be made. The following will discuss the similarities and differences between Organizational Identification and Organizational Commitment.

2.7 Organizational Identification and Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational identification has regularly been equated, and often confused, with the concept of organizational commitment (Ashfort et al., 2008; Benkhoff, 1997a; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Ouwerkerk et al., 1999; Wallace, 1993). The reasons for this lay primarily in the way organizational commitment has been conceptualized,

defined and/or measured. For example, Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979, p.27) defined organizational commitment as *“the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization”*. Meyer & Allen’s (1991, p.67) definition of the affective component of their three-component model of organizational commitment is *“an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization”*. Moreover, Chatman & O’Reilly (1986) conceptualized organizational commitment partially as an identification driven process. Consequently, measurement items for organizational identification and organizational commitment related to these definitions and conceptualizations have been found to sound very similar. Not surprisingly, Riketta (2005) found in his meta-analysis that due to the perceived similarity in the above examples, organizational commitment and organizational identification are strongly correlated. However, recent research has found that organizational identification and organizational commitment to be both conceptually (Pratt, 1998; Van Dick, 2001) as well as empirically (Herda & Lavelle, 2015; Herrbach, 2006; Riketta, 2005; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006) distinct from each other.

At the theoretical level, organizational identification and organizational commitment can be differentiated based on the cognitive basis of identification (Herda & Lavelle, 2015). The cognitive basis for identification within the organizational commitment literature relates to an employee’s attitude toward the organization from a social exchange perspective (Ashforth et al., 2008; Gautam, Van Dick, & Wagner, 2004; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). Identification from a social identity perspective, on the other hand, reflects the extent to which the organization is incorporated into the self-concept (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006) and is contingent on the basis of perceived similarity and shared fate with the organization (Gautam, Van Dick, & Wagner, 2004; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). This comparison alone provides further distinctiveness in terms of the relationship between the individual and the organization. Organizational identification is believed to be more related to the connectedness one feels with the organization making it hard to distinguish the self from the organization, whereas in organizational commitment the individual and the organization are seen as two separate entities (Ashforth et al., 2008). Moreover, organizational commitment, in general, has been defined conceptually more broadly than organizational identification has. As a result, organizational identification has been found to have a stronger association with discretionary behavioral outcomes, such as extra-role behaviors and job involvement, than organizational commitment (Riketta, 2005).

Empirically, organizational identification has been found to be distinct from organizational commitment based on various research findings. First, empirical distinction between the two concepts has been found based on its correlates. According to Riketta’s meta-analysis (2005), organizational identification was less correlated with absenteeism,

intent to stay and job satisfaction and more strongly correlated with job involvement and extra-role behavior than affective organizational commitment. Secondly, organizational identification has been found to not only be associated with positive emotions. Herrbach (2006) indicated that different than organizational commitment, organizational identification is also associated with negative emotional experiences such as in-group bias and reluctance to change. Differences in outcomes between both concepts can be explained by the way organizational identification and organizational commitment develop within the individual. Gautam et al. (2004) explain that individuals who are highly identified with their organization will incorporate group norms and values into their self-concept and act congruently with those norms and values.

Organizational commitment and organizational identification provide two important perspectives of the psychological relationship between the individual and organization and their effect on behavior (Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). Recent research efforts, incorporating both social identity and social exchange theories and concepts, have expanded our understanding of underlying pathways within the employee — organization psychological relationship and provide an enriched perspective to organizational phenomena.

2.8 Reconceptualizing Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment

By using both social identity theory and social exchange theory, the authors demonstrate that it is possible to develop a socio-cognitive model of organization commitment to advance a theoretical understanding of commitment development in a rapidly evolving workplace. Moreover, the proposed model addresses conceptual and methodological issues related to Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment.

There are four assumptions guiding this integrated model of commitment development. First, identification and commitment are separate cognitive processes of psychological bonding toward an entity that develop within their own right and eventually intersect to affect the type and degree of attachment (Klein et al, 2012). Second, identification precedes actual commitment as the self-concept is a predisposition based on values and beliefs acting as a lens to evaluate fit and belongingness to an entity or social group. Third, an affective state of identification or commitment is always preceded by a cognitive state of identification or commitment. Lastly, time is a critical factor in both the development of commitment and identification. This last assumption is important to theorize the dynamics of interplay between social exchange and social identity theory prior to and after organizational entry. These assumptions underlie the proposed reconceptualization

of Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment to address conceptual issues relating to their model and advance an integrative view to commitment development.

Figure 2.1 presents a dynamic perspective to organizational commitment development based on a reconceptualization of Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment. The following part of this paper will discuss the theoretical background of the proposed model.

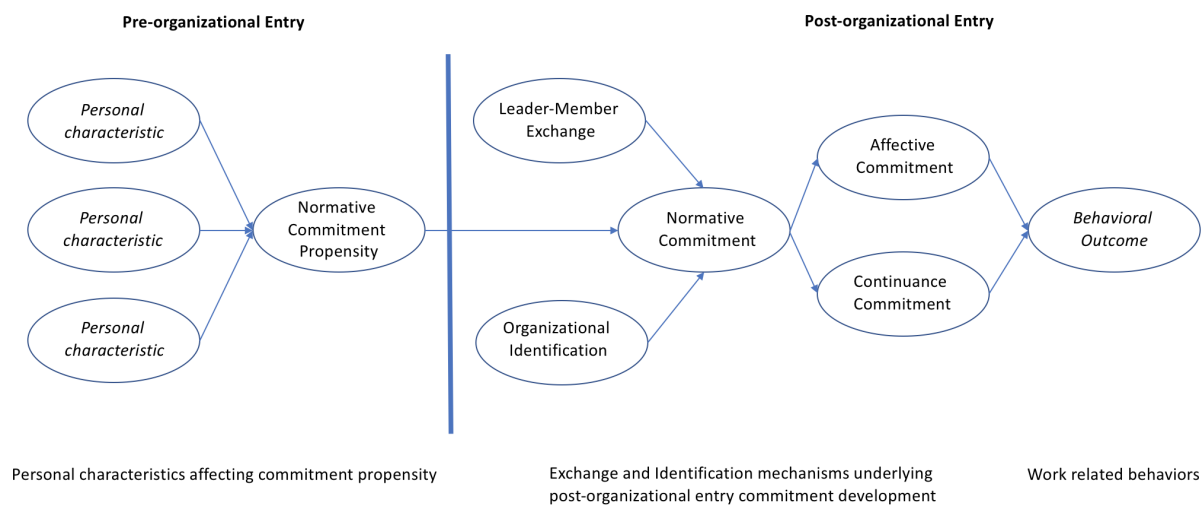


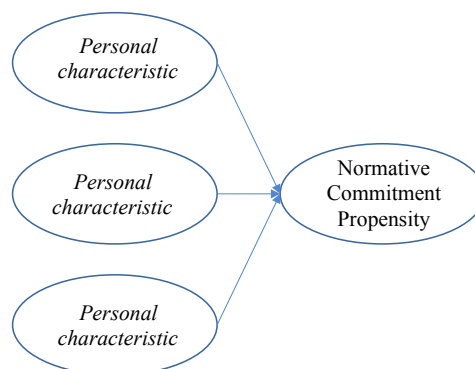
Figure 2-1 Dynamic process of commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry

The proposed model responds to calls from commitment theorists to develop a parsimonious model of organizational commitment (Cohen, 2007; Klein et al., 2012; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Solinger et al., 2014). Theorists have suggested that to overcome some of the conceptual and methodological issues found with using Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment is to focus primarily on the affective commitment component, as a purely attitudinal form of commitment, and to disregard the normative commitment and continuance commitment components of their model. However, Cohen (2007) makes an interesting proposal in his paper to not disregard, but to disconnect continuance and normative commitment from a static multi-dimensional model and to use them as a predisposition toward commitment development. To advance an integrated model of commitment development based on both social exchange theory and social identity theory, the authors build upon Cohen's notion of commitment development but take a different approach to its conceptualization.

Proposition 1: *Organizational commitment is best understood and measured using a unidimensional model of organizational commitment.*

Cohen (2007) proposes in his theoretical model that time plays an important role in how commitment is perceived. He indicates that commitment is viewed differently pre-organizational entry and post-organizational entry. Pre-organizational commitment has been referred to as a predisposition, or a *commitment propensity*, in previous studies (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982; Pierce & Dunham, 1987) and suggests that one's ability to become committed to an organization is partially dependent on personal characteristics developed prior to organizational entry. The authors of this study build upon Cohen's conceptualization of commitment development over time, but suggest that mainly normative commitment from an integrative perspective is pivotal in explaining how organizational commitment develops both prior to and after organizational entry.

Proposition 2: *Normative commitment plays a critical role in explaining which factors affect organizational commitment prior to and after organizational entry.*



Pre-organizational entry phase

Figure 2-2 Personal characteristics underlying normative commitment propensity

Normative commitment pre-organizational entry (hereafter referred to as normative commitment propensity) reflects normative beliefs and values of attachment from both a social exchange and social identity perspective and is influenced primarily by personal or situational factors experienced earlier in life such as through familial and cultural socialization (Cohen, 2006; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Wiener, 1982). Johnson & Chang (2006) argue that, from a social identity perspective, the self-concept is also a predisposition reflecting individual differences such as norms and values affecting

commitment in its own way. Normative commitment propensity therefore is a frame of mind representing cognitions of identification, moral obligation, and reciprocation developed throughout one's life (see figure 2.2). The authors claim in this paper such a mindset to be a *default cognitive psychological state of commitment*.

Proposition 3a: *Normative commitment propensity is a mindset reflecting normative beliefs and values of attachment from both a social exchange and social identity perspective.*

Proposition 3b: *Normative commitment propensity is influenced primarily by personal or situational factors experienced earlier in life, such as through familial and cultural socialization, and should be considered a personal characteristic or individual difference (predisposition).*

Proposition 3c: *Normative commitment propensity is a default commitment mindset*

Both social exchange theory and social identity theory help explain the need to reciprocate in social relationships which facilitate the process of attachment. Socialization fosters moral reciprocation and identification between oneself and others (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982). The notion of reciprocity forms the basis of the exchange relationship in any given relationship and serves as a psychological basis for further interaction and exchange. From a social identity perspective, identification with a social group and the internalization of an entity's prototypical characteristics to form one's concept of self governs individual behaviors to comply with group norms as a form of attachment.

Proposition 4a: *Normative commitment propensity from a social exchange perspective reflects normative beliefs and values facilitating reciprocation within social groups.*

Proposition 4b: *Normative commitment propensity from a social identity perspective reflects identity-based cognitions affecting attachment and behavior within social groups.*

Previous studies have found that commitment propensity affects commitment to the organization post-organizational entry (Cohen, 2007; Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982). Therefore, the authors propose that upon organizational entry, normative commitment propensity converts to normative commitment (see figure 2.3) forming a *base commitment mindset* from which other commitment forms can develop.

Normative commitment is not a component of a static multi-component model, but rather a stand-alone construct as it serves a critical mediating role in the commitment

development process. As will be later discussed, both the quality of the exchange relationship and the strength of one's identification with the organization will affect how organizational commitment further develops.

Proposition 5a: *Normative commitment propensity converts to normative commitment post-organizational entry.*

Proposition 5b: *Normative commitment forms a base commitment mindset from which other commitment forms develop.*

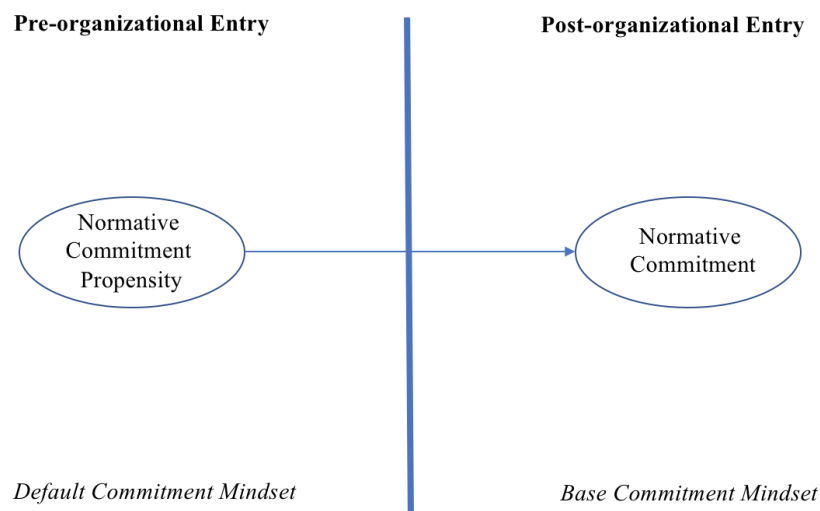


Figure 2-3 Normative commitment propensity converts to normative commitment post-organizational entry

Post-organizational entry, both social exchange and social identity play a critical role as well in the development of psychological attachment toward the organization and its constituents. Similar to the pre-organizational entry phase, socialization processes play an important role in instilling a shared identity, feelings of reciprocation and mutual obligation with the organization. Work socialization is considered to be the process of transforming an 'outsider' to the organization into an 'insider' of the organization (Feldman, 1981). Through this socialization process of workplace reciprocation and identification, a sense of moral obligation is established within the organizational context between the new insider and other organizational members. This moral obligation is facilitated simultaneously through the need to reciprocate received investments (time, support, training, social contact with organizational members, etc) and a way to create a sense of oneness with the organization through organizational sense-making (Ashforth et al., 2008).

Proposition 5c: *Through socialization processes post-organizational entry, normative commitment is established in the workplace to facilitate identification and reciprocation between the employee and the organization.*

When normative commitment toward the organization or its constituents has developed upon organizational entry, the authors propose that the specific type of commitment evolving from a normative commitment state can depend both on social exchange and social identity influences. In other words, the quality of social exchanges within a reciprocal relationship or the degree of internalization of group norms, values and behaviors play a strong role in determining the type of workplace commitment that develops after organizational entry (see figure 2.4).

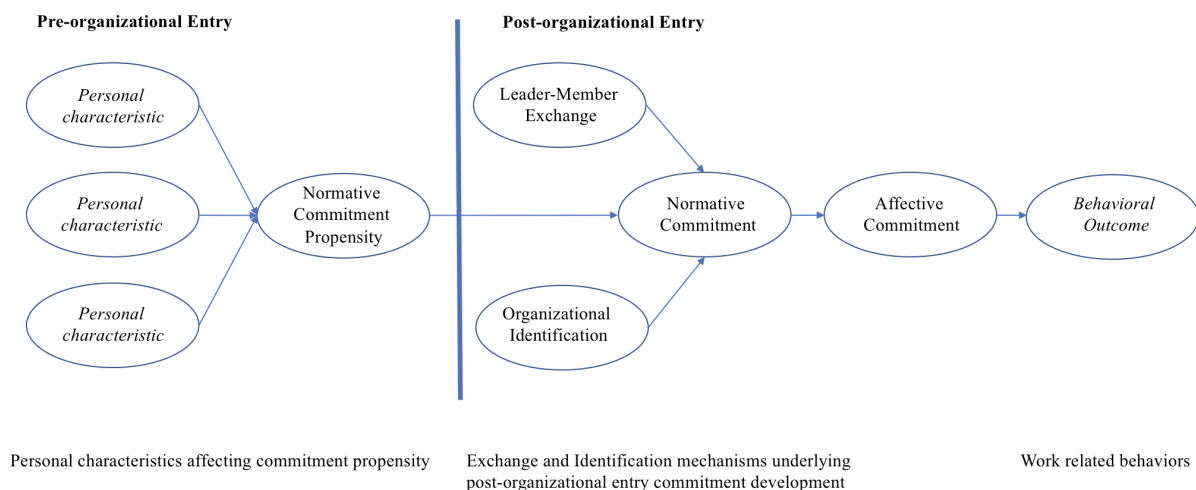
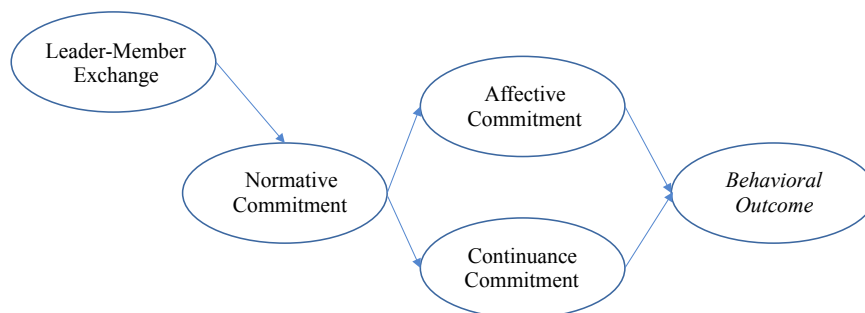


Figure 2-4 Organizational commitment development facilitated through exchange-based and identity-based mechanisms

Due to normative commitment initiating after organizational entry as a cognitive bond within the employee – organizational relationship, it is theorized that mainly factors at the cognitive level directly affect its further development. These cognitive factors are considered to be antecedents of both commitment and identification such as perceptions of congruence, the process of self-categorization, and evaluations of work-related interactions. As previously stated, the development of commitment and identification follows a cognitive-to-affect pathway, indicating that psychological attachment develops at a situational level first before a deeper level of attachment is formed. It can therefore be hypothesized that normative commitment in its early development plays a partial or fully mediating role in how different exchange-based and identification-based factors interact with other forms of commitment, not to mention their effect on behavioral outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 5).

Though various commitment forms can evolve from a base commitment mindset, theorists have suggested focusing primarily on the affective commitment component of Meyer & Allen's model to overcome some of the conceptual and methodological issues found.

From a social exchange perspective, commitment develops differently depending on the quality of the exchanges within the employer — organization relationship (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010). Normative commitment has the potential to develop into continuance commitment if the quality of social exchanges is low and mutual expectations are not met. In the case that positive work experiences are exchanged, and expectations are met in a balanced and fair manner, affective commitment is more likely to develop toward the organization or its constituents (see figure 2.5). Normative commitment is rooted in the notion of reciprocity, where the quality and frequency of social exchanges alone form the basis for both affective or continuance commitment development post-organizational entry. Interestingly, non-reciprocal based events have also been theorized to alter commitment states (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010), indicating that a shift in the cognitive-affective pathway of commitment can also happen suddenly.

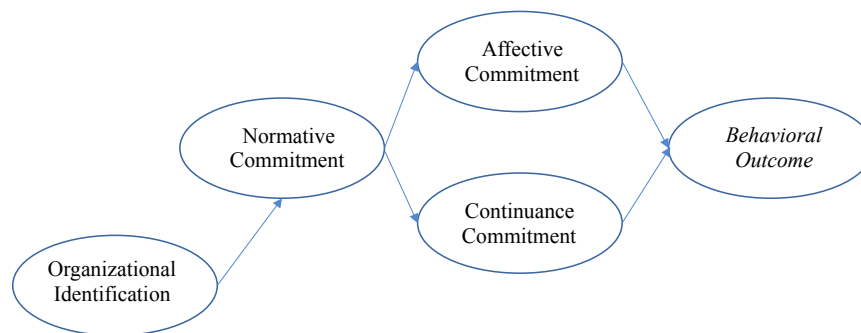


Exchange mechanisms underlying post-organizational entry commitment development

Figure 2-5 The development of normative commitment into other organizational commitment forms based on social exchange

Proposition 6a: *within a reciprocal work relationship, a normative commitment mindset develops into either an affective or continuance commitment mindset depending on the quality and frequency of the exchange with the specific organizational target.*

The interplay between social exchange and social identity affects the dynamic nature of commitment development in the following manner. Individuals with a strong collective identity will be more likely to develop affective commitment toward the organization than individuals with a stronger self-concept (see figure 2.6). Individuals with strong collective identities have a larger propensity to associate the self with the organization and to internalize group norms and values fostering also a sense of loyalty. This leads to stronger positive emotional responses regarding one's organizational membership. Contrarily, individuals with less effected self-concepts vis-à-vis the organization would have a tendency to develop stronger continuance commitment toward the organization. As Johnson & Chang (2006, p.564) put it *"individuals with strong individual self-concepts pay more attention to personal-level information such as investments and potential economic losses"*.



Identification mechanisms underlying post-organizational entry commitment development

Figure 2-6 The development of normative commitment into other organizational commitment forms based on social identity

Proposition 6b: *within a reciprocal work relationship, a normative commitment mindset develops into either an affective or continuance commitment mindset depending on the degree of identification with the specific organizational target.*

Research has also shown that when exchanges are negatively experienced, or expectations are not met, low levels of affective commitment are found and a higher level of continuance commitment is more eminent. Meyer & Allen (1991) and Solinger et al. (2014) propose that the recognition of the costs associated with leaving the organization is a conscious psychological state, which suggests a change in awareness if previously committed through affect. Moreover, Solinger et al. (2013, 2014) found that in dynamic micro-structures of commitment, a cognitive attitude is more present in both organizational entry and organizational exit as it resembles a *base attitude* that

is more reflective in nature. This suggests that normative commitment re-activates, disturbing the existing state of an affective and / or continuance commitment mindset, upon organization departure (see figure 2.7) to allow new experiences to affect the psychological – performance link. This is in line with the model's underlying assumptions of commitment development. Different than with sudden anchoring events (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010), it seems that time plays a crucial role in how commitment develops consciously and unconsciously through reciprocal exchanges and identification (Cohen, 2007).

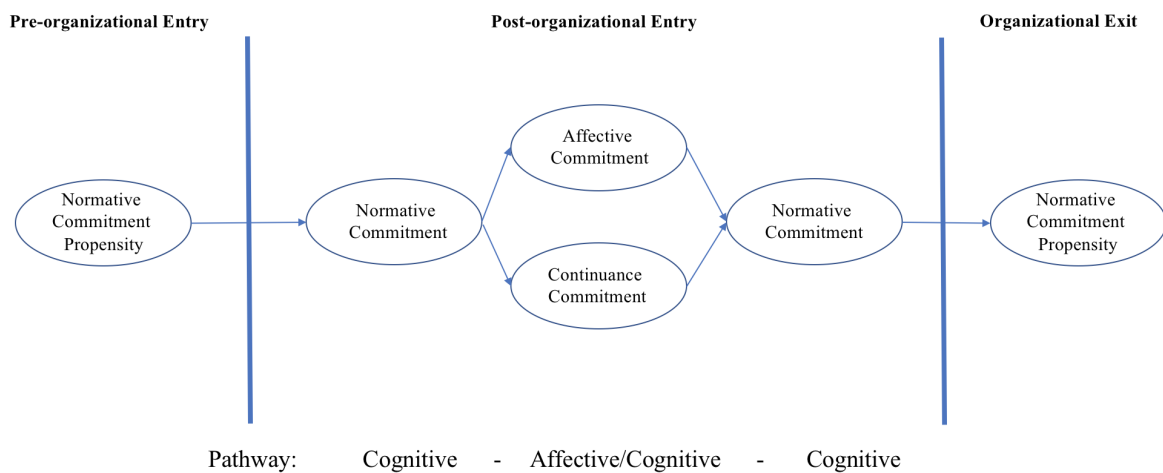
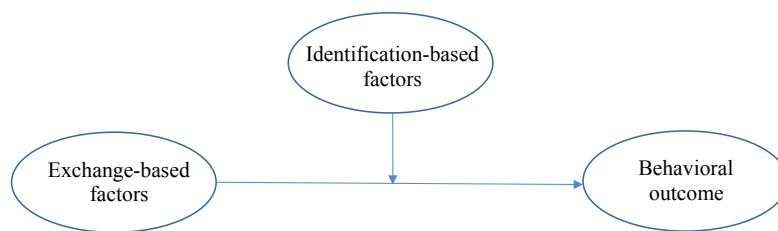


Figure 2-7 A cognitive – affective pathway of organizational commitment development

Proposition 7a: *A cognitive state or affective state of commitment in the workplace, after changing roles or leaving an organization, will always return back to a base commitment mindset (normative commitment or its propensity), so that new influences, experiences and organizational situations can influence the development of commitment in the workplace again.*

Social exchange-based and social identity-based attachment mechanisms affect the commitment development process in their own way. This means that social exchange and social identity factors facilitate organizational attachment through unique psychological pathways, potentially strengthening positive cognitions or buffering negative cognitions in the attachment process. From a social identity perspective, when exchanges are negatively experienced, expectations not met or when organization commitment deteriorates (e.g. cognitive dissonance related to organizational change), social identification moderates the relationship between commitment and behavioral outcomes (see figure 2.8). It has been found that strong organizational identification can buffer the negative effects of exchange factors leading to low affective commitment

on specific work behavior such as work performance, absenteeism and turnover (Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). Contrarily, changes in commitment toward an organization or its constituents have been found to affect the degree of identification, showing that there is a reciprocal relationship between organizational identification and commitment affecting behavior (Herda & Lavelle, 2015; Johnson & Chang, 2006).



Identification-based factors moderating exchange-based organizational commitment development

Figure 2-8 The reciprocal effects of social exchange and social identity factors

Proposition 7b: *Social exchange and social identity factors have a reciprocal effect on each other and on behavioral outcomes.*

2.9 Implications for theory and practice

2.9.1 Theory development

This research has various implications for further theory development and understanding of existing research findings within the organizational commitment and social identity field. First of all, this paper proposed an integrated model of organizational commitment development. The model approached this by integrating two very different perspectives to how the psychological relationship between the employee and the organization is formed, namely the social exchange perspective and the social identity perspective. Applying both social exchange theory and social identity theory to commitment development helps identify relationships between both concepts and their possible effect on work-related attitudes and behaviors. The integration approach also allows for a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms governing the employee — organizational relationship. Furthermore, this paper proposed a parsimonious reconceptualization of an existing model of organizational commitment illustrating how existing findings within commitment research and social identification can be integrated into a model of commitment development. This paper and its theoretical propositions

recommend disregarding the multi-dimensional model approach to organizational commitment testing, and to view commitment development from a socio-cognitive perspective going back to a unidimensional approach of commitment conceptualization.

2.9.2 Managerial implications

Findings from this research study on the interplay of exchange-based and identification-based factors affecting organizational commitment, and its effect on work attitudes and behaviors, provide interesting insights to organizational practice. The following managerial implications are discussed.

Employee Engagement & Retention. First and foremost, the key recommendation proposed based on this research is that organizations should focus on both commitment building strategies as well as organizational branding and identification strategies. The proposed model suggests that social exchange and social identity play a critical role in the commitment development process within work relationships. Management would benefit from the compounded effects that both concepts have on organizational attachment and work-related behaviors. Solely focusing on identification-based or exchange-based approaches would downplay potential gains from an integrated approach.

Newcomer On-boarding & Socialization. Newcomer socialization is a critical organizational process for new employees as it positively affects organizational attachment, work attitudes, work behaviors and performance. Findings from this research suggest that organizational attachment during newcomer socialization is strengthened by focusing on developing high-quality exchange relationships (e.g. provisioning of training) as well as helping new recruits identify with the organization and its representatives (e.g. on-boarding, mentorship). Exchange- and identification-based approaches strengthen positive attitudes toward the organization and support in the internalization of group norms and values.

HR Policy Design. In line with the findings from this study, when considering employee performance reviews, group decision-making policies, individual promotion and training decisions or redundancy strategies, it is important to ensure organizational procedures are transparent, fair and supportive. Procedural fairness and employee support factors have been found to affect the development of both organizational identification and organizational commitment (e.g. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Klein, Becker, & Meyer, 2009; Tyler & Blader, 2000). By applying fair procedures and treatment in the workplace together with enhancing employee support perceptions can benefit both work attitudes and behaviors toward the organization.

Organizational Resilience. Research findings combining social exchange and social identity have provided interesting insights on how to buffer for possible negative outcomes related to low organizational commitment or low self-identification with the organization. Low affective commitment has been associated with turnover intentions and absenteeism (e.g. Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001), which could harm the performance and longevity of the organization. Research shows that low affective commitment toward the organization or one of its representatives can be countered by fostering a strong organizational or group identification (e.g. Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). Strong identification has been found to relate to a willingness to remain with the organization and to meet organizational goals and needs. Though, a word of caution should be made with high identification. Research has also found high identification to be related to in-group bias and unwillingness to change (e.g. Brewer & Brown, 1998; Burton, 1990; Herrbach, 2006).

2.10 Future Research

This paper offers many opportunities and new avenues for future research. The following examples reflect a few possible avenues for future research. First, this study responds to the call for newer and parsimonious conceptualizations of organizational commitment because of the changing nature of work and careers. Organizational commitment is one of the most studied concepts in the field of organizational behavior since its initial conceptualization by Becker (1960). However, the tremendous focus on organizational commitment in the past 50 years has not only advanced our understanding of the organizational commitment construct, but has also added to the complexity of its investigation. New approaches within organizational commitment research are warranted to help better understand the role of commitment in modern times and to identify improved ways how organizational commitment should be defined, conceptualized and measured.

Second, this paper has paved the path for future research in organizational commitment, by advancing existing theoretical notions of the role of social exchange and social identification in employee – organization work relationships. Future research would do well to continue investigating the corroborating effects of integrative psychological concepts on attitudinal outcomes at the micro-level and the value creation and competitive advantage benefits at the firm-level. For example, researchers could also focus on concepts such as psychological ownership, job embeddedness, and deep listening to investigate effects on work attitudes and behaviors.

Third, social exchange and social identity are considered to be important concepts in an era of changing work relationships with shorter-term commitments, increasing and shifting interdependence, increasingly diverse workforces, more relational organizations in which workers continuously coordinate their work with colleagues and clients within and across boundaries (Gittel & Douglas, 2012), and the omni-presence of technology that transforms work relationships into virtual interactions. Organizational commitment and organizational identification still impact work relationships, but probably differently than in traditional settings in which these concepts have been readily applied and researched. Future research would benefit from utilizing both avenues of research to 1. avoid redundant research efforts (Riketta, 2005), 2. better understand the underlying pathways within the employee — organization relationship (Ashforth et al., 2008) and 3. identify how both concepts interact to positively influence behavior or counter-react negative outcomes (Herda & Lavelle, 2015; Johnson & Chang, 2006). This would be especially interesting in relational organizations as in these work environments contextual changes could flourish more than in *old-school* bureaucracies, where workers are focused more on narrowly-defined tasks than on their contribution at the company level. This also builds a bridge to another avenue of future research. In line with the macro-perspective, the strategy literature could benefit from more understanding of retention, attachment and commitment as human capital is instrumental in creating competitive advantage (Campbell et al., 2012a).

2.11 Conclusions

There is a lack of insights in the effects of the changing nature of work relationships on the development of commitment in the workplace. Besides, the increasingly diversifying work population in organizations may also affect work relationships. This study theorizes the dynamics of organizational commitment from different social and cultural backgrounds and unpacks the micro-foundations of social relationships in today's world of work.

The authors propose a theoretical model of commitment development based on a reconceptualization of Meyer & Allen's three-component model using both a social exchange and social identity perspective. The proposed model (a) helps uncover underlying mechanisms governing the employee — organization relationship, (b) explains existing research findings within the commitment literature, (c) integrates two major perspectives affecting the psychological relationship between employee and organization and (d) serves as a guide for future research in the context of the changing nature of work relationships.

