

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT:  
CORE AND CONTRACT EMPLOYEES IN A FEDERAL AGENCY**

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# **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT: CORE AND CONTRACT EMPLOYEES IN A FEDERAL AGENCY**

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(Abstract)

This study examined commitment levels of two groups of employees: core government employees and contract employees who directly supported the Federal Government. The sample included 85 government employees and 131 contract employees. The research identified each group's level of commitment to various work entities. These included: immediate government office, government organization, employer, and occupation. The focus was on affective commitment, i.e., an employee's emotional attachment to, and desire to maintain membership with, a work entity. A measure was also taken for socialization-related learning.

The purpose was to determine if there were: (1) differing levels of affective commitment among the immediate government office, government organization, the employer, and the occupation within each group, (2) differences in work entity affective commitment levels between the two groups, (3) differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups (4) relationships between socialization-related learning levels and work entity affective commitment levels for each group, (5) differences in work entity affective commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables, and (6) relationships between certain demographic variables and work entity affective commitment levels for each group.

Findings indicated that both groups of employees did vary in commitment levels to various work entities. Government employees displayed the most commitment to the occupation and least to the immediate office. Contract employees also displayed the most commitment to the occupation but the least to the government organization. Between the two groups, commitment level to the employer differed significantly with contractors displaying a higher level to the employing firm than government employees recorded to the Federal Service. Work entity had a significant effect and a significant employee group-by-work entity interaction was found. Differences in socialization-related learning levels and a relationship between socialization-related learning and work entity affective commitment levels were found for both groups. Several relationships between demographic variables and work entity affective commitment levels were also found for both groups.

Formal and informal interventions and work delegation strategies are recommended for organizations involved in employment relationships involving core and contract employees. Areas for future research are also presented.

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## CHAPTER I OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

### Background

For the past five decades, workers have been accustomed to the promise of long-term job security. At the same time, organizations could generally rely on committed employees who spent their entire careers supporting them. This contract between employees and employers is disappearing, however, and a new employment relationship is emerging in its place.

Traditional employer-employee relationships are being replaced by alternative staffing strategies. The "flexibility model" is the term Bradach (1997) uses to describe the recent reorganization of work relationships. Options range from the hiring of temporary employees for short-term assignments to the establishment of strategic partnerships between organizations. One strategy that continues to increase in popularity is "contracting out." This practice enables organizations to retain their primary business functions while outsourcing their non-core competencies to gain best-in-class capabilities.

The flexibility model already represents a large part of the economy. *The Report on the American Workforce* (1995) cites that the Current Population Survey (CPS) supplement, conducted in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, estimated the number of contingent workers to be up to 6 million or 4.9 percent of total employment. Contingent workers are individuals who do not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment. The CPS reported an additional 9.9% of the total workforce is in indirect or alternative job arrangements. According to Smith (1997), precise measurement of the contingent workforce is difficult because of definitional ambiguities, but researchers estimate that it includes from one quarter to one third of the American workforce.

Handy (1989) predicted that, "Less than half of the workforce in the industrial world will be in 'proper' full-time jobs in organizations by the beginning of the twenty-first century" (p. 31). Eighty percent of all jobs will require mental rather than manual skills; people with the necessary brainpower will be at a premium (Warkenthien, 1997). According to the Outsourcing Institute, companies with more than \$80 million in sales outsource roughly 15% of their functional areas (Kirschbaum, 1997). In 1996, U.S. companies spent \$100 billion on outsourcing, and by 2001 the total spent on outsourcing is expected to reach \$318 billion (Allerton, 1997). Temps, contractors, and consultants who are not a part of a company's core workforce make up 25% of the nation's employment base (Swoboda, 2000).

To reduce the size of the Federal Government while increasing responsiveness to the public, agencies have increasingly transferred work to private organizations. Rehffuss (1989) notes that contracting out is growing at all levels of the government and is seen as cost-effective due to reduced start-up costs and the flexibility provided to meet changing service demands. The U.S. Government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world (Clinton, 1997). The U.S. Government relies heavily on contracting arrangements and the use is growing; the total number of contract actions increased by more than a third between 1989 and 1995.

According to Ascher (1987), this growth, beginning in the early 1980s, is generally attributable to fiscal conservatism that characterized the revolt against big government. Contracting out is an adjustment to over-reliance on public sector provision characterized by two decades of poor management and powerful trade unions. The Clinton administration's National Performance Review (NPR) was the broadest attempt to change federal management in U.S. history (Pfiffner, 2000). The NPR argued that the information age required more flexible organizations; government should not produce goods and services and contracting was one way to take advantage of market incentives. As a result, in some cases more people work for federal contractors than for the Government itself. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare employed 157,000 employees in 1980, while an additional 750,000 worked under contracts at the agency (Sharkansky, 1980). The Clinton administration cut more than 300,000 positions which made the size of the civilian component its smallest since the Kennedy administration (Pfiffner, 2000). A Washington Post analysis reports that more than three private contract jobs have been created for every two federal jobs lost to downsizing from 1993 to 1999 (Hsu, 2000).

Contracting out for federal services has been federal policy for over 30 years (Musell, 1987). Since 1955, the Federal Government policy has been refined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-76. The 1983 Supplement "Performance of Commercial Activities" stipulates that agencies must utilize the private sector for commercial services unless the Government can provide them more economically. "Commercial services" are those that can be performed by the private sector. They are not considered government functions, i.e., those activities required to be carried out by federal employees for the sake of the public interest.

The A-76 program obligates agencies to compare the costs of providing a commercial service internally versus contracting it out. The program also establishes requirements for monitoring the quality of services and conducting management reviews to identify improvements in the in-house operation of services. Not all commercial activities must undergo cost comparisons, however, and A-76 outlines the exemptions. The A-76 program also does not have the force of law, so agencies can choose not to create lists of commercial activities.

Faced with downsizing demands and budget costs, Congress considered the Competition in Commercial Activities Act, introduced in 1997 (McAllister, 1998). This Act would have accelerated the contracting out trend with a measure that required agencies to make an inventory of all activities that could be done just as economically by private companies. Agencies would have been required to place those activities out for bid every five years, unless the work was deemed to be inherently governmental. Congress passed a watered-down version of the bill, the Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act, in July 1998. The Act requires agencies to publicly list jobs that could be targeted for contracting out (Friel, 1998b). The Act also sets up a process for the private sector to request additions and for unions to protest inclusions. In addition, a Bush Administration performance goal requires agencies to compete or convert at least 5% of their commercial activities full-time employees by fiscal year 2002.

The influx of contractors threatens the job security for both parties. Government and private contract organizations often hire outstanding employees away from one another. In some cases, the Government entices contractors looking for more structured and stable employment

situations. But perhaps more often, private industry draws in federal workers who desire a more flexible arrangement and the possibility for higher salaries. According to Romzek (1990), the revolving door problems among federal employees are the result of individuals developing expertise and work group networks of interest to private contractors. David Walker, U.S. Comptroller General, commenting on the stresses of downsizing, outsourcing, and an aging workforce, states, "We have a looming human capital crisis in the federal government" (Hsu, 2000, p. A14). The Government is unable to attract enough recruits in this fast-paced, flexible workplace. The General Accounting Office has designated the federal personnel system as "high-risk," a status usually reserved for programs vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse (Barr, 2001b). According to Barr, the numbers show that as much as half of the federal workforce will be eligible to retire or take an early-out over the next five years. It is difficult to recruit bright and skilled workers when competing with the higher-paying private sector.

