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THE MEASUREMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT.

A PROGRESS REPORT.

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This paper summarizes a stream of research aimed at developing and validating a measure of employee commitment to work organizations. The instrument, developed by Porter, is called the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Based on a series of studies among 2,563 employees in nine divergent organizations, cross-validated evidence of predictive, convergent, and discriminant validity emerged for the instrument. Moreover, satisfactory test-retest reliabilities and internal consistency reliabilities were found. Norms for males and females are presented →

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20. Abstract (continued)

based on the available sample. Possible instrument limitations and future research needs on the topic are reviewed.

The Measurement of Organizational Commitment: A Progress Report

Recent years have witnessed a marked increased in interest by social scientists in the concept of organizational commitment. This interest has been expressed in both theoretical efforts to explicate the construct and empirical efforts to determine the antecedents and outcomes of commitment (Buchanan, 1974; Hall & Schneider, 1972; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Kanter, 1977; Mowday, Porter, & Dubin, 1974; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Salancik, 1977; Sheldon, 1971; Staw, 1977; Steers, 1977). Throughout the various studies, commitment has been repeatedly identified as an important variable in understanding the work behavior of employees in organizations.

Several possible reasons exist as to why commitment has received this interest. First, according to theory, employee commitment to an organization should be a fairly solid predictor of certain behaviors, especially turnover. Committed persons should be more likely to want to remain with an organization and work towards its goals. Second, the notion of commitment is intuitively appealing to both managers and social scientists. The interest in enhancing employee attachment, almost for its own sake, dates from the early studies of employee "loyalty" in which loyalty was seen by many as a form of socially acceptable behavior on the part of employees. Third, an increased understanding of orgnizational commitment may help us to comprehend the nature of more general psychological processes by which people choose to identify with objects in their environment and to make sense out of this environment. *It helps us to some degree to explain how* people find purpose in life.

Recent investigations of the topic have largely been marked by a one-sample, one-study methodological approach. Little systematic or programmatic research has been carried out. Moreover, studies of commitment have been made more difficult by a general lack of agreement concerning how best to conceptualize and measure the concept. As noted by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972, pp. 558-559), "the lack of extensive examination of the organizational commitment of professionals might be due to the difficulty of making that concept operational and of deriving indexes amenable to empirical testing and validation." The present paper attempts to overcome this shortcoming by reviewing a stream of research carried out over a nine year period and including over 2,500 employees from nine widely divergent work organizations.

Definition of Organizational Commitment

Approaches to the definition of organizational commitment vary considerably. For example, a review of ten different studies reveals the following definitions:

> ...an attitude or an orientation toward the organization which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organization (Sheldon, 1971, p. 143)
>
> ...the willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations which are seen as self-expressive (Kanter, 1968, p. 499)
>
> ...a structural phenomenon which occurs as a result of individual-organizational transactions and alterations in side bets or investments over time (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972, p. 556)
>
> ...a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities and his own involvement (Salancik, 1977, p. 62)
>
> ...the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent (Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970, p. 176)

> ...the nature of the relationship of the member to the system as a whole (Grusky, 1966, p. 489)
>
> ...(1) it includes something of the notion of membership; (2) it reflects the current position of the individual; (3) it has a special predictive potential, providing predictions concerning certain aspects of performance, motivation to work, spontaneous contribution, and other related outcomes; and (4) it suggests the differential relevance of motivational factors (Brown, 1969, p. 347)
>
> ...Commitments come into being when a person, by making a side-bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity (Becker, 1960, p. 32)
>
> ...Commitment behaviors are socially accepted behaviors that exceed formal and/or normative expectations relevant to the object of commitment (Wiener & Gechman, 1977, p. 48)
>
> ...a partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization, to one's role in relation to goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth (Buchanan, 1974, p. 533)

Despite this diversity, certain trends are evident. In particular, many of these definitions focus on commitment-related <u>behaviors</u>. For example, when we talk about someone becoming "bound by his actions" or "behaviors that exceed formal and/or normative expectations," we are in effect focusing on overt manifestations of commitment. Such behaviors represent sunk costs in the organization where individuals forgo alternative courses of action and choose to link themselves to the organization. This behavioral approach to commitment is discussed in detail by Staw (1977).

A second trend that emerges from the available theory is to define commitment in terms of an <u>attitude</u>. That is, attitudinal commitment exists when "the identity of the person [is linked] to the organization" or when "the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent." Attitudinal commitment thus represents a state in which an individual identifies with a particular

organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate those goals. As noted by March and Simon (1958), such commitment often encompasses an exchange relationship in which individuals attach themselves to the organization in return for certain rewards or payments from the organization. It is with this second approach to organizational commitment that we are largely concerned, although our definition will include some aspects of commitment-related behaviors.

For purposes of instrument development, organizational commitment was defined here as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Porter & Smith, 1970). It can be characterized by at least three factors: 1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; 2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.

When defined in this fashion, commitment represents something beyond mere passive loyalty to an organization. It involves an active relationship with the organization such that individuals are willing to give something of themselves in order to contribute to the organization's well being. Hence, to an observer, commitment could be inferred not only from the expressions of an individual's beliefs and opinions but also from his or her actions. It is important to note here that this definition does not preclude the possibility (or even probability) that individuals will also be committed to other aspects of their environment, such as one's family or union or political party. It simply asserts that regardless of these other possible commitments, the organizationally committed individual will tend to exhibit the three types of behavior identified in the above definition.

As an attitude, commitment differs from the concept of job satisfaction in several ways. To begin with, commitment as a construct is more global, reflecting a general affective response to the organization as a whole. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, reflects one's response either to one's job or to certain aspects of one's job. Hence, commitment emphasizes attachment to the employing organization, including its goals and values, while satisfaction emphasizes the specific task environment where an employee performs his or her duties.