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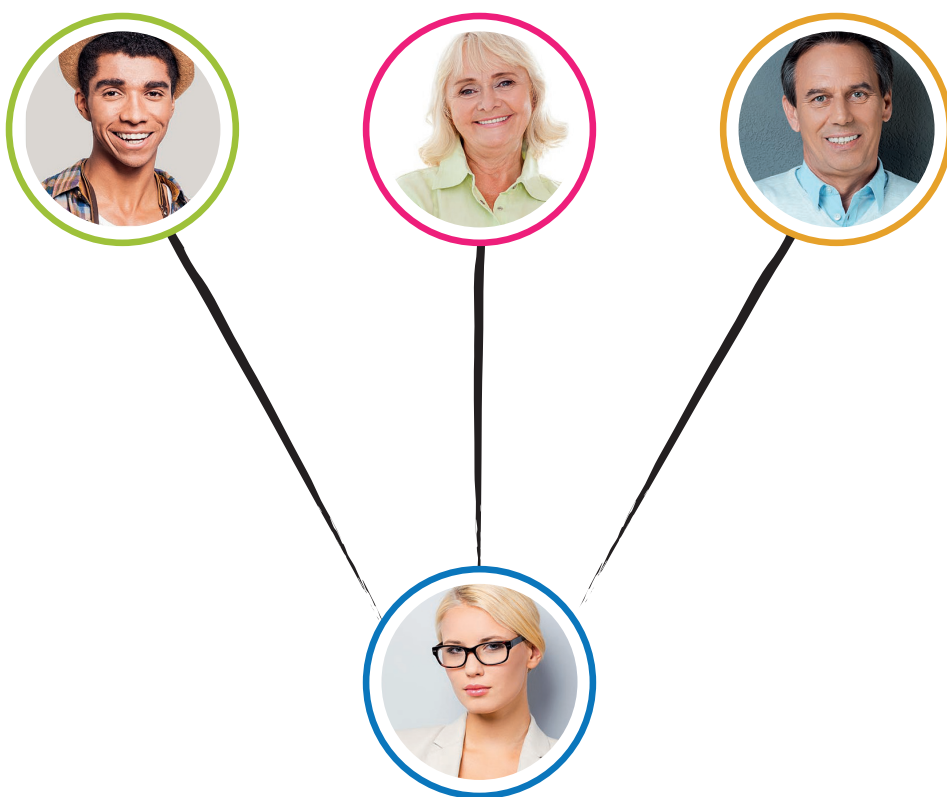
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Chapter 3

Re-examining the Importance of Normative Commitment: Psychological attachment pre- and post-organizational entry

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3.1 Abstract

There is reason to believe that the development of commitment in the workplace is partially dependent on the personal attributions people develop throughout their lives. Little research has focused on how an organizational commitment mindset develops before organizational entry. Using a longitudinal design, this study investigated the development of normative commitment pre- and post-organizational entry of MBA students in Dubai. Study findings provide evidence that personal characteristics partially affect normative commitment propensity and that normative commitment propensity is a strong indicator of normative commitment post-organizational entry. Conclusions and implications of the results for both human resource scholarship and practitioners are discussed.

3.2 Introduction

Normative commitment is one of the least understood constructs in the organizational commitment literature (Wiener, 1982). Meyer & Allen (1991) added the normative commitment construct to their three-component model of organizational commitment as means of extending the model with a sense of moral obligation one may feel to remain a member of an organization. Normative commitment has received a lot of scrutiny in the extant literature due to its limited effects on work-related outcomes and construct validity issues (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Ko et al., 1997; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). First, researchers have found considerable overlap in both the affective commitment and normative commitment constructs when empirically testing the three-component model (Hackett et al., 1994; Jaros, 2007; Solinger et al., 2008). Second, normative commitment, in comparison to other commitment components, has been found to have moderately positive effects on turnover and limited to no effect on other work-related outcomes (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). Researchers have therefore suggested disregarding normative commitment in future organizational commitment research (Armstrong-Strassen, 2006; Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Kuvaas, 2006; Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Liefvooghe, 2005; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). However, recent studies suggest that normative commitment be re-examined in future commitment conceptualizations to re-establish its value as an organizational commitment construct (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010).

As a response to the multiple calls to address the issues underlying the normative commitment component, this study aims to re-establish the value of normative commitment within the current literature. It does this by revisiting the development of the normative commitment construct and by providing new rational in explaining its function as an attachment mechanism within the employee – organizational relationship. The study proposes and examines a conceptual framework of normative commitment development both prior to and after organizational entry in which predispositions affect its development. As such, normative commitment is conceptualized as a default commitment mindset, taking on the form of a commitment propensity pre-organizational entry and functioning as a base commitment form post-organizational entry. This approach expands existing theory on the development of organizational commitment and helps explain the role of normative commitment within the attitude – performance link.

3.3 Constructs

3.3.1 Normative Commitment

Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment (1997) is a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment consisting of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Normative commitment is the least understood component of Meyer & Allen's three-component model, but was later added as means of extending the model with a sense of moral obligation one may feel to remain a member of an organization, internalized by normative pressures developed prior to or after organizational entry. Normative commitment can also develop through the provisioning of advanced rewards by the organization (e.g. training and support) that causes an imbalance in the employee-organization relationship, which the employee tries to restore by remaining in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Scholl, 1981; Wiener, 1982; Wiener & Vardi, 1980). This psychological state is based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960; Jaros, 2007). Employees are believed to have a normative commitment mindset prior to entering a company indicating that it does not develop during organizational life only. According to researchers (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Wiener, 1982), a normative commitment mindset develops during early life experiences influenced by familial, social and cultural factors.

Pre-organizational entry: personal and environmental factors affecting normative commitment propensity

Research has found that, besides external factors, personal variables also affect organizational commitment development (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). To provide a theoretical basis for explaining the effects of personal characteristics on the development of organizational commitment, Fishbein & Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (1975) is discussed.

According to Fishbein & Ajzen's theory of planned behavior, both internal and external processes help understand and predict behavioral intentions and actual behavior. According to their model, behavior can be predicted by examining the *attitudes* related to the behavior, the *normative beliefs and influences* affecting behavior and the *beliefs of self-control* regarding one's ability to perform the actual behavior. This framework helps explain how cognitions, influenced by personal values, expectations, beliefs, cultural influences and past experiences, affect attitudes and behaviors. As such, differences in cognitions affected by both internal and external factors can predispose one to a specific attitude. A predisposition toward organizational commitment is often referred to as a *commitment propensity* in the literature, reflecting one's ability to become committed

toward the organization upon organizational entry (Cohen, 2007; Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Pierce & Dunham, 1987).

Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982) defined commitment propensity as a combination of personal characteristics, experiences and cultural influences developed through socialization processes pre-organizational entry that allow an employee to develop a stable psychological attachment with an organization. It is believed that a high level of commitment propensity will positively affect commitment development upon organizational entry (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992). In other words, commitment propensity is a personal value or mindset, affected by past rearing and cultural socialization, which facilitates commitment development in future interactions (Angle & Lawson, 1993; Brown, 1996).

Normative commitment is considered a more general type of organizational commitment, based on moral judgment, which helps explain commitment development both pre- and post-organizational entry (e.g. Angle & Lawson, 1993; Cohen, 2007; Pierce & Dunham, 1987). Researchers have indicated that normative commitment has been shaped by personal characteristics (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & et al., 2002; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), past experiences (e.g. Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982) and cultural influences (e.g. Cohen, 2006; Marsh & Mannari, 1977; Wiener, 1982). Normative commitment can therefore be defined as a mindset, affected by individual differences, which acts as a base commitment form and functions as a moral compass to guide behavior.

However, it has been argued that organizational commitment cannot theoretically exist before organizational entry (Cohen, 2007; Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). This provides further support for the proposition that a normative commitment mindset constitutes both a commitment propensity before organizational entry and an actual form of commitment after organizational entry. Cohen (2007) has therefore suggested that normative commitment, as defined by Allen & Meyer (1990), be used as a commitment propensity measure (commitment propensity will be referred to in this study as *normative commitment propensity*). To investigate the development of normative commitment propensity and its validity as a predictor of commitment development post-organizational entry, this paper proposes the following conceptual framework (see figure 3.1).

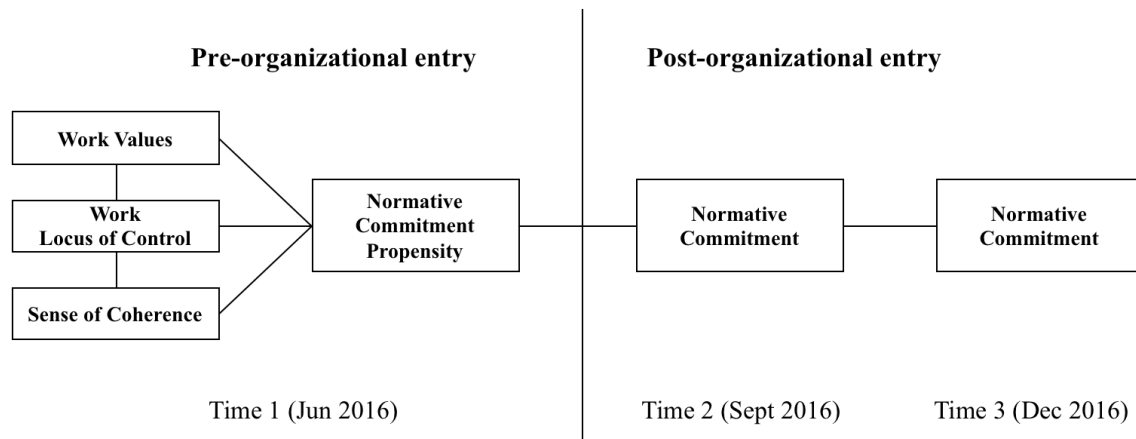


Figure 3-1 Longitudinal testing of normative commitment propensity and normative commitment over 3 waves

3.3.2 Work Values

Researchers have pointed out that work values are important indicators of affective reactions in the workplace, affecting job involvement and organizational commitment (e.g. Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Randall & Cote, 1991). Values are the cognitive representation of needs and goals, which help individuals perceive the world in a certain way, guide one's life choices and help react to environmental and situational cues in a meaningful way (Schwartz et al., 2000; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995).

The reason for seeking employment has been described as a value to satisfy certain instrumental needs (e.g. goal attainment, rewards and benefits) and socio-emotional needs (e.g. sense of belonging, recognition, identification and socialization). The expectation of fulfilling these values through employment is believed to be a source of commitment both prior and after organizational entry (Berings et al., 2004).

It has been suggested that some value-systems are more prone to commitment development than others (Furnham et al., 2005), which is in line with this study's notion that personal characteristics affect commitment propensity before organizational development (e.g. Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Besides personal needs, certain beliefs about employment, influenced by past experiences or cultural factors, can also be reflected in personal values and thus be a source for organizational commitment development. Cultural values (Hofstede, 1980) have been found to have an impact on commitment propensity development, highlighting individual differences resulting from cultural influences (e.g. Clugston, Howell & Dorfman, 2000; Randall, 1993). It has been recommended to compare commitment propensities in cross-cultural commitment studies as this better reflects the influence of culture on

organizational commitment development (Cohen, 2007; Sverke & Kuruvilla, 1995). Interestingly, cultural researchers have suggested that if researchers are to understand the way culture relates to social psychological phenomena, that specific relationships must be investigated using not all cultural dimensions available, but the most important cultural dimension influencing the examined relationship (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988). Individualism and collectivism are cultural dimensions often used in organizational research to identify the impact of individual differences and fit well with the suggested investigation of cultural influences on commitment propensity (Hui, Triandis, & Yee, 1991). Chen (2009) found in her study that normative commitment was the only commitment component affected by the individualism-collectivism cultural value. Based on the above, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 1a individualism has a negative relationship with normative commitment propensity.

Hypothesis 1b collectivism has a positive relationship with normative commitment propensity.

3.3.3 Locus of Control

Another predisposition with an internal and external orientation is locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control is related to the degree of control an individual perceives to have in relation to his or her actions, outcomes and surroundings. Individuals with an internal locus of control (internals) believe that outcomes depend strongly on their own efforts and that events are under their control. Individuals having an external locus of control (externals) believe that events and outcomes are beyond their control and depend more on chance, luck or divine intervention (Rotter, 1966; Spector, 1982). The relationship between locus of control and work attitudes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, has been regularly tested (e.g. Coleman, Irving, & Cooper, 1999; Furnham et al., 1994; Luthans et al., 1987). Research shows a strong relationship between internal locus of control and organizational commitment (e.g. Furnham et al., 1994; Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994; Luthans et al., 1987). However, research by Coleman et al. (1999) suggests that the locus of control – organizational commitment relationship depends on the type of commitment measured, referring to the specific base or mindset of commitment (for further details on mindsets of commitment, see Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment, 1997). In previous research where a high internal locus of control was found to significantly correlate with organizational commitment (e.g. Furnham et al., 1994; Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994; Luthans et al., 1987), organizational commitment was conceptualized and measured as a unidimensional model of commitment (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Coleman et al.'s research suggests that if commitment is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional

model of organizational commitment, locus of control correlates differently depending on the type of commitment mindset. Luthans et al. (1987) explain that people with a high internal locus of control are more likely to be affectively committed to an organization. This is justified by the fact that 1. internals have a higher sense of control over their environment which helps to maintain cognitive consistency, and 2. internals perceive to have more options than externals do (as they tend to search for information more actively), and having more choice relates to higher levels of commitment. Contrarily, an external locus of control was found to be strongly correlated to continuance commitment. Interestingly, normative commitment was not tested in their study, due to construct validity issues previously mentioned (Meyer et al., 2002). This study proposes that normative commitment mirrors a reflective mindset to oblige with social and organizational norms, indicating a degree of internal control over the environment (Chen & Wang, 2007). Based on the above, the following hypothesis is suggested.

Hypothesis 2 internal locus of control is negatively related to normative commitment propensity indicating that internals have a higher normative commitment propensity.

3.3.4 Sense of Coherence

SOC is a concept of *salutogenesis* developed by Antonovsky (1979) to explain the origins of health. Similar to Locus of Control, Sense of coherence (SOC) is a personal characteristic which reflects personal hardiness. Antonovsky's theory of *salutogenesis* assumes that people encounter various kinds of stress-producing experiences causing a state of tension and potentially causing harm to one's health. To be able to cope with life's strains and work-related stressors, people have access to various resistance resources. These resources represent a sense of being able to see life as *comprehensible, meaningful* and *manageable* (Antonovsky, 1979). These factors determining tension management have been termed by Antonovsky as General Resistance Resources (GRR). Examples of these resources are e.g. social support, ego strength, money and cultural stability. It is believed that a strong SOC develops when an individual has ample and frequent access to these resources throughout one's development (Strümpfer & Mlonzi, 2001). As SOC develops throughout one's life, SOC becomes an integral part of self and therefore is not a coping strategy in itself, but more a disposition based on previous experiences, cultural influences and upbringing (Antonovsky, 1984).

A high sense of coherence has been positively associated with a subjective state of health, active coping and resilience (Antonovsky, 1987; Johnson, 2004). People with a high sense of coherence are more naturally capable of dealing with the stressors they experience and therefore can be expected that they will try to deal with stressors they come across in their own way. As Antonovsky (1984, p.21) explains, people with a high SOC show a "*readiness and willingness to exploit the resources that they have at their*

potential disposal". People with a high sense of coherence prefer to be the master of their own pottery, generally have an active approach to their environment and a more internal orientation.

A low sense of coherence, on the other hand, has been associated with less active coping and resilience to external stressors and higher levels of stress (Antonovsky, 1987; Johnson, 2004). People with a low sense of coherence have a hard time to deal with the stressors they experience and therefore require external support. People with a low sense of coherence expect to be taken care of, generally have a passive attitude and a more external orientation. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 3 sense of coherence is negatively related to normative commitment propensity.

Post-organizational entry: Normative commitment as a moral compass to facilitate exchange and identification processes

In the previous sections, it was asserted that socialization processes during early life development (e.g. familial and cultural influences, past work experiences) help develop a mindset for commitment development in specific social situations such as organizational life. It has been posited that although actual 'organizational commitment' cannot exist theoretically before organizational entry, a normative commitment mindset does exist prior to organizational entry, which develops throughout one's life affected by both personal and situational factors. These factors influence the propensity someone can become committed. Researchers suggest that commitment propensity is an indicator of actual commitment development post-organizational entry. This provides rationale for a multi-faceted perspective to the development of commitment, specifically pre-organizational entry and post-organizational entry.

Besides commitment propensities, it is commonly understood that work experiences also affect subsequent forms of commitment (e.g. Meyer et al., 2002; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1982). The following will describe the process how normative commitment propensity develops into organizational normative commitment. After organizational entry, organizational socialization (e.g. on-boarding, training, leader-member exchange) processes have been found to facilitate both the social exchange and social identity process, which help the newcomer understand organizational life, identify with the organization and partake in economic and social exchanges (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). On the social exchange side, it has been posited (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1991; Wiener, 1982) that upfront investments are made by the organization to the employee (e.g. training, advanced benefits), which the employee feels the need to reciprocate in terms of work, effort and other organizational exchange commodities. Some researchers have

conceptualized normative commitment as a broad form of commitment that is embedded in both a feeling of moral obligation that conveys a conviction of loyalty and duty to the organization, and others as a reciprocation process based on balanced exchanges (e.g. Ko et al, 1997; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Wiener, 1982). This broad conceptualization of normative commitment functions as a moral compass that helps navigate intentions and behavior. Interestingly, it can be concluded from the above that both conceptualizations of normative commitment are present in the newcomer's mindset carried over from one's past development, which indicates that normative commitment forms a base or default commitment upon organizational entry, differing in its degree depending on the level of commitment propensity.

Hypothesis 4 normative commitment propensity pre-organizational entry is positively related to normative commitment post-organizational entry.

From the organizational identification perspective, the same organizational socialization processes facilitate organizational identification (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Organizational identification can be considered a form of social identification. According to social identity theory, organizational identification is the process by which employees shape their identity through organizational membership (see Ashforth and Mael, 1989 for more on organizational identification). Through the process of organizational socialization and organizational exchange, employees start to identify with the goals, values, norms and behaviors of the organization. This is especially important during the initial phases after organizational entry. Understanding these norms and behaviors governing a specific organization allows for an effective reciprocation within the exchange process and helps the organizational outsider become an organizational insider (Feldman, 1981). Wiener (1982) posits that employee-organizational value congruence affects subsequent forms of commitment development post-organization entry. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 5 normative commitment propensity will be higher in non-working students than in students who are working.

Hypothesis 6 over time the degree of normative commitment will decrease due to its transformation into other commitment forms.

3.4 General Method

3.4.1 Sample & Procedure

This study was undertaken in the period June 2016 – January 2017 under graduating master students at Hult International Business School in Dubai (UAE). To investigate commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry, a non-random purposive sampling technique was used. The sample was based on Master students in their final year of study who confirmed to have some kind of job arrangement after graduation.

Table 3-1 Demographic Characteristics (Wave 1, N = 231)

		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	159	68.8
	Female	72	31.2
Age	21 – 30	87	37.7
	31 – 40	83	35.9
	41 – 50	52	22.5
	51 – 60	9	3.9
Country of residence	Middle East	159	68.8
	North America	16	6.9
	South America	1	0.4
	Europe	32	13.9
	Asia	17	7.4
	Africa	6	2.6
Graduation	Aug / Sep 2016	147	63.6
	Aug / Sep 2017	67	29.0
	Other	17	7.4
Time with your current employer	1 year and less	29	20.6
	1 – 2 years	18	12.8
	2 – 3 years	13	9.2
	3 – 4 years	13	9.2
	4 – 5 years	7	5.0
	5 years or more	61	43.2
Employment Expectancy	Immediately	33	14.3
	Within 3 months	51	22.1
	Within 6 months	5	2.2
	Currently employed	142	61.4

Note: Wave 1. Total n = 231, working students n = 141, non-working n = 90

The study used a longitudinal design in which data was collected in three waves within a 3-month interval. At time 1 (June 2016), questionnaires were distributed to 350 selected students by email. Permission to send the questionnaires to the students was requested from the university. In addition to sending out an electronic survey, classroom announcements were made to remind students of the existence of the survey. Students were informed that participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. This was communicated both verbally and on the study consent page of the questionnaire. 231 usable completed questionnaires were received, which resulted in a 66% response rate.

At time 2 (September 2016) and time 3 (December 2016), data was collected electronically again. Questionnaires were emailed to the subjects 3 months apart from each other. Follow up questionnaires were only sent to subjects who filled in a questionnaire in the previous data collection round. Halfway through each survey period, a reminder email was sent out to subjects who had not responded yet to the follow-up survey request. An incentive was used to motivate the cohort panel to continue with the study till the final data collection in December 2016, as it is commonly known that longitudinal studies incur dropout rates over time (Goodman & Blum, 1996). This resulted in that at time 2 we received 105 usable completed questionnaires and at time 3 we received 80 usable completed questionnaires.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the demographics for the respondents including expected graduation time and job expectancy post-graduation. The age profile of the 231 respondents at Time 1. 37.7% had an age between 21 -30 years, 35.9% had an age between 31 – 40 years, 22.5% had an age between 41 – 50 years, and 3.9% had an age between 51 – 60 years. The mean age was 2.93 (SD = .869) which equates to an age of 29.3 years. The age composition is a good reflection of the demographics of the UAE indicating a fairly young demographic with a little over 73% of the respondents aged between 21 – 40.

68.8% of the respondents was male and 31.2% female reflecting a proportionately high number of male participants. The uneven split between male and female subjects can potentially bias the survey results revealing stronger male characteristics or tendencies in the answers found in the research results. The mean tenure of working students within the study group was 70.53 months (SD = 61.28), which is equal to 5.9 years. Months instead of years was used as a metric to measure tenure in the survey as Dubai is known as a transitional hub with over 80% of the population being non-UAE nationals (expats) and reflects shorter tenure periods common to the region. Therefore, it will be important to control for tenure in examining the hypothesized relationships.

3.4.2 Measures

The following measurement instruments were used within the questionnaire to investigate the impact of personal characteristics on organizational commitment propensity:

Work Values. To measure the cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism, Triandis & Gelfand (1998) 27-item scale (with four distinct subscales: Horizontal Individualism containing 5 items, Vertical Individualism containing 8 items, Horizontal Collectivism containing 8 items, Vertical Collectivism containing 6 items) was used. The Triandis and Gelfand scale uses a 9-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5=unsure/does not apply and 9 = strongly agree) to measure cultural work values and includes items such as *'Winning is everything'* and *'It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want'*. At Time 1 Cronbach α was 0.84.

Work Locus of Control. To measure locus of control even at pre-organizational entry, Spector's 16-item measure (1988) was preferred above Rotter's 29-item original locus of control scale. Spector's scale was specifically adapted to measure locus of control in work settings and is more applicable to organizational research. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure work locus of control and includes items such as *'promotions are usually a matter of good fortune'* and *'People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded'*. The scores for eight of the items should be reversed. A higher global score represents a more external locus of control and a lower global score represents a more internal locus of control. At Time 1 Cronbach α for WLOC was 0.81.

Sense of Coherence. To measure sense of coherence Antonovsky's (1987) 13-item Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ) was used. The OLQ measures sense of coherence as a total score, which is comprised of three dimensions: *comprehensibility*, *manageability* and *meaningfulness*. The scale uses a 7-point Likert-type scale to measure SOC and includes items such as *'do you have the feeling that you are being treated unfairly?'* and *'how often do you have feelings of which you're not sure if you can control them'*. In this study at Time 1 Cronbach α was 0.82.

Normative Commitment Propensity. To measure normative commitment propensity, Meyer & Allen's 8-item normative commitment scale (1991) was used. The original 8-item scale was used, minus items 4 and 5, to capture a more general form of commitment based on moral obligation. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure normative commitment propensity and includes items such as *'I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization'* and *'I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or*

her organization' (reversed). The scale at Time 1 demonstrated a low reliability. After deleting item 6, Cronbach α for normative commitment propensity was 0.49. The low Cronbach α is potentially the result of low internal consistency and for eliminating certain items on the scale.

Normative Commitment. To measure normative commitment, Meyer & Allen's 8-item normative commitment scale (1991) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure normative commitment propensity and includes items such as '*I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization*' and '*I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization*' (reversed). In this study, Cronbach α at Time 1 was 0.85, at Time 2 was 0.85 and at Time 3 was 0.90.

Table 3-2 Summary of Variables and their Operational Definition

Variable	Operational definition
Work Values	A predisposition reflecting the degree to which someone believes he or she is more individualistic or collectivistic.
Work Locus of Control	A predisposition reflecting the degree of control an individual perceives to have in relation to their actions, outcomes and surrounding.
Sense of Coherence	A predisposition reflecting the degree to which someone feels they are able to deal effectively with external stressors.
Normative Commitment Propensity	The degree to which an employee is susceptible to believe he or she is obliged to act on behalf of the organization.
Normative Commitment	The degree to which an employee believes he or she is obliged to act on behalf of the organization.

3.4.3 Construct and discriminant validity tests

3.4.3.1 Construct validity test Work Values

To test the construct validity of the WV measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. Triandis & Gelfand (1998) identified work values having 4 distinct subscales: Horizontal Individualism, Vertical Individualism, Horizontal Collectivism and Vertical Collectivism. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 27-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. This generated an 8-factor solution with some factors having lower than 3 items per factor. All items with a saturation lower than 0.50 were stepwise deleted to evaluate the factor structure. This resulted in a four-factor solution accounting for a total of 58.01% variance (see table 3.3). The KMO was 0.832 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 1583.21$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3-3 Factor Analysis Work Values

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
WV16	.834			
WV17	.800			
WV12	.734			
WV15	.608			
WV20	.593			
WV14	.543			
WV2		.817		
WV1		.769		
WV3		.697		
WV5		.650		
WV9		.592		
WV24			.791	
WV27			.754	
WV25			.664	
WV22			.599	
WV13				.779
WV4				.773
WV10				.734
WV6				.618

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. Only factor loadings >0.50 are shown.

The four-factor solution reflects the four components a priori perfectly and similar to Triandis & Gelfands' (1998) approach, the 4 highest factor-scoring items were used to reflect each dimension (see table 3.4). Cronbach α for HI, VI, HC and VC were 0.76, 0.76, 0.78, and 0.77 respectively.

Table 3-4 Four-Factor Solution for all Work Value Dimensions

Items	Factor loading
Horizontal Individualism	
1. I'd rather depend on myself than others. (WV2)	0.82
2. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others. (WV1)	0.77
3. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me. (WV3)	0.70
4. I often do my own thing. (WV5)	0.65
Vertical Individualism	
1. I enjoy working in situations involving competition. (WV13)	0.78
2. Competition is the law of nature. (WV4)	0.77
3. Without competition, it is not possible to have a good society. (WV10)	0.73
4. It is important that I do my job better than others. (WV6)	0.62
Horizontal Collectivism	
1. I feel good when I cooperate with others. (WV16)	0.83
2. The wellbeing of my co-workers is important me. (WV17)	0.80
3. If a coworker gets a prize, I would feel proud. (WV12)	0.73
4. To me, pleasure is spending time with others. (WV15)	0.61
Vertical Collectivism	
1. Parents and children must stay together as much as possible. (WV24)	0.79
2. Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required. (WV27)	0.75
3. I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group. (WV25)	0.66
4. It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want. (WV22)	0.60

In addition to the exploratory factor analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis in SPSS Amos was performed to confirm the derived factors for model fit. The confirmatory factor analysis confirmed a 4-factor model yielding an acceptable goodness-of-fit ($M1 \chi^2 (98) = 211.12$, $p < 0.01$; RMSEA = .07; CFI = .91; SRMR = 0.06) according to recommended values (e.g. Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). After reviewing the model for correlations between errors, modification indices and standardized residuals, a step-by-step approach was applied to improve the overall model fit, removing 1 item (WV13). These modifications resulted in an improved fit of the 4-factor model ($M2 \chi^2 (82) = 159.19$, $p < 0.01$; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .93; SRMR = 0.06). Latent factor significant correlations were $r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$ (HI – VI), $r = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$ (HI-HC), $r = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$ (HI-VC), $r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$ (HC – VC). HI + VI and HC + VC were strongly correlated, however not too strong to consider combining them to two single factors. Evaluating both models, reliability factors and potential for different cultural patterns to explain specific relationships in this study, it was decided to stick with Model 1 (see table 3.5) confirming the factor structure found in the exploratory factor analysis. Cronbach α for Model 1 was: 0.76 (HI), 0.76 (VI), 0.78 (HC), and 0.77 (VC).

Table 3-5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Work Values – Goodness-of-Fit

Model	χ^2	df	p	χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	items
M1 HI, VI, HC, VC	211.12	98	.00	2.15	.91	.90	.07	.06	16
M2 HI, VI, HC, VC	159.19	82	.00	1.94	.93	.92	.06	.06	15

Note: χ^2 = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = p-value, χ^2/df = chi-square index divided by degrees of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, GFI = goodness of fit index, RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual, items = scale items

3.4.3.2 Construct validity test Work Locus of Control

To test the construct validity of the WLOC measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. Spector (1988) indicates a high WLOC indicates an external locus of control and that a low WLOC indicates an internal locus of control. To test the construct validity, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 16-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. This provided a four-factor solution. Items 4 and 15 were deleted as they formed a small residual factor. The analysis was carried out again and item 7 was deleted due to cross-loading with another factor. The final solution was a two-factor solution with items (5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 16) indicating an *external locus of control* perfectly loading onto one-factor and items (1, 2, 3, 11 and 14) indicating an *internal locus of control* perfectly loading onto the other factor (see table 3.6). The KMO was .827 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 1007.65$, $p < 0.01$). The two-factor solution accounted for a total of 53.53% variance. All items had a factor loading of > 0.50 . Cronbach α was 0.71 for internal locus of control and 0.88 for external locus of control.

Table 3-6 Factor Analysis Work Locus of Control

	Component	
	1	2
LOC9	.832	
LOC6	.804	
LOC13	.792	
LOC16	.779	
LOC5	.776	
LOC8	.738	
LOC12	.586	
LOC3recode		.747
LOC14recode		.708
LOC2recode		.684
LOC11recode		.626
LOC1recode		.617

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 3 iterations. Only factor loadings >0.50 are shown.

In addition to the exploratory factor analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis in SPSS Amos was performed to confirm the derived factors for model fit. The confirmatory factor analysis also confirmed a 2-factor model, yielding a moderate goodness-of-fit ($M1 \chi^2 (103) = 268.70, p < 0.01$; RMSEA = .08; CFI = .86; SRMR = 0.07) according to recommended values (e.g. Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). After reviewing the model for correlations between errors, modification indices and standardized residuals, a step-by-step approach was applied to improve the overall model fit. These modifications resulted in an improved fit of the 2-factor model ($M2 \chi^2 (52) = 70.27, p < 0.05$; RMSEA = .04; CFI = .95; SRMR = 0.04). This model almost reflects the same model as found in the exploratory factor analysis, with the difference that item 11 was deleted instead of item 7, showing a better goodness-to-fit of the data. Also, a unidimensional model (M3) was tested, however this did not generate an acceptable fit with the data (see table 3.7). Cronbach α for Model 2 was 0.70 for internal locus of control and 0.88 for external locus of control.

Table 3-7 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Work Locus of Control – Goodness-of-Fit

Model	χ^2	df	p	χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	items
M1 Intern + Extern	268.70	103	.00	2.61	.86	.87	.08	.07	16
M2 Modified Intern + Extern	70.27	52	.05	1.35	.98	.95	.04	.04	12
M3 One-factor model	462.25	90	.00	5.14	.67	.75	.13	.13	16

Note: χ^2 = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = p-value, χ^2/df = chi-square index divided by degrees of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, GFI = goodness of fit index, RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual, items = scale items

3.4.3.3 Construct validity test Sense of Coherence

To test the construct validity of the SOC measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. Different factor structures have been found in the literature, though the most commonly found have been the one-factor structure (e.g. Callahan & Pincus, 1995; Flannery & Flannery, 1990) and three-factor structure (e.g. Bishop, 1993; Feldt & Rasku, 1998; Gana & Garnier, 2001). Antonovsky suggests that the multiple factor structure of SOC is composed of three related components: *comprehensibility* (items 2, 6, 8, 9 and 11), *manageability* (items 3, 5, 10 and 13) and *meaningfulness* (items 1, 4, 7 and 12). To examine the data, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 13-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. The data provided a 3-factor solution. After deleting items 6, 10, 11, and 12, which had a low factor scoring, a three-factor solution remained which accounted for a total of 61.10% variance. This did not fit the most commonly found 3-factor structure of SOC (see table 3.8).

Table 3-8 Factor Analysis Sense of Coherence

	Component		
	1	2	3
SOC8	.860		
SOC9	.723		
SOC13	.720		
SOC7recode		.804	
SOC4		.765	
SOC5		.609	
SOC2recode			.842
SOC3recode			.792
SOC1recode			.568

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations. Only factor loadings >0.50 are shown.

Secondly, internal reliability was tested for the identified 3-factor solution, and the proposed a priori one- and three-component model. The Cronbach α for the identified factor scale was 0.75 for factor 1, 0.57 for factor 2, and 0.63 for factor 3; the Cronbach α for the full scale was 0.82; and the Cronbach α for the three-component model was 0.65 (comprehensibility), 0.60 (manageability), and 0.56 (meaningfulness). Based on the above, the one-factor solution would seem the best choice to reflect the SOC construct in this study in terms of construct reliability. It should be noted that there is a possibility that SOC-13 in this study is a second-order construct with first order factors reflecting a generalized model of SOC for which a CFA is required to determine the final construct solution.