An area of study which is relevant to the changing federal workplace is the learning associated with the socialization of employees. Organizational socialization is mainly an information-seeking process; employees focus on acquiring the information they need to make sense of the work setting (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992). A solid socialization process may assist government organizations in attracting and retaining high quality employees. In addition, if organizations are involved in a contracting relationship with non-government employees, socialization-related learning should be analyzed. It is important to determine the significance of addressing both groups' need to learn how to acquire information and function effectively to meet the government organization's mission. Is there a relationship between socialization-related learning and commitment? Learning is potentially influenced by socialization interventions and may be one vehicle related to commitment. The reader is cautioned, however, that it is just one factor among many that may have a relationship with commitment. This is a preliminary study to explore possible relationships.

### **Contracting Out Debate**

Although the demand for outsourcing is high and trends point to increasing popularity, debates continue over potential benefits and pitfalls. Unions and traditional liberals represent the foremost opponents to outsourcing, citing concerns that the shift in the delivery mode of services to private firms will threaten employment security and the long-term health of organizations (Ascher, 1987). Private firms and traditional conservative views support outsourcing policy; the former hoping to make inroads into the public service market and the latter perceiving bureaucracies as inefficient service suppliers. According to Ascher, evidence supporting both sides is suspect; trade unions have made false accusations of contractors' performance while opponents have overstated the level of savings achieved. Much of the evidence is contradictory, and even non-partisan studies have suggested that the effects are not known.

### **Contracting Out Benefits**

Many people believe that private sector delivery is inherently more efficient and less costly than direct delivery resulting in cost savings (Ascher, 1987). Proponents of outsourcing argue that solutions are provided economically by smaller, independent specialists, who have greater flexibility and responsiveness than a large bureaucracy. Private firms can offer services at lower costs due to competition that results in efficient operations and flexibility to control compensation costs and employment levels. Private firms measure their performance through

profitability, assuring a more rigorous approach to costs. In addition, contracting out allows the firm only to pay for the agreed-upon results and reduces employee overhead and administrative duties.

Proponents laud the strengthening of private markets when the Government refrains from performing commercial activities (Musell, 1987). The practice reduces government while boosting the economy. Some also believe that the model results in higher productivity and quality for the employer, i.e., contractors may work harder, putting pressure on permanent employees to perform. Proponents view this as healthy competition among the labor pool.

### **Contracting Out Pitfalls**

Skeptics of outsourcing, however, warn about potential pitfalls. Pitfalls for the core organization include less-than-quality vendor service, vested contractor interests, loss of control, and inflexible long-term contracts. Some opponents question how much contracting out actually reduces federal costs and complain that the practice reduces accountability (Musell, 1987).

Should private sector profit motives replace the public sector service ethic? (Ascher, 1987). On the one hand, contract employees are motivated to perform well to retain contracts, but on the other hand, they seek to provide goods and services as cheaply as possible. The effect of this dichotomy is unclear. Some observers also believe that public servants are imbued with a 'public service ethos' (Ascher, 1987, p. 251) which manifests itself in high levels of organizational loyalty, client devotion, and effective performance. Critics propose that the practice of contracting out encourages agencies to substitute duties performed by experienced employees for duties performed by inexperienced workers that may have loyalties torn by the competing demands.

If core government and contract employees sense that they are in competition or contract employees feel at odds with competing demands of various work entities, it would stand to reason that attitudes toward information sharing and knowledge creation may be impacted. In a market where intellectual capital is viewed as giving organizations the edge that they need to be competitive, employees who ultimately serve different entities may be reluctant to communicate openly. The contractor must deliver a product or service and this will entail some amount of information sharing. But during the course of business, providing cutting edge ideas to government colleagues may be viewed as disclosing the expertise that they provide through their consultation services. Similarly, the government employee may be hesitant to speak openly for fear of providing the contractor with an unfair advantage for future opportunities.

Other critics express concern that employers may suffer if employees do not feel a connection to the mission of the organization. Employee commitment may be difficult to obtain when loyalty is unreciprocated by the organization. Nollen and Axel (1996) fear that employers may suffer if they populate their organization with individuals who have little attachment to their jobs. They note that some workers do not want to be so unattached. They state, "At a time when customer service and product quality are the operative watchwords, companies can ill afford to have less committed workers delivering their products and services" (p. 2). However, reciprocated commitment may be difficult to obtain because, by definition, no employment relationship with contract employees exists.

One characteristic of the contingent employee is the lack of attachment to the organization. According to Nollen and Axel (1996):

This defining characteristic encompasses all the others, but it is scarcely measurable except in subjective ways. It is a sense, a feeling in both the worker and the manager. Contingent workers do not belong to the company as regular employees do; they are not expected to be as committed to the company's mission. They may be as fully committed to the work they do as regular employees are, especially among highly skilled professional and technical people. But they do not have the same ties to the company where they do the work. (p. 6)

Pfeffer and Baron (1988) ask, "After all, is it really important whether one works for Firm X, or for a subcontractor to Firm X or, for that matter, for a temporary help organization supplying workers to Firm X?" (p. 293). The authors answer affirmatively, for they do not believe the theory that although organizations may differ, the externalized worker is still employed by a firm and potentially encounters the same benefits and problems regardless of organizational location of the job.

Pfeffer and Baron (1988) note that how well people are paid (Stolzenberg, 1978), chances of promotion (Baron, 1984), level of satisfaction (Hodson, 1984), and their commitment to the organization depend on the size of their employing organization, whether they are unionized (Freeman & Medoff, 1984), and how their jobs are structured. O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) included identification, defined as "pride in affiliation" in their definition of commitment. According to Pfeffer and Baron, one implication is that a person doing a task will have feelings of commitment that depend on the individual's relationship to the organization and the organization's principle mission.

Doing a task as part of an organization that does contract work for other organizations may not provide the same forms of identification that allow employees to relate strongly to superordinate goals (Pfeffer & Barron, 1988). The authors note that the literature suggests that employees' organizational positions and how work is structured impacts their place in and relationship to the process of production, implying that externalization has profound implications for individuals' orientations to their jobs. This new relationship is important to understand. If externalization reduces workers' odds of becoming attached to a large, unionized employer, the practice may have consequences for their labor market outcomes and experiences.

In addition, as cited in Morris and Sherman (1981), a large body of research indicates that organizational commitment has usefulness as a predictor of important behavioral outcomes such as performance (Mowday, Porter, & Dubin, 1974), absenteeism (Steers, 1977) and turnover (Hom, Katerberg, & Hulin, 1979; Porter, Crampon, & Smith, 1976; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Much effort has also been directed toward identifying variables that may influence levels of commitment (Buchanan, 1974a; Hall & Schneider, 1972; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Steers, 1977; Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Do contract employees provide a better or a worse service? On the one hand, contract employees do not experience the hierarchical and lateral relationships of the core organization. This employment structure may result in acceptable levels of service but perhaps not the extras that a full-time core employee would display in the name of team spirit. On the other hand, in a competitive environment, a contracting organization's employees may go above and beyond the normal call of duty to retain the contract with the U.S. Government.

