

# Organizational Commitment and Independence Among Canadian Managers

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Volume 42, Number 2, 1987

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/050311ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/050311ar>

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## Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

## ISSN

0034-379X (print)

1703-8138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

## Cite this article

Baba, V. V. & Knoop, R. (1987). Organizational Commitment and Independence Among Canadian Managers. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 42(2), 325–344. <https://doi.org/10.7202/050311ar>

## Article abstract

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# ***Organizational Commitment and Independence Among Canadian Managers***

**Vishwanath V. Baba**  
**and**  
**Robert Knoop**

*A model of organizational commitment linking the antecedents and consequence of commitment with organizational independence as a moderator is proposed and tested.*

Early research on employee — organizational linkages were predicated on the notion of fit. Argyris (1957) talked about the incongruence between the needs of mature individuals and those of the organization and suggested changes in organizational practices to enhance individual commitment to organization. March and Simon (1958), dealing with the same issue, but focusing on the individual side, emphasized the importance of the ease and desirability of movement as key factors in employee-organizational linkages. Though their orientations were broad, their ideas sparked considerable theoretical and empirical interest in the notion of organizational commitment and organizational independence respectively.

This study is an attempt to explore the nature of the ties that bind individuals to organizations. We believe such a study would help enhance our knowledge of several factors that determine the quality of an individual's attachment to an organization as revealed by his or her commitment to the organization. The quality of such attachment in turn influences its nature. Absence behavior, turnover behavior, effort, performance, individual well-being and extra role behavior on the job are some of the factors which determine whether the individual is fully connected to the institution or not. Thus, organizational commitment occupies a central role in linking certain personal, structural, and job factors to job related effort which is one of the indicators of the nature of an individual's attachment to the organization.

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- \*\* Financial support for this project from the Committee to Aid Scholarly Activities at Concordia University and Formation de chercheurs et d'action concertée (FCAC), Québec is gratefully acknowledged. The authors would like to thank Ron Crawford, Muhammad Jamal and Gary Johns for their help in preparing this manuscript.

There are two streams of research that have investigated the phenomenon of organizational commitment. The first approach focuses on behavior and couches its investigation in terms of commitment related behavior and behavioral intentions (Salancik, 1977). According to Salancik (1977), there are three characteristics that bind individuals to a course of action and, hence, commit them to certain behaviors. They are visibility, irrevocability, and volition. By publicizing employees' agreement to pursue certain goals, the organization invariably increases the individual's commitment to these goals. Employees, all of a sudden find themselves honor bound to engage in activities which they could have easily avoided had they not been made visible. Organizations often try to heighten an employee's commitment to the organization by publicizing the individual's identification with the organization through public visibility in the media. This is especially true in the case of senior appointments. As for the notion of irrevocability, the more irreversible an action is, the more committing it becomes. Signing of a contract of employment, with a difficult contract breaking clause, tends to increase commitment to the organization, even if it is, at first, merely a way to reduce post decision dissonance. The third factor, volition, refers to a course of action chosen out of free will. These include involvement in organizational activities which come out of a sense of personal responsibility. Employees become committed to a sales target or production quota, because they feel they have chosen it out of their own volition. The successful Management by Objectives (MBO) programs utilize this aspect of the theory to extract commitment to objectives from the participating employees. The major thrust in this line of research is overt manifestations of commitment. The other line of research is cognitive and studies commitment as an attitude that individuals develop over a period of time about their employing organizations (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). According to this view, a committed person will identify with a particular organization and experience a certain congruence between his or her goals and those of the organization. This cognitive commitment will motivate the employees to engage in activities desired by the organization which the employees themselves see as congruent with their own values and aspirations. So the theory would suggest that an attitude of commitment would encourage the employees to pursue greater effort and performance, reduce absence and turnover and otherwise enhance the organizational mission. However, in order to understand the phenomenon of commitment more thoroughly one needs to link these two streams of research and study both attitude formation as well as its behavioral consequences.

According to Becker (1960) an individual develops commitment to an organization when his or her extraneous interests are linked to a consistent line of activity. For instance, a person choosing a career in an organization

tends to settle down in that organization and does not always depict the typical behavior pattern expected of an economic man (Becker, 1960). The committed behavior resulting from such linking of extraneous interests to the organization may result in greater effort on the job. It is important to realize here that the sidebet notion of commitment and the behavioral model of commitment are neither mutually exclusive nor contradictory. The notion of sidebets can be easily expanded to include behaviors which result from visible and irreversible acts engaged in on a volitional basis. Sidebets can also include psychological factors such as one's sense of identity, in addition to economic, geographic, and work related factors. Further, it can be argued that the very act of making a sidebet is likely to influence the employee's attitude in the direction of that behavior. Thus we can see the connections between the two theoretical frameworks.