In addition, organizational commitment should be somewhat more stable over time than job satisfaction. Although day-to-day events in the work place may affect an employee's level of job satisfaction, such transitory events should not cause an employee to seriously reevaluate his or her attachment to the overall organization. Available longitudinal evidence supports this view (see, for example, Porter et al., 1974). Commitment attitudes appear to develop slowly but consistently over time as individuals think about the relationship between themselves and their employer. Such findings would be predicted from the definition and available theory. Satisfaction, on the other hand, has been found to be a less stable measure over time, reflecting more immediate reactions to specific and tangible aspects of the work environment (e.g., pay, supervision, etc.). Evidence for this transitory nature of satisfaction can be found in Smith, Kendall, & Hulin (1969) and Porter et al. (1974).

Approaches to Measurement

Measures of organizational commitment are as diverse as the definitions. Most of these measures consist of from two- to four-item scales

that are created on an a priori basis and for which little or no validity and reliability data are presented. For example, Grusky's (1966) scale used four items, consisting of company seniority, identification with the company, attitudes toward company administrators, and general attitudes toward the company. The median intercorrelation between the items was $r = .15$. Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) used a four-item scale which asked in essence what it would take for the employee to leave the organization. Spearman-Brown reliability was reported at .79 but no additional validity or reliability data were presented. Similar procedures were employed by Lee (1971), Sheldon (1971), Brown (1969), Gouldner (1960), Hall, Schneider, & Nygren (1970), Hall & Schneider (1972), and Buchanan (1974). Kanter (1968, 1977) used a 36 item scale, but failed to report either validity or reliability data. Finally, Wiener and Gechman (1977) asked employees to keep diaries of voluntary work-related activities on personal time, using a decoding procedure to estimate commitment.

In all, little evidence exists of any systematic or comprehensive efforts to determine the stability, consistency, or predictive powers of the various instruments. Researchers rely instead on face validity. If progress is to be made in explicating the commitment construct so that useful research about its nature and consequences can be carried out, there exists a need for an instrument that exhibits acceptable psychometric properties within the constraints of attitude measurement (Nunnally, 1967). Such an instrument is presented here, along with the psychometric findings that are available to date. The data summarized here represent initial efforts to develop a measure of organizational commitment and are presented in the hopes of stimulating further developmental work in the area so more

accurate indicators of employee commitment can be derived.

The approach to instrument development that was taken here was to identify 15 items that appeared to tap the three aspects of our definition of commitment. These items are shown in Table 1. The response format employed a 7-point Likert scale with the following anchors: strongly agree, moderately agree, slightly agree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly disagree, moderately disagree, strongly disagree. Results are then summed and divided by 15 to arrive at a summary indicator of employee commitment. Several items were negatively phrased and reverse scored in an effort to reduce response bias. It was intended that the scale items, when taken together, would provide a fairly consistent indicator of employee commitment levels for most working populations.

Insert Table 1 About Here

In order to examine the psychometric properties of the instrument, a validation strategy was devised which included the use of multiple and diverse samples. It was felt that if a general measure of commitment was to be achieved, it was necessary to collect validity and reliability data for various types of employees in different work environments. Moreover, it was further necessary to cross-validate these results where possible. In order to provide such data, a series of empirical studies were initiated. The results of these studies as they bear on the validity of the instrument are presented here.

METHOD

Samples

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was administered

to 2,563 employees working in a wide variety of jobs in nine different work organizations. The samples used in the validation of the OCQ are briefly described here. More complete details of the demographic characteristics of the various samples are presented in the original published sources mentioned below. In all, the array of both job classifications and work organizations is thought to be sufficiently broad to tap a reasonably representative sample of the working population.

Public employees. Subjects in this unpublished study by Mowday were employed in six governmental agencies of a Midwestern state. Agencies participating in the study included custodial hospitals, social service, budgetary, and licensing agencies. Of the 569 subjects who completed questionnaires, most (81%) were females employed on a variety of lower-level clerical and health-care related jobs. A smaller number of supervisory and administrative personnel also participated in the study.

Classified university employees. Morris, Steers, and Koch (in press) studied the job-related attitudes of 243 classified university employees in a large West Coast university. Subjects were employed in blue-collar (e.g., building and grounds maintenance), clerical (e.g., secretary), and administrative and professional positions (e.g., accountants).

Hospital employees. A study conducted by Steers (1977) examined 382 employees in a large Midwestern hospital. Subjects in the study were employed in a variety of technical and non-technical jobs, including administration, nursing, service work, and clerical positions.

Bank employees. Mowday, Porter, and Dubin (1974) studied 411 female clerical employees working in 37 branches of a major West Coast bank. Subjects in this study were employed as tellers, secretaries and bookkeepers.

Telephone company employees. Blue- and white-collar employees working in a Western telephone company were examined in studies conducted by Stone and Porter (1975) and Dubin, Champoux, and Porter (1975). The sample was composed of 605 primarily male employees working on such jobs as station installers and repairmen, reports clerks, PBX installers, line assigners, and framemen.

Scientists and engineers. A sample of 119 scientists and engineers employed by a major independent research laboratory in the Midwest was studied by Steers (1977). Subjects were engaged in both basic and applied research projects, primarily involving engineering. A variety of technical and administrative positions were sampled.

Auto company managers. Managers of various engineering departments in a major automotive manufacturing firm were studied by Steers and Spencer (1977). The majority of the 115 managers had college degrees, and some had advanced degrees.