These work dynamics represent a new way of accomplishing the organizational goals of government agencies. Previously, the Government conducted business by hiring and training its employees on how to complete the work. Employees accepted the promise of long-term job security; they traded higher pay for work stability. Government employees were “lifers” often working with one agency for their entire careers.

Today, however, varying physical work arrangements, short-duration projects, changing job responsibilities, teams comprised of different types of employees, and movement among multiple employers introduce new dynamics into the workplace. The previous model of conducting business with individuals who were promised life-time employment is no longer valid. At the same time, the Government is no longer asking individuals to remain committed to them for their careers. People now build careers across organizations and display loyalty to themselves, their skills, their professions, and their project teams (Bradach, 1997).

These factors suggest that a focus on the process of employee socialization is important for organizations. In a fast-paced work environment, it is important for employees to learn how to adjust to a new or changing work environment quickly in order to effectively accomplish the tasks required. Similarly, commitment is more important now than ever. Meyer and Allen (1997) cite several reasons. As government agencies scale back their workforces, those employees who remain have more responsibility for decision making and managing their own daily activities. Commitment helps ensure that employees do what is right. Second, organizations that contract out work will be concerned about the commitment of these employees because their success depends upon employee dedication. With a leaner workforce, absenteeism and tardiness become significant problems. If employees become less committed to organizations because of a lack of reciprocity, they will channel their commitment elsewhere. Employees will assess their skills and experience in terms of marketability versus a singular employment. Finally, organizations that move toward contracting out services will want to ensure that those who provide the services are committed to fulfilling their contracts. Commitment is just as important for the contract employees as for the internal employees.

In addition, the new workplace model may be impacting both core government and contract employees' levels of commitment to not one organization but to various work-related entities. Reichers (1985) notes that in the organizational commitment literature, the organization was traditionally viewed as an “monolithic, undifferentiated entity” (p. 469). Today, however, organizational commitment can be best understood as a collection of multiple commitments, e.g., managers, employees, customers, business partners, projects, and occupations (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Therefore, employees can have varying commitment profiles. “Preliminary evidence



indicates some value in measuring commitments to more specific foci within the organization” (Meyer & Allen, p. 19).

Finally, the nature of the work that is being contracted out must be understood if there are differences between the two groups of employees in terms of their commitment levels. If the work requires certain commitment level, it will be important to understand if there are differences between the two groups before entering into a contract arrangement. For example, Pfiffner (2001) asks, “How can a public service ethic be engendered when most people doing the government’s work do not work for the government?” (p. 27). The Government must identify whether commitment among both their own and contract employees is an issue; employers may suffer if employees have little attachment to their organizations. The need for commitment and requirement for socialization-related learning should be considered when making decisions for how to perform the work of the government.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this investigation was to analyze employee levels of commitment to various work-related entities in a contracted-out environment. The two employee groups studied were core government employees and contract employees who supported the Government. The work-related entities under study were: immediate government office, government organization, employer (i.e., Federal Service for government employees and employing company for contract employees), and occupation.

### **Research Questions**

The goal of this research was to answer six questions:

- 1) Were there differences among work entity affective commitment levels for each group of employees?
- 2) Were there differences between the two groups of employees among work entity affective commitment levels?
- 3) Were there any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups?
- 4) Were there any relationships between the following socialization-related learning variables and work entity affective commitment levels for each group?
  - a) Job knowledge
  - b) Acculturation
  - c) Establishing relationships
  - d) Learning environment
- 5) Were there differences in work entity affective commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables?
  - a) Employment type
  - b) Type of occupation

- c) Retirement plan (core government employees only)
  - d) Percentage of time spent on-site (contract employees only)
- 6) Were there any relationships between work entity affective commitment levels and certain demographic variables for each group?
- a) Time with immediate office
  - b) Time with government organization
  - c) Time with employer
  - d) Time in occupation
  - e) Education level

### **Unique Research Focus**

This research focused on socialization-related learning and commitment levels in federal agencies that hire both contract and government employees to help accomplish their missions. Many agencies are now comprised of a mix of government employees and contract employees, working side-by-side to achieve organizational goals. This work arrangement is characterized by shorter-term assignments and less job security for contract employees when compared to those traditional work relationships of the loyalty model. For core employees, less job security is a concern as well, since their positions may be in danger of being contracted out.

Although employee commitment is a popular topic in the research literature, earlier commitment studies emerged from a context of long-term employment, stability, and job security. In addition, researchers have conducted little empirical investigation on how the elements comprising the flexibility model work. In the existing research, little focuses on white-collar jobs (Bradach, 1997). According to Davis-Blake and Uzzi (1993), empirical research on the use of external workers has been mainly descriptive, with a focus on the demographic characteristics of external workers, their jobs, or the industries and regions in which they work. Areas of socialization-related learning and commitment have not been a main focus within the literature.

Therefore, the notion of workers being employed by different employers, but supporting the same mission, is a timely area for study. No study analyzes the role of socialization-related learning and commitment within the context of the Federal Government comprised of federal and contract employees. And only recently have researchers begun to look systematically at work-relevant commitments beyond commitment to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This new employment structure and the resulting multiple work-related entities could have profound implications for individuals' socialization to their jobs and resulting levels of commitment. There are potentially types of government activities which require a certain level of commitment; if there are differences between these two groups of employees, then decisions on what types of activities to contract out should be based on an understanding of this. Socialization-related learning activities may increase in importance due to the fluid nature of the work as well. We must determine what this new work relationship means to those involved.

In conclusion, several factors made this research particularly unique. First, the focus was on white-collar work. Traditionally, blue-collar professions engaged in the practice of contracting out; therefore contracting out has not been studied extensively in a white-collar

context. Second, one sample was employees of the Federal Government. This sample has not been studied extensively. Finally, the fact that the contract employees were not temporaries or individuals in a probationary status contributed to the unique nature of this study. The contractors were full-time employees who work for a company that contracted with the Government. These individuals had an organization that they called "home," yet they were hired to perform the work of a government agency. I have found no literature addressing this group of employees; the changing face of government employment relationships and resulting commitments are only just beginning to be understood.

### **Summary**

The federal workplace is changing at a rapid rate. Long-term employment relationships are becoming scarcer while shorter term-contracts become more prevalent. A mixture of employees supporting the same government organization may impact both groups' commitment levels to various work-related entities. An understanding of its affects may help government organizations address any areas of concern. As the trend increases, this area of research will continue to grow in importance.

## **CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to two major areas: the practice of contracting out and the nature of organizational commitment. First, a description of today's workforce precedes definitions of "contracting out." Information regarding the historical context and drivers of the contracting out phenomenon follows. The use of contract employees and the nature of the work are discussed. The second part of the chapter focuses on the historical perspective of and definition of commitment. It also includes information on the studies of the various dimensions of commitment, implications for management, and the introduction of a multiple constituency framework to the study of commitment. The chapter concludes with the objectives of the research. The review illustrates the scarcity of research in the area of employee commitment in government agencies that contract out services.