A model based on the above reasoning will include personal factors, structural factors and job factors as possible antecedents of organizational commitment and job related effort as a possible consequence. The moderating effects of skills and knowledge that are useful to other competing organizations on the above linkage have to be explored as well, to understand fully the complexities that underlie the phenomenon of organizational commitment.

The antecedents of commitment can be further subdivided into personal factors, structural factors and job factors as mentioned earlier. Among personal factors, the specific variables that have some theoretical relevance to organizational commitment are age, sex, education, salary, experience and locus of control. As one advances in age, he or she might accrue investments with the organization leading to greater commitment (Baba & Jamal, 1979; Morris & Sherman, 1981). Theories of differential sex role socialization would suggest that females are less likely to be committed to the employing organization than males because of the ambivalence they might experience with regard to their role in society (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). The more educated individuals quite often get a placement in an organization in line with their expectations. As a result, the highly educated individuals develop greater commitment to their organization (Mottaz, 1986). Using the same argument, one can expect people with higher salaries to be more committed to their organization than those with a lower salary (Angle & Perry, 1983; Baba & Jamal, 1979). Again, as the case with age, one accrues investments in the organization with experience (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Buchanan, 1974).

Since the concept of commitment is tied to the notions of career advancement, fair and equitable treatment, and value congruence, it is likely that those who believes they could control their own destiny in general, tend

to use the organization as a vehicle for advancing their position. In other words, since people with an internal locus of control perceive that rewards follow from their own behavior and actions, they develop an enhanced feeling of responsibility and commitment toward their organization if such rewards are forthcoming from the organization (Salancik, 1977). On the other hand, if an individual has an external locus of control such a linkage between advancing one's well being and the resulting commitment may not exist as he or she may attribute whatever benefits that might accrue to chance. Hence locus of control may have some influence on organizational commitment.

Among structural factors, organization size and department size seem to have some theoretical relevance to organizational commitment. People working for large organizations seem to derive a sense of power in the community because of the organization's impact on the community and this perception acts toward enhancing their commitment to the organization (Stevens, Beyer & Trice, 1978). However, research has also shown that smaller subunits within an organization facilitate greater social interaction among members of that subunit which they value (Porter, Lawler & Hackman, 1975). If their employing organization provides such a facility, then people may develop attachment to it. Thus both large organizational size and small department size are likely to evoke sentiments of commitment toward the organization.

With regard to situational factors, leader behavior (Bateman & Strasser, 1984), job scope (Bateman & Strasser, 1984), participation in decision making (Stumpf & Hartman, 1984) and job involvement (Stevens, Beyer & Trice, 1978) appear to be possible antecedents of organizational commitment. These are variables that characterize the situation in which an individual performs his or her job. So if the supervisor shows high consideration, initiates structure and the job itself presents a wide scope where there is plenty of opportunity to influence actual decisions, then the individual develops greater commitment to the organization that provides these positive outcomes (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). Further, people develop a psychological identification with their jobs and view them as a source of self-esteem, it is logical that they may become committed to the organization that provides those jobs. So job involvement is a likely antecedent of organizational commitment (Baba & Jamal, 1976; Stevens, Beyer & Trice, 1978). Thus the variables in the above categories of personal, structural, and situational factors are suggested as possible antecedents of organizational commitment.

Consistent with the proposed model that links attitudes and behavioral intentions, job related effort appears to be a possible behavioral conse-

quence of commitment. As suggested by Becker's theory of commitment (1960) it could be seen that individuals who are committed to their organizations perceive a certain congruence between their goals and those of the organization. This might result in the individual exerting more effort on the job to achieve those goals. Thus, increased job related effort is a likely consequence of organizational commitment.