To confirm findings from the previous factor analysis and test for a second-order construct, a CFA in SPSS Amos was conducted. In line with Antonovsky's modeling (1987), a one-factor model, three-factor and second-order model were tested to see which model best fit the data. First, a confirmatory factor analysis tested a one-factor model, yielding a low to moderate goodness-of-fit ($M1 \chi^2(65) = 210.26, p < 0.01$; RMSEA = .10; CFI = .78; SRMR = 0.08) according to recommended values (e.g. Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). After reviewing the model for correlations between errors, modification indices and standardized residuals, a step-by-step approach was applied to improve the one-factor model fit, which resulted in an 11-item structure by deleting item 1 and item 4. These modifications resulted in an improved fit of the one-factor model (M2; see table 3.9). Second, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on a first-order inter related three-factor model. The three-factor model (M3) showed an overall better fit to the data than the one-factor model (see table 3.9). The modified three-factor model (M4; see table 3.9) showed an even better fit with the data resulting in a 10-item structure, deleting item 2, 4 and 5. Finally, a second-order factor model (M5; see table 3.9) was tested which indicated a moderate fit to the data similar to the original three-factor model. Further modification of the second-order factor model (M6) provided for a better fit to the data after deleting item 2, 6 and 8, which were all items on the comprehensibility subscale. Compared with the modified three-factor scale, M6 was slightly inferior in terms of overall model fit. Based on the CFA of SOC, the modified one-factor model, modified three-factor model and modified second-order model all resulted in acceptable models. In line with the principle of parsimony (Kline, 2005), the modified one-factor model (M2) was chosen as the best model to reflect the SOC data instead of the other models. Cronbach α for Model 2 was 0.81.

Table 3-9 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Sense of Coherence – Goodness-of-Fit

Model	χ^2	df	p	χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	items
M1 One-Factor SOC	210.26	65	.00	3.24	.78	.87	.10	.08	13
M2 Modified one-factor SOC	65.10	41	.01	1.59	.96	.95	.05	.05	11
M3 three-factor SOC	189.45	62	.00	3.05	.81	.89	.09	.08	13
M4 Modified three-factor SOC	59.24	32	.00	1.85	.94	.95	.06	.05	10
M5 Second-order SOC	193.81	64	.00	3.03	.81	.88	.09	.08	13
M6 Modified second-order SOC	66.92	33	.00	2.03	.92	.94	.07	.06	10

Note: χ^2 = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = p-value, χ^2/df = chi-square index divided by degrees of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, GFI = goodness of fit index, RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual, items = scale items

3.4.3.4 Construct validity test Normative Commitment Propensity

To test the construct validity of the NCP measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. A confirmatory factor analysis tested the data for model fit as the proposed NCP scale is based on a well-tested model. The CFA found that the one-factor solution minus item 6 best fit the data ($\chi^2 (5) = 4.67$, $p = 0.46$; RMSEA = .00; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = 0.03). It was therefore decided to use the five-item scale in this study. Cronbach α for the one-factor solution was 0.49, which indicates low to slightly moderate reliability.

3.4.3.5 Construct validity test Normative Commitment

To test the construct validity of the NC measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed a one-factor model, yielding an acceptable goodness-of-fit ($\chi^2 (9) = 26.95$, $p < 0.01$; RMSEA = .12; CFI = .94; SRMR = 0.05). Cronbach α for the one-factor solution was 0.85, which indicates high reliability.

All Cronbach α values (see table 3.10), except for normative commitment propensity, exceeded 0.70 reflecting a high internal reliability (Nunnally, 1978). Normative commitment propensity had a Cronbach α of 0.49 respectively which indicates a low to slightly moderate reliability. A post-hoc explanation of the low reliability is that the scale was used experimentally to measure normative commitment propensity and consequently saw the elimination of certain items from the original unidimensional scale. This affected the original scale's reliability and validity.

Table 3-10 Reliabilities scores of independent and dependent variables

Items	alpha coefficients
<u>Predisposition Variables</u>	
Work Values	0.84
- Horizontal Individualism (HI)	0.76
- Vertical Individualism (VI)	0.76
- Horizontal Collectivism (HC)	0.78
- Vertical Collectivism (VC)	0.77
Work Locus of Control	0.81
- External Locus (ExtLocus)	0.88
- Internal Locus (IntLocus)	0.70
Sense of Coherence	0.82
- SOC-11	0.81
<u>Commitment Variables</u>	
- Normative Commitment Propensity (NCP)	0.49
- Normative Commitment (NC)	0.85

3.4.4 Statistical Analysis

In this study, all statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS version 23.

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Descriptives

Table 3.11 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and alpha coefficients for all measurement items. Mean values and standard deviations provided insight into the distribution of the variables WV (specifically HI, VI, HC, VC), WLOC (specifically External Locus, Internal Locus), SOC, NCP and NC. The skewness and kurtosis scores provided further evidence that the results were approximately naturally distributed, except for HI and HC, which indicate a slight negative (but acceptable) skewness and high kurtosis on some items. High kurtosis may indicate that there is a lack of variation in distribution and that data clusters around certain answers. Log transformation and squared root transformation were carried out on the individual items not normally distributed within the HI and HC components. However, visual indications (histograms and plot charts) did not provide evidence for normal distribution after transformation. Above average skewness and kurtosis results of certain work values items is not uncommon in culturally diverse research samples, as selection-bias and differences in scale interpretation can affect results (Triandis, 1995). Moreover, the proportionately high number of male subjects in the research sample could have also affected the work value scores.

Table 3-11 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum		Maximum		Mean		Std. Deviation		Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
WV	231	40.00		224.00		176.11		23.63		-1.601	.160	7.069	.319
HI	231	4.00		36.00		26.83		6.02		-.984	.160	1.040	.319
VI	231	4.00		36.00		25.87		6.27		-.954	.160	1.149	.319
HC	231	4.00		36.00		29.53		4.93		-1.700	.160	5.727	.319
VC	231	4.00		36.00		27.81		6.18		-.839	.160	.424	.319
WLOC	231	17.00		79.00		43.28		10.72		.215	.160	.143	.319
Intern	231	5.00		22.00		11.30		3.78		.391	.160	-.307	.319
Extern	231	7.00		42.00		20.91		7.88		.533	.160	-.222	.319
SOC	231	28.00		84.00		58.02		10.73		-.020	.160	-.212	.319
SOC-11	231	23.00		70.00		47.79		9.50		-.023	.160	-.087	.319
NCP	229	8.00		28.00		17.77		3.13		-.170	.161	.330	.320
NCP-5	229	7.00		25.00		15.07		2.88		-.028	.161	.547	.320
NC	140	6.00		30.00		18.44		5.25		-.179	.205	-.229	.407

Note: WV = Work Values, HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, WLOC = Work Locus of Control, Extern = External Locus of Control, Intern = Internal Locus of Control, SOC = Sense of Coherence, NCP = Normative Commitment Propensity, NC = Normative Commitment

3.5.2 Intercorrelations among study variables

As a first step, a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis (see table 3.12 below) was conducted to examine the relationship between Work Values (WV), Work Locus of Control (WLOC) and Sense of Coherence (SOC), Normative Commitment Propensity (NCP) and Normative Commitment (NC).

Reviewing the relationship between the two individualism variables and NCP, the analysis shows no significant relationships, HI and NCP ($r = .08$, $p=0.24$) and VI and NCP ($r = .010$, $p=0.14$). As for collectivism and NCP, the analysis shows that NCP has a significantly positive relationship with VC ($r = .29$, $p<0.01$), but not with HC ($r = .08$, $p=0.22$). Investigating the relationship between locus of control and normative commitment propensity, the data shows that NCP has a significant negative relationship with internal locus of control ($r = -.16$, $p<0.05$) and a non-significant positive relationship with external locus of control ($r = .05$, $p=0.42$). A higher global score on LOC represents a more external locus of control and thus a positive correlation implies a stronger belief that one is less in control of their destiny or able to achieve specific outcomes based on one's own merit. As for SOC and NCP, NCP didn't have a significant relationship with SOC-11 ($r = .01$, $p=0.72$). Noteworthy, the data did show a significant negative relationship between LOC and SOC-11 ($r = -.47$, $p<0.01$), which can be explained by the fact that as one's Sense of Coherence increases, so does one's sense of personal control, indicating that one's ability to deal with external stressors coincides with one's sense of control. Previous studies consider both SOC and LOC to be *salutogenesis* constructs (such as hardiness and self-efficacy) and hence similar constructs show a moderate to strong correlation (e.g. Gropp et al., 2007; Strümpfer, 1995). In this study, the data indicates that both SOC-11 and Locus of Control are important factors related to NC. As for the relationship between NCP and NC, the correlation analysis shows a significant positive relationship between both variables ($r = .43$, $p<0.01$).

Table 3-12 Intercorrelations of control, independent and dependent variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
TIME 1													
1. Gender	1.31	0.46	1										
2. Age	2.93	0.87	-.15*	1									
3. HI	6.44	1.56	.14*	-.15*	1								
4. VI	6.24	1.63	-.17*	-.13	.40**	1							
5. HC	7.43	1.01	.03	.05	.13*	.19**	1						
6. VC	6.72	1.40	-.15*	.07	.20**	.29**	.45**	1					
7. LocusINT	2.31	0.69	-.02	-.08	.00	-.11	-.23**	-.22**	1				
8. LocusEXT	3.00	1.01	-.08	-.17*	.09	.11	-.15*	.09	.12	1			
9. SOC-11	4.40	0.84	-.08	.22**	-.14*	.01	.16*	-.05	-.24**	-.45**	1		
10. NCP-5	2.94	0.69	.04	-.12	.08	.10	.08	.29**	-.16*	.05	.05	1	
11. NC	3.07	0.90	.05	-.12	-.08	-.05	.01	.01	-.23**	-.03	-.18*	.43**	1

Note: n = 231. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, LocusEXT = External Locus of Control, LocusINT = Internal Locus of Control, SOC-11 = Sense of Coherence, NCP-5 = Normative Commitment Propensity, NC = Normative Commitment. Control variables: Age is coded as 1 for <20 years, 2 for 21 – 30 years, 3 for 31 – 40 years, 4 for 41 – 50 years, and 5 for 51 – 60 years. Region is coded as 1 = Africa, 2 = Asia, 3 = Europe, 4 = Middle-East, North America and 5 = North America.

3.5.3 Hypotheses testing

To further investigate the utility that predisposition variables have on *NCP* and consequently *NC*, a multiple regression analysis was performed for both variables (see table 3.13 and table 3.14 below). First, a multiple regression analysis was performed on *NCP*, which generated 4 different models. Model 2, 3 and 4 provided for a significant regression equation. However, Model 3 and 4 did not show any new variables affecting *NCP* other than the variables found in Model 2. In Model 2 Age and VC were the only variables affecting *NCP* ($F=4.086$, $p<0.01$) and explained 11% of the total variance. Hypothesis 1a, 2 and 3 are therefore not supported. As *NCP* did not have a significant positive relationship with *HC*, hypothesis 1b is only partially supported. The model was also tested for multicollinearity and all the variables were found to be within acceptable ranges.

Table 3-13 Results multiple regression analysis with NCP-5 as dependent variable

	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	Model 3 β	Model 4 β
Gender	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.07
Age	-0.12	-0.13*	-0.14*	-0.15*
Region	-0.08	-0.06	-0.07	-0.08
HI		-0.02	0.01	0.00
VI		0.01	-0.00	-0.01
HC		-0.05	-0.07	-0.08
VC		0.34**	0.32**	0.33**
LocusEXT			0.01	0.04
LocusINT			-0.12	-0.10
SOC-11				0.08
R^2	0.02	0.11	0.13	0.13
ΔR^2	0.01	0.09	0.09	0.09
R^2 change	0.02	0.09	0.01	0.00
F	1.591	4.086**	3.530**	3.278**

Note: $n = 231$. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, LocusEXT = External Locus of Control, LocusINT = Internal Locus of Control, SOC-11 = Sense of Coherence.

Second, a multiple regression analysis was performed on *NC*, which generated 5 different models. Model 5 was the final model including all the indicated variables, which showed an overall significant regression equation ($F = 5.607$, $p = <0.01$). Regressing all personal characteristics with *NC* (see table 3.14), the model showed that besides control variables Age and Region, SOC-11 and *NCP* predicted *NC*. From these results, *NCP* in both

conditions (non-working and working students) show a positive relationship with NC. This suggests that after organizational entry the development of NC derives partially from one's propensity to become normatively committed, which validates the importance of personal characteristics as factors affecting propensity and subsequently normative commitment post-organizational entry. Hypothesis 4 is therefore supported. Model 5 explained 33% of the total variance. The model was also tested for multicollinearity and all the variables were found to be within acceptable ranges.

Table 3-14 Results multiple regression analysis with Normative Commitment as dependent variable

	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	Model 3 β	Model 4 β	Model 5 β
Gender	0.03	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.07
Age	-0.13	-0.17	-0.20*	-0.25**	-0.21**
Region	-0.15	-0.17	-0.18*	-0.23**	-0.20*
HI		-0.16	-0.12	-0.10	-0.09
VI		-0.05	-0.06	-0.07	-0.03
HC		-0.04	-0.07	-0.10	-0.07
VC		0.14	0.09	0.12	-0.04
ExtLocus			0.06	0.16	0.16
IntLocus			-0.27**	-0.20*	-0.16
SOC-11				0.25*	0.26**
NCP					0.42**
R ²	0.04	0.07	0.13	0.17	0.33
ΔR^2	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.10	0.27
R ² change	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.16
F	1.698	1.396	2.100*	2.593**	5.607**

Note: n = 140. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, LocusEXT = External Locus of Control, LocusINT = Internal Locus of Control, SOC-11 = Sense of Coherence.

To test the difference in normative commitment propensity between non-working and working students, an independent samples t-test was performed (see table 3.15). The test showed that there was no significant difference between NCP in non-working (M = 2.98, SD, 0.46) and working students (M = 2.94, SD = 0.56); t (227) = .62, p=0.53. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is rejected.

Table 3-15 Independent T-Test NCP between non-working and working students

Students		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
NCP-5	Non-working	90	2.99	0.46	.049
	Working	141	2.94	0.56	.047

Note: NCP-5 = Normative Commitment Propensity

To test the mean difference of NC over time, a dependent samples t-test was performed. First, NC at Time 1 ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.96$) NC at Time 2 ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 0.94$) were compared. Both conditions had a correlation of $r = .73$, $p < 0.01$ indicating the suitability of performing a dependent sample t-test. The null hypothesis was not rejected $t(84) = -1.13$, $p = .026$ so there was no significant difference in NC mean values between Time 1 and Time 2. Second, NC at Time 1 ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.96$) NC at Time 3 ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 1.00$) were compared. Both conditions had a correlation of $r = .79$, $p < 0.01$ indicating the suitability of performing a dependent sample t-test. The null hypothesis was not rejected $t(43) = 0.67$, $p = .051$, so there was no significant difference in NC mean values between Time 1 and Time 3. Finally, NC at Time 2 ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.90$) NC at Time 3 ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.93$) were compared. Both conditions had a correlation of $r = .69$, $p < 0.01$ indicating the suitability of performing a dependent sample t-test. The null hypothesis was not rejected $t(59) = 1.88$, $p = 0.07$, so there was no significant difference in NC mean values between Time 2 and Time 3. The dependent sample t-test does not provide sufficient evidence that the degree of NC declines over time, hence hypothesis 6 is not supported.

Table 3-16 Mean and Std. Deviation of Normative Commitment at Time 1, 2, and 3

Time	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1	2.99	0.98	80
2	3.07	0.90	99
3	2.93	0.92	76

3.6 Discussion

The purpose of this research study was to re-examine the importance of the normative commitment construct within the organizational commitment literature by addressing key issues related to its conceptualization and measurement. This study reconceptualized normative commitment as a default commitment mindset that develops during one's early upbringing, influenced by one's cultural background and past experiences. This was operationalized as a normative commitment mindset which exists both before and after organizational entry and was tested using a longitudinal design by examining how personal characteristics affect commitment development pre-organizational entry forming a normative commitment propensity, and later how normative commitment propensity affects normative commitment development post-organizational entry.

This study tested a model examining the effects of Work Values (IND-COL), Work Locus of Control (WLOC), Sense of Coherence (SOC) on Normative Commitment Propensity (NCP). Subsequently, the relationship between Normative Commitment Propensity and Normative Commitment (NC) was also tested to evaluate the notion that pre-organizational experiences and personal dispositions help set the basis for commitment development post-organizational entry. The following will be a discussion of the results attained in this longitudinal study divided into three parts: 1. The effects of predisposition factors on Normative Commitment Propensity, 2. The relationship between Normative Commitment Propensity and Normative Commitment, and 3. The further development of Normative Commitment post-organizational entry.

3.6.1 The effects of predisposition factors on Normative Commitment Propensity

Testing the relationship between predisposition factors and NCP, the regression analysis showed VC to have a significant relationship with NCP. This indicates that one's willingness to sacrifice one's own needs for the group and one's abidance to group authority is a strong indicator of NCP. Identifying such personal attribution patterns within new hires, as part of an employee selection criteria or as an outcome from a psychometric assessment, could increase the chance of finding individuals with higher psychological attachment potential. Interestingly, AGE had an inversed relationship with NCP providing evidence that NCP is more prone to development in earlier years.

3.6.2 The relationship between Normative Commitment and Personal Characteristics

Regressing NC with personal indicators, NCP and SOC were found to affect NC. NCP had the strongest effect on the variance of NC, indicating a positive relationship between commitment propensity and post-organizational commitment. However, the results also indicate that there is a moderately strong correlation between both variables bringing

discriminant validity into question. The model was tested for multicollinearity and all the variables were found to be within acceptable ranges. Furthermore, examination of the factors affecting NCP and NC indicates that the two constructs are influenced by different variables, providing some evidence that NCP and NC are distinct from each other.

It seems that the role of personal characteristics plays an important part in the development of an organizational commitment mindset both prior to and after organizational entry. Concretely, a sense of loyalty, as indicated by the relationship between NCP with VC, together with a mental model of personal hardiness are core to developing organizational attachment cognitions. Early development of such personal characteristics could prove beneficial to organizational life and work-related performance in today's changing nature of work.

3.6.3 The further development of Normative Commitment post-organizational entry.

NC was measured at Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 and was found to change ambivalently, especially from Time 2 to Time 3. This finding is in line with previous research findings, indicating that commitment levels change considerably during the first months after organizational entry (Vandenberg & Self, 1993). In line with this paper's theory, the finding at Time 3 could be an indication that as normative commitment transforms into other commitment forms, it decreases in strength over time (though no further observations were made after Time 3, it's hard to say if this trend continues). Equally, this means that normative commitment can increase in strength when activated due to changing circumstances or heightened self-awareness. Another explanation for the ambivalent behavior of NC could be explained by the different meanings that employees give toward commitment throughout one's professional career (Vandenberg & Self, 1993). Normative commitment, and its reflective capacity, not only functions as a moral compass to guide organizational behavior throughout one's career, but also functions as an evolving cognitive base from which new experiences and critical organizational incidents can be interpreted and translated into appropriate psychological and behavioral responses.

3.7 Implications to Theory

These research findings have major implications for organizational behavior and human resource management scholarship. First, this paper helps to re-establish the importance of the normative commitment construct within the organizational commitment literature. Repurposing normative commitment as a base commitment mindset provides

a new perspective to past research findings and helps guide future organizational commitment research. Second, this paper advances existing knowledge of commitment propensity and its relationship with actual organizational commitment. Third, it provides an integrated perspective to the development of commitment in the workplace. Finally, it advances the conceptualization of organizational commitment in modern times.

3.8 Managerial Implications

This study has helped to re-establish the role and value of normative commitment within the organizational commitment literature by positioning it as a default commitment mindset which develops prior to and during organizational life. This new conceptualization of normative commitment together with supporting empirical evidence from this study, provides a multitude of opportunities for practitioners to apply within organizations to improve talent management practices and organizational performance. Not only do these findings help broaden or enhance existing organizational attachment strategies, but also provide opportunities of application to other organizational realms important to business performance and survival such as employee well-being, change management and moral / ethical behaviors. A couple of these examples are discussed below.

Organizational attachment strategies. Existing organizational commitment strategies have focused on improving organizational attachment through the process of balanced reciprocations of both economic (pay, benefits) and socio-emotional organizational commodities (support, trust, recognition). Acknowledging that normative commitment is both a commitment mindset that develops before and after organizational entry, management focusing on attracting candidates with high or low commitment enabling predispositions could develop (psychometric) assessments to assess new recruits for job, team or organizational fit. Compared to existing personality or behavioral assessments, commitment propensity profiles could allow for more inclusive and holistic appraisals of new hires which include non-organizational attributes and experiences as evaluation points. In addition, commitment profiles of different organizational commitment components (together with other employee attitudes and behaviors) can be used as an on-going organizational census to assess changing attitudes toward organizational life and retention. Due to the reflective nature of normative commitment, the level of normative commitment is predicted to change continuously during organizational life, which besides predicting retention could also prove to be indicative of other organizational outcomes if assessed with different employee attitudes and behaviors.

Moral / ethical organizational behaviors. The reflective nature of normative commitment is not only prone to changes happening over time. As this research has shown, sudden or abrupt changes can alter states of commitment such as the changing of job position or the experiencing of sudden organizational changes. As a normative commitment mindset has 'moral judgment' core to its evaluation of external stimuli and experiences, it is plausible to believe that moral or ethical behaviors can be switched on or off. Interestingly, the behavioral economics literature has tested such assertions and found, using experimental designs, that moral or ethical behaviors can be temporarily activated through environmental cues (lighting, perceived surveillance) and social cues (social norms, behaviors of similar others) or by triggering a heightened sense of self, switching on one's moral compass through the recital of religious scripts, oath pledges or the reading and signing of honor codes (e.g. Shu et al., 2011). Management interested in applying moral salience activation, during times when dishonest behavior (cheating, stealing, false declarations) is prone to happen, could implement operational mechanisms or create communication approaches that help switch on a moral self-awareness or subconsciously nudge employees through subtle environmental cues. To test the effectiveness of such behavioral interventions, it is suggested to apply an experimental design to compare results between various conditions. For example, researchers Shu et al. (2012) found that by placing the signature box at the top of a tax form to prompt complete and accurate information provisioning, people reported more accurate information than when prompted to sign at the end.

Change management. Another application of a normative commitment mindset outside the realm of commitment is in change management. The activation of a normative commitment mindset during change situations could facilitate change management initiatives by enhancing one's ability to adjust to change. This can be achieved in two ways. The first way normative commitment facilitates change management is by creating a belief that adapting to the new situation is the 'right' or 'socially beneficial' thing to do. Enhanced normative beliefs or sensitivity to normative influences could strengthen the impact of social (group) norms on individual behaviors helping to overcome limiting beliefs and negative emotions related to change situations. One way this could be achieved prior to the change situation is by promoting team work and interdepartmental collaboration as a way to strengthen internal ties and group identity. The second way normative commitment facilitates change management is through its cognitive nature. Normative commitment facilitates logical and reason-based argumentation to comprehend why change is beneficial to self and the organization. Though change situations in organizations have been found to foster strong negative emotions such as fear and uncertainty, being transparent and clear about the intent and envisioned outcomes of the change initiatives and engaging employees within the change activities could help to facilitate more positive cognitions concerning change and its impact.

3.9 Limitations & Future Research

It should be acknowledged that there are several limitations in this research study. First, all the data was collected through a single source using self-reports which could have led to common method bias. Particularly, when filling in the Normative Commitment Propensity Scale and the Normative Commitment Scale, common method bias could have affected the research results as both scales are measuring a similar type of construct with some differences in how the questions have been framed. These differences between both scales reflect general normative beliefs versus normative beliefs relating to the organization. Secondly, the normative commitment scale as proposed by Cohen (2007) had a moderately low construct validity ($\alpha = 0.49$). Future research could consider replicating this study by using a different scale for normative commitment propensity to test the propositions from this research. Third, the reconceptualization of normative commitment in this study as a base commitment form could have biased the interpretation of the research results. More research is needed to further investigate this definition of commitment. Lastly, the study was carried out as a longitudinal study which helps better infer causality, though a longer study should be conducted using a similar research approach to further infer causality amongst the study variables or an (quasi) experimental design should be used.

3.10 Conclusion

Recent studies have shown that due to the changing nature of work existing conceptualizations of behavioral constructs need to be re-examined to better understand underlying mechanisms governing the employee-organization relationship. The present study re-examined the value of normative commitment by proposing it as a default commitment mindset that develops pre-organizational entry and becomes a base commitment mindset post-organizational entry. First, this study tested the proposition that personal variables predispose individuals to become normatively committed pre-organizational entry. Secondly, this study investigated the development of normative commitment in a longitudinal manner and found that normative commitment develops ambiguously. The study findings on normative commitment development post-organizational entry suggest that levels of normative commitment decline over time to give way to other commitment forms and increase when switched on to deal with changing circumstances. The current conceptualization of the normative commitment construct offers new opportunities and directions for research testing and organizational application.

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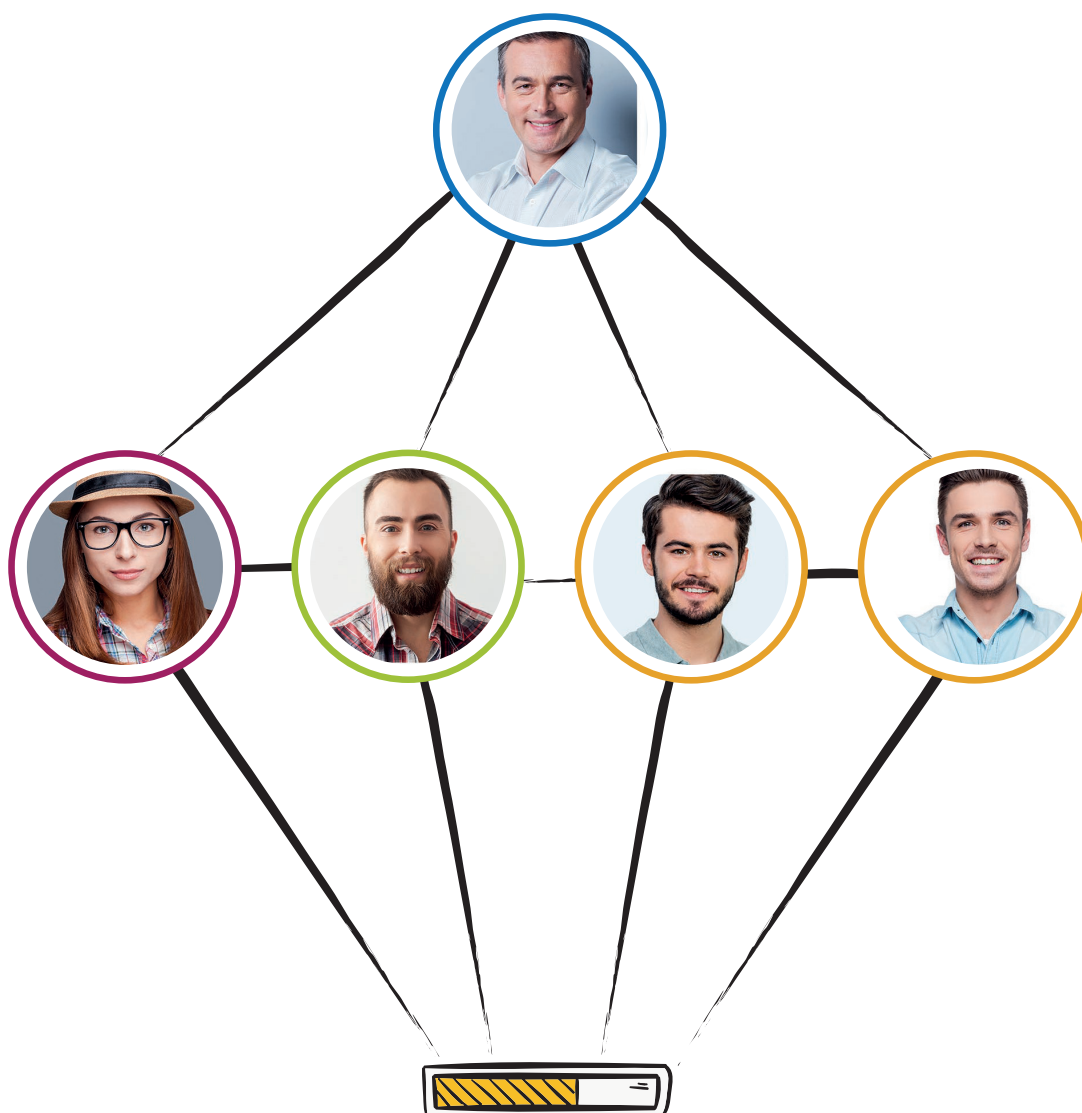
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Chapter 4

The Effects of Leader-Member Exchange and Organizational Identification on Work Attitudes and Behavior

This chapter is submitted for publication as:
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4.1 Abstract

Recent studies have shown that due to the changing nature of work existing conceptualizations of behavioral constructs need to be re-examined to better understand underlying mechanisms governing the psychological – performance link. This study tested a model examining the effects of leader-member exchange and organizational identification on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship performance. Study findings suggest that both leader-member exchange and organizational identification have unique effects on the development of work attitudes and behaviors. In addition, evidence was found for a new conceptualization of organizational commitment to explain how exchange-based and identification processes affect work behaviors. Conclusions and implications of the results for both academics and practitioners are discussed.

4.2 Introduction

In today's fast-moving and highly competitive business environment organizations are looking for new ways to implement and utilize organizational resources strategically to enhance organizational value and sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Talent Management has therefore become a key focus area for business leaders to boost organizational effectiveness and ensure its competitiveness in the marketplace (De Long & Davenport, 2003; Devi, 2009; Schramm, 2006). Due to the changing nature of work, as a consequence of globalization and technological influences, the definition of a job in the traditional sense is steadily 'dying out' (Organ, 1997a) and existing approaches to employee engagement and retention are losing ground. Moreover, a sense of organizational loyalty from both the employee's side as well as the employer's side is rapidly disappearing (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In other words, organizational constructs that have been pivotal in understanding and investigating the psychological-performance link in past decades require re-examination to remain relevant in explaining employee – organization interaction in today's nature of work. The leadership challenge for organizations in 21st century business will be how to create a committed and productive workforce in a fast-changing environment. To answer this question, this research aims to investigate the impact of exchange-based and identification-based processes on psychological drivers of attachment and productivity.

In past years, researchers have dedicated much attention to the development of positive work attitudes through work experiences based on social exchange and social identity processes. Social exchange processes are exemplified by various concepts in the organizational behavioral literature such as Perceived Organizational Support, Leader-Member Exchange and Psychological Contract. Organizational Commitment, more than other general work-related attitudes, has been considered the most impacted work attitude by influences of exchange processes in the workplace. Recently, organizational scholars have also considered the effect social identity processes (particularly the construct used in organizational studies called organizational identification) have on employee psychological attachment within the employee-organizational relationship.

Organizational Commitment research and Organizational Identification research have developed, to a large extent, independently from each other. Both constructs have provided for interesting theory development and practical relevance to understanding psychological linkages within organizational life. It is not until recent efforts that scholars have attempted to combine both schools of thought to better understand underlying mechanisms potentially governing the employer – organizational relationship. To test the combined impact of social exchange and social identity processes on the development of commitment, this research will test a model examining the effects of Leader-

Member Exchange (LMX) and Organizational Identification (OI) on the development of commitment in the workplace and its effects on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). OCB has been found to contribute to organizational efficiency and effectiveness through its positive impact on innovation, resource transformation and adaptability in fast-changing and complex environments (Organ, 1988; Organ et al., 2006).

The present research contributes to the current literature in three ways. First, this study aims to test both LMX and Organization Identification to examine the combined effects on Organizational Citizenship Behavior. To date, limited research has focused on the combined effects of social exchange and social identity processes on work-related outcomes. This research expands prior commitment research by examining both constructs in one study. Second, this research makes an important contribution to the existing commitment literature by testing a reconceptualized model of organizational commitment. Last, by investigating the leader-subordinate relationship in relation to performance, this research aims to contribute to both the leadership and organizational behavior literature by exploring possible psychological links that explain leadership effectiveness. Figure 4.1 presents the theoretical framework for this study. In the following part of this paper the theoretical background will be provided for the proposed model.