### **Today's Mixed Workforce**

The traditional employment model in which an organization's workforce is solely comprised of full-time, permanent employees is eroding. Handy (1989) attributes the shift to the emergence of what he labels the "shamrock" organization (p. 32). This form of organization is based around a core of essential executives and workers supported by outside contractors and part-time help. He proposes that, instead of one workforce, three should emerge. What are the implications for an organization if there are actually up to three workforces existing within it? Handy suggests that each of the three demonstrate a different kind of commitment to the organization, different contractual arrangements, and different sets of expectations. Subsequently, the three workforces should be managed in different ways. This research was designed to begin exploration of some of these issues to understand possible implications for organizations.

### **Definition of Contracting Out**

According to Heald and Morris (1984), contracting out is one form of privatization. Privatization includes denationalization in which nationalized industries are sold off to the private sector, liberalization in which monopoly powers are abolished, and the form of privatization in which customer fees are substituted for tax finance. The focus of this study was on the fourth typology in which public services are contracted out to the private sector.

*Contracting out* or "outsourcing" describes the situation where an organization contracts with another for the provision of specific goods and services (Ascher, 1987). In the contracting out relationship, the Government still maintains control through the planning and financing of the products and services involved. The nature of the required product may be to support internal operations, supply products to meet external obligations, or provide labor-intensive services. The latter enables the Government to reduce federal manpower levels.

According to Bingman and Pitsvada (1997), the contracting out of government functions takes two forms: contracting for new or temporary services or conversion of a currently in-house capability to a contractor. Forms of contractual services are categorized as *business*, i.e., the kind of entity providing the service (e.g., individuals, corporations, nonprofits), *competitive*, i.e.,

form of competition based on organizations' size, ownership, or purpose, or *type of product or service*, i.e., advisory or production (Collett, 1981). There are numerous types of federal contracts, but the following three are probably the most common. *Fixed-price* contracts place maximum risk on the contractor, establishing a price which is not subject to change. *Cost-reimbursement* contracts provide for payment to the contractor of all allowable costs incurred during performance. *Time and materials* contracts base procurement on direct fixed-rate labor hours and materials at cost (Collett).

The term *contingent work* has come to be applied to a wide variety of employment practices such as part-time work, temporary help, self-employment, employee leasing, and contracting out. Contingent work, however, pertains only to a job in which an individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment (Polivka, 1996). According to the *Report on the American Workforce* (1995), the term *indirect employment* refers to individuals hired through temporary agencies or contract companies while *alternative employment* refers to independent contractors.

For purposes of this research, contracting out was categorized as indirect employment because the focus was on employees who were employed on a full-time and long-term basis in a private firm that supported the Government. These contractors were, however, performing contracted out services for the Government and therefore may have exhibited the characteristics of a lack of attachment to the assignment agency. They did not belong to the Government as did the federal employees.

## **Historical Context**

### **Emergence of the Job**

The flexibility model is not an entirely new way of structuring employment. The reality of the pre-industrial world was that jobs were activities, not positions (Bridges, 1994). Further, the current concept of a job emerged in the early nineteenth century to package the work needed in the factories of industrializing nations. Critics claimed that positions represented an unnatural and even inhuman way to do work and contrasted work positions with the farmer and craftperson's freedom. Factory workers performed rote duties and worked a fixed schedule.

Although industrialism prompted a workplace which provided individuals with jobs, the factory did not immediately replace traditional methods of work and workers held on to the contracting model that existed up to that point. Craft skills were still required and some factory proprietors were comfortable with letting their workers determine the timing and manner of production (Jacoby, 1985). At one extreme, this practice took the form of internal contracting whereby the contractor, a highly skilled foreman, arranged with the proprietor to deliver products within a specific time for a specific cost. The contractor employed his own group of skilled workers. As manufacturers increased their output to take advantage of growing markets, however, they relied less on the artisan techniques of the contract system and more heavily on technology.

### **Emergence of Job Security**

Largely in response to the Great Depression, reforms in personnel management introduced after 1933 concentrated on employment policies and procedures (Jacoby, 1985). Job

security was a primary concern of workers during, and after, the depression. Both government and unions encouraged job security. Unions lobbied for seniority as a criterion for retention and promotion, guaranteed wage plans, and uniform promotion policies. Following World War II, Some labor economic scholars "feared that, in the quest for security, too much had been relinquished: Labor market flexibility, economic efficiency, and even individual freedom were said to have declined" (Jacoby, p. 275).

### **Drivers of Contracting Out**

The flexibility model has emerged due to the collapse of the most recent work relationship structuring, termed the "loyalty model" by Bradach (1997). The loyalty model was characterized by enduring organization-employee relationships that ensured the steady production of goods and services. This model began to erode in the mid-1980s because of competition, the need for speed, market uncertainty, and knowledge organizations.

### **Competition and Need for Speed**

Increased competitiveness, globalization, and rapid technological change are requiring a new way of obtaining expertise in shortened timeframes. Managers must be able to rapidly access skills to meet new opportunities and threats; large bureaucratic organizations often do not allow managers to quickly transfer people or hire externally. Product life cycles are getting shorter which forces organizations to become more sensitive to efficiencies and bottom-line results (Gupta & Gupta, 1992).

Companies are working with smaller staffs and tighter budgets and must leverage internal resources with the capabilities of external talents (Peach, 1997). Often, companies do not have the time, energy, or money to devote to developing certain functions internally if there are companies who are already marketing the needed products. Employees often take longer than contractors to become effective on an assignment (Bradach, 1997). Because of the unforgiving nature of the marketplace and the need for speed, organizations can no longer afford the missteps that often occur with learning on the job. Managers want contractors who can apply their skills immediately.

### **Market Uncertainty**

The once-close bonds between employer and employee have dissolved because corporations are unwilling to take on employees for their entire careers (Nollen & Axel, 1997). Employers cannot be certain about the business operations or jobs that will be needed in the future. Changing markets require companies to remain flexible. The hiring of contract workers protects against uncertainty of economic conditions. The *Report on the American Workforce* (1995) explains that short-term relationships enable employers to meet rising demand for products without permanently committing to additional workers. The purchasing of products, as opposed to in-house production, allows companies to buy more when demand increases and to buy less when it decreases, without having to worry about sizing and labor costs (Peach, 1997). Plant closures throughout the manufacturing sector have displaced workers and reduced employment security (Jacoby, 1985).

## **Knowledge Organizations and Employees**

Handy (1989) notes a move toward knowledge-based organizations, resulting in not only a requirement for different people but also organizations that recognize that they need a central group of talented and energetic people, a great deal of specialist help, and ancillary agencies. Today, an organization's key to success is its intellectual capital rather than its manual skills. The age of information requires creative thinking and targeted expertise to remain competitive in a market characterized by a plethora of innovative services. This type of work requires a different kind of employee composition, incorporating the steady workmanship of core workers enhanced by individuals who can provide specific, high-level knowledge, skills, and abilities as needed.