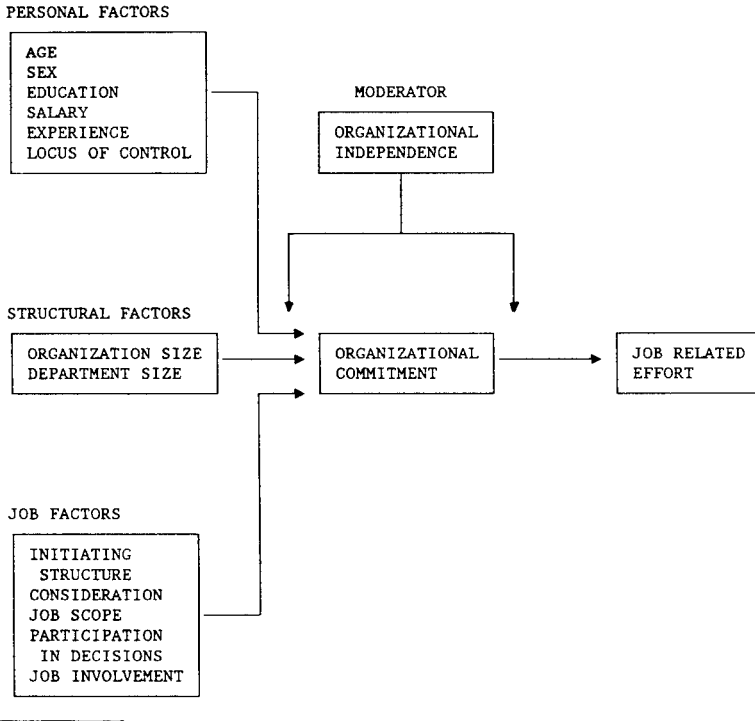
Research on organizational commitment has not explored the changes in one's cognitive map that may come about due to perceptions of how valuable his or her skills are to competing organizations. In other words, an important factor that might moderate the proposed linkage between antecedents and consequences of commitment is organizational independence. The theoretical relevance of this concept to commitment research can be traced to the work of March and Simon (1958) where they discuss the notions of ease and desirability of movement and point out their implications to an understanding of the fit between employees and organizations. If an individual possesses knowledge and skills that are readily marketable to other organizations, it is conceivable that it affects his or her commitment to the current employer (Bateman & Strasser, 1984). One might also expect certain differences in terms of antecedents that bring about commitment and consequences that manifest committed behavior between an individual who possesses high organizational independence and one who has only a low level of organizational independence. An attempt is made here to investigate such moderating effects so as to gain a better understanding of organizational commitment. The model to be tested is shown in Figure 1.

## **METHOD**

### **Sample and Setting**

The sample consisted of 105 upper and middle managers working in the furniture manufacturing industry across Canada. Of the total sample 94 percent were male. The average respondent is 42 years of age, has some college education, 11 years of work experience with the present organization which has between 100 and 300 people, and is in a department which has between 5 and 25 people. Data were collected through a structured field survey questionnaire which was pretested in one organization. The questionnaires in their final form with return envelopes were mailed in bulk to 26 organizations. One contact person in each organization took the responsibility of distributing the questionnaires to the target group mentioned earlier. A total of 300 questionnaires were sent of which 200 questionnaires

FIGURE 1  
MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT



were actually distributed to the prospective respondents yielding a response rate of 52 percent. The completed questionnaires were mailed back to the researchers directly in the postage paid return envelopes. The response rate of 52 percent compares favorably with the average response rate of 48 percent reported in the literature for such mail back questionnaires with no follow up (Heberlein & Baumgartner, 1978).

### Instrument

Among the independent variables, information regarding age, sex, education, salary, experience, organization size and department size were obtained by asking the respondents pertinent questions. Locus of control was measured using the modified 10 item Rotter Scale (Valecha, 1972). The

internal consistency reliability for locus of control using the Cronbach alpha was found to be .62. Initiating structure and consideration were measured using the 10 item modified Form XII of the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (Schriesheim & Kerr, 1974). The internal consistency reliabilities for initiating structure and consideration were found to be .79 and .80 respectively. Job scope was measured using the 14 item Job Diagnostic Survey-Section II (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). The internal consistency reliability was found to be .60. Participation in decision-making was measured using the five item scale developed by Siegel and Ruh (1973). The internal consistency reliability for that was found to be .82. Job involvement was measured using the six item short form of the Lodahl and Kejner Scale (1965). The internal consistency reliability of this scale was .75.

The moderator variable, organizational independence was measured by a four item scale (House & Kerr, 1973). Details on scale development and psychometric properties are reported in Kerr, House and Wigdor (1971). Because of the small number of items (four) it was felt that an internal consistency test might not yield meaningful results. However, the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula correction of the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 was reported to be .88 (Kerr, House & Wigdor, 1971).

With regard to the dependent variables, organizational commitment was measured using the 10 item Moore Schedule (L.F. Moore, Personal Communication, March 1976). Because the items were not published elsewhere, the scale is reported here in full. The items were as follows:

1. I certainly feel that my organization is a better place to work than most.
2. I am pleased to have my friends know where I work.
3. In general, I often tell someone in my immediate family (wife, child, parents, brother, sister) about some projects that this organization has done or is doing.
4. The values of most managers at my level in this organization coincide closely with my own values.
5. I really care about the fate of this organization.
6. This organization is a good one for a person trying to get ahead.
7. This organization is reasonable and fair with its employees.
8. The values of managers senior to me in this organization coincide with my own values.
9. It bothers me very much when I hear (or read about) someone criticizing this organization or its products or services.
10. I find that I work well with most managers in this organization.