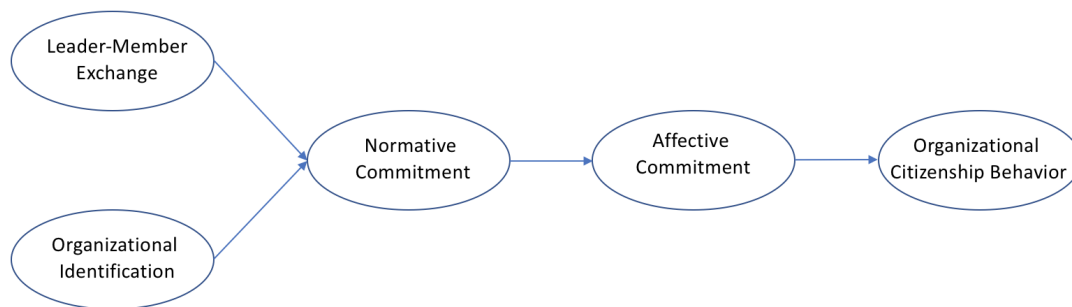


Figure 4-1 Proposed model

4.3 Constructs

4.3.1 Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) reflects the different types of supervisor-subordinate relationships that evolve based on the degree of reciprocal exchanges within this dyad relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX is based on the tenants of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and role theory (e.g. Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Kahn et al., 1964).

Positive economic and social exchanges between supervisors and subordinates enhance mutual obligations to reciprocate each other's efforts beyond basic contractual requirements (Wayne & Green, 1993), characterized by a high degree of mutual respect, trust and support (Loi, Chan, & Lam, 2014). Graen (2003) found that when subordinates receive favorable treatment, subordinates feel a need to reciprocate with higher commitment and increased effort. LMX has been linked to various job outcomes such as organizational commitment (e.g. DeConinck, 2011; Erdogan & Liden, 2002; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Joo, 2010), turnover intentions (e.g. Gerstner & Day, 1997; Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2009) and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Gerstner & Day, 1997; Wayne & Green, 1993).

The leader-member dyad relationship spans a continuum reflecting either a high-quality LMX or a low-quality LMX relationship (e.g. Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Sparrowe & Liden, 2005). The quality of the relationship depends on the exchange of effort, resources, support and trust (e.g., Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997). High-quality LMX relationships promote the social and psychological context of the organization positively affecting behavioral and performance outcomes (Organ, 1998). In high-quality LMX relationships, supervisors provide subordinates with salient organizational resources and privileges (e.g. rewards, training, support and responsibility) to increase their effort and commitment toward achieving organizational goals (Graen & Scandura, 1987). However, in low-quality LMX relationships, employee performance is often found to be limited to contractual obligations (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Employees limit their functioning to meet performance targets to receive equitable benefits. Employees in high-quality LMX relationships are therefore often found to receive more challenging job assignments, work-relevant information and other privileges than employees in low-quality LMX relationships (Hackett & Lapierre, 2004).

4.3.2 Organizational Identification

Organizational Identification is a form of social identification grounded in social identity theory. Social identity is considered the classification of self and others into various social categorizations such as organizational membership, religious associations and gender (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Social categorization is defined by prototypical characteristics derived from members of a social group by which an individual identifies with and systematically categorizes other members (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Ashforth & Mael (1989) indicate that the process of categorization creates a perception of belongingness to a category of people, which actually fosters social identification and therefore is often defined as an individual's sense of *oneness* with and *belongingness* to a social group or organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Organizational identification helps provide an understanding of how an individual develops his or her personal identity (over time) and how social identity is enacted and strengthened within organizations (See Edwards, 2005 for a thorough review of the development and conceptualization of identification). Organizational identification is believed to determine an individual's cognitive attachment to the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Rousseau, 1998), which is reinforced through either positive or negative emotions (e.g. Albert, Ashforth, Gioia, Godfrey, Reger, & Whetten, 1998; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Kessler & Hollbach, 2005). Various psychological reasons have been identified why individuals integrate group identities into their own self-concept, such as the enhancement of self-esteem (Oaker & Brown, 1986), the reduction of uncertainty especially in newcomer situations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Abrams, 1993), a fulfilment of belongingness needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and a way to understand people, situations and environments (Tajfel, 1978).

The fulfilments of cognitive and affective motives through organizational identification influence employee perceptions, attitudes and behaviors and have been found to increase the willingness to dedicate effort toward the organization (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999). Organizational identification has been found to be positively associated with various work-related behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Blader & Tyler, 2009), monetary donations (e.g. Mael & Ashforth, 1992), commitment (e.g. Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001) collective actions (e.g. Blader, 2007b), and in-group favoritism (e.g. Brewer, 1979; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997).

4.3.3 Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is one of the most studied concepts within the organizational behavioral literature. For more than 50 years researchers have focused on understanding what organizational commitment is, which factors stimulate commitment in the workplace and how it affects job outcomes (for a review of the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organizational commitment see Meyer et al.'s meta-analysis, 2002). Organizational commitment has been conceptualized as a unidimensional construct (e.g. Bandura, 1977; Becker, 1960; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) and a multi-dimensional construct (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986) and has been defined in various ways (see Meyer and Herscovitch's 2001 paper for a comprehensive overview of the various definitions organizational commitment has had). O'Reilly & Chatman (1986, p.492) indicate that *"although the term commitment is broadly used to refer to antecedents and consequences as well as the process of becoming attached and the state of attachment itself, it is the psychological attachment that seems to be the construct of common interest amongst the various definitions of commitment"*. For this reason, organizational commitment is often defined as the psychological attachment to and involvement in an

organization (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Researchers have also identified different forms or bases of organizational commitment (e.g. Becker, 1960; Meyer & Allen, 1990; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Wiener, 1982). These bases are often referred to as mindsets of commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). There are three different types of organizational commitment mindsets. Affective commitment (AC) is defined as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in an organization and encompasses a desire or want to be part of an organization. This is characterized by the statement '*I **want** to work for this organization*'. Continuance commitment (CC) involves the economic and socio-emotional costs perceived with leaving the company or the lack of alternatives to find another job. This is characterized by the statement '*I **need** to work for this organization*'. Normative commitment encompasses a sense of moral obligation to remain in an organization. This is characterized by the statement '*I **should** or **ought** to work for this organization*'. Organizational commitment has been connected to various work-related outcomes such as employee turnover and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (e.g. Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1980; Meyer et al, 2002). For the purpose of this research study, organizational commitment will be conceptualized as a unidimensional construct and only the affective commitment construct and the normative commitment construct will be tested.

4.3.4 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational Citizenship Behavior is a well-researched construct in the organizational behavior literature (e.g. Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Hackett et al., 2003; LePine et al., 2002; Organ, 1997a; Organ et al., 2006; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 2009). Organ (1988) defined Organizational Citizenship Behavior as discretionary behaviors not formally recognized by the organization's performance management system and which in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization. The term OCB was first coined by Organ and colleagues (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, et al., 1983) and originally measured using a 2-factor scale consisting of altruism and general compliance. In later conceptualizations Organ (1988) broadened its conceptualization to include 5 dimensions, namely Altruism, Civic Virtue, Sportsmanship, Conscientiousness, and Courtesy. Since its initial conceptualization, other researchers have conceptualized similar concepts based on Organ's original work that have included constructs such as pro-social behaviors (e.g. Brief & Motowidlo, 1986), contextual performance (e.g. Borman & Motowidlo, 1993), and extra-role behavior (e.g. Van Dyne et al., 1995). Factors that contribute to the development of OCB are dispositional traits, employee attitudes, perceptions of fairness, leadership behaviors and job characteristics (e.g. Borman et al., 2001; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Organ et al., 2006; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 1997). Thus, OCB seems to be highly dependent on both personal and environmental characteristics implying a strong contextual dependency. Additionally,

the dimensionality of OCB has been found to change based on its application in non-Western cultural settings (e.g. Farh et al., 1997; Lam et al., 1999) to which Podsakoff et al. (2000, p.556) cautions that '*cultural context may affect the forms of citizenship behavior observed in organizations (e.g. factor structure)*'.

Due to the changing nature of work as a consequence of globalization and technological influences, the definition of a job in a more traditional sense is steadily changing. Organ (1997a) suggested that the clearly defined job with explicit and formal roles and responsibilities is steadily 'dying out'. This, in turn, has consequences for how organizations continue to create value and the role human resources play in the value creation process as well as how OCB should be conceptualized to reflect what is considered discretionary behavior and the value discretionary behaviors have in today's work. Not surprisingly, in a meta-analysis conducted by Podsakoff et al. (2009) it was established that over 65% of all articles on the topic of OCB were published in the 21st century alone, signifying the potential role that OCB plays in explaining the function of efficiency and effectiveness in the changing nature of work. In lights of these changes, Organ and other researchers have suggested that OCB affects contextual performance, which reflects the conditions that maintain or enhance the social and psychological context that supports task performance and the general operations of the company (Hoffman et al, 2007; LePine, 2002; Organ 1997). This definition of OCB provides virtue to a possible increasing importance of personality traits, values and attitudes in promoting effective performance in today's nature of work (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Organ et al., 2006). To measure OCB, Organ and colleagues' (1983) original OCB measurement scale, consisting of two factors *altruism* and *compliance*, will be employed in the study.

4.3.5 Leader-Member Exchange and Organizational Commitment

LMX research has mainly focused on the leader-follower relationship investigating the effects of different types of vertical dyadic relationships on related outcomes. However, supervisors are often perceived by employees as representative of the organization carrying prototypical characteristics of the organization reflecting organizational preferred behaviors, goals and values (Hogg & Van Knippenberg, 2003; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The effects of high- or low-quality LMX relationships affect not only how employees interact with their supervisor, but also affect general perceptions and attitudes toward the organization. In recent years, LMX research has also explored the effects that high-quality leader-follower relationships have on more general work-related attitudes and behaviors such as organizational commitment and OCB (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Research has found that there is a positive relationship between LMX and organizational commitment (e.g. Coglisier et al., 2009; Erdogan & Liden, 2002; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997), indicating that organizational commitment partially

or fully mediates the relationship between LMX and work-related behaviors. Some studies have found a direct relationship between LMX and work-related behaviors such as turnover intentions when omitting organizational commitment (e.g. Harris, Harris, & Brouer, 2009). However, Gerstner & Day (1997) discovered in their meta-analysis low correlations between LMX and turnover intentions (-0.31) and between LMX and actual turnover (-0.04) presenting a stronger case that LMX affects work-related behaviors through work attitudes such as organizational commitment. Based on these research findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1 lmx has a positive influence on normative commitment.

Wiener (1982) described organizational commitment as a function of situational-organizational factors and personal dispositions, representing internalized normative pressures to reciprocate received support or to remain in the organization. These normative pressures can be exerted on an individual both prior to and after organizational entry. This form of commitment was later referred to as normative commitment in the organizational commitment literature. Meyer et al. (2002) in their meta-analysis examined which factors lead to affective commitment. Personal characteristics and work experiences were found to be positively related to affective commitment. Though not accounted for in their meta-analysis, personal characteristics also take the form of norms and values. Cohen (2006) found a strong relationship between personal cultural values and organizational commitment. Mowday et al. (1982) also attest to personal values and prior work experiences influencing propensity to becoming committed to the organization. Wiener (1982) indicated that employees develop other forms of commitment as value-congruence grows between employee and organization. It can therefore be theorized that normative commitment, based on personal characteristics such as values and norms, precedes affective commitment development. Another interesting finding from Meyer et al. (2002) meta-analysis is that normative commitment and affective commitment are highly correlated. Various researchers have therefore suggested that future organizational commitment research focus only on the affective commitment construct when examining psychological attachment (e.g. Brown, 1996; Buchanan, 1974; Mowday et al., 1982). However, it has also been suggested that normative commitment plays an important role as a predisposition to actually becoming committed to an organization (Angle & Lawson, 1993; Cohen, 2007). Scant research has investigated the role of normative commitment as a propensity to actual organizational commitment development. Therefore, in this study, normative commitment is considered to be a default or base commitment mindset hypothesized to mediate the relationship between LMX and affective commitment:

Hypothesis 2 normative commitment mediates the positive relationship between lmx and affective commitment.

4.3.6 Organizational Identification and Organizational Commitment

There is a plethora of research focused on investigating the outcomes of organizational commitment (e.g. Meyer et al., 2002) and organizational identification (e.g. Riketta, 2005) independently from each other. However, little research has focused on studying the combined effects both variables have on work-related outcomes. The concept of social identity has regularly been equated, and often confused, with the concept of organizational commitment (Ashforth et al., 2008; Benkhoff, 1997a; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Ouwerkerk et al., 1999; Wallace, 1993). The reasons for this lay primarily in the way how organizational commitment has been conceptualized, defined and/or measured. For example, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979, p.27) defined organizational commitment as *“the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization”*. Meyer & Allen’s (1991, p.67) definition of the affective component of their three-component model of organizational commitment is *“an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization”*. Moreover, O’Reilly & Chatman (1986) conceptualized organizational commitment partially as an identification driven process. Consequently, measurement items for organizational identification and organizational commitment related to these definitions and conceptualizations have been found to sound very similar. Not surprisingly, Riketta (2005) in his meta-analysis found organizational commitment and organizational identification to be highly correlated (correlation of 0.78) indicating a high-level of similarity. However, Riketta explained that though there seems to be a strong correlation between both constructs, there is still a clear level of distinctiveness in regard to how both organizational commitment and organization identification relate to work-related outcomes. Recent research has found that organizational identification and organizational commitment are both conceptually (Pratt, 1998; Van Dick, 2001) as well as empirically (Herda & Lavelle, 2015; Herrbach, 2006; Riketta, 2005; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006) distinct from each other. For this reason, in this study, both organizational commitment and organizational identification are surveyed to investigate their combined effects on organizational citizenship behavior.

In studies where both organizational commitment and organizational identification have been tested in one study, different relationships have been found. In studies that tested the mediating effect of organizational identification on affective commitment, favorable work experiences were found to affect organizational commitment through organizational identification. These findings suggest that positive work experiences, such as a high-quality LMX relationship, help identify with the organization (and its constituents) and that identification generates both cognitive and emotional responses

toward the organization (e.g. Loi, Chan, & Lam, 2014; Stringlhamber et al., 2015). There have also been studies that have found that exchange-based work experiences, such as leader-member exchange, and organizational identification both have combined effects on commitment development (DeConinck, 2011), supporting prior research that they are both important antecedents to organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2002; Riketta, 2005).

Hypothesis 3 organizational identification has a positive influence on normative commitment.

Hypothesis 4 normative commitment mediates the positive relationship between organizational identification and affective commitment.

4.3.7 Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Research suggests that the degree to which attitudinal factors correlate with OCB depends on how a 'job' is defined by an employee. The boundaries of a job affect the extent to which 'moral' factors are considered to underlie generally expected within-scope work behaviors or are out-of-scope and by default considered discretionary (e.g. Organ et al., 2006; Organ & Ryan, 1995). In other words, employees in jobs which are not narrowly defined will be inclined to consider discretionary behavior as an integral (moral) part of the job requirement, whereas, employees in narrowly defined jobs will be more cognizant of discretionary behavior as going 'above and beyond'. One of the many employee attitudes considered to affect OCB is commitment (e.g. Bateman & Organ, 1983; LePine et al., 2002; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Organ, 1988). Various studies have found that affective commitment is positively related to OCB (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; McFarlane & Wayne, 1993; Meyer et al., 2002; Haque & Aslam, 2011; Organ et al., 2006; Wiener, 1982). There have also been findings indicating no correlation between affective commitment and OCB (Shore & Wayne, 1993; Williams & Anderson, 1991), though there is more research evidence that supports that both are related (Meyer et al., 2002). Affective commitment, compared to normative commitment, has been found to have the strongest relationship with OCB (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Empirical findings regarding the effects of normative commitment on OCB have been similar to that of affective commitment, albeit weaker in strength. For example, Becker & Billings (1993) and Meyer et al. (2002) found normative commitment to be positively related to OCB. Based on the underlying 'moral' factor of expected behaviors within the definition of a 'job' and the moral factor core to normative commitment, it can be expected that there will be a positive relationship between normative commitment and OCB. Moreover, commitment is considered to be a unidimensional model in this research and normative commitment to be a base commitment mindset that precedes other forms of commitment. This paper therefore

suggests that normative commitment directly and indirectly (through its relationship with affective commitment) affects OCB. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 5 affective commitment has a positive influence on organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 6 affective commitment mediates the relationship between normative commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

4.4 General Method

4.4.1 Sample & Procedure

To study the effects of social exchange and social identity processes on the development of commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, this study applied a cross-sectional design. Data was collected using an online questionnaire administered to 350 students, alumni, faculty and staff at Hult International Business School Dubai in the UAE. It was important for this study to identify alumni with current positions in an organization. Students and alumni currently unemployed were excluded from this study. For this reason, faculty members were also included in the sample. From 350 questionnaires emailed to the research population 105 surveys were completed, generating a response rate of 40%. 74.8% of the respondents was male and 25.2% female reflecting a proportionately high number of male participants. The age profile of the respondents was reflected within age ranges with a minimum and maximum age. 20.9% had an age between 21 –30 years, 41.0% had an age between 31 – 40 years, 33.1% had an age between 41 – 50 years, and 5.0% had an age between 51 – 60 years. Mean age was 3.22 (SD=.834). In terms of residential demographics, 79.9% was based in the Middle East, 2.8% was based in the US, 10.1% was based in Europe, 3.6% was based in Asia and 3.6% was based in Africa.

The mean tenure of working students within the study group was 70.53 months (SD = 61.28), which is equal to 5.9 years. Months instead of years was used as a metric to measure tenure in the survey as Dubai is known as a transitional hub with over 80% of the population being non-UAE nationals (expats) and reflects shorter tenure periods common to the region. As for organizational position 10.1% had an intermediate position, 45.3% had a middle management position, 33.1% had an upper management position and 11.5% had an executive position.

Table 4-1 Demographics Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	104	74.8
	Female	35	25.2
Age	21 – 30	29	20.9
	31 – 40	57	41.0
	41 – 50	46	33.1
	51 – 60	7	5.0
Region	Middle East	111	79.9
	North America	4	2.8
	Europe	14	10.1
	Asia	5	3.6
	Africa	5	3.6
Time in your current position	1 year and less	52	37.4
	1 – 2 years	35	25.2
	2 – 3 years	16	11.5
	3 – 4 years	10	7.2
	4 – 5 years	9	6.5
	5 years or more	17	12.2
Tenure	1 year and less	28	20.1
	1 – 2 years	18	12.9
	2 – 3 years	13	9.4
	3 – 4 years	13	9.4
	4 – 5 years	7	5.0
	5 years or more	60	43.2
Position	Entry	0	00.0
	Intermediate	14	10.1
	Mid Management	63	45.3
	High Management	46	33.1
	Executive	16	11.5

Note: n = 139

4.4.2 Measures

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). To measure Leader-Member Exchange the 7-item scale developed by Scandura, Graen, & Novak (1986) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure the quality of Leader-Member Exchange and includes items such as ‘*My manager understands my problems and needs*’ and ‘*I can count on my manager to bail me out at his or her expense when I really need it*’. Cronbach α was 0.90.

Organizational Identification (OI). To measure Organizational Identification the 6-item scale developed by Mael & Ashforth (1992) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-

type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure organizational identification and includes items such as *'When somebody criticizes your company, it feels like a personal insult'* and *'When I talk about this company, I usually say we rather than they'*. Cronbach α was 0.85.

Affective Commitment (AC). To measure Affective Commitment the 6-item affective commitment scale from Meyer & Allen (1993) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure commitment and includes items such as *'I would be very happy to spend the rest of career in this organization'* and *'I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization'* (reversed). The scale has demonstrated good reliability (internal consistency and temporal stability) with strong factor structure (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Cronbach α was 0.85.

Normative Commitment (NC). To measure Normative Commitment the 6-item normative commitment scale from Meyer & Allen (1993) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to measure commitment and includes items such as *'I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it'* and *'This organization deserves my loyalty'*. The scale has demonstrated good reliability (internal consistency and temporal stability) with strong factor structure (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Cronbach α was 0.85.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). To measure Organizational Citizenship Behavior the 16-item scale developed by Smith, Organ, & Near (1983) was used. This 16-item scale was one of the first scales used to measure organizational citizenship behavior. 7 of the 16 items are related to altruism or helping others, and the remaining 9 items are related to general compliance or meeting organizational rules and procedures. The scale uses a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = Never, 4 = sometimes and 7 = always) to measure organizational citizenship behavior and includes items such as *'Help others who have heavy workloads'* and *'Attendance at work is above the norm'*. Items 9, 11, and 13 on the general compliance scale were reversed items. Cronbach α for was 0.81.

Control Variables. The following control variables were collected in this study: gender, age, organizational tenure and organizational position.

4.4.3 Construct and discriminant validity tests

4.4.3.1 Construct validity test Organizational Citizenship Behavior

To test the construct validity of the OCB measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 16-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. This resulted in a 4-factor

solution accounting for a total of 62.83% variance. All items had a saturation of >0.50 or higher. The KMO was 0.804 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 935.87$, $p < 0.01$). This resulted in the table below (table 4.2).

Table 4-2 Factor Analysis Organizational Citizenship Behavior 1/2

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
OCB4	.851			
OCB5	.838			
OCB2	.775			
OCB3	.751			
OCB1	.657			
OCB6	.627			
OCB7	.551			
OCB15		.935		
OCB14		.893		
OCB16		.875		
OCB13recode			.801	
OCB11recode			.660	
OCB9recode			.544	
OCB8				.694
OCB12				.602
OCB10				.576

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. Only factor loadings >0.50 are shown.

In addition to using an orthogonal varimax rotation, an oblique direct rotation was also performed on the scale, assuming a level of factor correlation. The factor structure was different from the orthogonal rotation now resulting in a 3-factor solution with cross-loadings on items OCB-6 (0.433), OCB-7 (0.424) and OCB-13 (0.558). Deleting OCB-13 provided a better fitting 3-factor solution. The final 3-factor solution accounted for a total of 58.60% variance. To decide which model to use, both solutions were tested for internal reliability. Finally, the 3-factor solution provided a better reliability score (Factor 1 α 0.86, Factor 2 α 0.90 and Factor 3 α 0.65).

Table 4-3 Factor Analysis Organizational Citizenship Behavior 2/2

	Component		
	1	2	2
OCB5	.861		
OCB4	.853		
OCB2	.791		
OCB3	.780		
OCB1	.643		
OCB6	.598		
OCB7	.555		
OCB15		.935	
OCB14		.914	
OCB16		.859	
OCB11recode			.732
OCB9recode			.699
OCB10			.605
OCB8			.587
OCB12			.534

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. Only factor loadings >0.50 are shown.

Interestingly, both analyses show a multi-factor solution instead of a 2-factor solution propagated by Smith, Organ, & Near (1983). More than 2-factor solutions were also found in other research studies (e.g. Dalton & Cosier, 1989; Koh et al., 1995; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Podsakoff et al., 1993). Possible explanations for these results are multiple. First, common method variance could potentially affect the factor loading (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Second, different than expected factor loadings could reflect the influences of contextual factors (e.g. cultural influences) or the changing nature of work and their effects on the multi-dimensionality of the OCB construct (e.g. Farh et al., 1997; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

In line with its original conceptualization, items OCB 1 – 7 load on one factor which represents ALTRUISM, or as Smith et. al (1983, p.657) puts it '*captures behaviors directly and intentionally aimed at helping a specific person in face-to-face situations (e.g. orienting new people, assisting someone with a heavy workload)*'. However, the data shows that the original GENERALIZED COMPLIANCE items load better on three factors than on one. Similar to findings by Koh et al. study (1995), all the negatively worded compliance factors loaded onto one factor (e.g. *does not take extra breaks*) (Factor 2), and all the positively worded compliance items loaded onto 1 factor (Factor 3). The reason for all

negatively worded compliance items to load on one factor could be due to common method variance, which is common in psychological research using data from one single source or using items of similar structure (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The positively worded items, which load on one factor, appear to capture behaviors that represent something akin to COMPLIANCE (e.g. punctuality, attendance at work is above the norm, gives advanced notice if unable to come to work) or as Smith et al. (1983, p.657) puts it “*internalized norms defining what a ‘good employee ought to do’*”. For measurement purposes, Factor 2 and Factor 3 will be referred to as COMPLIANCE 1 and COMPLIANCE 2 respectively.

These findings suggest that the interpretation of the original OCB construct warrants a more contextual enunciation to reflect the zeitgeist of OCB in its current interpretation versus that of its original conceptualization. Noteworthy, is item 13 ‘*great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations*’, dropped due to cross-loading, which is an item reflective of how phones were used in the past and would be more appropriate nowadays to be rephrased as ‘*great deal of time spent on mobile phone*’ to better reflect the way people use their phones today. Similarly, it is possible that items loading on Factor 3 might be perceived differently by respondents due to changes in how a job is defined today versus 30 years ago. These perceptions could affect the correlation between attitudes and OCB and the degree to which behaviors are considered to be discretionary (Organ et al., 2006).

4.4.3.2 Construct validity test Normative Commitment

To test the construct validity of the NC measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 6-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. The KMO was 0.837 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 301.67$, $p < 0.01$). The 6 items loaded perfectly on one factor accounting for a total of 56.53% variance. All items had a factor loading of > 0.70 .

4.4.3.3 Construct validity test Affective Commitment

To test the construct validity of the AC measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 6-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. The KMO was 0.829 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 354.94$, $p < 0.01$). The 6 items loaded perfectly

on one factor accounting for a total of 57.22% variance. All items had a factor loading of >0.60 .

4.4.3.4 Construct validity test Organizational Identification

To test the construct validity of the OI measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 6-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. The KMO was 0.855 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 329.86$, $p < 0.01$). The 6 items loaded perfectly on one factor accounting for a total of 57.41% variance. All items had a factor loading of >0.60 .

4.4.3.5 Construct validity test Leader-Member Exchange

To test the construct validity of the LMX measure used in this research study, a factor analysis was applied. First, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 6-item scale. Performing a principal component analysis with an orthogonal varimax rotation, factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or higher were extracted. The KMO was 0.887 indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity based on chi-square statistics was significant ($\chi^2 = 531.29$, $p < 0.01$). The 7 items loaded perfectly on one factor accounting for a total of 61.95% variance. All items had a factor loading of >0.70 .

All Cronbach α values, except OCB-COMPLIANCE 2, exceeded 0.70 which reflect high internal reliability (Nunnally, 1978). OCB-Comp2 Cronbach α was 0.65 which constitutes an acceptable range of reliability.

4.4.4 Statistical Analysis

In this study, all statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS version 23.

4.5 Results

4.5.1 Descriptives

Table 4.4 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and alpha coefficients for all measurement items. Mean values and standard deviations provided insight into the distribution of the variables. The skewness and kurtosis scores provided further evidence that the results were approximately naturally distributed, except for Organizational Identification, which showed signs of a slight kurtosis ($K = 1.546$).

Table 4-4 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
Gender	139	1.25	0.44	1.16	.206	-0.67	.408
Age	139	3.22	0.83	0.09	.206	-0.70	.408
Tenure	138	70.53	61.28	0.95	.206	0.07	.410
Position	139	3.46	0.83	0.21	.206	-0.48	.408
OI	139	3.86	0.70	-0.80	.206	1.55	.408
LMX	139	3.56	0.86	-0.58	.206	-0.16	.408
AC	139	3.41	0.83	-0.24	.206	-0.15	.408
NC	139	3.08	0.88	-0.19	.206	-0.25	.408
OCB-Altruism	139	5.17	0.98	-0.05	.206	-0.47	.408
OCB-Comp1	139	4.63	1.69	-0.44	.206	-0.84	.408
OCB-Comp2	139	5.52	0.85	-0.30	.206	-0.87	.408

Note: OI = Organizational Identification, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, AC = Affective Commitment, NC = Normative Commitment, OCB-Altruism = Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Altruism, OCB-Comp1 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Compliance 1, OCB-Comp2 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Compliance 2

4.5.2 Intercorrelations among study variables

To test the relationships between Leader-Member exchange (LMX), Organizational Identification (OI), Affective Commitment (AC), Normative Commitment (NC) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted. The intercorrelation matrix in table 4.5 shows many significant positive relationships. Reviewing the relationships between the different variables, dependent variable OCB-Altruism was found to be positively related to LMX ($r = .21, p < 0.05$), OI ($r = .29, p < 0.01$), AC ($r = .40, p < 0.01$), NC ($r = .29, p < 0.01$). Dependent variables OCB-Comp1 and OCB-Comp2 were positively related to OI ($r = .19, p < 0.01, r = .17, p < 0.01$) and AC ($r = .20, p < 0.01, r = .18, p < 0.01$) respectively. The difference in correlates between OCB-Altruism and OCB-Comp is an indication that different organizational citizenship behaviors are affected by specific psychological processes of attachment. Finally, control variables Tenure and Position were positively related to AC, indicating that affect-based organizational attachment increases the longer one stays in the company and the more senior the position.

Table 4-5 Correlation matrix independent, dependent and control variables

	M	SD	Gender	Age	Tenure	Position	LMX	OI	AC	NC	OCB-Altruism	OCB-Comp1	OCB-Comp2
Gender	1.25	0.44	1	-									
Age	3.22	0.83	-.056	1	-								
			.513										
Tenure	70.53	61.28	-.024	.423**	1	-							
			.780	.000									
Position	3.46	0.83	-.183*	.249**	-.003	1	-						
			.031	.003	.968								
LMX	3.56	0.86	.076	-.021	-.071	.115	1	(.90)					
			.375	.803	.406	.177							
OI	3.86	0.70	-.048	-.045	.123	.138	.205*	1	(.85)				
			.571	.602	.150	.106	.016						
AC	3.41	0.83	.004	.047	.266**	.272**	.325**	.657**	1	(.85)			
			.964	.586	.002	.001	.000	.000					
NC	3.08	0.88	.048	-.115	-.029	.211*	.479**	.415**	.558**	1	(.85)		
			.576	.176	.734	.013	.000	.000	.000				
OCB-Altruism	5.17	0.98	.087	-.154	.052	.085	.210*	.288**	.397**	.289**	1	(.86)	
			.310	.070	.546	.318	.013	.001	.000	.001			
OCB-Comp1	4.63	1.69	.061	-.032	.144	-.032	-.064	.186*	.199*	.054	.241**	1	(.90)
			.478	.706	.091	.708	.451	.029	.019	.528	.004		
OCB-Comp2	5.52	0.85	.041	.098	-.016	.016	.096	.170*	.180*	.072	.343**	.068	1
			.628	.251	.850	.850	.262	.046	.034	.402	.000	.427	(.65)

Note: n = 139. ** p < .01, * p < .05. LMX = Leader-Member Exchange; OI = Organizational Identification; AC = Affective Organizational Commitment; NC = Normative Organizational Commitment; OCB-Altruism = Factor 1 OCB – Altruism; OCB-Comp1 = Factor 2 OCB – Compliance1; OCB-Comp2 = Factor 3 OCB – Compliance 2. Control variables: Age is coded as 1 for <20 years, 2 for 21–30 years, 3 for 31–40 years, 4 for 41–50 years, and 5 for 51–60 years. Tenure is expressed in number of months. Position is coded as 1 = entry level, 2 = intermediate, 3 = middle management, 4 = upper management and 5 = executive level. Cronbach alphas for all independent and dependent variables are stated between parentheses.

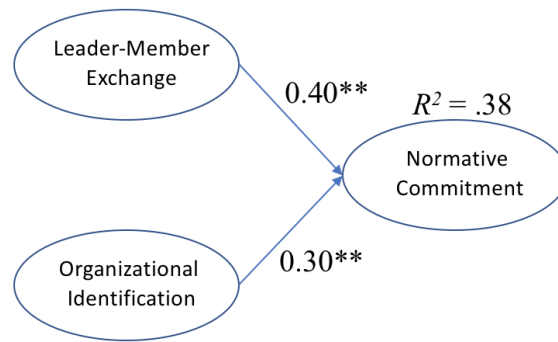
4.5.3 Hypotheses testing

To test H1 and H3, a multiple regression analysis was performed on NC, which generated 3 different models. Model 3 was the final model including all the indicated variables, which showed an overall significant regression equation ($F = 13.342$, $p < 0.01$). The model showed that besides control variables Age and Position, both LMX and OI predict NC (see table 4.6). This suggests that both social exchange and social identification processes affect cognitions of moral obligation and reciprocation. Hypothesis 1 and 3 are therefore supported. Model 3 explained 38% of the total variance. The model was also tested for multicollinearity and all the variables were found to be within acceptable ranges. The regression is illustrated below in figure 4.2.