Knowledge itself has become as critical as capital in determining an individual's position in the organization and social system (Davenport, 1999; Hall, 1975; Stewart, 1997). Yet Employees with these high-level skills tend to view career growth as a "multiple-company experience" and do not wish to commit to one organization (Nollen & Axel, 1996, p. 24). The flexibility model allows individuals the freedom to move among organizations, lending their expertise as needed. Hall and Moss (1998) call this new career contract the "protean career," i.e., the contract is no longer with the organization but rather with the self and one's work. The authors propose that, unfortunately, some employers view the new contract to mean the employee is completely in charge of his or her career, thus absolving the organization of any responsibility to provide resources and opportunities for continuous learning.

### **The Contracting Out Decision**

A company's decisions regarding outsourcing functions are highly strategic (King, 1994). The organization distinguishes between functions that require external provider expertise versus internal expertise. One strategic goal of outsourcing is the idea that companies should follow a "hollowing" strategy in which only core competencies are retained and others are purchased.

The parameters for determining a core competency must be carefully defined and assessed before the outsourcing decision. A "core competency" is a capability that evolves slowly through collective learning and information sharing that cannot be quickly enhanced through investments and cannot be easily imitated or transferred (King, 1994, p. 58). A core competency is synergistic with other organizational capabilities. Customers perceive that a core competency provides a competitive advantage. In some cases, the core competency can represent a key success factor for the industry, one in which the investment is irreversible (King, 1994). An organization must understand why it is successful before selecting the activities to outsource.

### **Use of Contractor Employees**

Contract employees provide organizations with flexibility and a capability not present in firms (Bradach, 1997). They are not merely contracted to provide background support services. Rather, they often fill a specific skill not present in the core organization. In environments that demand high levels of flexibility, contractors may often be working on activities that are central to the organization's success. Current practices challenge the traditional notion that the employees are the "core" workers who conduct the organization's key activities (Bradach, 1997).

Bradach (1997) found that organizations used contractors in two ways (1) as members and leaders of project teams, and (2) as interim executives. Projects are well suited to contract work because the desired outcomes are typically well defined, the tasks are of a finite duration, and the work is usually associated with peaks in demand. In the case of the interim executive, the person fills a role in the organization for a finite term.

In government agencies, the trend is, however, to contract out non-core services. Contract employees generally will not serve as team leaders or interim executives. They will, however, perform work on-site and often enter a long-term project in which they serve as a contributing team member. On occasion, due to reorganizations and career mobility within government, contract employees may have a stronger historical perspective on a contract than the federal team members.

For purposes of this research, the contracting firm employed the contractors full-time. In essence, they were core employees for their employer, yet serving a support role to the government agency. This type of contractor often chooses this work status as opposed to employees in temporary positions who, in some cases, may have been forced into a provisional condition. Van Dyne and Ang (1998) suggest that contingent employees who possess job alternatives have bargaining power and may not be as motivated to display high levels of performance in hope of obtaining regular employment. This type of work arrangement has not yet been examined in research studies.

### **Nature of Work**

When the make-up of an organization's workforce changes, there are implications for the work individuals perform. For example, core government employee positions may change from performing the work to overseeing a contractor's performance. Providing a service and monitoring a service require quite different skills (Rehfuss, 1989). Program management skills are increasing in importance for federal workers. Decision making skills and strategic planning ability are required to lead teams of internal and external employees. Furthermore, core employees must be able to communicate clear expectations to those delivering the services. This prevents misunderstandings regarding deliverables. They must also be able to evaluate performance.

In contrast, federal agencies often hire contractors to execute targeted duties to accomplish specific objectives. The nature of their work may be more focused on providing discreet, technical skills not easily found within the federal labor pool. Contractors often possess scarce skills or may be hired to help solve a specific problem. Managers may assign contractors work that requires little organization-specific knowledge, is easily monitored, or is nonrecurring (Pearce, 1993). Pearce's research provided support for the expectation that an organization shifts interdependent tasks to the employee co-workers of contractors to reduce dependence on contract employees.

In addition, downsizing is often associated with an increase in contracting out services. Downsizing usually reduces the size of management, creating the potential for increased responsibility for non-managerial survivors. The 1999 American Management Association Staffing and Structure Survey found that, although off-set by concurrent hiring, downsizing rose



slightly to 24.1% (during the twelve months ending in June 1999) from 21.9% previously. Job elimination was disproportionately reflected in supervisory and managerial ranks at 28%. This finding suggests managers may be targets of cost-cutting and their work is then pushed into lower levels of the organization. The organization relies even more heavily on those who remain to take on added and perhaps less well-defined tasks to make the organization successful. Therefore, those core employees must be able to find creative ways to improve their efficiency (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Do differences in the nature of the work have implications for the desired level of employee commitment or socialization-related learning? Are certain duties more suited for contracting out services? These are questions that federal managers must ask themselves as the trend toward contracting out increases. If there are types of activities that are sensitive to commitment levels and if the two groups of employees differ in regard to commitment, government organizations would need to carefully determine which activities will be performed in-house. Similarly, positions that require a strong socialization-related learning capacity may not be appropriate for contractors. The former loyalty model, which demanded commitment on both the part of employers and employees, is disappearing. The role of commitment will change to meet the demands of these new work relationships and implications for employee commitment will continue to increase in importance.

### **Historical Perspective of Commitment Research**

The research area of commitment is marked by conceptual chaos. Work by Morrow (1983, 1993) has played an important role in helping to clarify the various domains to which workers can be committed (Lee, Carswell, & Allen, 2000). According to Morrow (1983), over 25 commitment related concepts and measures exist. She reviewed and compared the major forms of work commitment and explored the interrelationships between them. Morrow identified five major forms of work commitment in the literature: value focus, career focus, job focus, organization focus, and union focus. Further research by Morrow (1993) produced a model of work commitment that included affective organizational commitment, continuance organizational commitment, career commitment, job involvement, and work ethic endorsement. One theme in the literature is clear: progress in understanding organizational commitment will not be made until conceptual and empirical distinctions among various forms of work commitment are recognized and demonstrated (Mueller, Wallace, & Price, 1992).

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) also note the ambiguous nature of commitment. Commitment has been used to refer to antecedents and consequences, the process of becoming attached, and the state of attachment itself. The authors attribute the lack of consensus to a failure to differentiate among the antecedents and consequences of commitment and the basis for attachment. They note that some investigations have explored the processes through which one becomes committed (Salancik, 1977) or the impact of individual and organizational influences on this process (Angle & Perry, 1983; Steers, 1977). Others have examined attitudinal or behavioral consequences of commitment such as intention to reenlist in the military (Hom et al., 1979), positive affect and loyalty (Kanter, 1972), motivation and involvement (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), and behaviors such as performance (Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994; Mowday et al., 1974) and organizational adaptability (Angle & Perry, 1981).