The average inter-item correlation was found to be .35 and the internal consistency reliability was .84. The other dependent variable, effort was measured using the 17 item Landy and Guion Scale (1970). The average inter-item correlation was .12 and the internal consistency reliability was found to be .69. Table 1 shows the means, stand and deviations and the intercorrelations of the above scales.

### **Data Analysis**

Product moment and canonical correlations, multiple regression analysis and subgroup analysis were used for analyzing the data. In order to minimize the impact of missing values, the mean value of a respondent's score on each variable was computed and used for analysis instead of the usual cumulative score for each variable. For the subgroup analysis, the sample was divided into two groups based on their score on the organizational independence scale. Those below the median score were classified as having low organizational independence and those above the median as having high organizational independence. The scales were presented in random order to minimize priming effects.

### **RESULTS**

The results for the total sample indicated that both personal and job factors were significantly related to organizational commitment while structural factors were not. The canonical correlation between organizational commitment and personal factors was .36 ( $p < .05$ ), for job factors it was .60 ( $p < .005$ ) and for the structural factors it was .14 (not significant). The Pearson product moment correlation between organizational commitment and effort was .31 ( $p < .005$ ).

When the sample was divided into two subgroups with high and low organizational independence some interesting differences emerged. For people with high organizational independence, salary, department size, initiating structure and consideration became significant predictors of organizational commitment (Table 2). Organizational commitment itself was not significantly connected to job related effort though it must be pointed out that the beta coefficient was quite high (.35) (Table 2). Education was found to influence effort directly rather than through organizational commitment as proposed originally. Figure 2 summarizes the results of subgroup analysis for the high independence group.

**Table 1**  
**Scale Means, Standard Deviation and Correlations**

Scale	Range	Means	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Locus of Control	0-1	.41	.35	—								
2. Initiating Structure	1-5	2.16	1.11	.17	—							
3. Consideration	1-5	2.17	1.06	.19	.70	—						
4. Job Scope	1-7	5.58	.70	-.15	-.29	-.16	—					
5. Participation in Decision Making	1-5	4.23	.87	.13	.23	.19	.13	—				
6. Job Involvement	1-5	3.40	1.40	.09	.42	.36	-.10	.39	—			
7. Organizational Independence	1-5	3.80	.86	.07	-.19	-.15	.12	.03	-.08	—		
8. Organizational Commitment	1-5	1.92	.64	.06	.49	.41	-.46	-.17	.22	-.01	—	
9. Effort	1-5	2.05	.81	.05	.64	.68	-.22	-.32	.57	-.29	.31	—

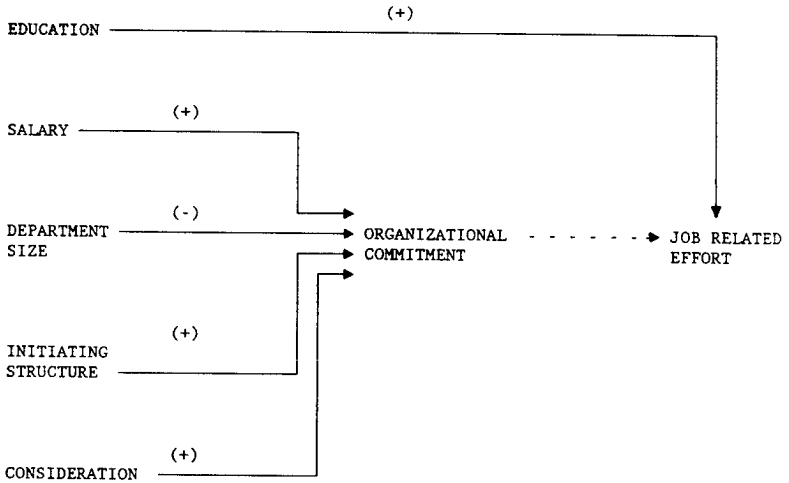
Note: 1. For locus of control, low score indicates internal locus of control and high score indicates external locus of control.  
 2. The scales of Initiating Structure, Consideration, Job Involvement, Organizational Commitment and Effort are reverse scored.  
 3. Correlations .16 are significant at the .05 level.  
 .23 are significant at the .01 level.