Table 4-6 Results multiple regression analysis with Normative Commitment as dependent variable

	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	Model 3 β
Gender	0.06	0.02	0.04
Age	-0.25*	-0.23**	-0.18*
Tenure	0.08	0.10	0.04
Position	0.30**	0.23**	0.19*
LMX		0.45**	0.40**
OI			0.30**
R^2	0.10	0.30	0.38
ΔR^2	0.07	0.27	0.35
R^2 change	0.10	0.20	0.08
F	3.646**	11.283**	13.342**

Note: $n = 139$. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, OI = Organizational Identification.



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 4-2 The effects of leader-member exchange and organizational identification on normative commitment

To test H2, a mediation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between LMX and AC through NC. Baron & Kenny's (1986) mediation method was applied to test for mediation. First, direct relationships were examined between LMX and AC, LMX and NC and NC with AC. All direct relationships were found to be significant. Second, a multiple regression was conducted to predict AC from LMX and NC. The model showed that both LMX and NC explain 31.6% of the variance of AC. AC was significantly related to a linear combination of LMX and NC ($F(2, 136) = 15.09$, $p < 0.01$, $r = .56$). NC ($\beta = .50$, $p < 0.01$) had a significant partial effect on AC and LMX ($\beta = .07$, $p = 0.35$) did not have a significant partial effect on AC, providing evidence that NC fully mediates the relationship between LMX and AC, confirming hypothesis 2. The mediation model is shown below in figure 4.3.



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 4-3 Mediation model leader-member exchange, normative commitment, and affective commitment

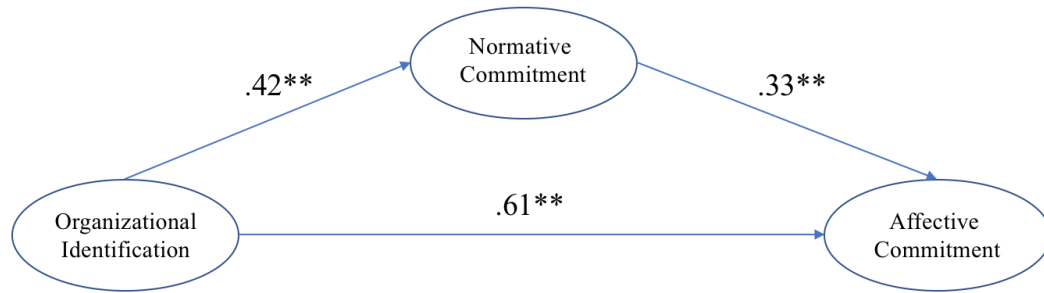
Table 4-7 Beta Co-efficients Leader-Member Exchange and Normative Commitment

Model	Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	Constant	1.638	.271		6.056	.00
	LMX	.072	.078	.075	.929	.35
	NC	.495	.077	.522	6.460	.00

Dependent Variable: AC

Note: n = 139. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, NC = Normative Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment.

To test H4, a mediation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between OI and AC through NC. Baron & Kenny's (1986) mediation method was applied to test for mediation. First, direct relationships were examined between OI and AC, between OI and NC, and between NC and AC. All direct relationships were found to be significant. Second, a multiple regression was conducted to predict AC from OI and NC. The model shows that both OI and NC explain 53.0% of the variance of AC. AC was significantly related to a linear combination of OI and NC ($F(2, 136) = 25.30, p < 0.01, r = .73$). Both OI ($\beta = .61, p < 0.01$) and NC ($\beta = .33, p < 0.01$) had a significant partial effect on AC, providing evidence that NC partially mediates the relationship between OI and AC. There is partial support for hypothesis 4, seeing that OI also has a direct effect on AC. NC and AC have been found in other studies to (partially) mediate the relationship between OI and work behaviors, providing evidence that OI precedes commitment. This suggests that identification leads to a sense of belonging which positively affects work attitudes such as organizational commitment (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). For this reason, there is no indication that normative commitment could potentially moderate the OI – AC relationship, which was not further considered in this research as a possible interaction effect. The mediation model is shown below in figure 4.4.



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 4-4 Mediation model organizational identification, normative commitment, and affective commitment

Table 4-8 Beta Co-efficients Organizational Identification and Normative Commitment

Model	Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	Constant	.067	.281		.239	.81
	OI	.608	.076	.513	7.943	.00
	NC	.327	.061	.345	5.340	.00

Dependent Variable: AC

Note: $n = 139$. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. OI = Organizational Identification, NC = Normative Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment.

To test H5, the relationship between AC and OCB was examined. The path analysis shows that AC is a significant predictor of OCB-ALTRUISM ($\beta = .40$, $p < 0.01$), OCB-COMPL1 ($\beta = .20$, $p < 0.05$), and OCB-COMPL2 ($\beta = .18$, $p < 0.05$). The model shows that 16%, 4% and 3% of the variance of OCB-ALTRUISM (see table 4.9), OCB-COMPL1 (see table 4.10) and OCB-COMPL2 (see table 4.11) respectively is explained by AC. The regression is illustrated below in figure 4.5.

Table 4-9 Beta Co-efficients and R2 for OCB-Altruism

Model	Variable	Co-efficient (β)	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	AC	0.40**	0.16	0.15	25.565**

Note: n = 139. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. AC = Affective Commitment.

Table 4-10 Beta Co-efficients and R2 for OCB-Compliance 1

Model	Variable	Co-efficient (β)	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	AC	0.20*	0.04	0.03	5.659*

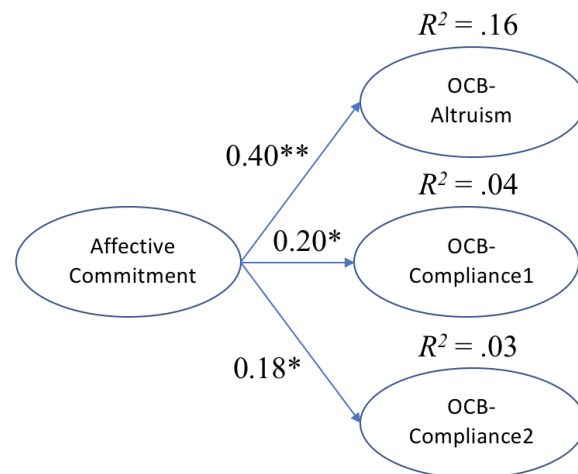
Note: n = 139. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. AC = Affective Commitment.

Table 4-11 Beta Co-efficients and R2 for OCB-Compliance 2

Model	Variable	Co-efficient (β)	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	AC	0.18*	0.03	0.03	4.584*

Note: n = 139. ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05. AC = Affective Commitment.

To test H6, a mediation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between NC and OCB through AC. As the correlation matrix shows that NC only has a significant relationship with OCB-ALTRUISM ($r = .29, p < 0.01$), the two other OCB factors will be left out of the regression. Baron & Kenny's (1986) mediation method was applied to test for mediation. First, direct relationships were examined between NC and OCB-ALTRUISM, between NC and AC, and between AC and OCB-ALTRUISM. All direct relationships were found to be significant. Then a multiple regression was conducted to predict OCB-ALTRUISM from NC and AC. The model summary shows that both NC and AC explain 16.4% of the variance of OCB-ALTRUISM, which is relatively low. This model may include the effects of other mediators not included in this study. OCB-ALTRUISM was significantly related to a linear combination of NC and AC ($F(2, 136) = 13.34, p < 0.01, r = .41$). AC ($\beta = .40, p < 0.01$) had a significant partial effect on OCB-ALTRUISM and NC ($\beta = .11, p = .30$) did not have a significant partial effect on OCB-ALTRUISM, providing evidence that AC fully mediates the relationship between NC and OCB-ALTRUISM. Based on these findings, there is only partial support for hypothesis 6, seeing that AC only mediates the relationship between NC and one OCB factor. The mediation model is shown below in figure 4.6.



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 4-5 The effects of affective commitment on organizational citizenship behavior



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 4-6 Mediation model normative commitment, affective commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior

Table 4-12 Beta Coefficients Normative Commitment and Affective Commitment

Model	Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	Constant	3.464	.342		10.115	.00
	NC	.110	.105	.099	1.047	.30
	AC	.401	.111	.341	3.613	.00

Dependent Variable: OCB-ALT

Note: $n = 139$. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. OI = Organizational Identification, NC = Normative Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment, OCB-ALT = OCB-Altruism.

These findings also provide evidence that LMX and OI affect OCB-COMP1 and OCB-COMP2 via AC only, indicating that exchange and identification processes over time play a key part in fostering an emotional psychological attachment with the organization that promotes work behaviors geared toward supporting general productivity (e.g. punctuality and attendance, effective communication, work efficiency). It can also be inferred from these findings that both exchange and identification processes affect different commitment mindsets, having their own unique impact on OCB.

4.6 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influences of work experiences based on social exchange and social identification processes on the development of work attitudes and behaviors, namely the impact of Leader-Member Exchange and Organizational Identification on the development of Normative Commitment, Affective Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Organizational Commitment research and Organizational Identification research have developed independently from one another and it is not until recently that scholars have focused on examining the combined effects of both theories on psychological attachment within the employee – organizational relationship and their effects on organizational performance. This study contributes to this upcoming body of research in three ways. First, by testing the combined effects of social exchange and social identification processes on the impact of work attitudes and behaviors. Secondly, by exploring a new conceptualization of commitment in the workplace, which incorporates new theory development. Lastly, by investigating well-established theoretical constructs within a multi-cultural and fast-moving environment contributing to the further generalization of these constructs.

This study tested a model examining the effects of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and Organizational Identification (OI) on the development of commitment in the workplace (NC and AC) and its effects on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). The following will be a discussion of the results attained divided into two parts: 1. *Commitment and its contributing factors*, and 2. *Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its contributing factors*.

4.6.1 Commitment and its contributing factors

Organizational commitment was operationalized in this study as AC and NC. AC and NC were found in this study to be strongly correlated, which is similar to findings from other studies testing a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment. Researchers have attributed the high correlation between AC and NC to the limited discriminant validity between both variables and have argued to use only AC in future commitment

studies (Bergman 2006; Ko et al. 1997; Solinger et al. 2008; Vandenberg & Self 1993). Our study, however, proposes that AC and NC are distinct variables, where NC functions as a base commitment mindset from which other commitment forms can emerge depending on the evaluation of exchange and identification factors.

Study results showed that LMX and OI both have a positive influence NC and AC independently. This indicates that social exchange and social identification processes affect different commitment mindsets in their own way, namely as evidenced in this study, by triggering cognitions of perceived obligations and positive attitudes toward the organization. The notion of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) plays a central part within the LMX dyadic relationship. Study results showed that NC had the strongest relationship with LMX, which besides a sense of indebtedness could also be affected by cultural influences. High-quality LMX relationships result in high-quality exchanges that nurture reciprocal behaviors and a sense of (moral/mutual) obligation. This is also reflected in the mediation model where NC fully mediates the relationship between LMX and AC. High-quality LMX relationships also reflect positive exchanges within the employee – organizational relationship, which in turn positively affect employee attitudes toward one's manager and explain the significant relationship between LMX and AC. Similarly, highly identified employees strongly identify with the goals and values of the organization and thus feel a sense of oneness with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and are more willing to execute behaviors in line with organizational norms due to reciprocal forces and a sense of indebtedness (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This normative power is reflected in the results where NC partially mediates the relationship between OI and AC. The effect of identification is therefore twofold. On one hand, it creates emotional attachment through the process of self-categorization, belongingness and perceived fit with organizational goals and values, and on the other hand, identification facilitates reciprocal behaviors through a sense of belongingness allowing positive work experiences to create an affective bond. Both a sense of oneness and the experience of positively evaluated work encounters create a feeling of safety, which allow for emotional responses to drive behavior and cognitive scarce resources to be applied to other work-related cognitive tasks in need of consumption. In essence, the psychological – performance link follows Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) or Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1959) indicating a requirement to fulfill basic needs first (such as security and safety) before psychological links promote work performance.

4.6.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its contributing factors

When examining the effect of work attitudes on the different OCB factors, the contributions of the different commitment mindsets on work behaviors showed also unique variances. In testing the combined relationship of NC and AC on OCB-ALTRUISM,

AC was found to fully mediate the relationship between NC and OCB-ALTRUISM. It can be inferred from these findings that both LMX and OI not only affect commitment mindsets differently but that their unique variance also contributes to different OCB behaviors. These results are interesting as they uncover underlying psychological linkages to help explain how specific exchange and identification processes affect different types of work attitudes and behaviors.

These results provide some preliminary evidence that NC is a precursor to AC and that the value of NC as a unidimensional construct affecting certain types of work behavior has merit. Research by cognitive scientists Del Pinal & Reuter (2016) provides an interesting perspective to the effects of the normative dimensions of social roles and how such attitudes predict role-dependent behaviors, suggesting that normative influences should be considered more broadly than currently done in the commitment literature. Moreover, it can be established that normative commitment plays an important role in enhancing the contextual performance as a social and psychological driver of helping behaviors, which augments the importance of predispositions and attitudes as important drivers of performance.

From a practical standpoint, these findings could support (re-)surveying methods in employee testing and selection focused on personality and other personal characteristics to measure normative beliefs, as well as developing and optimizing values-based organizational practices to enhance employee engagement and retention. Examples of the latter could be a). placing emphasis on the importance of leadership effectiveness as a value-driving organizational practice in the modern employee – employer relationship from both an exchange and identification perspective, b). how positive employee – supervisor relationships can help drive business continuation through enhanced performance and employee retention, and c) and how alignment of organizational values (e.g. creating a supportive environment) with operational procedures, business practices and incentive schemes can have compounded effects on individual and team work behaviors (e.g. pro-social behaviors) which in turn contribute to the effective and efficient functioning of the organization.

4.7 Managerial Implications

Findings from this research study on the interplay of exchange-based and identification-based factors on work attitudes and behaviors provide interesting insights to organizational practice. The following managerial implications are discussed.

Role of Management. A clear take-away from the research findings is the difference in individual effect and compounded effect of exchange-based factors and identification-based factors on work attitudes and behaviors. This study suggests that employee – employer interaction affects work behaviors in various ways. In one way, positive work experiences promote work performance through emotional attachment. Positive work experienced in the exchange perspective reflect balanced exchanges between employee and manager, which help set expectations, build trust and create a safe environment. Equally, managers facilitate employee attachment through identification. Managers are an embodiment of the company's values, goals, norms and rules, which if expressed coherently should spill over to the echelons below to help others understand the norms governing accepted group behavior and organizational life (Steffens et al., 2014). It is often said that people get attracted to a company because of the organization's reputation and values, but often leave the organization because of a bad experience or relationship with a manager. The role of management is not only to enable people through positive exchanges, support and fair conduct but also through role-modeling and value-based leadership reflecting the organization's beliefs, values and goals. This study provides evidence that the role of management affects employee performance through both exchange and identification.

Shared Values & Goals. The old paradigm of exchanging commitment for lifetime employment seems to have ended at the turn of the last century. The changing nature of work and evolving attitudes toward work and work-life balance are demanding a new social contract. A social contract which looks beyond pay to provide meaning, purpose, pride, and impact. A possible mechanism underlying this new social contract is identification. As this study points out, identification facilitates the exchange of socio-cognitive commodities (OI – NC) and has a direct pathway to emotional attachment (OI – AC) through perceived fit and a sense of belonging. Connecting employees to the bigger picture, by helping others understand how they contribute to the organization's overall goals and direction, promotes employee loyalty, commitment and engagement. Moreover, understanding the impact of identification on organizational attachment and work performance, managers should also focus on providing employees with a vision of their career. Seeing the changing nature of work, advancing up the leadership pipeline is not the only possible or preferred career path in today's dynamic work environment. Many employees are also searching for horizontal shifts in the organization, looking to develop new skills to boost employability. Managers supportive of either vertical or horizontal career moves will be in a better position to provide better direction to their workforce, retaining critical talent within the organization and promoting employee performance.

Organizational On-boarding. This research study has also amplified the importance of newcomer socialization and organizational on-boarding. Newcomer socialization helps turn an organizational outsider into an organizational insider (Feldman, 1981) using both exchange-based and identification-based aspects. Work exchanges help create a need or indebtedness to reciprocate received favors and gestures, while organizational identification helps create a sense of belonging, safety, pride and sense-making. A strong and rounded on-boarding process is critical to boosting employee retention and performance, as new situations trigger the mind's reflective capacity to (re-)evaluate its new environment, which according to this study are governed through identification and normative evaluation processes.

4.8 Limitations & Future Research

It should be acknowledged that there are a number of limitations in this research study. First, the number of respondents in this study was limited, which could have affected significance scores and potentially affected mean scores due to selection bias in terms of who participated in the study. Second, as all data was collected from a single source using self-reports, common method bias could have affected the relationships between constructs, which was prominent from one of the factor loadings of the dependent variable (OCB-COMP1). This research study attempted to limit the effects of common method bias, by assuring anonymity in participation both prior and during the survey taking. Though attitudinal constructs are best collected using self-reports, future research could consider replicating this study using both Supervisor and Employee reports of OCB to overcome the effects of common method bias. Third, this study had a cross-sectional design, which limits the inference of causality amongst relationships. Future research could consider using a longitudinal or (quasi-) experimental design to test for causality. Forth, it can be argued that LMX and OI constructs measured different levels of analysis. However, for the purpose of this research study, LMX was used as a more specific measure of exchange rather than a more general concept. Future research would do well to test other exchange-based constructs such as Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Justice. Lastly, the reconceptualization of organizational commitment in this study could have biased the interpretation of research results. More research is required to further investigate the merit of using normative commitment as a default or base commitment model and its relationship with other commitment forms.

4.9 Conclusions

The present research contributed to the current literature in three ways. First, this study aimed to test both LMX and Organization Identification to examine the combined effects on Organizational Citizenship Behavior. To date, limited research has focused on the combined effects of social exchange and social identity processes on work-related outcomes. This study expands prior commitment research by examining both constructs in one study. Second, this research makes an important contribution to the existing commitment literature by testing a reconceptualized model of organizational commitment. Normative commitment was conceptualized as a base commitment mindset independently affecting other commitment forms. Changes in the way employees perceive a job and the changing nature of work have called for a re-examination of existing theoretical linkages to better understand underlying mechanisms in the attitude – performance link. Last, by investigating the leader-subordinate relationship in relation to work attitudes and performance, this research aimed to contribute to both the leadership and organizational behavior literature by exploring possible psychological links that explain leadership and management effectiveness in modern-day and multi-cultural work environments.

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Chapter 5

Enhancing Psychological Attachment within the Workplace through Social Exchange and Social Identity: A new conceptual model

This chapter in an expanded format is submitted for publication as:
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5.1 Abstract

Little is known about the underlying mechanisms governing the commitment development process. Based on the three previous studies investigating organizational attachment development from a social exchange and from a social identity perspective, this study proposes and tests a new conceptual model of the commitment development process. Research findings suggest that personal characteristics that affect normative beliefs influence normative commitment propensity development pre-organizational entry. Normative commitment propensity has been found to affect both normative commitment and organization identification post-organizational entry. Finally, exchange-based and identification-based factors were found to affect work-related behaviors through a socio-cognitive model of commitment. Conclusions and implications of the results for both academics and practitioners are discussed.

5.2 Introduction

Organizational commitment has been one of the most studied constructs in the organizational behavior literature in the past 50 years. Organizational commitment has evolved significantly since its first conceptualization by Becker (1960) as an organizational attachment mechanism assessing a trade-off between investments made within the organization and one's willingness to leave. Organizational commitment has since then also been categorized as a mindset which not only evaluates a cost-benefit perspective toward remaining and engaging with the organization and its members but has also been categorized as an attachment mindset which is affected by emotional or normative influences. This has led to the development of a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1991), which is currently considered the dominant model within the commitment literature to evaluate workplace commitment. The multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment has also been criticized based on theoretical and empirical grounds, though little attempt has been made to propose an improved model of organizational commitment.

The theoretical underpinnings of organization commitment are based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1968), suggesting that psychological attachment toward the organization is initiated and strengthened through the exchange of tangible and intangible commodities. However, due to the rapidly changing environment in which organizations currently operate, there seems to be less time and opportunity to allow a commitment mindset to evolve based purely on social exchange factors alone. Social identity (Tajfel, 1978), on the other hand, is another basis upon which psychological attachment can develop toward the organization. Organizational identification has been found to affect the employee – organizational relationship differently than organizational commitment, namely by incorporating organizational values into one's own identity and by creating a sense of oneness with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This research study has therefore considered both social exchange and social identity processes to better understand how psychological attachment can be enhanced within the employee – organizational relationship, especially in today's changing nature of work.

First, this research study has attempted to review the extant literature on organizational commitment to identify the theoretical foundations of psychological attachment within the workplace and propose a new theoretical model of organizational commitment based on both social exchange and social identity processes (Chapter 2). This review has proposed a reconceptualization of organizational commitment to address current issues found in the organizational literature and to better understand the development of psychological attachment toward the organization over time. Specifically, it was suggested that a model of organizational commitment be reflected as a unidimensional

model of commitment and that the importance of normative commitment be re-evaluated within the commitment literature as a default or base commitment mindset. Secondly, normative commitment was longitudinally tested as a default commitment mindset which was proposed to develop prior to organizational entry and which transforms into other commitment forms post-organizational entry (Chapter 3). Research results found preliminary evidence that personal characteristics affect a default commitment mindset which transforms into normative commitment post-organizational entry. Lastly, the theoretical proposition that normative commitment acts as a base commitment post-organizational entry and transforms into other commitment forms based on social exchange and social identity factors was tested in a cross-sectional study (Chapter 4). Findings from this study provided evidence that normative commitment acts as a stand-alone commitment form, which fully mediates the relationship between social exchange (LMX) and affective commitment (AC), and partially mediates the relationship between social identity factors (OI) and affective commitment.

This paper aims to test a full model of commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry (see figure 5.1) and its impact on behavioral outcomes based on the findings from the previous two empirical studies. This will be done in the following way. First, this study will use a variance-based structural equation modeling to conduct a path analysis to assess the structural model. Secondly, an improved model of organizational commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry will be proposed based on the significant relationships found.

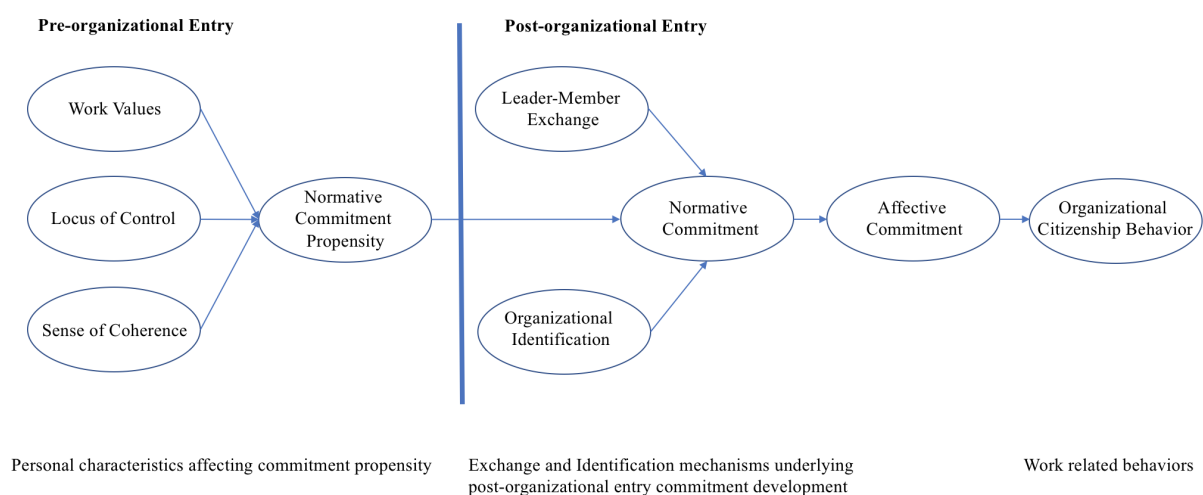


Figure 5-1 Dynamic process of commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry

5.3 General Method

5.3.1 Sample & Procedure

This study was undertaken in the period June 2016 – January 2017 under graduating master students at Hult International Business School in Dubai (UAE). To investigate commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry, a non-random purposive sampling technique was used. The sample was based on Master students in their final year of study, who confirmed to have some kind of job arrangement after graduation.

The study used a cross-sectional design and questionnaires were distributed to 350 selected students by email. Permission to send the questionnaires to the students was requested from the university. In addition to sending out an electronic survey, classroom announcements were made to remind students of the existence of the survey. Students were informed that participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. This was communicated both verbally and on the study consent page of the questionnaire. 139 usable completed questionnaires were received, which resulted in a 40% response rate.

5.3.2 Measures

The following measurement instruments were used in this study to investigate the impact of personal characteristics and commitment propensity on normative commitment post-organizational entry and the effects of social exchange and social identity factors on work attitudes and behaviors:

Work Values (WV), Work Locus of Control (WLOC), Sense of Coherence (SOC), Normative Commitment Propensity (NCP), Normative Commitment (NC), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Organizational Identification (OI), Affective Commitment (AC), and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

A detailed description of the measurement instruments including reliability and validity tests can be found in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

5.3.3 Statistical Analysis

In this study, statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS version 23. To test the full commitment model, a partial least squared structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM version 3.2.6) was used to determine the factors affecting commitment and subsequently organizational citizenship behavior. First, all hypothesized relationships are depicted within the base model after which only the significant relationships are shown in the final path analysis. T-values and path correlations co-efficients are shown in both models.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Descriptives

Table 5.1 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, min and max, skewness, and kurtosis for all measurement items. Mean values and standard deviations provided insight into the distribution of the variables. The skewness and kurtosis scores provided further evidence that the results for most variables were approximately naturally distributed, except for the work value HC, which had a higher than acceptable kurtosis ($K = 7.940$).

Table 5-1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
HI	139	1.00	9.00	6.54	1.55	-1.11	.206	1.29	.408
VI	139	1.00	9.00	6.35	1.60	-1.04	.206	1.10	.408
HC	139	1.00	9.00	7.38	1.30	-2.18	.206	7.94	.408
VC	139	1.00	9.00	6.89	1.62	-0.93	.206	0.71	.408
Intern	139	1.00	4.20	2.24	0.74	0.31	.206	-0.53	.408
Extern	139	1.00	6.00	2.80	1.03	0.64	.206	0.19	.408
SOC-11	139	2.27	6.36	4.44	0.84	-0.01	.206	0.01	.408
NCP-5	139	1.33	4.67	2.94	0.56	-0.10	.206	0.44	.408
NC	139	1.00	5.00	3.08	0.88	-0.19	.206	-0.25	.408
AC	139	1.00	5.00	3.42	0.83	-0.24	.206	-0.15	.408
OI	139	1.00	5.00	3.86	0.70	-0.80	.206	1.55	.408
LMX	139	1.14	5.00	3.56	0.86	-0.58	.206	-0.16	.408
OCB ALTR	139	2.57	7.00	5.17	0.98	-0.05	.206	-0.47	.408
OCB COMP1	139	1.00	7.00	4.63	1.69	-0.44	.206	-0.84	.408
OCB COMP2	139	3.60	7.00	5.52	0.85	-0.30	.206	-0.87	.408

Note: $n = 139$. HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, Extern = External Locus of Control, Intern = Internal Locus of Control, SOC-11 = Sense of Coherence, NCP-5 = Normative Commitment Propensity, NC = Normative Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, OI = Organizational Identification, OCB Altr = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Altruism, OCB Comp1 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Compliance 1, OCB Comp2 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Compliance 2.

Table 5.2 provides an overview of the demographics for the respondents including gender, age, country of residence, position and tenure. 74.8% of the respondents was male and 25.2% female reflecting a proportionately high number of male participants. The age profile of the 139 respondents was 20.9% had an age between 21 -30 years,

41.0% had an age between 31 – 40 years, 33.1% had an age between 41 – 50 years, and 5.0% had an age between 51 – 60 years. The mean age was 3.22 (SD = .834) which equates to an age of 33.0 years. In terms of country of residence, 79.9% of the respondents resided in Dubai, 10.1% in Europe, 3.6% in Africa, 3.6% in Asia and 2.9% in North America.

The mean tenure of working students within the study group was 70.53 months (SD = 61.28), which is equal to 5.9 years. Months instead of years was used as a metric to measure tenure in the survey as Dubai is known as a transitional hub with over 80% of the population being non-UAE nationals (expats), and reflects shorter tenure periods common to the region. Of the 139 respondents, 10.1% had an intermediate level position, 45.3% a middle management level position, 33.1% a high management level position, and 11.5% an executive position.

Table 5-2 Demographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	104	74.8
	Female	35	25.2
Age	21 – 30	29	20.9
	31 – 40	57	41.0
	41 – 50	46	33.1
	51 – 60	7	5.0
Country of residence	Middle East	111	79.9
	North America	4	2.9
	South America	0	0.0
	Europe	14	10.1
	Asia	5	3.6
	Africa	5	3.6
Time with your current employer	1 year and less	28	20.1
	1 – 2 years	18	12.9
	2 – 3 years	13	9.4
	3 – 4 years	13	9.4
	4 – 5 years	7	5.0
	5 years or more	60	43.2
Position	Intermediate	14	10.1
	Mid Management	63	45.3
	High	46	33.1
	Management	16	11.5
	Executive		

Note: n = 139

Correlation Analyses

Table 5-3 Intercorrelations of independent and dependent variables

	M	SD	HI	VI	HC	VC	Intern	Extern	SOC-11	NCP-5	NC	AC	OI	LMX	OCB ALTR	OCB COMP1	OCB COMP2
HI	6.54	1.55	1														
VI	6.35	1.60	.366**	1													
			.000														
HC	7.38	1.30	.233**	.302**	1												
			.006	.000													
VC	6.89	1.63	.262**	.339**	.542**	1											
			.002	.000	.000												
Intern	2.22	0.74	.037	-.078	-.281**	-.227**	1										
			.666	.359	.001	.007											
Extern	2.80	1.03	-.002	-.008	-.230**	.050	.283**	1									
			.984	.925	.006	.562	.001										
SOC-11	4.44	0.84	-.078	.005	.194*	.030	-.396**	-.432**	1								
			.360	.950	.022	.724	.000	.000									
NCP-5	2.94	0.56	.084	.051	.142	.292**	-.118	.002	.002	1							
			.328	.548	.095	.000	.166	.979	.981								
NC	3.08	0.88	-.082	-.053	.013	.017	-.233**	-.036	.176*	.458**	1						
			.340	.536	.877	.846	.006	.673	.038	.000							
AC	3.42	0.83	-.094	.048	.055	.078	-.226**	-.010	.140	.351**	.558**	1					
			.273	.574	.520	.361	.008	.904	.101	.000	.000						
OI	3.86	0.70	-.031	.093	.078	.081	-.291**	.074	.083	.319**	.415**	.657**	1				
			.718	.275	.358	.343	.001	.383	.333	.000	.000	.000					
LMX	3.56	0.86	-.041	.055	.203*	-.044	-.376**	-.223**	.409**	.057	.479**	.325**	.205*	1			

OCB	5.17	0.98	.633	.517	.017	.604	.000	.008	.000	.505	.000	.000	.016			
ALTR			.009	.022	.155	.104	-.248**	-.123	.174*	.323**	.289**	.397**	.288**	.210*	1	
OCB	4.63	1.69	-.117	-.021	-.055	-.069	-.134	.071	-.009	.005	.054	.199*	.186*	-.064	.241**	1
COMP1			.169	.804	.520	.422	.115	.405	.913	.953	.528	.019	.029	.451	.004	
OCB	5.52	0.85	-.091	.038	.012	.078	-.208*	-.240**	.341**	-.029	.072	.180*	.170*	.096	.343**	.068
COMP2			.287	.657	.884	.362	.014	.004	.000	.732	.402	.034	.046	.262	.000	.427

Note: $n = 139$. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. HI = Horizontal Individualism, VI = Vertical Individualism, HC = Horizontal Collectivism, VC = Vertical Collectivism, External = External Locus of Control, Internal = Internal Locus of Control, SOC-11 = Sense of Coherence, NCP-5 = Normative Commitment Propensity, NC = Normative Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, OI = Organizational Identification, OCB Altr = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Altruism, OCB Comp1 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Compliance 1, OCB Comp2 = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Compliance 2.