## Definition of Commitment

Multiple definitions of commitment are found in the literature. Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) identified behavioral and attitudinal definitions of commitment. *Behavioral commitment*, also referred to as attributional commitment in the literature, involves “behaviors that exceed formal and/or normative expectations” (p. 225). Salancik (1977) proposed that behaviors that are explicit, irrevocable, volitional, and public bind individuals to the behaviors, thus causing greater commitment. In this approach, employees are viewed as becoming committed to a particular course of action, rather than to a particular entity; commitment is developed retrospectively (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

*Affective commitment*, also referred to as psychological or attitudinal commitment in the literature, is the basis of many definitions. According to Buchanan (1974a): “Commitment is viewed as 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” (p. 533). Porter et al. (1974) contend that affective commitment can be characterized by three factors: (1) belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization achieve its goals, and (3) a desire to maintain organizational membership. It “represents a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these goals” (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 225). According to Meyer and Allen (1997), affective commitment represents the employee’s emotional attachment to the organization; employees retain membership because they want to do so.

A third commitment definition is *continuance commitment*, also referred to as calculative and exchange-based commitment in the literature (Etzioni, 1961). This commitment refers to utilitarian gain from the employment relationship, with the employee being less likely to leave the organization based on the extent to which the contribution ratio is in balance or favorable to the employee (Gaertner & Nollen, 1989). Commitment is a function of the rewards and costs associated with organizational membership (Reichers, 1985). This conceptualization is consistent with Becker’s (1960) argument that attachments to the organization are influenced by “side bets,” i.e., accrued extrinsic benefits that would be lost if membership was concluded (Morris & Sherman, 1981; Stevens et al., 1978). According to Meyer and Allen (1997), employees who possess continuance commitment retain membership because they need to do so.

A relatively new concept is referred to as *normative commitment* (Bolon, 1993). This fourth type of commitment is viewed as a belief about one’s responsibility to the organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) define normative commitment simply as a feeling of obligation to remain with the organization; employees retain membership because they feel they ought to do so. Wiener (1982) suggested that normative commitment might result from pressures exerted either prior to, or after, organizational entry.

### Affective Commitment: The Dependent Variable

A *committed employee* is generally described as one who stays with an organization, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in organizational goals (Meyer & Allen, 1997). A committed employee should, in theory,

contribute to a competitive edge for the organization because of the positive nature of this work behavior.

Some critics, however, propose that costs and benefits accrue for both the organization and the employee. For example, unquestioned commitment to an organization may result in acceptance of the status quo and a loss of innovation. An employee who is overly committed to an organization may not develop broad skills, thus making him less marketable or they may remain with an organization simply because they feel they have no choice but to do so. The form of commitment that most closely represents this type of employee is termed “continuance” and this dimension of commitment was not included in the study.

The literature describes employees with strong normative commitment as generally behaving in ways supportive of the organization. Normative commitment, however, is based on feelings of obligation, and is therefore not inclined to generate a sense of enthusiasm and involvement. Employees with strong normative commitment may also resent the organization if they feel a sense of obligation (Meyer and Allen, 1997). The impact on employee attitudes is not yet known.

Although one approach to the study of organizational commitment is a multi-faceted view, for purposes of this research, concentration was on the affective commitment of both government and contract employees. Affective commitment represents a major approach to the study of organizational commitment (Hackett et al., 1994) and appears to be the most desired form. Affective commitment is a key indicator of worker-firm relations and its use provides continuity with other studies examining work status effects on organizational attachment (Van Dyne & Ang, 1998). In addition, affective commitment has been found to correlate with a wider range of outcomes and more strongly with any given outcomes measure, e.g., turnover, absenteeism, job performance, organizational citizenship behavior (Meyer & Herscovitch, in press). These authors recommend that whenever possible, it is desirable to foster affective commitment:

An individual who is bound to a course of action (e.g., remaining in the organization; implementing a policy) to avoid costs is not as likely to consider the best interests of the relevant target in unexpected situations as is one who is highly involved in or believes in the value of what he or she is doing. (p. 33)

A perspective that includes multiple facets of the concept also represents a relatively new area of study. While a more inclusive perspective on commitment would be beneficial to commitment research efforts, studying commitment using more than one facet requires the researcher to ensure that each form is operationally distinct. In addition, the added complexity of a multiple components model requires unambiguous specification of relationships between each commitment component and other variables of interest (Somers, 1995).

### **Organizational Commitment to Employees**

As stated, for purposes of this research, the focus was on employee commitment to the organization and other work entities from the perspective of affective commitment. However, to note that the organization's commitment to employees has changed and recognize its role in

impacting employee commitment is important. Economic constraints have forced organizations to downsize or perform massive lay-offs. Moving work from internal provision to the private industry has resulted in a reduction in organizational jobs, demoralized employees, and rises in turnover.

Contracting out suggests to public service employees that they are dispensable, destroying mutual trust and commitment. This perception may lead to deterioration in the quality of public service work. A study by Pearce (1993) found that employees with contract co-workers reported less trust in their organizations than employees in employee-only employment situations. In addition, federal employee survivors may focus on their potential loss by a future cut, thus increasing continuance commitment. Or, they may feel grateful for retaining their jobs, thus increasing a sense of obligation, or normative commitment.

An emerging area of study in relation to the changing workplace is the *psychological contract*. Psychological contracts signify one of the most fundamental aspects of employment relationships and represent workers' views of their relationships with firms. The psychological contract is "individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization" (Rousseau, 1995, p. 9). The employee and employers' psychological contract is the basic building block of contracts in organizations. Contracts are created by promises and perceptions of mutuality. Rousseau states that there is a paradox in current organizational contracting because the unraveling of many long-standing contracts (e.g., IBM, Xerox) and the move toward more temporary employment denotes a fear of commitment by many organizations. She proposes that in the future, organizations might have it both ways – commitment and flexibility.

### **Commitment Antecedents**

An understanding of how employee commitment develops, and the potential relationships between commitment and work behaviors, is critical to conducting a complete study of the construct. The literature generally focuses on two areas: antecedents and outcomes. Both predictors and results of affective, continuance, and normative commitment have been studied widely. A summary of the research articles contained in this chapter are included at Appendix A.

### **Affective Commitment Antecedents**

Affective commitment antecedents are generally studied in terms of personal characteristics or work environment attributes. The former area, the relationship between various personal characteristics and organizational commitment, has not produced impressive results (DeCotiis and Summers, 1987). One explanation, according to the authors, is that no "commitment profile" of an individual exists (p. 449). Lee, Ashford, Walsh, and Mowday (1992), however, did investigate the role of personal characteristics, i.e., a summary concept of personal characteristics and experiences that individuals bring to the organization, and found it to predict subsequent organizational commitment. Steers (1977) found that personal characteristics, especially need for achievement and education (inversely), influenced commitment.

Although research has uncovered some positive associations, overall the relationships between demographic variables (e.g., gender) and affective commitment are weak (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Studies have found some positive relationships between both age and tenure and commitment which may be a reflection of the process of growth in the development of identification (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Buchanan, 1974a; Hackett et al., 1994; Hall et al., 1970; Stevens et al., 1978). These findings support the intuitive belief that employees' assumptions of lengthy tenure will lead them to have greater organizational commitment than contract employees; however, in a study by Pearce (1993) no significant differences between the two groups were found.