Table 2  
 Test of an Organizational Commitment Model: Summary of Correlations, Path Analysis and Subgroup Analysis

Criteria	High Independence n = 44			Low Independence n = 61			Total Sample n = 105			High Independence n = 44			Low Independence n = 61			Total Sample n = 105		
	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β	r	β
Predictors																		
Personal factors:																		
Age	06	02	34***	30*	20*	21*	-19	-06	-21	-06	-10	-09	-14					
Sex	-22	10	02	01	16*	12	04	-01	-07	-01	04	-03	-04					
Education	-19	-23	00	04	-09	-09	27*	-02	38*	-02	06	11	11					
Salary	06	44*	21*	-09	11	03	14	12	10	12	02	15	13					
Experience	-05	05	-13	-05	-09	-02	-16	-07	-25	-07	02	-10	-01					
Locus of control	-03	-01	21*	-03	06	-11	-06	22*	-22	22*	-02	05	-08					
Structural factors:																		
Organizational Commitment																		
Organization size	-22	08	03	-10	-10	-14	-08	-04	-05	-04	-04	-05	00					
Department size	-16	-36*	24*	18	02	-01	-13	-07	12	-07	-05	-04	-07					
Job factors:																		
Initiating structure	69***	49***	41***	05	49***	20	31*	73***	-04	73***	26	64***	27***					
Consideration	53***	39***	35**	22	41***	20	54***	74***	26	74***	38*	68***	39***					
Job scope	48***	14	43***	32*	46***	36***	42***	13	24	13	03	22*	09					
Participation in decisions	28*	-05	-17	01	02	06	-17	-49***	-01	-49***	-13	-32***	-13					
Job Involvement	16	-06	28*	14	22	06	36**	63***	14	63***	30**	57***	25***					
Organizational commitment	-	-	-	-	-	-	52***	24*	35	24*	-06	31***	-04					

\*p ≤ .05    \*\* p ≤ .01    \*\*\* p ≤ .005

FIGURE 2  
 SUBGROUP ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT  
 HIGH ORGANIZATIONAL INDEPENDENCE GROUP (N=44)

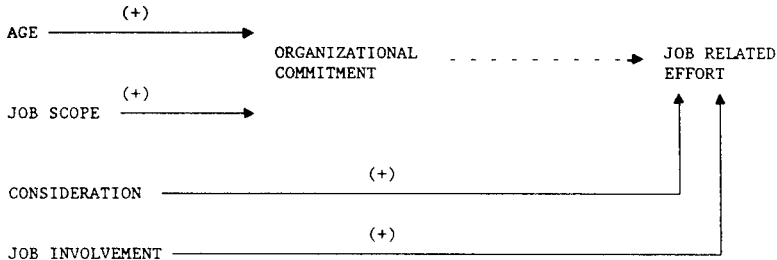


THE SOLID ARROWS INDICATE SIGNIFICANT PREDICTIONS

Other observations worth noting were that both salary and department size did not exhibit significant zero order correlations with organizational commitment though their beta coefficients were significant (Table 2). In addition to initiating structure and consideration, both job scope and participation in decision-making were correlated significantly to organizational commitment (Table 2). Significant zero order correlations were also obtained between effort and education, initiating structure, consideration, job scope, job involvement and organizational commitment (Table 2).

For the low organizational independence group, only age and job scope were significantly linked to organizational commitment. As in the previous case, organizational commitment was not linked to job related effort and in this case the beta coefficient was considerably lower than the other group (-.06). Consideration and job involvement were directly connected to effort rather than through organizational commitment. Figure 3 summarizes the results of subgroup analysis for the low independence group.

FIGURE 3  
 SUBGROUP ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT  
 LOW ORGANIZATIONAL INDEPENDENCE GROUP (N=61)



THE SOLID ARROWS INDICATE SIGNIFICANT PREDICTIONS

As for zero order correlations, organizational commitment was significantly associated with age, salary, locus of control, department size, initiating structure and consideration (Table 2). Job related effort was significantly correlated to locus of control, initiating structure, consideration, participation in decision-making, job involvement and organizational commitment (Table 2).

## DISCUSSION

The results obtained suggested that only age and job scope were viable antecedents of organizational commitment if the moderator effects of organizational independence were ignored. However, because of the significant differences that emerged due to the moderating effects of organizational independence, it is imperative that the results have to be discussed in the light of the subgroup analyses in order to gain a more thorough understanding of organizational commitment.