5.4.2 Intercorrelations among study variables

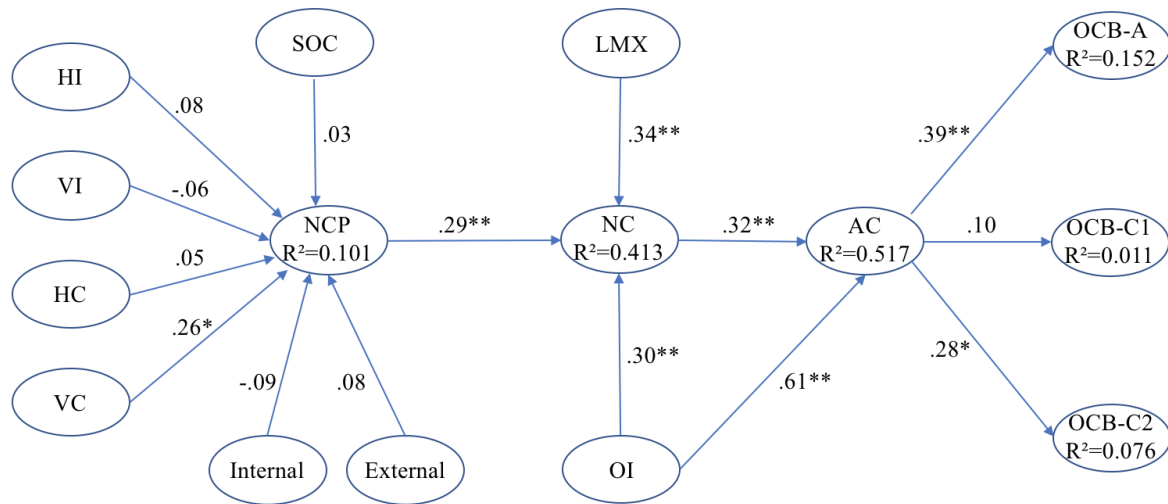
To test the relationships between the different variables, a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted. The intercorrelation matrix in table 5.3 provides an overview of all significant relationships. Reviewing the relationships between the different predisposition variables, VC was the only factor to have a positive significant relationship with NCP ($r = .29, p < 0.01$). To evaluate the relationship between pre- and post-organization variables, NCP had a significant relationship with NC ($r = .46, p < 0.01$), OI ($r = .32, p < 0.01$) and AC ($r = .35, p < 0.01$) indicating that specific predispositions developed prior to organizational entry affect work attitudes and behaviors. Reviewing the relationship between LMX, OI, NC, AC and dependent variable OCB, the analysis shows that OCB relates differently depending on the type of work-related behavior. Dependent variable OCB-Altruism was found to be positively related to LMX ($r = .21, p < 0.05$), OI ($r = .29, p < 0.01$), NC ($r = .29, p < 0.01$), and AC ($r = .40, p < 0.01$). Dependent variables OCB-Comp1 and OCB-Comp2 were positively related to OI ($r = .19, p < 0.01$, $r = .17, p < 0.01$) and AC ($r = .20, p < 0.01$, $r = .18, p < 0.01$) respectively, but not to LMX and NC. The difference in correlates between OCB-Altruism and OCB-Compliance is an indication that social exchange and social identity factors affect organizational citizenship behavior through different cognitive processes.

5.4.3 Path Analyses

To test the structural model, incorporating the effects of personal characteristics on commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry, and consequently the effects of social exchange and social identity factors on the development of work attitudes and behaviors, a path analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM (see figure 5.2). On measuring the original model, the full path analysis indicated that in terms of the personal characteristics, it was only Vertical Collectivism that had a significant effect on Normative Commitment Propensity ($r = 0.26, p < 0.05$). Vertical Collectivism contributed to 10,1% of the variance in Normative Commitment Propensity pre-organizational entry.

As for Normative Commitment post-organizational entry, 41,3% of its variance can be attributed to Normative Commitment Propensity, Leader-Member Exchange and Organizational Identification, highlighting the impact of both social exchange and social identity factors on the development of a base commitment mindset. Normative Commitment was found to fully mediate the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and Affective Commitment, and partially mediate the relationship between Organizational Identification and Affective Commitment (Chapter 4). Affective Commitment fully mediated the relationship between Normative Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and between Organizational Identification and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. As for Organizational Citizenship Behavior, only

the components Altruism and Compliance 2 were significantly affected by Affective Commitment, indicating that component Compliance 1 is a rest factor due to common method variance (see Chapter 4).



** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 5-2 Full model path analysis

Interestingly, when retesting the full model, Normative Commitment Propensity, besides Normative Commitment, was also found to have a significant relationship with Organizational Identification, $r = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$ (see figure 5.3). Normative Commitment Propensity is thus an attachment mindset affected mainly by cultural factors, which affect both the degree of organizational commitment and organizational identification post-organizational entry. It is possible that current predispositions not found to significantly relate to Normative Commitment Propensity still might affect commitment propensities based on different ancillary concepts (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Klein et al., 2012).

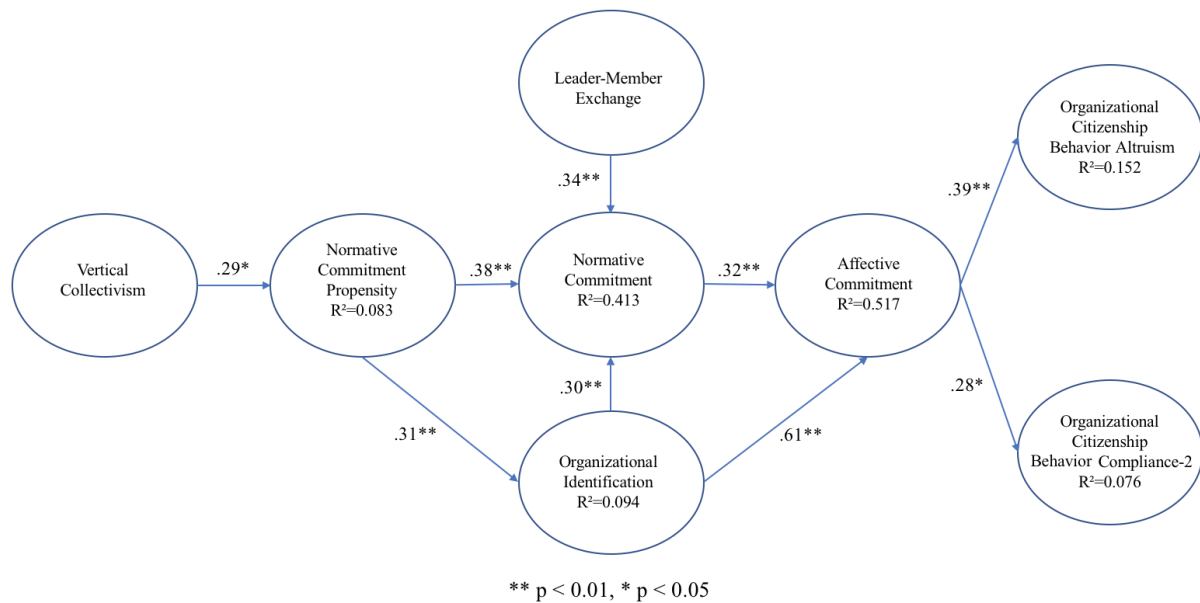


Figure 5-3 Final path analysis shows the significant hypothesized path co-efficients amongst the variables

5.5 Discussion

This study aimed to test a full model of commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry. The study evaluated the conditions under which normative commitment propensity is developed through personal characteristics, and how post-organizational entry normative commitment propensity affects commitment development, organizational identification and consequently work-related behaviors. Specific to this research study is the notion that normative commitment propensity is a personal characteristic reflecting a base commitment mindset, which transforms into other forms of commitment post-organizational entry. In past research, normative commitment has found less support as a stand-alone commitment mindset due to construct validity issues, hence this study aimed to re-evaluate and re-establish the role of normative commitment. Lastly, organizational citizenship behavior was tested as a dependent variable.

The path analysis of the full model provided little evidence that the proposed personal characteristics had significant impact on normative commitment propensity, a precursor believed to affect normative commitment post-organizational entry. The only variable which showed to have a significant relationship with normative commitment propensity was vertical collectivism, a cultural value reflecting obedience to group authority and the willingness to sacrifice personal needs to support the group. These results are in line with Wiener's normative view of organizational commitment (1982), expressing

that generalized views of loyalty and duty are determinants of a normative commitment mindset. Vertical collectivism was responsible for 8.3% of the variance in normative commitment propensity. It is possible that other personal characteristics not tested in this model, affecting normative beliefs, could have a significant effect on normative commitment propensity.

The impact of normative commitment propensity on normative commitment was significant. It can be argued that though not the same scales and wording were used to test normative commitment propensity and normative commitment, normative beliefs expressed in the two scales were very similar in nature and could have biased the results, suggesting a significant positive relationship. However, normative commitment was found in the final model to affect both normative commitment and organizational identification which indicates that normative beliefs affected through personal values have a significant effect on one's attachment to the organization through both commitment and identification processes. This study supports the standing that personal characteristics (or a pre-organizational mindset) affected through normative beliefs are a predictor of organizational attachment post-organizational entry.

In addition, the path analysis suggests that leader-member exchange and organizational identification partially or fully affect organizational citizenship behavior through normative commitment. Moreover, normative commitment was found to mediate the relationship between exchange and identification factors and affective commitment, providing evidence that normative commitment acts as a base commitment form (see Chapter 4 for a thorough analysis on the mediating effects of normative commitment).

The evaluation of exchange and identification factors on organizational citizenship behavior through organizational commitment suggested that the three-factor model of organizational citizenship behavior identified in Chapter 3 was actually a two-factor model. OCB Comp1, which consisted of three negatively worded questions (items 14, 15 and 16), was found in this study to be a remaining factor and did not have a significant relationship with commitment. In the final path analysis OCB Comp1 was dropped and OCB Altruism (items 1 – 7) and OCB Comp2 (Items 8 – 12) kept, reflecting citizenship behaviors related to helping others and general compliance.

Finally, the choice for using PLS path modeling (PLS-SEM) above the more commonly used co-variance based SEM (CB-SEM) in organizational behavior research was specific. First, the sample size ($n = 110$) used in the final model testing was relatively small. PLS-SEM is known to handle smaller sample sizes better than CB-SEM and therefore is a more robust structural modeling technique when sample size is an issue (e.g. Boomsma & Hoogland 2001; Reinart et al, 2009). Secondly, PLS-SEM is known to be beneficial

in the assessment of model development and theory testing. Though most of the relationships had already been validated independently in the previous studies, this study reconceptualized commitment development and the role of normative commitment both pre- and post-organizational entry, which was tested in a full model. Moreover, variation in normality with HC and a slight reliability issue with the NCP scale in Chapter 3 also preferred the usage of PLS SEM. PLS-SEM is often used to test and validate exploratory models avoiding many of the restrictive assumptions imposed by CB-SEM (e.g. Hair et al., 2016; Reinart et al, 2009).

5.6 Managerial implications

The findings from this research have implications for management practice. A key take-away from this study highlights the importance of past experiences on future behaviors. Though distal factors such as cultural and parental influences didn't show to have a huge effect on work behavior, the relationships found were significant enough to indicate that personal characteristics do indeed affect a pre-organizational commitment mindset, which in turn has an effect on work attitudes and behaviors. This study conceptualized a normative commitment mindset as a personal characteristic developing prior to organizational entry and forms a base (or default) commitment mindset, affecting organizational commitment post-organizational entry. The only predisposition found in this research study to affect a pre-commitment mindset, albeit weak, was a collectivistic work value reflecting obedience to group authority and a willingness to sacrifice personal needs to support the group. These attributes are strongly linked to the term loyalty, which like commitment is a psychological bond, but differentiates itself on the basis of self-sacrifice. It seems that these personal attributes not only facilitate organizational attachment but also promote a reflective mindset capable of adjusting to new circumstances and promoting altruistic and compliance behaviors serving the collective of the organization.

Another interesting insight relevant to organizational practitioners is the discovery that a pre-commitment mindset doesn't only affect organizational commitment but also affects organizational identification. This means that a pre-commitment mindset based on normative beliefs strongly affects organizational attachment through different cognitive processes, emphasizing the importance of not only evaluating knowledge and professional skills during recruitment and selection, but also assessing personal characteristics such as values, attitudes, and personality.

Finally, this research also emphasizes the role of management and its ability to empower people. Similar to other research findings, effective leadership and management skills

were found to affect employee commitment and engagement. As the study findings show, supporting positive work experiences, balanced exchanges and clear identification with organizational goals and values throughout the organization is a feeding ground for psychological attachment, employee performance and organizational support.

5.7 Limitations & Future Research

There are several limitations in this research study which should be noted. First, as all data was collected from a single source using self-reports, common method bias could have affected the relationships between constructs. This research study attempted to limit the effects of common method bias by assuring anonymity in participation both prior and during the survey taking. Though attitudinal constructs are best collected using self-reports, future research could consider replicating this study using both Supervisor and Employee reports of OCB to overcome the effects of common method bias. Second, this study had a cross-sectional design, which limits the inference of causality amongst relationships. Future research could consider using a longitudinal or (quasi-) experimental design to test for causality. Third, it can be argued that LMX and OI constructs measure different levels of analysis. However, for the purpose of this research study, LMX was used as a targeted measure of exchange rather than a more general concept. Future research would do well by testing other exchange-based constructs such as Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Justice. Lastly, the conceptualization of commitment propensity in this study from a normative perspective found little relationship with the chosen predispositions. Future research would do well to identify and test other personal characteristics affecting normative beliefs or even consider conceptualizing a different form of commitment propensity (Cohen, 2007). More research is required to further investigate the merit of using normative commitment as a default commitment model and its relationship with other antecedents and outcomes.

5.8 Conclusions

This study tested a structural model to evaluate the effect of personal characteristics on commitment development pre- and post-organizational entry and its effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Structural equation modeling was used to test a path model of the proposed relationships. Study findings suggest that personal characteristics affecting normative beliefs significantly affect normative commitment propensity which has been found to affect both normative commitment and organizational identification post-organizational entry. Subsequently, leader-member exchange and organizational identification affect organizational citizenship behavior through normative and

affective commitment. Normative commitment was found to be a base commitment form, fully mediating leader-member exchange and partially mediating organizational identification with affective commitment. Empirical findings from this study suggest that mechanisms to develop psychological attachment to the organization in a dynamic business environment require both the identification of selected personal characteristics in new hires and the facilitation of positive exchange and organizational identification processes.

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Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

Organizational attachment has been one of the most investigated concepts within organization behavioral research in the past 50 years. From all attachment theories, organizational commitment is probably the most investigated construct reflecting psychological attachment within the employee – organization relationship. The Organizational Commitment construct has seen various definitions and conceptualizations in the past years to reflect the basis upon which organizational commitment develops and the effect it has on employees working within organizations. Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment has been considered the most dominant model to measure organizational commitment within organizations. However, the three-component model of organizational commitment has received much critique due to conceptual, methodological and measurement concerns related to its multi-dimensionality. Key concerns have concentrated on construct validity issues related to both the normative commitment and the continuance commitment component of the model and its value in predicting behaviors other than turnover (intentions). Researchers have called for new research to address these concerns and to advance both its conceptualization and its application, especially in today's changing nature of work.

This research study has responded to this call by 1. reviewing the extant literature on attachment theory in organizations with a focus on social exchange theory and social identity theory, 2. addressing key issues relating to the three-component model of organizational commitment, 3. proposed a new theoretical framework incorporating both attachment theories to address current methodological and conceptual issues and create a new model of commitment, and 4. empirically tested key propositions from this framework to advance theory and practice in organizational attachment development. The following will summarize and discuss the major findings from this study.

6.2 Discussion & Conclusions

6.2.1 Addressing key issues regarding the organizational commitment construct

Though Meyer & Allen's three-component model is regarded as the most dominant model in the organizational commitment literature and currently is still the most applied model in organizational attachment research, it has received various critique by organizational behavior researchers. The bulk of the critique has focused on its conceptualization, measurement issues related to scale definitions, and construct validity issues of the normative commitment and continuance commitment components of the model. Moreover, the value of a multi-dimensional model has been brought into question, as

empirical findings related to its testing have suggested that affective commitment is the only commitment mindset which captures an attitudinal form of commitment having effect on various work behaviors (e.g. Sturges et al., 2005; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Researchers have recommended that affective commitment be the only commitment component to be used in future organizational commitment research, suggesting a return to a unidimensional model of organizational commitment. Lastly, the changing nature of work also affects how people build psychological attachments with their organizations, organizational commitment specifically, questioning the value of commitment as a relevant organizational bonding mechanism.

This research study has suggested that the conceptualization and measurement of organizational commitment return to a unidimensional model of commitment in the workplace to help address key concerns related to its current conceptualization. However, this study departs from recent proposals to only use the affective commitment component in future organizational commitment research. Accordingly, theoretical grounds have been provided for the relevance of keeping other commitment forms other than affective commitment, such as normative commitment and calculative commitment. This research focused on studying normative commitment, the least known component within Allen & Meyer's three-component model of organizational commitment, to re-establish its value within the organizational commitment literature and to support an improved reconceptualization of organizational commitment. Studying the theoretical underpinnings of normative commitment provided insights into its nature and development over time. In fact, this study theorized that normative commitment plays a critical role in understanding how a commitment mindset develops not just during organizational life, but also prior to it. Normative commitment has therefore been defined as a default or base commitment mindset which initially forms prior to organizational entry and functions as a reflective mindset allowing other commitment forms to develop post-organizational entry. Furthermore, it has been suggested that one's propensity to become committed upon organizational entry depends on early pre-organizational experiences such as cultural influences and upbringing. These influences have been characterized as predispositions reflecting individual differences. In other words, normative commitment is a default commitment mindset formed over time reflecting personal beliefs and values and forms the basis for the development of other commitment mindsets post-organizational entry.

This new conceptualization of organizational commitment addresses some of the major concerns found in the literature, suggesting the need to return to a unidimensional model of commitment, the importance of the normative commitment component within organizational commitment development, the function of normative commitment as a base commitment mindset upon organizational entry, its relationship with affective

commitment and effect on work behaviors. This conceptualization provides theoretical reasoning to the high correlation found between normative and affective commitment in this and previous studies.

6.2.2 Review of the extant literature and proposal of a new theoretical framework

Besides methodological and empirical considerations, the changing nature of work has been influential in how this research study had aimed to advance theory and practice. The changing nature of work reflecting flexible work arrangements, virtual working environments, globalization, rapid innovation, and the rise of the contingent worker, demands a re-evaluation of the utility of organizational commitment in modern-day organizational research. Though commitment could be argued to be less important in flexible and fast-changing environments, attachment to work and organizations remains critical, especially in times when human capital is considered more important than other capital resources (Fulmer & Ployhart, 2014) and talent management is contingent with sustained competitive advantage (De Long & Davenport, 2003; Devi, 2009; Schramm, 2006).

For this purpose, this research study looked at two focal theories of attachment, namely Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory, to help investigate the development of attachment in organizations. Theoretical investigation of both these theories helped construct a new theoretical model of psychological attachment within the employee – organization relationship. Key propositions from this framework were tested in three empirical studies which will be addressed next.

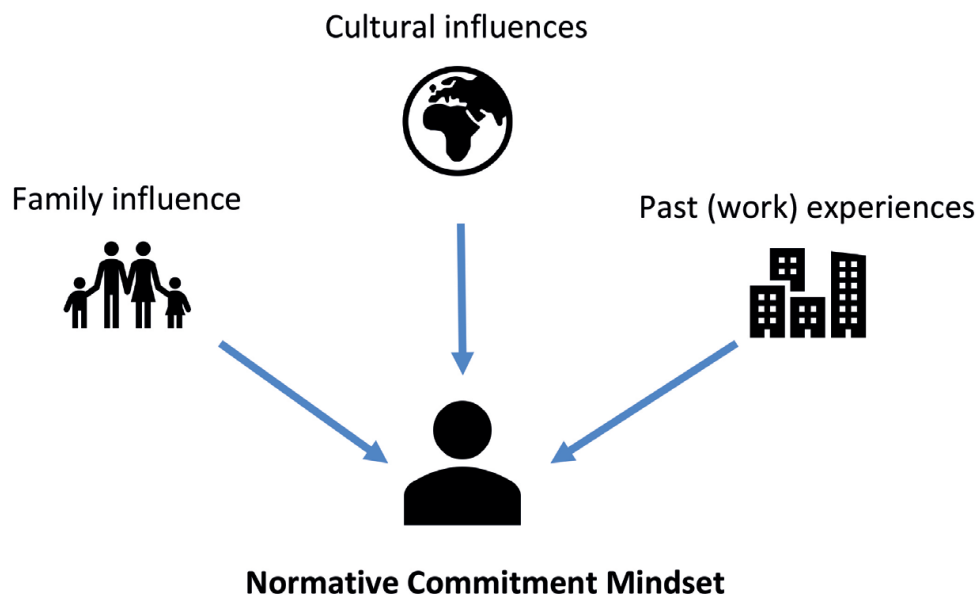
6.2.3 Research Questions & Findings

To assess the new theoretical framework of attachment in organizations, propositions put forward were tested in Chapter 3, 4 and 5. The scope of this research study only allowed for the testing of key ideas put forward in Chapter 2 and hence the following propositions were empirically tested:

6.2.3.1 Personal Characteristics and Normative Commitment Propensity and their effect on work attitudes and behavior.

A major contribution of this research study was the theoretical development of normative commitment as a default or base commitment mindset which evolves prior to and during organizational life. It was asserted that commitment is not a mindset that just evolves once one becomes an employee of an organization and that there should be theoretical ground to proclaim its existence prior to entering the organization. In this study, a normative commitment mindset was suggested to act as a moral compass, formed through internal and external forces inducing behaviors seen as morally the 'right' thing to do. This normative mindset thus takes shape throughout one's early

upbringing and continues to develop throughout one's organizational life and through other significant social group interactions. Chapter 3 & 5 examined this proposition by first testing the impact of personal characteristics on the development of a normative commitment propensity pre-organizational entry, normative commitment propensity's relationship with normative commitment post-organizational entry, and finally its development into an affective commitment mindset.



Factors influencing normative commitment propensity. Interestingly, when testing the a priori hypothesized predispositions having a relationship with normative commitment propensity, Vertical Collectivism (VC) and Internal Locus of Control (Locus Ext) were found to have a significant relationship with normative commitment propensity. However, when conducting the path analysis of the full model in Chapter 5, only VC was found to have a significant effect on work attitudes and behaviors tested in this research. This finding indicates that a normative mindset is most affected through a willingness to sacrifice personal needs for the group and one's willingness to subdue oneself to group authority. This proves that distal personal attributions of a normative nature do affect work behavior, specifically pro-social behaviors such as altruism and compliance. Sense of Coherence was not found to be significantly related to normative commitment propensity. This doesn't mean that other commitment propensities based on different ancillary formats (instrumental based for example) can't be affected by Locus of Control and Sense of Coherence (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Klein et al., 2012) or that these personal characteristics don't affect behavior in their own way through different psychological pathways other than a commitment mindset. Characterizing normative commitment propensity, based on learned or genetic characteristics, is a potential marker for identification. However, it should be mentioned that viewing innate abilities

as absolute determinants of behavior is incomplete and should also consider the effects of social and environmental influences and the power of mindset on behavioral outcomes (Dweck, 2006). Moreover, recent research in the field of behavioral neuroscience and biological psychology, and to some extent developmental psychology as well, claim to be able to explain the biological link on how nurture affects nature (e.g. Gottlieb, 1991; Meaney, 2010). This new field of research is called epigenetics and highlights the effects of external factors (e.g. socio, psycho-socio, environment) on the way genes are expressed, potentially switching specific genes 'on' or 'off' to behave differently than genetically sequenced (e.g. Bird, 2007; Caspi, 2003).

The relationship between normative commitment propensity and normative commitment. Limited research effort has focused on the development of organizational commitment propensity and its actual relationship with commitment upon organizational entry. Some researchers have found that there is a relationship between commitment propensity and actual commitment (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982; Pierce and Dunham, 1987). As previously mentioned, this study conceptualized a normative commitment mindset as a mindset which develops prior to and during organizational life. To test this proposition, a normative commitment mindset was operationalized as normative commitment propensity pre-organizational entry and as normative commitment post-organizational entry. Chapter 3 & 5 tested the relationship between normative commitment propensity and actual normative commitment and confirmed that normative commitment propensity relates positively to normative commitment. Interestingly, the path analysis testing the full conceptual framework in Chapter 5 indicated that normative commitment does not only have a significant relationship with normative commitment upon organizational entry but also has a significant relationship with organizational identification.

This finding is a significant contribution toward the existing body of knowledge on organizational commitment (propensity) development. First, this finding supports the assertion that a normative commitment mindset forms prior to organizational entry creating a basis for organizational commitment forming upon organizational entry. Forming personal and situational factors, inherited or shaped throughout early childhood and beyond, play a significant role in one's ability to become attached. Second, this finding indicates that a pre-organizational normative commitment mindset is not only an indicator of normative commitment but also an indicator of organizational identification. This asserts that conscious and unconscious normative beliefs, norms and collective values guide identification and exchange cognitions. Lastly, this finding also indicates that normative commitment propensity affects organizational commitment development through both identification and exchange processes, indicating the need to conceptualize, test and measure identification processes within future organizational

commitment research. Metaphorically, normative commitment propensity, organizational identification and normative commitment can be better understood as the interior and exterior of a moral compass. Normative commitment propensity relates to the normative values and beliefs systems operating as the magnetized needle at its heart to help identify and navigate toward one's true north within the earth's magnetic field. Organizational identification, on the other hand, being the magnetic polarization between one's magnetic north (personal beliefs, norms and values) and one's geographical north (environmental influences). At moderate latitudes, a moral compass works well, but the closer one gets to geographical poles, the stronger the magnetic decline becomes to indicate one's true north; highlighting the positive and negative effects of identification on one's sense of moral obligation, but its profound effect on affective commitment and actual behavior. Lastly, a moral compass can be faulty by design causing a magnetic decline to happen from the inside out, but it can also be adjusted over time to re-align with one's true north.

6.2.3.2 Normative Commitment acts as a base commitment which precedes other commitment forms (Affective Commitment).

Normative Commitment as a base commitment mindset. Another finding from Chapter 3 is that an affective commitment mindset is capable to quickly return to a normative commitment mindset even after changing position. This interesting finding suggests that rapid commitment formation is subject to identification influences, allowing new commitment mindsets to form not only on the basis of the evaluation or awareness of (un)balanced exchanges but also due to taking on new identities such as a new organizational position or job title. Both situations induce a cognitive response based on situational cues from the environment, reinforcing the ability of a base commitment mindset to respond to new circumstances. Moreover, the proposed socio-cognitive model of commitment has merit based on these findings, as a perception or recognition of a new identity can trigger an existing commitment form back to a base commitment mode.

Normative commitment and its ability to develop into other commitment forms. In addition, Chapter 3 tested the development of normative commitment over time and findings suggest that normative commitment behaves ambivalently depicting its reflective capacity due to cognitions of new situations and experiences. It was initially suggested that the level of normative commitment gradually decreases, potentially giving way to other commitment forms such as affective commitment, but it is also possible that normative commitment is in continuous flux if critical new situations occur which activate the reflective nature of this commitment mindset to help guide behavior. These assertions are grounded in dual process theory (Greene et al., 2001) from neuroscience, which states that human moral judgment is based on subsets of competing rational and

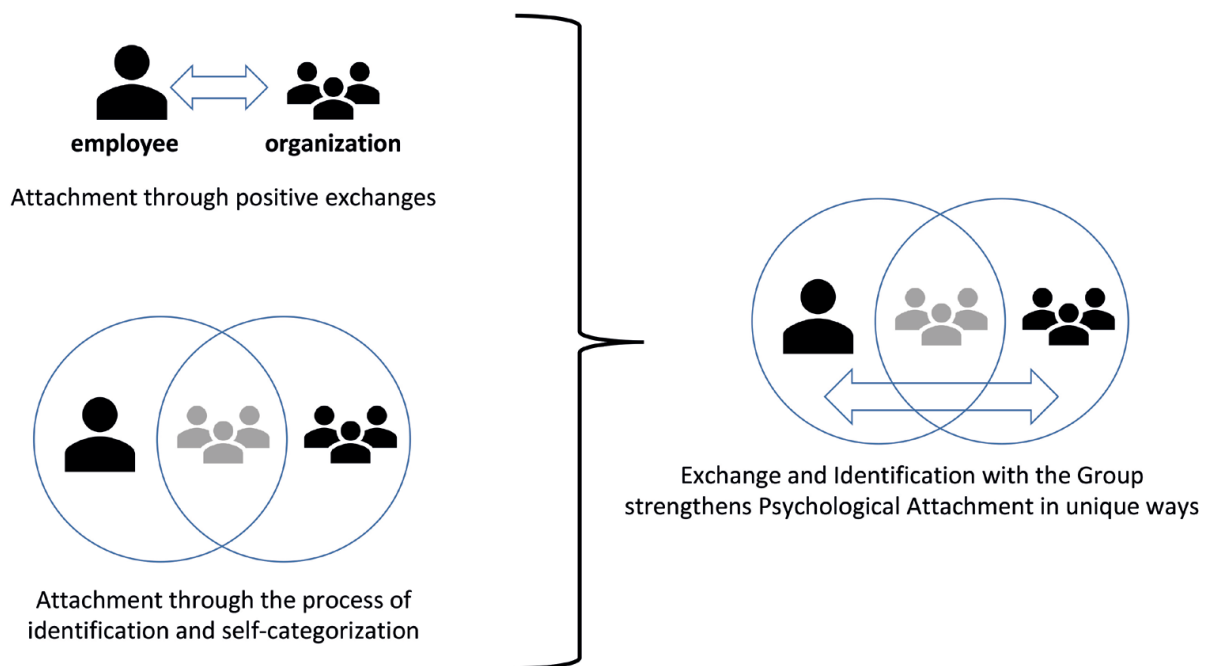
emotional-based reasoning. To test these assumptions concerning the changing nature of normative commitment and the dynamic nature of organizational commitment development, further (and longer) longitudinal investigation is required, which future research could consider doing.

Affective commitment fully mediates the relationship between normative commitment and work behaviors. Findings from Chapter 4 provided evidence that AC fully mediated the relationship between NC and OCB. This provides preliminary support that NC is a precursor to AC and can be considered as a base commitment mindset. This study responds to the recent calls to return to a unidimensional model of organizational commitment and adds that affective commitment not be the only commitment mindset to be considered in future organizational commitment research. Evidence from Chapter 4 supports the notion that NC is a base commitment mindset and that NC should be considered a valuable construct in understanding how organizational commitment develops. In lines with the metaphor of the moral compass, being able to stay on course ignites action by providing a sense of purpose and direction. Our moral compass is merely guiding and checked when required, but without it, our actions feel less secure and powerful.

6.2.4 The effects of exchange-based and identification-based factors on work attitudes and behaviors.

The effect of Leader-Membership Exchange and Organizational Identification on Normative Commitment and Affective Commitment. Another major contribution of this research study was the conversion of two major organizational attachment constructs to better explain attachment development within organizations. These two constructs are organizational commitment and organizational identification. Both organizational commitment and organizational identification bind employees to organizations in their own specific way. Organizational commitment, which is described as a binding force formed and strengthened through a balanced reciprocal exchange of economic and socio-emotional commodities, creates a psychological attachment between an entity and its focal target. Organizational identification, on the other hand, creates a psychological attachment with an entity and its focal target through a sense of relatedness (with a social group) and the incorporation of prototypical characteristics into one's own identity. This conversion of theories, as a way to uncover underlying mechanisms of the psychological – performance link, was tested in Chapter 4 & 5 and findings suggest that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and Organizational Identification (OI) effect both normative commitment and affective commitment. Normative commitment was found to fully mediate the relationship between LMX and AC, which indicates that the reciprocal nature of high-quality LMX relationships is critical to form positive attitudes within the employee – employer relationship. Normative commitment (NC) partially

mediated the relationship between OI and AC. Furthermore, OI was found to have a direct effect on AC. The effect of identification on work attitudes is therefore twofold. In one way, it creates emotional attachment through the perceived fit of values and goals between the employee and the organization creating a sense of oneness. Additionally, a sense of belongingness helps facilitate reciprocation amongst organizational members, which in turn also promotes emotional attachment. These findings indicate that LMX and OI affect different commitment mindsets in unique ways, which strengthen the development of organizational attachment.