In regard to work environment attributes associated with organizational commitment, often-cited variables include organizational structure, organizational climate, and human resource processes (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987). In the first area, for example, role perceptions such as role conflict and ambiguity have been found to be correlates of commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Stevens et al., 1978). The responsibility offered by the task itself was also reported to have a positive effect on commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990a) point out that the strongest evidence has been provided for work experience antecedents, especially those that fulfill an employee's psychological needs to feel comfortable and competent.

Some research has reported relationships between various climate dimensions and commitment (DeCotiis and Summers, 1987). Salancik (1977) found employees who described themselves as personally important to the organization were highly committed. Commitment was also found to be high in organizations that were described as being high in autonomy and trust (Steers, 1977).

Human resource processes such as leadership, communications, and decision-making have been found to be correlates to organizational commitment (Decotiis & Summers, 1987). Some researchers propose that the more social involvement an individual has with others in an organization, the higher the individual's commitment to the organization (Buchanan, 1974a). The results of a Gaertner and Nollen (1989) study suggest a clear connection between employee perceptions of employment practices and affective commitment. Participants with positive perceptions about internal mobility, training, and employment security were more psychologically committed to the organization.

An important human resource process, which has gone largely unresearched in terms of its relationship to commitment, is the learning associated with the socialization of employees. Organizational socialization is mainly an information-seeking process in which employees focus on acquiring the information they need to make sense of the work setting (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992). Research by Morton (1993) indicated that employees develop job proficiency by first seeking information through establishing co-worker relationships, then pursuing direction from supervisors (Reio & Wiswell, 2000). Learning occurred formally, informally or incidentally. Morton's 1993 study found that those employees who mastered socialization-related learning were more committed to the organization.

Findings of a 1993 Morton study indicated that the process applies to both new and seasoned workers because socialization is required whenever individuals enter new areas of

responsibility, e.g., moving to a new department, obtaining a promotion, getting a new coworker or supervisor, or even returning to school (Fisher, 1986; Morton, 1993, Schein, 1988). Morton's model suggests that the socialization process is ongoing and builds upon experiences and knowledge gained from socialization-related learning experiences, informal learning, on-the-job training, and formal learning. Socialization is a process that is continuous throughout one's career because of experiencing ongoing change such that constant learning and development is appropriate (Falcione & Wilson, 1988).

According to Morton (1993), there is a lack of information regarding the socialization experiences of professionals and technicians, public sector workers, re-entry workers, and those who have held more than one job. This study not only includes government employees, it also addresses the socialization-related learning of contract employees in a professional organization. This study will help to expand the research base by looking at socialization-related learning as it relates to a broader population.

### **Continuance Commitment Antecedents**

Continuance commitment generally explores two antecedent areas: investments and alternatives. Investments include the previously mentioned notion of side bets, i.e., actions that link a person to a course of action because something would be forfeited if the activity was discontinued (Becker, 1960). Leaving the organization would mean a loss of some type of investment (time, money, effort). Alternatives refer to employment choices which individuals believe to be available. Continuance commitment is negatively correlated with the number of alternatives. Meyer and Allen (1997) emphasize that continuance commitment will not be influenced unless employees recognize the cost of leaving due to investments or alternatives.

### **Normative Commitment Antecedents**

Normative commitment has not been studied extensively but preliminary hypotheses focus on the areas of socialization, investments by the organization, and the development of psychological contracts (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Both early socialization from one's family and one's culture and socialization as newcomers to an organization can put pressure on individuals, thus developing normative commitment (Wiener, 1982). Individuals learn what is valued and internalize beliefs about being loyal to one's organization, thus possessing a personal commitment predisposition. Organizations can define their value systems and recruit and select individuals with similar values of loyalty and duty. In addition, some authors speculate that investments an organization makes in an employee without reciprocation (e.g., tuition assistance) may create a sense of obligation (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Scholl, 1981). Finally, psychological contracts may play a part in developing normative commitment (Rousseau, 1995). As previously stated, psychological contracts are the beliefs of the parties involved in an exchange relationship about their reciprocation duties, thus influencing obligations felt by the employee.

### **Commitment Antecedents: Implications for Core and Contract Employees**

Meyer and Allen (1997) identified themes within the antecedent research for the forms of commitment. Regarding the development of affective commitment, they cite the importance of organizations being supportive of employees, valuing employee contributions, and providing fair treatment. Work experiences that employees find rewarding may lead to affective commitment. The entities under study are all capable of fostering organizational practices that lead to

rewarding experiences. The nature of the Government's work arrangement with contract employees, however, may not be as conducive to ensuring these organizational practices. Yet, fairly treating government and contract employees who work on the same project and recognizing both members' contributions can be an accepted policy for the government organization.

Continuance commitment is more likely to exist for government employees than for contract employees. Employees who think their educational or training investments are less transferable or whose retirement, money, status, job security investments are strong often express stronger continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Because of the flexible nature of their work, these two antecedent areas are not as likely to be a part of a contract employee's make-up.

Finally, the very nature of normative commitment - a feeling of obligation to remain with an organization - may be relevant to the federal employee and the government organization but it goes against the concept of contract employee commitment. Contractors do not belong to the Government so they will not be socialized by the federal organization. The Government also does not directly make investments (e.g., provision of training), another antecedent to normative commitment, in the contract employee.

Therefore, of the three commitment areas, affective commitment is the most desired form, and appropriate to, both types of employees. The antecedents that lead to affective commitment are more applicable to the work entities under study. Organizations can influence an attitudinal commitment more easily while continuance and normative commitment are less relevant due to the inclusion of the contract workforce. Continuance and normative commitment do not apply to contractors in relation to the immediate customer office and government organization because contractors do not have a choice as to whether they can remain employed with those entities. While organizations can take steps to influence affective commitment, continuance and normative are less easily controlled, providing little insight into what the implications for organizations may be. For example, a 1994 Hackett et al. study found that the Multimethod Job Design Questionnaire (Campion & Thayer, 1985) had the strongest positive correlation with affective commitment, thus reinforcing the notion that, of the three commitment components, affective commitment is most affected by the nature of one's work experiences. Research of antecedents reinforced the importance of isolating affective commitment; study results concerning this type would prove most useful for understanding the implications for organizations.

### **Research on Commitment Outcomes**

The research on commitment outcomes has examined whether the different components of commitment are correlated with certain consequences. Employee retention is one of the more widely studied outcomes of commitment. Attendance, in-role job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior are also widely researched. According to Reichers (1985), the antecedents of commitment are much more varied and inconsistent than the researched outcomes of commitment (i.e., decreased turnover and other forms of withdrawal). The author suggests that the inconsistency may be the result of the many ways in which commitment has been defined and operationalized.

## **Retention**

One reason organizational commitment has emerged as a focus in the study of work attitudes and behavior is due to demonstrated links with turnover intention and turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1996). According to Reichers (1985), commitment has been significantly, negatively associated with turnover. A longitudinal study by Porter et al. (1974) found that “leavers” of organizations were consistently characterized by lower levels of commitment than stayers. Meyer and Allen (1997) caution that the different components of commitment may have different consequences for work-related behavior. For example, continuance commitment may be related to retention because the costs of leaving an organization are too high. These employees do not possess an emotional attachment to the organization. Therefore, continuance commitment may or may not relate to performance outcomes. An emphasis on employee retention to the exclusion of performance would be unhealthy for an organization.