### Independent Group

Examining the phenomenon of organizational commitment for the group which perceives high organizational independence (henceforth called independent), it appears that salary, department size, initiating structure

and consideration are significant antecedents of organizational commitment as shown in Figure 2. In other words, for this group, all three predictor sets contributed variables that were significantly related to organizational commitment, as suggested in the original model. In addition, the proposed link between organizational commitment and job related effort was much stronger ( $\beta = .35$ ) compared to the low organizational independence group (henceforth called dependent) ( $\beta = -.06$ ) though both were not statistically significant. The results indicate that salary is one of the ties that bind members of this group to the organization. Because they perceive themselves to be marketable they would consider leaving the organization if they are not satisfied with their salary. Thus it becomes an important ingredient for developing commitment to the organization.

Among structural factors, department size was found to be a negative predictor of organizational commitment. Consistent with previous research (Porter, Lawler, Hackman, 1975) these individuals seem to prefer a smaller subunit which facilitates greater coordination of work activities and manageability of that subunit. Given their perceptions of mobility, a smaller work group becomes a key factor in developing attachment to the organization.

Among job factors, leader behavior became a significant positive predictor of organizational commitment. If an independent manager finds the leader behavior unacceptable, he or she can withdraw commitment and yet not suffer the consequences. Thus it becomes a discriminating variable in developing commitment.

As mentioned earlier, though the linkage between commitment and effort was in the predicted direction it did not quite reach statistical significance. This may be due to the small sample and for more conclusive evidence, the linkage has to be tested with a larger sample. It was observed that education had a direct influence on effort instead of the proposed linkage through commitment. One of the factors that makes an individual independent from the organization is education (Mottaz, 1986). Often people with professional training would exert the same amount of effort in any job that is matched with their training, regardless of the organization. Thus it stands to reason that education be directly linked to job related effort than through commitment for the independent managers. Further, by virtue of having a higher level of education, the independents would like to keep their options open as they perceive more opportunities than their dependent counterparts. As a result, they do not see their education as an antecedent to organizational commitment.

It has also been found for this group that age, sex, experience, locus of control, organizational size, and job involvement were neither correlated

nor predicted organizational commitment while job scope and participation in decision making were correlated positively with commitment but did not exhibit significant beta coefficients. The independent managers did not perceive either age or experience as important side bets, contrary to the theory, perhaps because they felt they could move to another organization either laterally or upwards without really losing any investments accrued to them due to age or experience. No meaningful interpretation of the effect of sex on commitment is possible in this study as the female sample was very small (6 percent).

It was suggested earlier that managers with an internal locus of control were more likely to use the organization as a vehicle for advancing their position compared to externals, and development commitment if the organization seemed responsive to such attempts. However if there are other organizations which would be equally responsive, the proposed association between locus of control and organizational commitment loses its strength. Thus locus of control was perceived to be unrelated to organizational commitment by this group.

As for organization size, there was no significant relationship with commitment in both the independent and the dependent groups. It is conceivable that the critical organizational size that makes a difference in terms of perceptions of power in the community may be higher than 400 and this study did not provide for differentiation for sizes above 400 in its response format.

Another antecedent variable that did not show any relationship with commitment was job involvement. It suggests that these managers viewed their jobs and organizations separately and identified themselves with their jobs. However, that identification did not spill over to their organization as they could get a similar job in whatever organization they moved to. Job scope and participation in decision making were significantly correlated with commitment but their beta coefficients were non-significant. It is conceivable that these variables did not influence commitment directly but through some third variable like job satisfaction. This view is supported in the literature as well (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979; Porter, Lawler & Hackman, 1975; Stumpf & Hartman, 1984).

### **Dependent Group**

The next step is to examine the antecedents and consequences of commitment for the organizationally dependent managers. As can be seen from Figure 3, the antecedents of organizational commitment for this group are

totally different from those of the other group. For this group only age and job scope predicted organizational commitment. It seems clear that for managers dependent on the organization, the considerable accrual of investment in the organization due to age becomes very valuable. Taken together with the argument that the older manager is less attractive to other organizations, it is easy to see why there would be a direct relationship between age and commitment for the dependent manager. The managers in this group also realize that it may be difficult to get a comparable job elsewhere and as a result, become attached to the organization that provides them one with sufficient scope. Hence a positive predictive relationship between the two variables emerged for this group.

Organizational commitment itself was not a significant predictor of job related effort for this group though there was significant correlation between the two variables. One explanation for this lack of relationship lies in Steers' (1977) distinction between active and passive commitment. Passive commitment refers to the loyalty aspects while active commitment deals with behavioral acts of commitment. It can be argued that if a manager's commitment is primarily due to an attempt at reducing dissonance created by his or her organizational dependence, such commitment may not readily translate into increased effort on the job. Thus the affective responses of the managers in this group were not converted to behavioral intentions. This calls for separating the dimensions of organizational commitment in future studies into a passive-active dichotomy.