The effect of Leader-Membership Exchange and Organizational Identification on Organizational Citizenship Behavior. LMX and OI were found to affect Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) differently. This is best understood by examining the mediating relationship between NC and AC with OCB. NC was found to have a significant relationship with the OCB-Altruism component of OCB, indicating that a moral-based commitment mindset has a strong relationship with helping behaviors. Altruistic behaviors, though not always directly affecting task performance, play an important role in enhancing the contextual performance (social and psychological environment) which has an indirect effect on task performance (Organ 1997). AC on the other hand, was found to have a significant relationship with both OCB-Altruism and OCB-Compliance indicating that AC impacts both helping behaviors and behaviors related to general compliance. Interestingly, OI was also found to be related to both OCB-Altruism and OCB-Compliance components of OCB. These results are meaningful as it indicates the unique contribution of LMX and OI on different OCB work behaviors and at the same time uncovers the underlying psychological linkages governing these relationships. In

lines with the moral compass metaphor, the degree and quality of exchanges reflect the boat's interaction with the sea. When seas are calm, the exchanges are balanced creating a pleasant sailing experience; when storming weather arrives, and exchanges become unbalanced, all hands are on deck to maintain or to change course; but when the ship is wrecked, the journey must be abandoned reflecting the violation of the exchange relationship and a possible point of no return. Identification on the other hand, reflects the sense of self versus others and the sense of self in relation to others. The magnetic power of identification can abruptly change one's direction, demagnetizing the moral compass from its true north or keeping it further on track.

Conclusively, this study has contributed toward the further understanding of how attachment to organizations develops within the employee – organizational relationship. First, this research study has answered a call to re-evaluate the mechanisms underlying psychological attachment development within organizations, specifically organizational commitment and organizational identification. Second, this research has attempted to address major methodological issues found in the extant literature related to organizational commitment. It has done this by re-examining Allen & Meyer's (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment and addressed methodological issues previously identified. Third, this research suggests, that future conceptualizations of commitment take a parsimonious approach, returning to a unidimensional model, to better grasp different commitment mindsets which have value to be tested independently from each other. Forth, coinciding with the previous contribution, normative commitment has been found to serve a purpose as an independent commitment mindset, and a very important one for that matter, as a normative commitment mindset was found to explain how commitment develops prior and after organizational entry. This is a major contribution to the organizational commitment literature, as past researchers have disregarded normative commitment as a serious commitment form to be used in future commitment research. Fifth, normative commitment facilitates the development of other commitment forms as a base commitment mindset, activated by both organizational exchange and organizational identification processes which validates a socio-cognitive model of commitment formation. Lastly, affective commitment can return back to a cognitive commitment mindset even when the exchange relationship is balanced and fair such as the transitioning to a new position or department (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010). This flexibility in mindset allows for new organizational influences to affect interaction with others and for new bonds to develop.

It is clear from this research that multiple bonds or attachments need to be identified within organizational commitment research if psychological attachment formation is to be better understood, especially under the changing nature of work. In addition, a new definition of a committed workforce should be provided taking into account

various attachments within the employee – organizational relationship and their reflective ability. In an attempt to advance future conceptualizations of commitment in the organization, the following definition to organizational commitment is provided based on the application of social exchange theory and social identity theory to enhance psychological attachment in today's changing nature of work:

“Organizational commitment is a dynamic and evolving psychological attachment mindset, which is formed prior to and during organizational life by both personal and social attributions, affecting an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization”.



Chapter 7

Future Research

7.1 Further Research

This research study has contributed to the advancement of both the conceptualization and utilization of organizational commitment in modern times. This was achieved by 1.) addressing pressing theoretical and empirical related issues connected to the dominant view of commitment development in the workplace and by 2.) developing a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment based on social exchange and social identity that better reflects commitment development in today's changing nature of work. However, this research study is not without its limitations and possibilities for re-evaluation and expansion are plentiful. The following will be a summary of the key limitations of this study with recommendations for further research.

First, psychological attachment within work relationships was found in this study to be affected mainly by social exchange and social identity processes. Though the extant research provides a solid theoretical explanation for the selection and convergence of both theories, there are other attachment theories which provide an explanation to how psychological bonds emerge and strengthen within the employee – organizational relationship (Klein et al., 2012).

Second, the scope of this research study was to test key propositions from the proposed theoretical framework. Those propositions not tested in this study should be empirically validated in future studies. For example, the development of normative commitment into other commitment forms suggests that besides affective commitment also continuance commitment can evolve depending on how the exchange relationship between an employee and its focal target are reciprocally and non-reciprocally affected (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010). The proposed model should therefore be further validated.

Third, a normative commitment mindset was defined in this study as a default commitment form substantiating its use in future commitment studies and as an explanation for commitment propensity formation pre-organizational entry. Other commitment forms should be investigated such as an instrumental commitment propensity to validate the existence of other ancillary commitment forms (Cohen, 2007).

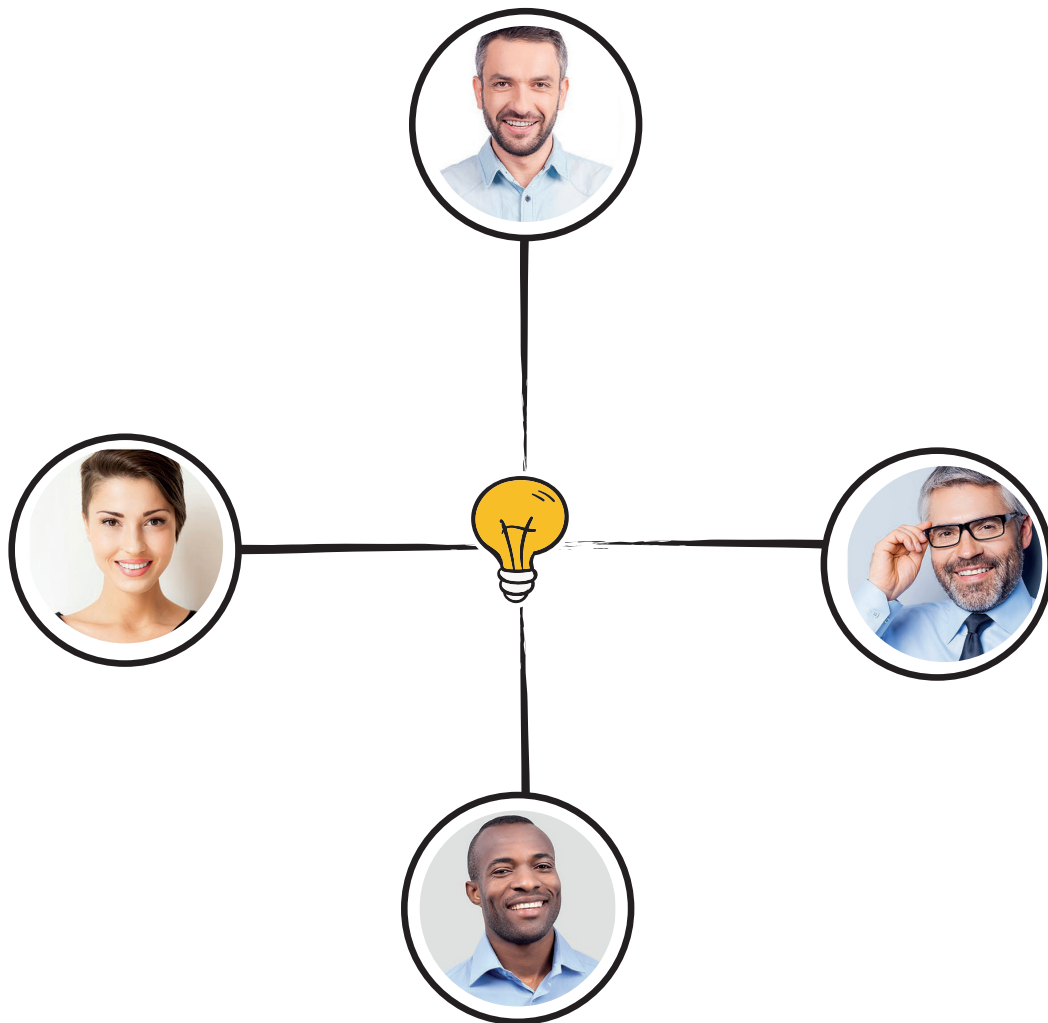
Forth, personal characteristics not tested in this research study should also be considered in future research due to study findings confirming that personal characteristics affecting normative beliefs affect normative commitment propensity. In addition, the possibility that other ancillary commitment propensities exist require conceptualization and testing together with corresponding personal characteristics.

Fifth, this study tested the development of normative commitment over time in a longitudinal study. Chapter 3 tested normative commitment over three time points not extending longer than 6 months in duration. Future research could conduct longer longitudinal studies to test the development of newcomer commitment as studies have suggested that commitment cannot be fully understood by newcomers' post-organizational entry, and that commitment takes on new meaning during one's organizational career (Vandenberg & Self, 1993). In addition, other methodologies can be applied in future research, as one-way ANOVA's and path analysis were applied to measure the development of normative commitment over time. Researchers could consider applying a mixed methods approach to investigate the development of commitment over time.

Sixth, this research study asserted to investigate the dynamic nature of commitment by proposing a new theoretical framework of commitment development over time. However, the dynamic interplay asserted in the model is not clear. The idea of a dynamic model of commitment helps explain how the changing nature of work relationships impacts commitment development within organizations. Future researchers could refine the model by better highlighting the reciprocal influences and dynamic interplay over time and apply other research methods to better capture such changes.

Seventh, in Chapter 4 leader-member exchange is used to reflect an exchange relationship affecting normative commitment and organizational identification is used to reflect identification factors affecting normative commitment. Though leader-member exchange was used to reflect a more general mode of exchange, it can be argued that it differs from organizational identification at the level of analysis. Future research could re-assess other exchange and identification factors in a similar research approach, focusing purely on processes at the individual level, team level or organizational level.

Lastly, all data was collected from a single source using self-reports. It is highly probable that common method bias could have affected the relationships between constructs. In addition, specifically framed question groups could have also affected survey results, which was highlighted in Chapter 4 & 5. Future research could consider using supervisor reports in addition to self-reports to help minimize the effects of common method bias.



Chapter 8

Managerial Recommendations

8.1 Recommendations to practice

Employee attachment to the organization is an important matter for any leader to consider in a world where talent means organizational competitiveness. Based on the findings from this research, the following recommendations are presented to managers and organizational leaders who are interested in promoting a committed workforce within their organization while meeting the requirements of organizational structure and human resource policies to fit today's rapidly changing nature of work.

8.1.1 Creating and enhancing organizational attachment throughout the talent management cycle using commitment and identification strategies

The development of commitment in organizations is the outcome of a(n) (un) balanced exchange of economic (pay, benefits) and non-economic commodities (support, recognition, trust). When the exchange relationship is balanced and in line with the expectations of the employee and the organization, research shows that an affective commitment mindset can be shaped. Emotional-based commitment has been found to have the strongest and most durable impact on various work-related behaviors (Armstrong-Strassen, 2006; Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Kuvaas, 2006; Mercurio, 2015; Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Liefoghe, 2005; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), which has a positive effect on organizational performance. Contrarily, when the exchange relationship becomes unbalanced (or suddenly altered) a more rational (or instrumental) mindset emerges creating a stronger awareness for the cost and benefits of the exchange relationship (Ballinger & Rockmann, 2010), leaving it more vulnerable to unmet expectations and potentially hampering organizational performance. Today's rapidly changing nature of work also provides challenges to fostering strong positive commitment mindsets.

To foster a strong culture of commitment within the organization, this research suggests that managers should consider the following strategies throughout the whole talent management cycle:

Recruitment & Selection Strategies. Identify and select organizational candidates based on a variety of selection criteria involving skills, knowledge, experience, motivation and attitude. Especially predispositions have been found in this research to affect the development of commitment and organizational behaviors. This finding confirms the importance of considering personal characteristics as a key selection criterion if commitment development is important to the organization. Interview-based and psychometric testing for personal characteristics affecting normative beliefs should be included in the hiring process. Interestingly, research has also found that personal characteristics can moderate the effects of certain stimuli on commitment development,

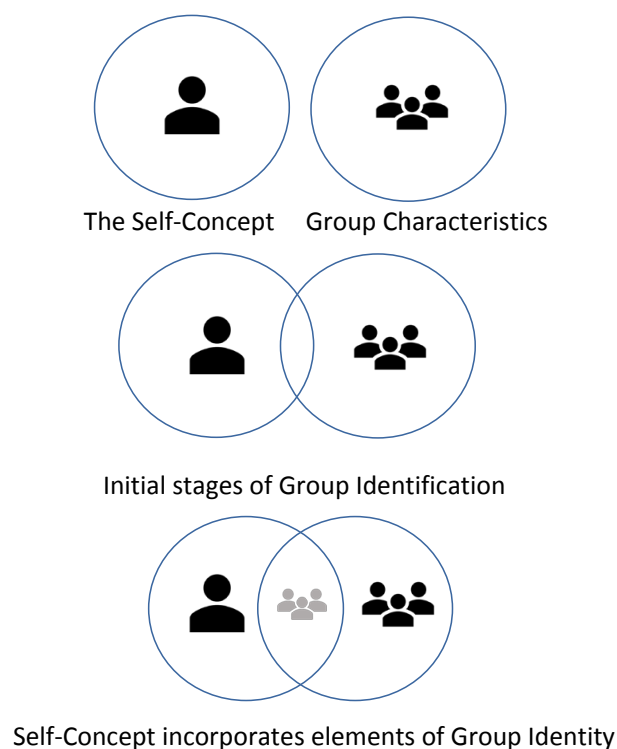
either strengthening or weakening the effects of commitment (e.g. Chiu et al., 2005; Meyer et al., 2002; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). This could be particularly interesting when identifying candidates who are more resilient to less commitment generating factors or when identifying less attachment-needed candidates. However, it should also be mentioned that solely using psychometrics as a recruitment and selection device, is limited in predicting work behaviors over time. Recent research suggests that intelligence and personality are not fixed, indicating that people can develop new skills and traits over time (Dweck, 2006). This also means that durable traits (e.g. attitude) can be changed if enough effort, time and money is put into their development. This is a consideration to both the employee and the organization. Organizations with a short-term or long-term perspective need to consider current and future potential and the organization's abilities and values around personal development when recruiting and selecting (and potentially developing) new hires. From an employee side, one's belief in being able to develop new skills and traits and one's willingness and ability to learn from mistakes is equally important and should be thoroughly reviewed in line with the organization's objectives and employee's needs. The focus on predispositions, personal characteristics, and attitude as a potential selection criterion highlights the '*hire for attitude, train for skills*' creed often heard in talent management practices.

Realistic Job Previews. Studies suggest that providing Realistic Job Previews is an important way to enhance attachment toward the organization as it sets clear expectations of what is offered to and required from a job candidate. Realistic Job Previews help candidates assess fit with the job, the organization and its values potentially promoting a stronger attachment as a result (Phillips, 1998). Human Resource Managers are recommended to use realistic job previews to help foster organizational attachment post-organizational entry.

Employee Engagement Strategies. Newcomer socialization strategies: In line with the research findings, socialization plays an important role in turning a new employee into an organizational member (Feldman, 1981). First, socialization helps the newcomer navigate organizational life and understand what is generally expected from him or her. As a way to deal with the uncertainty of the new situation, newcomers will start to identify with other organizational members which in turn facilitates the development of organizational relationships and value congruence. This process of identification allows for newcomers to bond with the organization and to steadily instill organizational norms and beliefs to help navigate organizational life. In addition to identification, the provisioning of support, training and other organizational exchange commodities creates a need in newcomers to reciprocate with time and effort toward the organization and its members, fostering an exchange relationship. Newcomer socialization through a systematic on-boarding process is an important practice and immersion experience for

managers to facilitate and engage in as it forms a strong basis of attachment development within the organization.

Organizational Identity and its impact on work attitudes and behaviors. Organizations should aim to become or emulate visionary companies (Collins & Porras, 2000) articulating a clear ideology. Visionary companies create a clear and stable identity based on strong core values with which employees can identify with and, in turn, increases organizational attachment in the form of commitment and identification. As was found in this research study, commitment or ‘becoming committed’ is preceded by a form of organizational identification. Organizations that are able to maintain and communicate a consistent identity based on strong values, norms and beliefs are able to foster strong psychological bonds with their employees even in times of change. Other researchers have found comparable findings and have provided similar conclusions (Hatum, 2007; Hatum et al., 2008; Hatum & Pettigrew, 2006). In times when talent management provides a competitive edge to organizations, fostering a strong group identity is critical to business continuity and sustained competitive advantage.



Organizational identification has also been linked to the group engagement model (Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003), which explains that individual behavior is influenced by how the group influences individual cognitions about oneself (Blader & Tyler, 2009). Strong social identities toward the organization can evoke behaviors toward the organization's image, interests, welfare and success (Blader, Van Knippenberg, & Sleebos, 2008). Managers

are therefore recommended to create strong organizational identification to promote organizational attachment and organizational promoting behaviors over time.

Strong values and identity have also been linked to various kinds of positive effects. Core values and consistent beliefs over time have been found to create a sense of belonging, pride, trust, stability, predictability and loyalty (Alvesson, 2000). In times of organizational change, employees experience various kinds of negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, uncertainty, instability and mistrust. It seems that the positive emotions generated through a strong organizational identification can potentially counteract the negative emotions experienced during change and uncertainty. It has been found that in times of major change a stable organizational identity, based on organizational characteristics employees can psychologically identify with, is able to better attach organizational members to their organization than non-organizational attributes (Gustafson & Reger, 1995; Hatum, 2007).

Having strong core values by itself is not a recipe for success alone. Continuing down the line of organizational value creation, it is also important to consider the type of organizational values and beliefs an organization should possess. Organizational values that represent rigid stability, fear of change, no creativity and strong individualism would not fare well with the conditions of today's working environment. Interestingly, strong social identification has also been found to relate to negative sentiments such as in-group bias and reluctance to change (Herrbach, 2006), which could hamper organizational development when needed. It is therefore recommended that managers cultivate a clear understanding of the effects of identity on organizational behavior and develop strategies which promote behaviors in favor of organizational success and sustainability.

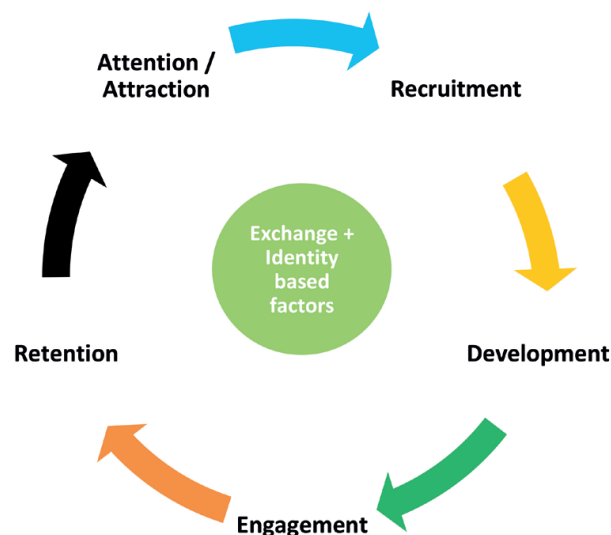
Retention Strategies. Social identity and organizational culture are often referred to as the organizational glue that keeps people together (Goffee & Jones, 1996). Organizational (cultural) values help employees interpret how to conduct oneself and provide an organizational lens on how to deal with organizational issues. Organizational retention strategies have focused mainly on creating positive exchanges between the employee and the employer as a way to foster and maintain psychological attachment. Positive transactional and socio-emotional exchanges have been found to improve job satisfaction and organizational commitment which lead to higher retention.

Identification-based retention strategies help foster organizational attachment through different psychological mechanisms. In line with the proposed socio-cognitive model from this study, identification-based strategies are capable of creating a sense of oneness with the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), which in turn intensifies the level of organizational attachment an employee experiences. The more identified an

employee, the more he or she aims to remain with the organization and to behave in line with organizational norms and beliefs, as one's group membership helps construct one's own identity. Interestingly, the theory states that the process of identification enables the incorporation of the group's prototypical characteristics into one's own identity, which de-individualizes the employee and promotes self-sacrificing behaviors to benefit the organization. This could mean that highly identified employees would be willing to serve the organization by voluntarily leaving if it would benefit the organization's well-being or prospects. Group serving behaviors are known to stimulate the psychological and social context of the work environment, which affects the effective and efficient running of the organization. Moreover, a 'WE' perspective to work was also found to be related to personal hardiness, which highlights the value of social identity on personal development and resilience. Especially in today's rapidly changing business environment, organizations would do well to create strong social bonds internally by utilizing the power of 'WE', which can benefit the organization and its employees in multiple ways.

Finally, the combination of exchange-based and identification-based factors as an attachment strategy could prove beneficial in retaining employees. Study findings suggest that identification and exchange can have enhancing or counteracting effects on each other. If in the case an employee has a low exchange-based commitment toward the organization, team or supervisor, a strong identification can counter this mindset which could potentially keep the employee with the organization and allow time for new balanced exchange relationships to form. In reverse, a low identification with the organization can be countered by a high exchange-based commitment toward the organization, supervisor or even profession. Managers are recommended to focus on creating organizational attachment through both exchange-based and identification-based mechanisms to improve organizational retention and build employee and organizational resilience.

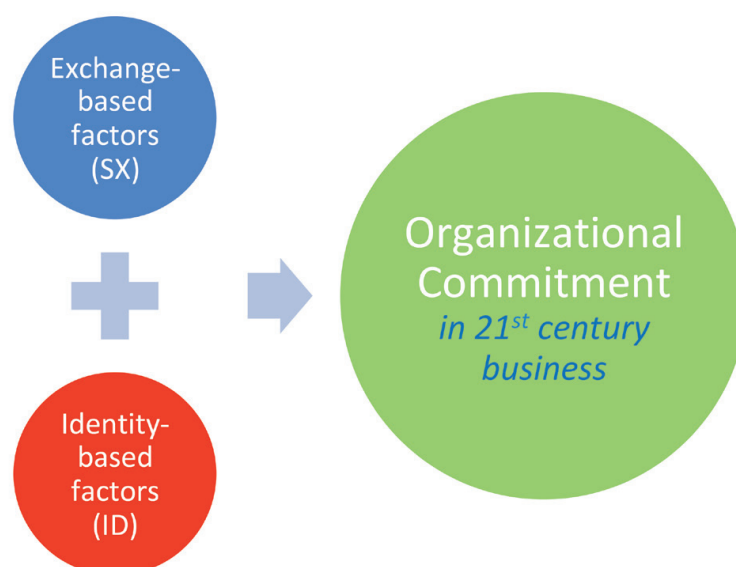
**Enhancing the Employee Experience from *ATTENTION* to *RETENTION*
through Social Exchange and Social Identification**



8.2 Enhancing psychological attachment within the changing nature of work

The goal of this research study was to re-evaluate organizational commitment in today's dynamic world of work. Shorter time horizons of work relationships in organizations, human – computer interaction and virtual work engagements, and workplaces transcending outside the company's premises characterize today's business landscape. The job in the traditional sense, with clearly defined job descriptions and formal roles and responsibilities, is steadily 'dying out' (Organ, 1997a), requiring a new social contract between the employee and the organization. This, in turn, has consequences for how organizations continue to create value and the role of human resources in the value creation process. Due to these changes, researchers have questioned the value of an exchange-based commitment mindset as a robust attachment mechanism in today's changing nature of work. Flexible working conditions, organizational agility and organizational change make it close to impossible to provide a perceived *balanced, fair and supportive* environment to its employees (Becker et al., 2009). As such, this research study reconceptualized organizational commitment as a dynamic and integrative socio-cognitive model of commitment, incorporating not only organizational exchange factors but also organizational identification factors, as a way to better understand how psychological attachment can be enhanced in a fast-moving and changing environment.

The following will be a proposal of organizational approaches, based on insights from this study, to enhance psychological attachment and work performance within organizations undergoing, facilitating or operating organizational changes to meet the requirements of today's changing nature of work. The approaches are embedded within 5 contemporary themes.



8.2.1 Flexible working arrangements.

Due to organizational design, technological advances, changes in labor law, work-life balance set-ups, changing employee work attitudes, globalization and competitive influences, flexible working arrangements in organizations are becoming a common practice (Schabracq & Cooper, 2000; Schaufeli, 2004). Flexible working arrangements (otherwise known as precarious working arrangements) support a more productive, effective and agile organization. Precarious working arrangements, often defined as uncertain, unstable, and insecure (Vosko, 2010), include shorter time work relationships, flexible contracts, contractual work, and virtual work set-ups. However, organizations applying flexible working conditions within their organizational design have also reported performance declines and inefficiencies due to physical-to-virtual operational transformations, ineffective policy design and unintentional consequences. The following is a short discussion of the opportunities and challenges of flexible working conditions and how insights from this study can help address them.

Short-term working relationships. Non-standard working contracts, temporary based work and other precarious working relationships are rising as they provide means to cut costs, minimize employment risks, and foster organizational agility (Lee, Hampton, & Jeyacheya, 2015). However, an increasing amount of studies in the organizational psychology literature provide evidence that the utilization of short-term and temporary work arrangements increases perceptions of job insecurity amongst both temporary and permanent workers affecting job attitudes, employee well-being and work behaviors (e.g. Bernhard-Oettel et al., 2005; Mauno et al., 2005). It is possible that organizations could create unintended consequences by using temporary workers, potentially reducing the benefits of short-term work relation set-ups (Underhill & Quinlan, 2011). Careful attention to the utilization and coordination of temporary and permanent workers is therefore required.

This study has shown the benefit of using identification as an attachment mechanism. Organizational identification has been associated with positive work outcomes such as employee happiness and well-being. Organizational identification has also been positively associated with work-related health outcomes such as the reduction of work-related stress, anxiety and resilience (Cruwys, Haslam, Dingle, Haslam, & Jetten, 2014; Jetten, Haslam, & Haslam, 2012; Steffens et al., 2016). Role, team and organizational identification play a key role in promoting physical and mental health and HR managers should consider how to utilize identification mechanisms within flexible work set-ups.

Another solution is the internal labeling of temporary and permanent employees. Identification has been associated with both positive and negative emotions. Negative emotions and outcomes associated with strong organizational identification are

hatred toward other groups, animosity, distrust, in-group bias (we versus them) and stereotyping (e.g. Herrbach, 2006; Turner et al., 1987). The way temporary workers are labeled, positioned, located or categorized internally can therefore have positive or negative effects on performance on both sides. To ensure effective temporary and permanent workforce management, HR managers should take into consideration employee categorization and internal labeling, besides employee coordination, support and collaboration. According to the study's proposed socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment, positive work experiences facilitated by both exchange and identification factors will also affect the contextual environment to stimulate support and collaboration. A great example of this is the usage of adjunct and external faculty by universities. Core faculty members work closely with adjunct faculty to provide a positive work experience for teachers and support staff while ensuring a positive and exciting learning experience for students. In many universities, adjunct faculty members are provided similar resources and opportunities as core faculty members, while there is a clear division between temporary and permanent staff. Both exchange-based and identification-based approaches can help to effectively make use of short-term working relationships in organizations.

Virtual working arrangements. The digitalization of the workplace and worldwide access to the internet through personal computers, laptops and handheld devices has made it easier for people to work, collaborate and communicate remotely (Coenen & Kok, 2014). This has given rise to virtual teams, telecommuting and remote office set-ups. Globalization is also affecting where and with whom people want to work nowadays, diminishing the requirement to be physically present to work together effectively and promoting workforce mobility (Cavusgil & Cavusgil, 2012; Lee, Olson, & Trimi, 2012). It is predicted that currently 1/5 of the global workforce is working virtually (Johns & Gratton, 2013) and is only going to increase in the future. Though many companies facilitate virtual working arrangements, some companies have gone back to traditional working arrangements because of performance issues related to collaboration and communication issues, ineffective usage of digital platforms and sub-par company labor policies guiding the implementation and usage of virtual work arrangements by (temporary) employees.

Study findings from this research can help improve the effectiveness of virtual working arrangements. Research claims that it is difficult to build strong personal relationships without physical face-to-face meetings (Warkentin et al., 1997). Face-to-face interactions use identification as a core psychological mechanism governing the development of psychological attachment. However, studies have found that positive work experiences (e.g. meeting work expectations, quality of work, timely responses online) help create positive perceptions and help facilitate positive work experiences through the process

of reciprocation. This means that positive work-based commitment and improved work performance can also be achieved even when physical presence is not available. Virtual work arrangements can be improved through the interchange of high quality work reciprocations based on positive, timely and quality (digital) exchanges.

Another solution to promote the effectiveness of virtual work arrangements is through the process of external validation. External validation, work reviews or social ranking is a socially-driven performance management mechanism incorporated into many online platforms. Online platforms and mobile applications used in the gig economy (e.g. Uber, Airbnb, Fiverr) make regular use of such self-steering performance enhancement mechanisms. Social identification functions as a normative mechanism to ensure performance standards in line with social group norms are upheld. This does not require the constant supervision of a community manager to ensure people are doing their work adequately. Such insights and techniques can also be applied within the design of organizational virtual work arrangements. However, HR managers should ensure the appropriate usage and alignment of gig economy-based social performance control mechanisms with existing internal performance management procedures.

Finally, a combination of flexible work conditions and virtual working arrangements have given rise to the 'digital nomad'. Digital nomads are characterized as digital (content) specialists not having a permanent residence, traveling to various countries around the world to facilitate a better work-life balance, enjoy lower labor costs or engage in work activities which require continuous mobility. Digital nomads work independently or for organizations and often provide digital services B2B or B2C to facilitate a travel-based lifestyle. Typical examples of digital nomads are online vloggers (e.g. lifestyle, travel, beauty video bloggers), affiliate marketing professionals, online platform/mobile application developers, and online traders. Consumer brands and the hospitality industry make use of digital nomads to produce online content in the form of video content and editorials, and to promote their products or services to a specific audience. Digital nomads with a strong base of online followers are called *influencers* and play a key role in today's online marketing strategy. Many digital nomads, from a value position, consider personal freedom, travel, connection, and recognition as their most important core values.

The study's socio-cognitive model helps to understand the key drivers of digital nomads' motivation and performance and hence helps organizations to develop potential organizational attachment strategies to address these new types of workers. Core values play a crucial role in how these groups of people associate with one another, show commitment toward personal growth and online followers, develop professional and interpersonal skills and which projects they would be willing to participate in. Organizations interested in attracting and retaining digital nomads would benefit from

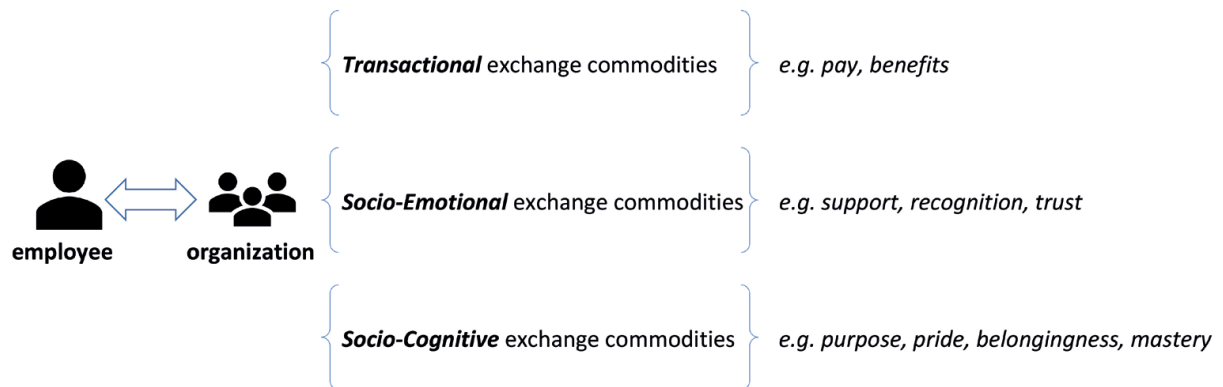
creating virtual work arrangements and work identities that fit with their lifestyle and core values.