Psychiatric technicians. Two classes of psychiatric technician trainees who worked in a major West Coast hospital for the mentally retarded were studied by Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974). The investigation involved a longitudinal administration of questionnaires over a 16 week period ranging from 10 weeks prior to completion of training to 6 weeks following assignment to a full-time position. The 60 technicians studied were primarily female employees involved in patient care and limited treatment.

Retail management trainees. A longitudinal study of management trainees in a large national retail sales organization was conducted by Porter, Crampon, and Smith (1976). Subjects were all recent college graduates entering a 9 to 12 month training program. Questionnaires were

administered at regular intervals from the first day in the organization to 15 months of employment. A total of 212 trainees began the study, although the sample size decreased substantially over the 15 month period due to involuntary military leaves of absence among 56% of the trainees and a lesser amount of voluntary turnover.

Measures

A variety of measures were used to assess the predictive, convergent, and discriminant validity of the OCQ. Since not all of the measures were available in each study, Table 2 summarizes the use of each measure for the various samples. The measures are briefly described below.

Sources of organizational attachment. A twelve-item scale was used to measure the perceived influence of various aspects of the job, work environment, and organization on the individual's desire to remain with or leave the organization (Mowday et al., 1974). A seven-point scale ranging from "strong influence toward leaving" to "strong influence toward staying" measured the strength of twelve potential sources of attachment. An overall score reflecting the total influence toward staying or leaving was derived by averaging the individual items. Coefficient alpha for the total attachment score ranged from .84 to .89 across the six samples in which the instrument was used. Since the desire to remain a part of the organization is a central component of organizational commitment, it was predicted that the individual's commitment to the organization as measured by the OCQ would be positively related to the overall strength of an individual's attachment.

Job involvement. The degree to which employees were highly involved in their job was measured in four samples by an instrument developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The six-item form of the instrument was used

in each sample and responses were measured on a 7-point agree-disagree

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Insert Table 2 About Here

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format. The developers of the instrument have reported acceptable validity and reliability data for the measure. Job involvement represents a close attachment to a particular job rather than the larger organization. Although employees highly involved in their job may also be highly committed to the organization, many jobs transcend particular organizational settings. It was therefore predicted that organizational commitment would be moderately rather than highly related to job involvement.

Job satisfaction. The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith et al. (1969) was used to measure job satisfaction in three samples. The instrument measures employee satisfaction with five specific aspects of work: co-workers, the work itself, supervision, pay, and opportunities for promotion. Information on the development and psychometric properties of the JDI can be found in Smith et al. (1969). Job satisfaction appears to require employees to evaluate relatively specific and tangible aspects of the job, while organizational commitment reflects a more global and stable evaluation of work in the organization (Porter et al., 1974). Thus, while the two measures are likely to be related attitude constructs, the relationship found between job satisfaction and organizational commitment should not be overly high.

Career satisfaction. This measure represents a three-item instrument which reflects the extent to which employees are satisfied with the progress of their particular career (Steers & Braunstein, 1976). As with job involvement and job satisfaction, we would expect only a modest

correlation with OCQ as evidence of discriminant validity. Career satisfaction measures were available for two samples.

Motivational force to perform. For employees in the bank, telephone, and retail management samples, overall motivational force to perform was measured using a 29 item path-goal instrument. The instrument consisted of 29 expectancy items that asked respondents to indicate on a seven point scale the extent to which they believed high performance would lead to 29 positive and negative work-related outcomes. Respondents also indicated the extent to which they valued each of the 29 outcomes on a seven point scale. A total motivational force score was calculated for each respondent by taking the average of the multiplicative product of each expectancy item and the corresponding value of the outcome. Since the willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization is a component of organizational commitment, it was thought that positive correlations between the measures of motivational force and commitment would provide evidence of convergent validity for the OCQ.

Intrinsic motivation. A measure of intrinsic motivation associated with the job was collected from the public employees using a single item from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Package (Nadler, 1975). The measure asked respondents to indicate the extent of their agreement on a seven point scale to the statement "doing my job well gives me a good feeling." Following a similar line of reasoning to that stated for motivational force, it was felt that employees more highly committed to the organization would also express higher levels of intrinsic motivation.

Central life interests. The Central Life Interest (CLI) questionnaire developed by Dubin (1956) was administered in several studies to

assess the extent to which employees are work oriented, non-work oriented, or indifferent between the two orientations. The instrument is composed of 32 items which ask respondents to indicate whether they prefer to engage in a specific behavior in the work setting, some other setting away from work, or are indifferent as to the setting in which they prefer to behave. The central life interest measure and the method of scoring responses is described in greater detail in Dubin et al. (1975). Since an orientation to work may be a necessary but insufficient condition for commitment to work organizations, it was felt that moderate relationships would be found between the measures of organizational commitment and central life interests. It was predicted that employees with a central life interest in work would be more likely to report higher levels of commitment to the organization.

Turnover. Turnover data were collected subsequent to the measures of organizational commitment for subjects in four samples. Information about which individuals subsequently left the organization was collected from company records. In each sample, only those individuals who voluntarily resigned from the organization were included in the leaver group. The relationship between organizational commitment and turnover was examined to assess the predictive validity of the OCQ. Since commitment to the organization is defined in part as a desire to remain a member of the organization, it was predicted that individuals who remained in the organization would exhibit higher levels of commitment than those who left.

Absenteeism. Data on employee absenteeism were collected in three samples. Absenteeism was measured in terms of the number of days absent from work for the samples of hospital employees and scientists and engineers. For the sample of public employees, absenteeism was measured by the number

of incidents of absence for each employee. Each of these measures included both voluntary and involuntary absenteeism. It was felt that employees who are highly committed to the organization would be less likely to be absent than employees with lower organizational commitment. Due to the failure of these measures to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary absences and the large number of factors which potentially influence whether or not an employee is absent from work, the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism was not expected to be strong.