Other deviations from the original model meriting discussion are as follows: both consideration and job involvement were directly linked to job related effort rather than through commitment for this group. For people who are settled in an organization, and for whom commitment and effort are not connected, it is possible that a considerate supervisor may be able to enhance job related effort directly by his or her supervisory style. In other words, for this group, commitment as an intervening variable in the linkage between consideration and effort may be irrelevant because even if they find the leader inconsiderate, they cannot really leave the organization, yet, can minimize their efforts. In this context, it must be mentioned that initiating structure also correlated highly with effort for this group though the beta coefficient was not statistically significant. It is likely that initiating structure is linked to effort through a third variable, such as role clarity (Steers, 1977) and future attempts should examine this linkage for concrete results.

Job involvement is another variable which instead of influencing effort through commitment was linked to it directly. Given the perceived low market potential of this group, the members do not feel the need to link their job involvement to commitment to the organization. Their commit-



ment comes about as a result of the benefits accrued to them in their respective organizations. On the other hand, if they derive psychological identification and self esteem from their jobs, they put more effort into it. Baba (1979) found some empirical support to this notion.

Among the antecedents of commitment for the dependent group, sex, education, experience, organizational size and participation in decision making showed no relationship with organizational commitment while others such as salary, locus of control, department size, initiating structure, consideration and job involvement were positively correlated with commitment though their beta coefficients were not significant. Discussing the insignificant findings seen in Table 2 for this group, no conclusions can be drawn with regard to the relationship between sex and commitment as the female sample was very small (6 percent). For the dependent managers it is likely that the positive value of education and experience is lost as a result of perceived lack of mobility and therefore does not contribute toward building commitment. As for organizational size and participation in decision making, the dependent managers are likely to desensitize themselves to such matters thereby reducing dissonance. The other antecedent variables which were positively correlated with commitment but with nonsignificant beta coefficients may be related to commitment through some unexplored variables. Further research is needed to identify these variables and their relationships to commitment.

A look at Figures 1, 2, and 3 together suggests that while it is possible to conceptualize organizational commitment as an outcome of personal, structural, and job factors, it is important to recognize the crucial role played by organizational independence as a contingency factor. The figures indicate that the precise nature of the impact of the above antecedents on commitment depends very much upon how the employees perceive themselves with regard to their organizational independence. Therefore, strategies to induce commitment among independent managers as can be seen from Figure 2 have to be very different from those employed to enhance commitment among dependent managers as shown in Figure 3. The conclusion one can draw from these figures is that development of organizational commitment is a complex process and the inducement factors are contingent upon how individuals perceive their independence from the organization.

Discussing the results in general, it can be seen that the portfolio of predictors of commitment was more varied for the independent managers than for the dependents. One reason may be that the independents who believe that they can leave the organization if they are not happy are keenly attuned to the various factors that may contribute to their leaving or staying

in the organization. However cognitive dissonance theory would suggest that those who perceive that there is no real chance of changing an unpleasant situation tend to minimize their felt displeasure toward the situation by becoming indifferent to contributing factors mentioned earlier. Thus their portfolio of antecedents tends to be more limited than those of the independents.

In summary, the overall findings of this study suggest that the predictive model of organizational commitment derived from previous research can only be partially supported. Though influences on commitment can be found among all three groups of antecedents, organizational independence seems to be an important moderator in the relationship between antecedents and commitment and between antecedents and outcomes of commitment. Thus the nature of the ties that bind individuals to organizations is contingent upon perceptions of organizational dependence or independence as the case may be, among those individuals.

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## *Appartenance à l'organisation et indépendance parmi les cadres canadiens*

Il y a eu deux courants différents de recherche sur le phénomène de l'appartenance à l'organisation. Le premier met l'accent sur le comportement des individus en reliant le sentiment d'appartenance au comportement lui-même et aux intentions qui le motivent. Le second se fonde sur la connaissance et étudie le phénomène de l'appartenance en fonction des attitudes que les individus développent avec le temps par rapport aux organisations pour lesquelles ils travaillent. Cependant, afin de mieux comprendre le phénomène de l'appartenance, il est nécessaire de combiner les deux courants de recherche et d'étudier ensemble la formation des attitudes ainsi que leurs conséquences sur le comportement.

Un modèle fondé sur le raisonnement précédent doit inclure des facteurs personnels, des facteurs structurels et des facteurs rattachés à l'emploi comme antécédents possibles à l'appartenance à l'organisation et à l'effort de travail comme conséquence plausible. De même, les effets modérateurs des qualifications et des connaissances qui peuvent être utiles aux entreprises concurrentes touchant la relation précédente doivent-ils être également examinés pour comprendre toute la complexité du phénomène.