8.2.2 Managing a diverse workforce.

Globalization has been a major driver behind the development of diverse work teams in organizations. Workforce mobility, digitization and the internet, global talent acquisition, and geo-political changes have changed workforce composition in many organizations, making it more culturally diverse. Furthermore, the existence of four generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials) working in companies has also diversified the workforce from an age and work attitude perspective (Eisner, 2005). Workforce diversification has been found to yield multiple organizational benefits (e.g. Andreovski, Richard, Shaw, & Ferrier, 2014; Barak, 2013), but also provides multiple challenges. The following is a discussion of the opportunities and challenges of managing a diverse workforce in the 21st century, and how insights from this study can help address these challenges.

Managing multiple generations at work. It is said that organizations are currently managing 4 different generations of employees: The Baby Boomers (born 1945 – 1959), Generation X (born 1960 – 1979), Generation Y (born 1980 – 1994), and Generation Z (born 1995 – 2010), the last two generations collectively referred to as Millennials. Organizational Leaders and Strategic HR Partners have voiced challenges with managing a workforce with different values, beliefs, and attitudes toward work. One of the major areas of discrepancy within generational belief systems is the area of organizational loyalty and commitment (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Baby Boomers and to some extent, the generation most influenced by them, Generation X developed a psychological attachment relationship with their employers based on the premise of job security and vertical development. Due to globalization and technological forces, companies are now becoming more lean, agile and digital. As a consequence, workforce redundancy and short-term work relationships are steadily replacing lifetime employment practices. The Millennials are the generation who have entered the workforce not understanding the value of loyalty as an exchange commodity within the employee – employer relationship. Rather, Millennials value lifetime *employability*, meaningful work and work-life balance more than older generations do, quickly switching jobs and careers and doing work that fits with their immediate needs and values. This has an effect on employee retention, especially amongst younger generational groups of employees in organizations, and as talent is contingent with organizational survival, strategic HR partners need to focus their efforts on facilitating talent acquisition and talent retention of younger generations through tailored interventions.

Employee Psychological Attachment developed through an Exchange Relationship



This study proposes to utilize both organizational exchange and organizational identification as an attachment mechanism within HR policy design to attract and retain younger generations. Overall, the provisioning of competitive salary and remuneration benefits remain a must for all generational groups. These minimum job requirements are often referred to as hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1959). However, pay is not the only motivator for younger generations to exert effort at work or to remain in an organization. From a social exchange and social identity perspective, socio-cognitive commodities can be equally, or even more, beneficial to younger generations as an exchange factor for personal effort and commitment toward the organization. These factors, which help fulfil social-emotional needs, include a sense of pride, purpose, belongingness, meaning, vision, career identity, and mastery to name a few. Though identification plays a key part in the early development of many of these cognitive factors, the exchange process facilitates that these factors lead to higher commitment and consequently improved performance. Moreover, as physical boundaries within organizations are steadily disappearing, organizations need to look for attachment approaches from within. Understanding the value of such intrinsic (cognitive) motivators, and its exchange potential to younger generations will help HR partners and supervisors create more effective organizational attraction and retention practices.

Yet, with the rise of digitalization and personalization, identification seems to have a dark side to it as well. The internet and social media platforms, have made it very easy for people to form social groups online with similar interests, beliefs and values. This can be construed as a positive or negative development. A recent development globally has been the rise of polarization in society which has often been attributed to the internet. Examples of these developments are the rise of exclamations for national independence (e.g. Brexit, the Spanish province of Catalonia), the rise of nationalist parties and extremist groups, and the formation of social tribes with little to no

integration with other layers of the society. The digital platform has facilitated this by diminishing the need to foster diversified connections in the real world or has given rise to personal empowerment to voice hatred or opposed views with a compounded potential to destabilize societies at large. It is also not impossible to conceive that with the advent of artificial intelligence and advanced computer algorithms, people are intentionally fed the information that best fit with their personality or belief system, potentially strengthening opposed viewpoints with lack of diversity and biased reactions as a consequence. These recent global developments concerning polarization highlight the power of identification, together with the internet, as an attachment mechanism at a societal level and the potential negative consequences it can have depending on its utilization. As mentioned in previous sections, organizational identification can affect different areas of the organization from generational, ethnicity, and gender differences, work arrangements and job titles, to work and career identities. Companies devising and applying identification strategies internally would be wise to use careful and moral judgment in their conception and develop ethics around the correct application of identity-based strategies.

Workforce Diversity & Knowledge Management. The exchange, management and implementation of tacit and explicit knowledge is critical to any organization (e.g. Giju et al, 2010; Grant, 1997). Knowledge is a critical heterogeneous resource able to produce strategic competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1997). From a generational perspective, those possessing organizational knowledge the longest are the eldest in the workforce. As Baby Boomers are steadily moving into retirement, it is believed that much organizational and hard to learn tacit knowledge gets lost with attrition. At the other side of the spectrum, younger generations entering the workforce have limited tacit or explicit organizational knowledge, requiring the need to develop this in a fast and efficient manner. Furthermore, temporary workers or external contractors possess little organizational knowledge to help them succeed in their current and future jobs. Creating knowledge management systems and improving organizational design to harvest existing and new knowledge is critical to the survival of the organization (Burke & Ng, 2006).

Insights from this research study can provide potential knowledge management solutions to organizational development specialists and knowledge management experts from an organizational attachment and generational perspective. The first solution is to develop knowledge sharing mechanisms within organizations which bring together the entire workforce. An example of this is the corporate university. To facilitate life-long learning and develop a learning organization, organizations can develop various kinds of short-term and long-term training and development programs to grow people from the inside. This learning can be taught by internal or external specialists. This way older generations

about to leave the workforce are provided the opportunity to pass on critical learning experiences and knowledge to younger generations in the organization, without too much knowledge being lost due to attrition. At the same time, younger generations can be offered special development, management or apprenticeship programs, as a replacement for higher education, creating a stronger fit between learned outcomes and actual work. Not only do these development programs provide knowledge, skills, experience, they also help develop work attitudes and values, and positively affect employee retention.

A second solution is geared around new knowledge creation. Today's rapidly changing world requires new knowledge creation to stay on track. The pace of change is faster than the pace of learning, so knowledge creation is crucial to minimize this gap. The technological sector and gig economy facilitators (e.g. Uber, AirBNB, Fiverr) understand that new knowledge creation is crucial to organizational survival and a forward outlook is what dictates organizational design and work coordination (Barney, 1991). Digital organizations facilitating the gig-economy have created self-organizing autonomous project teams that decide through rapid experimentation which direction to go to and which products and services to develop relinquishing the need for strict management control systems and additional management layers. According to Zuijderhoudt (1990), self-organizing and less controlled systems are able to generate efficiencies similar to those of organized and controlled structures.

This study's socio-cognitive model of commitment can help to facilitate rapid knowledge creation and knowledge sharing in digital and fast-moving organizations. Based on the model's framework, identification and a normative commitment mindset play a crucial role in being able to switch rapidly between teams and projects. First, creating and promoting work values that allow making mistakes (as long as one learns from them) and fostering team and organizational flexibility, can help create an environment in which innovation and agility flourishes. Even if exchange factors are not fully present, a strong identification with the team, leader, organization or product, and incorporation of organizational values into one's self-concept, can create affective bonding and positively affect performance in a fast-moving environment.

The Millennial Leadership Development Challenge. As a digitally immersed younger generation enters the workforce, changing values and beliefs about the nature and value of work have entered the workplace as well. Millennials consisting of Generation Y (born 1981 – 1994) and Generation Z (born 1995 - 2014) have been found to have different attitudes toward work than Generation X (born 1965 - 1980) and Baby Boomers (born 1945 - 1964) do (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). A major concern for most Millennials is not lifetime *employment*, but lifetime *employability*, hence younger generations look for new

and challenging opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge and gain generalist-like work experience (Kupperschmidt, 2000). The traditional vertical leadership pipeline advancement is not what many younger generations in the workforce are looking for, often interested to work in different departments to gain relevant skills and to improve one's future employment chances in a fast-moving labor market (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Littleton et al., 2000). A major issue for many organizations will be to fill up their future leadership pipeline with competent and knowledgeable people, especially from within.

Based on findings from this study, leadership development interventions should include both horizontal and vertical movements to not only develop key competencies, but also as a way to retain talent. Horizontal and vertical career moves can foster positive exchange experiences and strengthen organizational identification. Taking on a new job or position re-activates a normative commitment mindset, which allows for new experiences to affect the psychological – performance link. Horizontal transitions provide for new learning experiences which otherwise would only be experienced if an employee changes company. These new experiences not only affect one's identification with the organization, but also help create new bonds with other employees, providing a more meaningful and holistic organizational experience. Horizontal job repositioning also reflects the evolving definition of a 'career' and the meaning of 'career success' from generation to generation (Arthur et al., 2005). Altering a career identity can help facilitate organizational identification and attachment with younger generations. Furthermore, horizontal career moves are also fueled by Carol Dweck's growth mindset concept (Dweck, 2006), which reflects that learning capabilities are not innate and fixed but can be enhanced through study and effort. HR Managers and Department Supervisors should enable exchange and identification facilitating experiences through both horizontal as well as vertical career moves to help satisfy employability perspectives of younger generations and retain key talent in the organization.

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General Summary

**Samenvatting in het Nederlands
(Summary in Dutch)**

Acknowledgements

Appendices

General Summary

In today's fast-moving and highly competitive business environment organizations are looking for new ways to implement and utilize organizational resources strategically to enhance organizational value and achieve a firm-level competitive advantage. However, due to the changing nature of work as a consequence of globalization and technological influences, the definition of a job in a more traditional sense and the concept of a '*job for life*' are steadily dying out. This has consequences for how organizations create value and the role human resources play in the value creation process. Strategic Talent Management and Organizational Behavior have therefore become a key focus area for business leaders today to boost organizational effectiveness and ensure its competitiveness in an ever-changing marketplace.

Investigating the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization has been an important contributor toward understanding how human capital affects performance. Organizational Commitment is a psychological concept that serves as a foundation for work relationships guiding career and organizational development. The concept reflects the extent to which an employee is attached to an organization through identification with an organization's goals and values, and through one's involvement in the organization. Empirical evidence has repeatedly shown that employees with a high level of commitment in the workplace contribute to better performance, increased citizenship behaviors, less absenteeism and less turnover than employees who have a low level of commitment. By identifying factors and interventions that enhance employee organizational commitment, organizations will be in a better position to create value for its stakeholders through strategic and sustainable utilization of its human capital.

Organizational commitment has been one of the most investigated concepts within the organizational behavior literature in the past 50 years. As organizational commitment research has evolved to address new working conditions, global environments, and strategic activities, there appears to be a need to re-evaluate existing conceptualizations of the organizational commitment construct. Moreover, the sheer complexity and diversity of research in organizational commitment are demanding parsimonious approaches and integrated models to reflect organizational commitment in a modern world.

The aim of this research is to respond to such calls for improvement by 1). addressing key issues pertaining to the most dominant model used to measure organizational commitment, 2). propose an integrated model of organizational commitment based on organizational theories reflecting attachment, and 3). explain the practical relevance

of the proposed model of organizational commitment to organizational life and value creation. Seeing the multi-sided approach of this research study, this thesis takes the form of a collection of research papers as the core part of this study. The following will describe the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2 is the first research paper and explores the literature on psychological attachment within the employee – organizational relationship. This positioning paper provides a review of the development of organizational commitment since its inception up to Meyer & Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment, which is currently considered the most dominant view of organizational commitment. Consequently, the paper addresses the main issues pertaining to Meyer & Allen's model and proposes a new theoretical framework of organizational commitment based on Social Exchange and Social Identity to help overcome these issues and to provide an enriched perspective to commitment development in today's workplace. Propositions accompany the newly proposed framework of organizational commitment and are further investigated in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Chapter 3 re-establishes the importance of normative commitment within the commitment literature by reconceptualizing normative commitment as a base commitment mindset and investigates the development of normative commitment over time. Research findings provide evidence that normative commitment acts as a default commitment mindset, which takes form long before organizational entry and is influenced by critical incidents as well as familial and cultural factors. This default commitment mindset is an indicator of actual organizational commitment upon organizational entry, which is often referred to as a commitment propensity. Research findings further suggest that normative commitment acts ambivalently in the initial months after entry, indicating its reflective nature to adapt. Reconceptualizing normative commitment as a commitment propensity suggests that norms, values and beliefs carried over from the past are core to one's base commitment upon organization entry and influence how social exchange- and social identity-based work experiences affect the further development of a base commitment mindset.

Chapter 4 investigates the impact of organizational exchange- and organizational identification-based factors on work attitudes and behavior. More specifically, this study investigates how organizational commitment and employee citizenship behaviors are affected by the quality of the relationship between employees and their managers (often referred to as leader-member exchange) and by one's identification with the organization. Research findings from this study highlight the critical role normative commitment plays as a base commitment mindset, which fully mediates the relationship between leader-member exchange and affective commitment, and partially mediates

the relationship between organizational identification and affective commitment. Affective commitment was found to fully mediate the relationship between normative commitment and citizenship behaviors. These findings uncover the unique underlying pathways of the psychological – performance link by which social exchange and social identity affect attachment to the organization and induce performance.

Chapter 5 tests the proposed model based on social exchange- and social identity-based factors and the key propositions of this study. This evaluation resulted in an improved model of organizational commitment which identified specific personal characteristics that affect commitment development and work performance through both social exchange- and social identification-based work experiences. The improved model further indicates that a default commitment mindset affected through personal characteristics not only affects organizational commitment upon organizational entry, but also affects organizational identification. This suggests that cultural and familial factors play an important role in how employees attach to the organization. This attachment was found to affect organizational citizenship behavior along the lines of altruism (e.g. helping others, providing support) and general compliance (e.g. following organizational rules, being punctual).

Finally, **Chapters 6** concludes the research by providing a discussion of the empirical findings from the research papers and uses the metaphor of a moral compass to explain the role of normative commitment, social exchange and social identity to put forth a new model of organizational commitment, which better reflects attachment in a modern workplace than existing conceptualizations of organizational commitment. **Chapter 7** addresses limitations of the current study and suggests future research approaches, and **Chapter 8** makes managerial recommendations based on the research findings from this study.

In summary, this study has been able to re-establish organizational commitment as a key attachment device in organizations today by uncovering underlying mechanisms within the psychological – performance link. These findings have resulted in the development of a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment and provide a new definition of organizational commitment to better reflect organizational attachment in modern times. Study findings have important implications for organizational practice and provide organizational managers and leaders with new and effective approaches to talent management and business continuity in a rapidly changing and diversified business environment.

The following will be a summary of the major contributions this study has made to theory and management practice.

Theoretical Contribution

The theoretical contributions made by this paper are plentiful and will be listed in order of importance.

1. This study has re-established the role of normative commitment as an important commitment component. Previous studies have rejected the value of normative commitment in future studies due to discriminant validity issues compared with affective commitment. This study provides evidence that normative commitment is a stand-alone commitment mindset which affects other commitment mindsets.
2. In line with the above, the role of normative commitment as a unidimensional model and a base commitment mindset suggests that organizational commitment researchers re-examine their existing organizational commitment research data to further confirm the proposed propositions.
3. Surprisingly, little research has focused on the development and the role of commitment propensity in organizational attachment research. This research provides further understanding on how personal and social attributions affect one's commitment propensity and how such a commitment propensity is related to actual organizational commitment.
4. Findings from this research provide insights into the underlying linkages of using an integrated approach in organizational commitment research and its unique effects on work behaviors. The study's proposed socio-cognitive model provides a better understanding of organizational commitment in modern times and identifies improved ways how organizational commitment can be defined and conceptualized.
5. Moreover, the role of normative commitment as a *default* and *base* commitment mindset, based on normative beliefs and values, argues for an improved measurement scale which better reflects the normative dimensions underlying both organizational role and work interaction. Future research could focus on creating new measurement instruments which better reflect the normative grounds of organizational commitment.
6. This paper has paved the path for future research in organizational commitment, by advancing existing theoretical notions of the role of social exchange and social identification in employee – organization work relationships. Future research would do well to continue investigating the corroborating effects of integrative psychological concepts on attitudinal outcomes at the micro-level. For example, researchers could

also focus on concepts such as psychological ownership, job embeddedness, and deep listening to investigate their effects on work attitudes and behaviors.

7. In line with the macro-perspective, the strategy literature could benefit from more understanding of engagement, commitment, and retention as human capital is believed to be instrumental in creating organizational value and firm-level competitive advantage. Findings from this research help build the bridge from the micro-perspective to the macro-perspective.

Contribution to Management Practice

The contributions of this study to management practice span various organizational stakeholders and provide tools and critical insights to organizational managers and leaders to better serve their people and society. This highlights the role of organizations in today's world as an interconnected social enterprise.

1. An organization's role in and for society is becoming more important than ever before. Organizations and leaders are no longer only evaluated upon financial performance, but also on how they treat their key stakeholders. The way organizations and their leaders serve their people, give back to society, and protect the natural environment are paramount to organizational survival. This study suggests that a new social contract is required that is grounded in core values, sustainable by nature, and aims to serve others. Transcending from an 'I' perspective to a 'WE' perspective has various benefits as shown in this study.
2. This study also highlights the importance of ethics in organizations. With organizations facing so much change, it is clear that futures are uncertain, and leaders are challenged on which direction to take. If anything, moral judgment and responsibility to society play a critical role in guiding organizational behaviors, especially those of organizational leaders.
3. The study provides evidence that organizations need to recognize culture as an asset. As culture is a driving force within organizations to help employees align, engage, and connect in a modern world. Culture is a hard to imitate organizational resource which governs the norms and values underlying the organization and is an effective asset to attract and retain talent.
4. This study suggests that employee – employer interaction affects work behaviors in various ways. Positive work experiences promote work performance through

emotional attachment. Positive work experiences from an exchange perspective reflect balanced exchanges between employee and manager, which help set expectations, build trust and create a safe environment. Equally, managers facilitate employee attachment through identification. Managers are an embodiment of the company's values, goals, norms and rules, which if expressed coherently should spill over to the echelons below to help others understand the norms governing accepted group behavior and organizational life. This study provides evidence that the role of management affects employee performance through both exchange and identification.

5. The changing nature of work and evolving attitudes toward work and work-life balance are demanding a new social contract. A social contract which looks beyond 'pay' to provide meaning, belongingness, mastery, purpose, pride, and impact. Connecting employees to the bigger picture, by helping others understand how they contribute to the organization's overall goals and direction, promotes employee loyalty, commitment and engagement. Moreover, as physical boundaries within organizations are steadily disappearing, organizations need to look for attachment approaches from within. Understanding the value of such intrinsic (cognitive) motivators, and its exchange potential to younger generations will help HR partners and supervisors create more effective organizational attraction and retention practices.
6. As employee well-being is becoming a key performance indicator in many organizations as a way to contribute to sustainable human resource management and firm-level competitive advantage, using a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment will help improve the vitality and attachment of employees. The proposed model not only engages employees through meaningful encounters, but also provides a sense of belongingness and shared reality which is core to enhancing employee pride and self-esteem.
7. The traditional horizontal leadership pipeline advancement is not what many younger generations in the workforce are looking for, often interested to work in different departments to gain relevant skills and to improve one's future employment chances in a fast-changing labor market. Managers supportive of either vertical or horizontal career moves will be in a better position to provide better direction to their workforce, retaining critical talent within the organization and promoting employee performance.
8. With the rise of entrepreneurship, which is fueling most innovation and growth in today's rapidly changing environment, a new management approach and mindset to existing organizational practices are required. Large corporations which still

operate within a traditional top-down management hierarchy are finding it harder to respond faster to external forces and are looking to the startup community to find new ways how best to structure and manage their existing operations. Startups are characterized by being agile, responsive, customer-centric, and data-driven organizations, led by self-organizing autonomous teams which distribute decision-rights and leadership when and where it is needed. These characteristics are well suited to deal with today's fast changing business environment, which is steadily becoming a blueprint on how to (re)design and lead organizations in the 21st century. This study's socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment helps explain how people working in startups are psychologically connected to and driven by their work. Job characteristics commonly attributed to startups such as purpose-driven work, shifting role identities, cross-functional teamwork, work autonomy, and a culture of accepting failure trigger strong identity-based cognitions. These cognitions help foster attachment and drive (intrinsically motivated) work performance within those who feel aligned with such characteristics. The findings from this research provide organizations and startups with a framework on how to build attachment and drive performance in a fast-moving business environment.

Samenvatting in het Nederlands (Summary in Dutch)

In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik – vanuit de organisatiepsychologie (het micro-perspectief) – hoe ondernemingen talent beter aan zich kunnen binden en laten bewegen in een dynamische organisatieomgeving. De flexibilisering van de arbeidsmarkt en het nieuwe werken hebben het traditionele loyaliteitsgevoel tussen werkgever en werknemer sterk onder druk gezet, terwijl het een belangrijk psychologisch instrumentarium is om mensen te binden en te bewegen. In dit onderzoek focus ik op organisatiebetrokkenheid (organizational commitment) als bindingsmechanisme tussen werkgever en werknemer en onderzoek ik hoe persoonlijkheidskenmerken en werkervaringen, die betrokkenheid versterken, werkattitudes en -gedrag beïnvloeden. Onderzoek naar de psychologische dimensies binnen de werkgever-werknemer relatie geeft belangrijke inzichten in hoe human capital bedrijfsresultaten beïnvloedt.

Organizational Commitment geeft de mate van betrokkenheid weer waarin medewerkers zich verbonden voelen tot de organisatie door een gedeelde visie te hebben op organisatiedoelen en -drijfveren. Deze verbondenheid ontstaat voornamelijk door positieve uitwisselingen en ervaringen op het werk. Empirisch onderzoek laat herhaaldelijk zien dat medewerkers met een hoge organisatiebetrokkenheid beter presteren, zich meer inzetten voor collega's, regels en procedures goed navolgen, minder verzuim tonen en langer in dienst blijven dan medewerkers met een lagere organisatiebetrokkenheid. Ondernemingen die actief sturen op organisatiebetrokkenheid, zullen beter in staat zijn werknemers strategisch en duurzaam in te zetten, wat bijdraagt aan het waardecreatieproces en de levensduur van de organisatie.

Organisatiebetrokkenheid is een van de meest onderzochte thema's binnen de organisatiepsychologie- en HRM-literatuur. In de afgelopen jaren, heeft het 'organizational commitment'-construct veel kritiek gekregen vanuit het onderzoeksveld, vanwege conceptuele en methodologische kwesties rondom het meest gebruikte model om organisatiebetrokkenheid te meten binnen organisaties. Bovendien beproeft de flexibilisering op de arbeidsmarkt en het nieuwe werken de waarde van betrokkenheid als bindingsmechanisme binnen organisaties. Meer onderzoek is nodig om de huidige conceptualisering van organisatiebetrokkenheid te verbeteren en de waarde van betrokkenheid binnen organisaties te herzien om meer aansluiting te vinden in huidige tijden. Bovendien is er door de complexiteit en diversiteit in onderzoek rondom organisatiebetrokkenheid de laatste jaren behoefte aan eenvoudige en geïntegreerde modellen die de werking van organisatiebetrokkenheid beter verklaren.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om organisatiebetrokkenheid als construct en als bindingsmiddel te verbeteren door:

- I. Methodologische vraagstukken, die betrekking hebben tot het meest gebruikte model om organisatiebetrokkenheid te toetsen, op te lossen;
- II. Een geïntegreerd model van organisatiebetrokkenheid te ontwikkelen bestaande uit verschillende psychologische verbindingstheorieën; en
- III. Organisatiemanagers en -leiders praktische handvatten aan te reiken om op organisatiebetrokkenheid beter te kunnen sturen.

Gezien de breedte van de studieaanpak zal deze studie bestaan uit verschillende deelonderzoeken, die gepubliceerd worden als wetenschappelijke artikelen.

Opbouw proefschrift

Hieronder volgt een beschrijving van de opbouw van dit proefschrift.

Hoofdstuk 2

Hoofdstuk 2 is een literatuurstudie en onderzoekt de psychologische dimensies binnen de werkgever-werknemer relatie met betrekking tot organisatiebetrokkenheid. Het literatuuronderzoek omschrijft hoe het 'organizational commitment'-construct zich ontwikkeld heeft sinds zijn aanvang tot en met het 'drie-componenten model van organisatiebetrokkenheid' van Meyer & Allen; momenteel het meest gebruikte model om betrokkenheid binnen organisaties te meten. Volgens dit model bestaat organisatiebetrokkenheid uit een emotioneel (AC), rationeel (CC) en normatief (NC) gedeelte. Empirisch onderzoek wijst jarenlang uit dat het drie-componenten model niet voldoende organisatiebetrokkenheid meet noch weergeeft. Conceptuele en empirische tekortkomingen van het model van Meyer & Allen worden in deze studie benoemd en een verbeterd model wordt voorgesteld waarin niet alleen 'social exchange'-, maar ook 'social identity'-factoren zijn opgenomen om deze tekortkomingen op te lossen. Verder helpt dit nieuw geïntegreerd model te verklaren hoe organisatiebetrokkenheid zich ontwikkelt in het huidige ondernemersklimaat. Toetsbare stellingen zijn gekoppeld aan het nieuwe model en worden getoetst in hoofdstuk 3, 4 en 5.

Hoofdstuk 3

Dit hoofdstuk onderzoekt het normatieve kant van organisatiebetrokkenheid (oftewel normative commitment). Het NC-component van het model van Meyer & Allen is het minst onderzocht in de literatuur en tevens het meest betwiste vorm van organisatiebetrokkenheid. Deze studie onderzoekt hoe organisatiebetrokkenheid

beïnvloed wordt door sociale en morele factoren en ontdekt dat deze vorm van organisatiebetrokkenheid centraal staat in hoe betrokkenheid binnen organisaties tot stand komt. Onderzoekresultaten wijzen uit dat NC als een mindset tot stand komt alvorens de organisatie binnen te treden, welk gevormd wordt door persoonlijke kenmerken en sociale omgevingsfactoren. Deze vroege vorm van psychologische betrokkenheid is een mogelijke indicator in hoeverre iemand organisatiebetrokkenheid ontwikkelt na binnentreden van de organisatie. Dit suggereert dat persoonlijke normen, waarden en geloofsovertuigingen de basis vormen van organisatiebetrokkenheid na binnentreden van de organisatie, en beïnvloeden hoe werkinteracties en identificatie op het werk organisatiebetrokkenheid verder doet ontwikkelen. Onderzoekresultaten wijzen ook erop dat NC in de eerste maanden na binnen treden van de organisatie zich ambivalent gedraagt, een mogelijke indicatie dat NC een reflectieve vorm is van organisatiebetrokkenheid. Dit aanpassingsvermogen vormt een psychologische basis voor het ontwikkelen van nieuwe vormen van organisatiebetrokkenheid. In hoofdstuk 4, wordt dit verder onderzocht.

Hoofdstuk 4

Dit hoofdstuk onderzoekt de effecten van organisatie-uitwisselingen en organisatie-identificatie op werkattitudes en -gedrag door middel van organisatiebetrokkenheid. Specifiek heeft deze studie de relatie onderzocht tussen leader-member exchange (LMX) en organizational identification (OI) met organizational commitment (OC) en organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). LMX geeft de mate weer waarin medewerkers en leidinggevendenden met elkaar omgaan. OI geeft de mate weer waarin medewerkers zich identificeren met de organisatie. Tenslotte OCB geeft de mate weer waarin medewerkers zich extra inzetten om de organisatie en andere medewerkers te helpen. Om de stellingen uit hoofdstuk 2 en 3 te onderzoeken wordt OC in deze studie onderzocht als twee zelfstandige componenten, namelijk NC en AC. Onderzoekresultaten wijzen uit dat NC de relatie tussen LMX en AC volledig medieert, en de relatie tussen OI en AC gedeeltelijk medieert. De relatie tussen normative commitment en organizational citizenship behavior wordt volledig gemedieerd door AC. Deze bevindingen onderschrijven de kritische rol van NC als een startpunt voor organisatiebetrokkenheid en wijzen erop dat organisatiebetrokkenheid niet als een drie-componenten model gemeten moet worden, maar als zelfstandige vormen van organisatiebetrokkenheid. Dit onderzoek geeft de unieke psychologische effecten van 'social exchange'- en 'social identity'-factoren op werkattitudes en -gedrag weer; door middel van organisatiebetrokkenheid. Deze studie levert belangrijke inzichten op, in hoe betrokkenheid in de organisatie tot stand komt en het effect van betrokkenheid op werkgedrag.

Hoofdstuk 5

In dit hoofdstuk wordt het conceptueel model van organisatiebetrokkenheid uit hoofdstuk 2 in zijn volledigheid getoetst. De toetsing van het nieuwe organisatiebetrokkenheidsmodel levert een verbeterd model op, welke bevestigt dat persoonskenmerken een effect hebben op organisatiebetrokkenheid en werkprestaties. Dit betekent dat culturele achtergrond, opvoeding en ervaringen uit het verleden een belangrijke rol spelen in de mate waarin medewerkers organisatiebetrokkenheid ontwikkelen. Het getoetste model laat ook zien dat organisatiebetrokkenheid een belangrijke rol speelt in hoe werkattitudes, door middel van werkinteracties en werkidentificatie, het werkgedrag beïnvloedt.

Hoofdstuk 6

In dit hoofdstuk worden de empirische bevindingen van de vorige deelonderzoeken besproken. Daarnaast gebruik ik het concept van een moreel kompas als metafoor om de effecten te beschrijven die NC, werkinteracties (social exchange) en werkidentiteit (social identity) hebben op het ontwikkelen van organisatiebetrokkenheid in een snel veranderende werkomgeving. Het nieuwe organisatiebetrokkenheidsmodel geeft de vorming en impact van betrokkenheid in organisaties beter weer dan bestaande modellen.

Hoofdstuk 7 bespreekt de beperkingen van de huidige studie en maakt aanbevelingen voor toekomstig onderzoek. **Hoofdstuk 8** reikt organisatieleiders en HRM-managers praktische handvatten aan om beter te sturen op organisatiebetrokkenheid om talent te behouden en bewegen.

Kort samengevat, heb ik met dit proefschrift onderzocht hoe psychologische aspecten van de arbeidsrelatie impact kunnen hebben op organisatieprestaties. Deze studie onderschrijft de waarde van organisatiebetrokkenheid als belangrijk bindingsmechanisme in een veranderende ondernemingsomgeving. Uit dit proefschrift is een sociaal-cognitief model van organisatiebetrokkenheid ontstaan, welk beter de ontwikkeling en het effect van betrokkenheid in organisaties weergeeft in het huidige ondernemingsklimaat. De bevindingen van dit onderzoek hebben belangrijke implicaties voor de praktijk. Aan de hand van de studieresultaten worden praktische handvatten aangereikt om effectief sturing te geven aan talent management en business continuïteit in een dynamische ondernemingsomgeving.

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“To be is to be perceived. And so to know thyself is only possible through the eyes of the other. The nature of our immortal lives is in the consequences of our words and deeds that go on apportioning themselves throughout all time. Our lives are not our own; from womb to tomb, we are bound to others, past and present, and by each crime and every kindness we birth our future” – David Mitchell

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CREATING A COMMITTED WORKFORCE WITHIN AN EVER-CHANGING WORKPLACE

In today's fast moving and highly competitive business environment organizations are looking for new ways to implement and utilize organizational resources strategically to enhance organizational value and achieve a firm-level competitive advantage. However, due to the changing nature of work the definition of a job in a more traditional sense is steadily dying out. This has consequences for the role human resources play in the value creation process.

Investigating the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization has been an important contributor toward understanding how human capital affects performance. Organizational commitment is a psychological concept that serves as a foundation for work relationships guiding career and organizational development. As organizational commitment research has evolved to address new working conditions and global environments, there appears to be a need to re-evaluate the concept of commitment in a modern business world.

Findings from this research have resulted in the development of a socio-cognitive model of organizational commitment, uncovering underlying mechanisms within the psychological – performance link, and provide new and effective approaches to talent engagement, employee well-being and psychological attachment in a rapidly changing and diversified workforce.



"Today's changing nature of work requires better understanding and utilization of psychological concepts within organizations to effectively engage, connect and retain human capital"

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