Intent to leave and estimated tenure. In four samples a measure of intent to remain in the organization was collected from employees. Although the specific form of this measure varied from sample to sample, a single item was generally used to assess the extent to which employees anticipated leaving the organization. In the public employees sample, respondents were also asked to estimate the length of time they intended to remain a member of the organization. It was predicted that employees with a high level of organizational commitment would be less likely to indicate they intended to leave the organization.

Job performance. Measures of individual job performance were available for the hospital employees and retail management trainees. Although the specific content of these measures differed, each involved a supervisory rating or ranking of the employee's overall job performance. At a group level of analysis, Mowday et al. (1974) collected performance data for 37 branches of a large bank. A measure of overall branch performance was constructed from separate ratings of branch marketing, operations, employee relations, and manager effectiveness. Steers (1977) has indicated several reasons why organizational commitment may not be strongly related

to performance on the job. Consequently, it was felt that although organizational commitment would be related to job performance, a strong relationship would not necessarily emerge.

Behavioral commitment rating. Immediate superiors of the retail management trainees were asked to rank the overall commitment to the organization of each trainee under their supervision. Supervisors were provided with a description of commitment related behavior (e.g., willing to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization, belief in the goals and values of the organization, etc.). To facilitate comparison of the rankings of trainees across stores, rankings within each store were standardized.

RESULTS

A variety of analyses were carried out using the OCQ among these samples. In particular, interest focused on providing information pertinent to the following psychometric properties of the instrument: 1) means and standard deviations; 2) internal consistency reliability; 3) test-retest reliability; 4) convergent validity; 5) discriminant validity; 6) predictive validity; and 7) norms. While data from all samples were not sufficient to carry out all analyses, results of those analyses that were possible are reported here.

Means and Standard Deviations

Initial attention can be focused on the distribution properties of the OCQ across the nine samples. These results are shown in Table 3. As can be seen from this table, the mean level of commitment ranges from a

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Insert Table 3 About Here

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low of 4.0 to a high of 6.1 across the nine samples. Mean scores are typically slightly above the midpoint on the 7-point Likert scale. Moreover, standard deviations indicate an acceptable distribution of responses within samples.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Esimates of internal consistency were calculated in three different ways: coefficient alpha, item analysis, and factor analysis. First, as shown in Table 3, coefficient alpha is consistently very high, ranging from .82 to .93, with a median of .90 (Cronbach, 1951). These results compare favorably with most attitude measures (cf., Smith et al., 1969).

Item analyses (correlations between each item of the commitment scale and the total score less the item) are reported in Table 4. The last column in Table 4 reports the average item-total score correlations across six samples. In three of the six samples for which these data are available, a 9 item short-form of the instrument utilizing only positively worded items was used. The average item-total score correlations reported for the negatively worded items are therefore based on three samples while the average correlations for the remaining positively worded items are based on six samples. A review of the correlations reported in Table 4 indicates that each item had a positive correlation with the total score for the OCQ, with the range of average correlations being from .36 to .72, and a median correlation of .64. In general, the negatively worded items correlate less highly with the total score than the positively worded items, although this difference is not great. These results suggest the 15 items of the OCQ are relatively homogeneous with respect to the underlying attitude construct they measure.

Insert Table 4 About Here

To further examine the homogeneity of the OCQ items, factor analyses were performed and the results rotated to Kaiser's (1958) varimax solution. Results of these analyses for studies in which the 15 item scale was used are reported in Table 5 and results for studies using the 9 item form are reported in Table 6. In each table factor loadings above .30, eigen values, and the percentage of common variance accounted for by each factor are presented. These analyses generally result in single-factor solution and support the previously stated conclusion that the items are measuring a single common underlying construct. Where two factors emerged from an analysis, the eigen value associated with the second factor never exceeded 1.0. Further, the percent of common variance explained by the second factors ranged from 2.4 to 15.5, while the percentage of variance associated with the first factor ranged from 83.2 to 92.6. As would be expected, lower and more complex patterns of factor loadings were generally found for those items having a lower item-total score correlation (cf. Table 4).

Insert Tables 5 & 6 About Here

Test-Retest Reliability

In order to examine the stability of the OCQ over time, test-retest reliabilities were computed for those samples for which multiple data points were available. As can be seen in Table 7, test-retest reliabilities reach acceptable levels (from $r = .53$ to $r = .75$) over periods ranging 2 months to four months.

Insert Table 7 About Here

These data compare favorably to other attitude measures. For example, Smith et al. (1969) reported test-retest reliabilities for the JDI ranging from .45 to .75.

Evidence of Convergent Validity

In view of the absence of acceptable standards for comparison, it is difficult to establish convergent validity for a measure of organizational commitment. Even so, it would appear that at least four lines of evidence can be suggested which, when taken together, are suggestive of convergent validity. These data are summarized in Table 8.

Insert Table 8 About Here

First, the OCQ should be related to other instruments which are designed to measure similar affective responses. In order to provide for such a comparison, the OCQ was correlated with the Sources of Organizational Attachment Questionnaire (described above). This instrument seemed particularly relevant for a point of comparison since it differs structurally from the OCQ, thereby hopefully reducing common methods variance problems in the analysis. As can be seen in Table 8, convergent validities across six diverse samples range from .63 to .74, with a median of .70. In this case, then, consistent evidence of convergent validity for the OCQ was found.