Parmi les facteurs personnels, les variables pouvant être théoriquement pertinentes à l'appartenance sont l'âge, le sexe, le degré de scolarité, le salaire, l'expérience et le degré de contrôle que permet le poste.

Parmi les facteurs structurels, l'importance de l'organisation et du département où l'employé travaille peuvent être théoriquement pertinents à l'appartenance à l'organisation. En ce qui concerne les facteurs reliés au poste lui-même, le leadership, l'étendue du poste, la participation aux prises de décision et le degré d'engagement dans le poste semblent être des antécédents possibles de l'appartenance. Conformément au modèle proposé, l'effort de travail pourrait être une conséquence possible de l'appartenance.

La recherche sur l'appartenance à l'organisation n'a pas exploré les changements susceptibles de se produire dans l'esprit d'un travailleur qui peuvent résulter de sa perception de la valeur de ses qualifications pour une entreprise concurrente. Ainsi, un facteur primordial susceptible de tempérer l'association proposée entre les antécédents et les conséquences de l'appartenance réside dans l'indépendance de la personne à l'endroit de l'organisation. L'article s'efforce donc d'enquêter sur de tels effets modérateurs de façon à en arriver à une meilleure compréhension de l'appartenance à l'organisation.

L'échantillon comprenait 105 cadres supérieurs et intermédiaires travaillant dans l'industrie du meuble à travers le Canada. On a recueilli les données au moyen d'un questionnaire prétesté dans une organisation. On a distribué deux cents questionnaires dans vingt-six établissements et le taux de réponses a été de cinquante-deux pour cent.

L'analyse des données s'est faite à l'aide des méthodes du moment produit, de la corrélation canonique, de la régression multiple et du sous-regroupement. Lorsque l'échantillon fut divisé en deux sous-groupes selon que le degré d'indépendance face à l'organisation était fort ou faible, il est apparu d'intéressantes différences. Pour les personnes dont l'indépendance était forte, le salaire, l'importance de l'organisation ou du département, la structure d'initiation et la considération apparurent comme des indicateurs significatifs d'appartenance à l'entreprise. L'appartenance à l'organisation n'était pas significativement liée à l'effort de travail quoiqu'il faille signaler que le coefficient bêta était fort élevé (.35). On a découvert que la scolarité avait une influence directe sur l'effort de travail et non pas par l'intermédiaire de l'appartenance à l'organisation comme on l'avait proposé antérieurement.

Pour ceux dont le degré d'indépendance à l'endroit de l'organisation était faible, seuls l'âge et l'étendue du poste se trouvaient significativement liés à l'appartenance. Comme dans le cas précédent, l'appartenance n'était pas liée à l'effort de travail et, dans ce cas, le coefficient bêta était beaucoup plus bas que dans l'autre groupe (-.06). La considération et l'implication dans la tâche étaient directement reliées à l'effort plutôt qu'au facteur de l'appartenance à l'organisation.

Lorsqu'on discute des résultats d'une façon générale, on peut remarquer que le portefeuille des indicateurs d'appartenance était plus diversifié chez les cadres indépendants que chez les cadres dépendants. L'un des motifs en est que les personnes indépendantes, étant donné qu'elles croient pouvoir quitter l'organisation si elles ne s'y sentent pas heureuses, s'harmonisent parfaitement avec les facteurs qui peuvent fonder leur décision d'y rester ou de la quitter. Cependant, l'application de la théorie de la dissonance cognitive sous-entend que ceux qui estiment n'avoir aucune possibilité sérieuse de modifier une situation pénible ont tendance à minimiser le mécontentement qu'ils ressentent par rapport à leur situation en devenant graduellement indifférents aux divers facteurs énoncés précédemment. Ainsi, le portefeuille des antécédents a tendance à être plus limité dans leur cas que dans celui des individus indépendants.

En résumé, les constatations générales de cette étude laissent voir que le modèle prédictif de l'appartenance à l'organisation tiré des recherches antérieures peut seulement être partiellement supporté. Même si on peut dégager certaines influences sur l'appartenance à l'entreprise dans les trois groupes d'antécédents, l'indépendance à l'endroit de l'organisation semble tempérer considérablement le rapport entre les antécédents et l'appartenance et entre les antécédents et les résultats de l'appartenance. Ainsi, la nature des liens qui associent les individus aux organisations dépend des perceptions qu'ils peuvent avoir de leur dépendance ou de leur indépendance à l'égard de celle-ci.