The second step in determining convergent validity was to examine the extent to which the OCQ was related to employees' behavioral intentions to remain. Intent to remain is deeply imbedded in our conceptualization

of commitment. In four studies, significant correlations were found between OCQ and intent to remain. Although the magnitude of three of the four correlations is not overly high, strong relationships would not be expected in view of the fact that intent to remain or leave represented only one of the three primary ingredients in the definition of commitment and a number of personal and environmental factors can be expected to influence intent to remain in addition to one's commitment to the organization. Moreover, in one study, the OCQ was found to be strongly related to employee's estimates of how long they would remain with the organization.

Third, according to theory, commitment should be related to motivational force to perform and intrinsic motivation. That is, highly committed employees are thought to be motivated to exert high levels of energy on behalf of the organization. Based on four studies where such data were available, some evidence emerged of a moderate relationship between the two variables (using two different measures of motivation), with correlations ranging from .35 to .45.

Fourth, in a study conducted by Dubin et al. (1975) it was found that organizational commitment was related to the central life interest of employees, defined in terms of an expressed orientation toward work or non-work activities, in two diverse samples. The results indicate that employees with a work-oriented central life interest are more likely to be highly committed to the organization than employees expressing a non-work interest. Moreover, non-work oriented employees were more likely than work-oriented employees to express low levels of organizational commitment.

Finally, in the study of retail employees, it was possible to secure independent ratings of employee commitment by employee's superiors. Because

of the narrow range of expressed commitment for this particular sample, the correlation between OCQ and supervisor ratings of commitment was calculated using the restriction of range formula (see Porter & Smith, 1970, for details). Using this procedure, the OCQ correlated at $r = .60$ with independent commitment ratings (the uncorrected correlation was $r = .20$, $p < .05$).

In all, then, the pattern of findings does serve to provide some evidence of convergent validity for the OCQ.

Evidence of Discriminant Validity

As an attitude, organizational commitment would be expected to be related to other job-related attitudes. However, if we are to explicate successfully the commitment construct and identify it as a unique variable in the study of organizational behavior, it must demonstrate acceptable levels of discriminant validity when compared to other attitudes. In order to investigate the extent of discriminant validity of the OCQ, it was compared against three other attitude measures: job involvement, career satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Results are shown in Table 9.

Insert Table 9 About Here

Several lines of evidence emerge from these data bearing on the question of discriminant validity of the OCQ. First, relationships between organizational commitment and Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) job involvement measure ranged from $r = .30$ to $r = .56$ across four samples. Second, correlations between organizational commitment and a three-item measure of career satisfaction were .39 and .40 for two samples. Finally, across four studies and 35 data points, correlations between organizational commitment and scales of the Job Descriptive Index ranged from .01 to .68, with a median correlation

of .41 (these data include results from a study conducted independently by Brief and Aldag, 1977). The highest relationships were generally found between commitment and satisfaction with the work itself.

In view of the typically high correlations found between various job attitudes measured at the same point in time, these correlations are sufficiently low as to provide some indication of an acceptable level of discriminant validity. The percentage of common variance shared by organizational commitment and the other measures did not exceed 50% and was generally less than 25% for most relationships. The magnitude of these correlations, however, are clearly higher than might be desired to demonstrate conclusively discriminant validity, particularly when it is considered that correlations were calculated among instruments of less than perfect reliability.

Evidence of Predictive Validity

Finally, the theory underlying the commitment construct suggests that highly committed employees will be less likely to leave their jobs and may, under some circumstances, perform at higher levels than their less committed counterparts. Data bearing on this point were available from five studies, again among widely diverse groups of employees.

The predictive power of the OCQ vis-a-vis subsequent turnover was examined in four studies (see Table 10). Across eight data points, seven

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Insert Table 10 About Here

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significant correlations between commitment and turnover were found. The eighth data point, where commitment was measured during the initial employment

stage, was not expected to be significant (see Porter et al., 1974, for details). Hence, evidence for a consistent inverse commitment-turnover relationship emerges, although the magnitude of the correlations clearly show that other variables also play an important role in influencing turnover (Porter & Steers, 1973).

In a longitudinal study among newly hired psychiatric technicians, the OCQ was compared against the JDI in predicting turnover across time. The results, shown in Table 11, indicate that the relation between commit-

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Insert Table 11 About Here
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ment and turnover strengthened over time (as would be predicted), while this was not the case for the JDI. Moreover, the OCQ proved to be a somewhat better predictor of turnover than any facet of the JDI. In several static analyses, however, mixed results emerged between the OCQ and the JDI insofar as their predictive powers vis-a-vis turnover are concerned (Porter & Steers, 1977; Steers, 1977). Even so, the OCQ was found to be a fairly stable predictor of employee turnover, as would be predicted by theory.

In three studies where measures of employee absenteeism were available, significant relationships were found between organizational commitment and absenteeism in two of the three samples. The magnitude of these relationships were generally low, as might be expected in view of the fact these measures pooled voluntary and involuntary absences and that a number of other factors in addition to commitment are likely to influence employee absenteeism (see Steers & Rhodes, in press). In any event, the findings were generally in the predicted direction and consistent with theory.

Related to the notion of turnover is the concept of actual tenure in the organization (Salancik, 1977). Here again, as shown in Table 10, significant correlations were found between the OCQ and actual tenure.

Finally, we would expect commitment to be modestly related to employee performance. This relationship should not be overly strong in view of the many factors that have been found to influence performance (e.g., role clarity, reward systems, etc.). Mowday et al. (1974) reported the mean level of commitment for employees in high performing bank branches was greater than the mean for employees in low performing branches.

Performance data collected at the individual level of analysis were available from two samples (see Table 10). For the sample of hospital employees, two of the four correlations between organizational commitment and performance were significant, although the general magnitude of these correlations was low. For the sample of retail management trainees, Crampon, Mowday, Smith and Porter (1978) reported cross-lag relationships between organizational commitment and performance measured after four, six, and nine months in the organization. Although none of the concurrent correlations approached significance, some evidence was found for the relationship between organizational commitment and performance measured in subsequent time periods in two of the three possible comparisons. These analyses were based on very small samples and even though moderate correlations were found, relationships only approached significance. Significant differences between the cross-lag correlations were only found for the four to six month comparison. No evidence was found to substantiate a relationship between performance and subsequent commitment, suggesting that organizational commitment may lead to higher levels of performance, as predicted. These

results must be interpreted with caution, however, since they are based on a small sample and relationships did not reach customary levels of statistical significance.

Taken together, results across these three studies indicate that the relationship between organizational commitment and performance is in the predicted direction, although the strength of the relationships found were modest.

Norms

Based on the results of the studies carried out to date, it is possible to provide some rough indication of how one employee's score on the OCQ compares in magnitude with other employees. An attempt to provide such an indication is provided in the normative data shown in Table 12. This table shows the percentile conversions for raw scores on the OCQ for both males and females. Such data should facilitate more accurate comparative

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Insert Table 12 About Here

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analyses of relative levels of employee commitment by indicating how a particular raw score on the OCQ compares against other scores for a broad sample of employees of the same gender.

DISCUSSION

Criteria for evaluating the psychometric properties of an attitude measure have perhaps been most highly influenced by the work of Campbell and Fiske (1959) on multitrait-multimethod matrices. These researchers suggested very rigorous standards for establishing the reliability and validity of a measurement instrument based upon a study or studies using

several different methods of measurement and measuring both similar and dissimilar attitude constructs. If the standards established by Campbell and Fiske (1959) were interpreted literally, it is apparent that few, if any, attitude measurement instruments would be judged to possess adequate psychometric properties, including many instruments that are widely used in organizational research. The extent to which our instruments can measure up to the high standards set by these authors is limited by the common methods of measurement that are typically used both within and between studies, our level of sophistication in measuring attitudes, and our theoretical understanding of the attitude constructs we attempt to measure. It therefore seems more reasonable to evaluate the properties of a particular instrument in view of these constraints and relative to the validity and reliability available for other widely accepted attitude measures.

With this frame of reference in mind, several conclusions can be drawn concerning the utility of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire for research in organizations. Reasonably strong evidence was presented for the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the OCQ. Compared with other measures, the items of the OCQ were found to be reasonably homogeneous and the results suggest that the overall measure of organizational commitment was relatively stable over short periods of time. Evidence was also presented of acceptable levels of convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity, particularly when compared against other similar attitude measures. The results of the analyses concerning the three types of validity require further comment, however, to place these findings in perspective.

Evidence of convergent validity for the OCQ was suggested by moderate

correlations found between organizational commitment and other measures of both similar attitude constructs (e.g., sources of organizational attachment) and one of the component parts of the definition of organizational commitment (e.g., motivational force to perform). Discriminant validity was assessed by examining the relationships between commitment and satisfaction with one's career and specific aspects of the job and work environment. Commitment was found to be moderately correlated with several of these satisfaction measures, with the percentage of common variance shared by the measures rarely exceeding 25%. While the correlations found for convergent validity are on the average larger than the correlations found for discriminant validity ($\bar{r}$ = .52 vs. .42), this difference is not as large as might be desired. Clearly, correlations of lower magnitude for discriminant validity would be more desirable to demonstrate conclusively that the OCQ is related more highly to similar constructs than different constructs. What is perhaps most important in evaluating the validity of the OCQ, however, is the pattern of results across both analyses. The OCQ was found to be generally more highly related to measures of similar as opposed to different attitude measures and the relationships found between commitment and satisfaction were not so high as to lead one to conclude they were measuring the same attitude. Compared with the evidence for other measures, this pattern of results suggests the OCQ possesses acceptable, although far from perfect, levels of convergent and discriminant validity.

Evidence for the predictive validity of the OCQ was demonstrated by relatively consistent relationships in the predicted direction between commitment and measures of employee turnover, absenteeism, tenure in the

organization, and, to a lesser extent, performance on the job. The magnitude of these relationships was frequently not high, however, suggesting employee behavior in organizations is determined by a complex set of factors and not just commitment to the organization. Given the complexity of the determinants of such behaviors as turnover and absenteeism, it would be truly surprising to find any single attitude measure highly related to a particular behavior. The results presented here suggest that organizational commitment correlates as well, if not better in some cases, with certain employee behaviors than most commonly used attitude measures (e.g., job satisfaction). Where comparisons were available between the relative predictive power of commitment and a well developed measure of job satisfaction, commitment was found to be a better and more stable predictor of turnover (Porter et al., 1974) and group level performance (Mowday et al., 1974). These results indicate that organizational commitment is an important construct to include among other determinants in modeling and researching employee behavior in organizations.

Experience to date with the OCQ suggests several cautions to potential users of the instrument. First, the OCQ is the type of instrument which respondents may easily dissemble, if they are so inclined. The intent of the items are not disguised in such a way as to make it difficult for respondents to manipulate their scores. In this regard, the results of any particular administration of the OCQ are likely to be somewhat dependent upon the circumstances of administration. Researchers interested in using the OCQ should be aware of the possibility that employees may distort their responses if they feel, for example, threatened by completing the questionnaire or are unsure how their responses will be used. It is

important in using the OCQ, therefore, to exercise appropriate caution in administering the questionnaire.

Second, results of the reliability and item analyses suggest that the short form of the OCQ (i.e., using only the 9 positively worded items) may be an acceptable substitute for the longer scale in situations where questionnaire length is a consideration. Even though the internal consistency for the 9 item scale is generally equal to the full instrument, care should be taken in constructing a short form since several of the negatively worded items that might be discarded were correlated more highly with the total score than several of the positively phrased items. Moreover, the negatively worded items were included to guard against the acquiescence response tendency and removal of these items may increase this tendency. The data presented here should allow individual researchers to make their own judgments concerning the appropriateness of a short form for their particular research situation. Where conditions permit, however, we recommend the use of the full instrument.

As a result of the studies reported here, it is possible to identify several areas in which future research would be useful. First, as was noted earlier in the paper, the present work focused on measuring attitudinal commitment. There are other ways in which commitment might be conceptualized and measured and future research may in fact prove these to be superior to the present formulation. It would be useful if future research efforts were directed toward comparing attitudinal and behavioral conceptualizations of commitment. How are these two forms of commitment related, if at all? Does behavioral commitment lead to or facilitate attitudinal commitment? Greater understanding of this relationship would assist in the development

of broader models of employee attachment to organizations.

Second, from a theoretical perspective, it would be helpful to learn more about the major antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. While some progress has been made in this area [see, for example, Steers (1977) and Porter et al. (1974)], much more work remains to be done. In particular, it would be useful to examine the stability of predictors of commitment across divergent samples (e.g., different occupations) and across employees with widely divergent demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, education). Moreover, additional investigations of the commitment-job performance relationship are in order.

Finally, questions need to be raised concerning how organizational commitment as a construct relates to the larger issue of employee behavior in work organizations. This suggestion points to the need for broader theories of organizational behavior that incorporate (but do not rely exclusively on) commitment as a predictor of behavior. Several directions for theoretical and empirical work can be identified. For example, what are the effects of high levels of organizational commitment on the impact of organizationally-designed motivation and reward systems? Would a more participative leadership style be more appropriate among highly committed employees than among less committed ones? In fact, can commitment to the organization be considered as a substitute (or partial substitute) for leadership?

Answers to questions such as these should contribute to a broader understanding of the role of employee attitudes (including commitment) in the determination of employee behavior and organizational performance. It is hoped that the instrument presented here will facilitate such research

by providing a standardized measure with acceptable levels of validity and reliability with which to assess employee commitment to organizations.

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Table 1

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

Instructions

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the company or organization for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organization for which you are now working (company name) please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization. (R)
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work were similar. (R)
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization. (R)
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined.
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely. (R)
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees. (R)
13. I really care about the fate of this organization.
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

Note. Responses to each item are measured on a 7 point scale with scale point anchors labeled: 1) strongly disagree; 2) moderately disagree; 3) slightly disagree; 4) neither disagree nor agree; 5) slightly agree; 6) moderately agree; 7) strongly agree. An "R" denotes a negatively phrased and reverse scored item.

Table 2

Measures Used in Each of Nine Samples

Measures	Public Employees	Classified University Employees	Hospital Employees	Bank Employees	Telephone Company Employees	Scientists and Engineers	Auto Company Managers	Psychiatric Technicians	Retail Management Trainees
Sources of Attachment	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Job Involvement	X	X	X			X			
Job Satisfaction (*JDI*)				X	X			X	
Career Satisfaction			X			X			
Motivational Force to Perform				X	X				X
Intrinsic Motivation	X								
Central Life Interest				X	X				
Turnover	X		X					X	X
Absenteeism	X		X			X			
Intent to Leave	X	X	X			X			
Estimated Tenure	X								
Performance			X	X					X
Behavior Rating									X

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Internal Consistencies for OCQ

	N	Mean	S.D.	Coefficient Alpha
Public Employees	569	4.5	0.90	.90
Classified University Employees	243	4.6	1.30	.90
Hospital Employees	382	5.1	1.18	.88
Bank Employees	411	5.2	1.07	.88
Telephone Company Employees	605	4.7	1.2	.90
Scientists & Engineers	119	4.4	0.98	.84
Auto Company Managers	115	5.3	1.05	.90
Psychiatric Technicians[1]	60	4.0/3.5 4.3/3.5 4.3/3.3 4.0/3.0	1.00/1.00 1.10/0.91 0.96/0.88 1.10/0.98	.82-.93
Retail Management Trainees	59	6.1	0.64	NA

1. For this sample, means and standard deviations are reported separately for stayers and leavers across four time periods.

Table 4

Item Analyses for the
Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

OCQ Item #	Public Employees	Classified University Employees	Hospital Employees	Scientists and Engineers	Bank Employees	Telephone Company Employees	Average Item-Total Correlations
1	.46	.72	.62	.54	.53	.56	.57
2	.73	.63	.75	.61	.71	.73	.69
*3	.48				.39	.40	.43
4	.33	.47	.33	.35	.35	.46	.38
5	.69	.80	.65	.67	.66	.65	.68
6	.79	.67	.76	.63	.74	.75	.72
*7	.37				.30	.28	.36
8	.72	.61	.69	.57	.64	.72	.67
*9	.51				.45	.55	.47
10	.72	.72	.73	.56	.71	.73	.69
*11	.67				.62	.63	.64
*12	.48				.51	.45	.47
13	.56	.70	.63	.48	.68	.62	.62
14	.75	.70	.70	.64	.69	.72	.70
*15	.65				.60	.71	.64

Note. * indicates item is reversed in scoring. Reverse scored items were omitted from short form.

Table 5

Factor Analyses - Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (15 Item)

Item	Public Employees (N=569)		Bank Employees (N=411)		Telephone Company Employees (N=600)	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2
1		.76	.69		.67	
2	.43	.53	.72	.32	.72	.34
3	.45	.36		.53		.34
4					.39	
5	.40		.67		.66	
6	.50	.49	.75	.32	.75	.35
7	.35			.39		.40
8	.44	.41	.67		.55	.50
9	.60			.58		.54
10	.53	.38	.54	.46	.55	.55
11	.62		.38	.53	.34	.63
12	.45			.50		.37
13		.60	.62	.38	.62	
14	.49	.36	.57	.36	.61	.45
15	.68	.37	.44	.49	.49	.58
% Variance	83.2	9.0	83.6	10.6	92.6	2.4
Eigen Value	6.28	.68	5.99	.76	6.30	.50

Table 6

Factor Analyses - Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (9 Item)

Item	Hospital Employees (N=376)	Scientists & Engineers (N=119)		Classified University Employees (N=256)
	Factor 1	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1
1	.66		.78	.77
2	.82	.41	.57	.68
3	.33			.49
4	.68	.55	.45	.86
5	.83	.43	.57	.71
6	.73	.69		.65
7	.77	.66		.76
8	.68		.59	.74
9	.74	.73		.73
E	4.51	3.59	.66	4.61
%	100.0	84.5	15.5	100.0

Table 7

Test-Retest Reliabilities

Sample	Time Interval	Test-Retest Reliability
Psychiatric Technicians	2 months	.53
	3 months	.63
	4 months	.75
Retail Management Trainees	2 months	.72
	3 months	.62

Table 8

Convergent Validities for the OCQ

	SOA[1]	Intent to Leave	Intended Length of Service	Intrinsic Motivation	Motivational Force to Perform	Central Life Interest	Behavior Rating
Public Employees	.74	-.63	.51	.44			
Classified University Employees		-.38					
Hospital Employees	.70	-.31					
Bank Employees	.69				.45	.39[3]	
Telephone Company Employees	.74				.42	.43[3]	
Scientists & Engineers	.63	-.38					
Auto Company Managers	.74						
Retail Management Trainees[2]					.43 .45 .35		.60

1. SOA = Sources of Organizational Attachment Questionnaire.

2. Concurrent correlations available from three time periods in a longitudinal study.

3. Gamma coefficient.

Table 9

Discriminant Validities for the OCQ

Samples	Job Involvement	Career Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction (JDI) Work	Supvn.	Pay	Prom.	Co-Workers
Public Employees	.55						
Classified University Employees	.54						
Hospital Employees	.56	.40					
Scientists & Engineers	.30	.39					
Bank Employees			.63	.46	.37	.43	.34
Telephone Company Employees			.50	.41	.29	.48	.20
Psychiatric Technicians[1]			.58	.53	.68	.34	.36
			.63	.39	.24	.31	.51
			.54	.41	.15	.49	.40
			.64	.68	.35	.51	.55
Brief & Aldag (1977)			.37	.22	.01	.14	.32

1. Four time periods were used in this longitudinal study.

Table 10

Predictive Validities for the OCQ

	Turnover	Tenure	Absenteeism	Performance
Public Employees	-.19***	.23***	-.13**	
Hospital Employees[1]	-.17**	.26**	.08	.05 .07 .11* .10*
Scientists and Engineers			-.28**	
Psychiatric Technicians[2]	-.02 -.32* -.43** -.43**			
Retail Management Trainees[3]	-.41* -.43*			.36[4] .33[4] .20

* Significant at the .05 level.

** Significant at the .01 level.

*** Significant at the .001 level.

1. For the hospital sample, four separate measures of performance were available for the one time period.

2. Results presented are from four data points of a longitudinal study. Hence, the relationship between commitment and turnover increased over time.

3. Results for the turnover analysis presented are from two data points of a longitudinal study representing measures taken on the employees' first day and the last two months in the organization. Analysis for performance were available for measures taken at three points in time and represent cross-lag relationships between commitment and subsequent performance from 4 to 6 months, 6 to 9 months, and 4 to 9 months.

4. Correlations approached significance at the .05 level.

Table 11

Discriminant Analysis Between Stayers and Leavers

for Commitment and Job Satisfaction

for Psychiatric Technicians

Variable	Time Period 1	Time Period 2	Time Period 3	Time Period 4
Std Discriminant Weights				
Organizational Commitment	-.12	1.04	1.04	1.43
JDI - Supervision	-.25	.05	-.24	-.12
JDI - Co-Workers	.48	-.38	-.19	-.25
JDI - Work	.57	.10	-.50	-.39
JDI - Pay	.85	-.18	-.01	-.28
JDI - Promotion	-.40	.19	.52	.01
Test Statistic	5.1	4.7	13.5*	13.0*
Degrees of Freedom	6	6	6	6
Total Discriminatory Power	12.5%	7.4%	20.7%	21.0%

(Source: Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974)

* Significant at the .05 level

Table 12

OCQ Norms for Males and Females

OCQ Score	Percentile Score	
	Males	Females
7.00	99.8	99.5
6.75	98.1	98.3
6.50	94.6	95.8
6.25	90.2	91.4
6.00	83.4	84.2
5.75	77.6	77.8
5.50	70.3	70.2
5.25	63.6	61.2
5.00	56.8	52.4
4.75	50.0	46.5
4.50	43.7	37.4
4.25	36.3	29.4
4.00	28.3	21.6
3.75	22.8	18.1
3.50	17.7	12.6
3.25	12.8	9.3
3.00	9.1	6.1
2.75	6.7	4.3
2.50	4.5	2.4
2.25	2.8	1.4
2.00	1.6	0.9
1.75	0.9	0.5
1.50	0.5	0.2
1.25	0.1	0.1
1.00	0.0	0.0

Note. Ns for males and females on which norms were calculated are 1,015 and 1,118, respectively.

Footnote

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