## **Attendance**

Of the components of commitment, affective commitment appears to be most positively related to attendance. Studies have also supported the theory that affective commitment is negatively correlated with voluntary absence (Gellatly, 1995; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). A Steers (1977) study found commitment to be positively related to attendance for a sample of scientists and engineers but not for hospital employees. Meyer and Allen (1997) propose that, theoretically, affective commitment should be negatively correlated only with voluntary absence. Therefore, when research combines both voluntary and involuntary absences, the influence of affective commitment on attendance behavior may be underestimated.

The relationship between continuance and normative commitment and attendance has not been studied as extensively and preliminary results are inconclusive. Gellatly (1995) found continuance commitment to be positively related with absence frequency. Somers (1995) found that nurses with both low affective and continuance commitment exhibited a higher number of absences. Meyer et al. (1993) found normative commitment to the nursing occupation to correlate with voluntary absence while Somers's (1995) and Hackett et al. (1994) study found no relationship between normative commitment and voluntary absence.

## **Performance**

Research results of affective commitment's relationship to performance are inconclusive. In some cases, employees with strong affective commitment report high work effort (Leong, Randall, & Cote, 1994) and strong job performance effort (Baugh & Roberts, 1994; Meyer et al., 1993). Studies have also found affective commitment to be associated with positive supervisors' ratings of promotion potential (Meyer et al., 1993) and positive supervisors' rating of job performance (Mayer & Schoorman, 1992; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989).

Other research does not support a relationship between affective commitment and performance indicators (Ganster & Dwyer, 1995; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Meyer and Allen (1997) identify four reasons which may explain why affective commitment is not significantly related to performance in all studies: the seriousness with which supervisors take the appraisal process, the importance that organizations put on job performance aspects, the extent to which the performance indicator reflects employee motivation (e.g., initiative) versus nonmotivational factors (e.g., ability), and the amount of employee control over the outcomes.



The relationship between continuance and normative commitment has not been studied extensively. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), available research examining continuance commitment has few positive relationships with performance indicators while results of initial studies of normative commitment and performance are mixed. Normative commitment was positively correlated with self-report measures of overall performance (Ashforth & Saks, 1996), yet Hackett et al. (1994) found no relationship with independently rated performance indicators.

### **Citizenship Behavior**

Another research area focuses on outcomes related to citizenship behavior in the organization. Citizenship behavior is work-related behavior that goes above and beyond the position duties (Meyer & Allen, 1997) and is also referred to as extra-role behavior. Although some studies have found no significant relationships between affective commitment and citizenship behavior (Van Dyne & Ang, 1998; Williams & Anderson, 1991) when examining citizenship behavior at work, other studies involving self-reports have found significant relationships with affective commitment (Meyer et al., 1993; Pearce, 1993). In a study by Shore and Wayne (1993), supervisors' independent assessments of citizenship behavior were positively related with affective commitment. Van Dyne and Ang found a positive relationship between affective commitment and citizenship behaviors for contingent workers who chose their work status.

The literature does not find a strong positive correlation between continuance commitment and citizenship behavior (Meyer et al., 1993). Results of a 1993 Shore and Wayne study showed that continuance commitment was negatively related to citizenship behavior. An initial study of normative commitment did find a relationship, albeit weaker than affective commitment (Meyer et al., 1993). Shore and Wayne's study found that perceived organizational support (POS) was the best predictor of citizenship behavior. This finding suggests that feelings of obligation, rather than emotional attachment, may be the basis for citizenship behavior.

### **Outcomes Conclusion**

In conclusion, evidence generally supports the theory that affective commitment is positively associated with certain desired outcomes while continuance commitment generally has negative associations. Only preliminary studies have been conducted in the area of normative commitment. This knowledge reinforced the importance of studying the affective commitment of core and contract employees.

### **Multiple-Constituency Framework**

In today's workplace, employees are presented with a number of work entities to which they can become committed. Workers experience varying degrees of commitment to several aspects of the work setting simultaneously (Lewis, 1992). A study by Blau, Paul, and St. John (1993) concluded that it is important to distinguish commitment facets such as attitudes toward the job, organization, occupation, and work in general. Some evidence promotes the value of distinguishing among constituencies within the organization (e.g., immediate work unit), suggesting that behavior might be best predicted from commitment to the constituency for which the behavior has the greatest impact (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The strongest links between affective commitment and behavior will be observed for behavior that is relevant to the constituency to which the commitment is directed. For example, employees with strong

attachments to the work group might express this loyalty by helping their coworkers but not by carrying out behaviors of direct relevance to the larger organization.

In addition, commitments to domains other than the organization (e.g., occupation) can have an influence on organization-relevant behavior, as well as on behavior of relevance to that domain. The relative complexity of this approach, as compared to a global concept of commitment, may represent a more realistic depiction of the nature of employee-organization attachments (Reichers, 1985). Commitment may best be understood as a general and a specific construct (Reichers, 1986). Baugh and Roberts (1994) found that professional engineers who had both a strong commitment to the organization and the profession were the highest performers whereas those with a strong commitment to the profession but weak commitment to the organization were the lowest performers.

Commitment to different domains can cause conflict for an employee. If different constituencies espouse goals that are in conflict with one another, employees may become conflicted as to where to direct their commitment. Professional-organizational conflict contributed negatively to the professional commitment of accountants (Aranya, Pollock, & Amernic, 1981). If an employee must endorse the goals of one constituency at the expense of another, overall organizational commitment may wane as a reaction to escape the source of conflict (Reichers, 1986). This issue is sometimes referred to as a zero-sum game (Gunz & Gunz, 1994) in which an employee can be loyal to the profession or the organization but not to both. Professionals who were encouraged to both use their own initiative in executing jobs and challenge management decisions displayed greater commitment to their profession than to their organization (Raelin, Sholl, & Leonard, 1985).

The presence of multiple constituencies does not imply that they must be in conflict. According to Reichers (1986), employees may be committed to any or all of the constituencies. The results of a meta-analysis by Wallace (1993) indicated a moderately strong, positive association between organizational and professional commitment, suggesting that it is possible for employees to simultaneously feel commitment to multiple entities. Of four constituencies studied, Reichers found that commitment to top management goals was positively associated with organizational commitment. Professionalism, funding agencies, and clients were not correlates of organizational commitment. Research should explore what determines to which constituencies employees will become committed and how to help employees cope with conflicts among them.

For purposes of this research, the focus was on both the government and contract employees' levels of commitment to the immediate government work unit, the government organization, the employer, and the occupation. For government employees, employer was defined as the Federal Service and for contract employees, employer was defined as the employing company. The fact that both commitment antecedents and outcomes can apply to a variety of work entities was also assumed.

Each work entity is distinct. The immediate government work unit represented the office in which the government employee performed his or her job. The employee's supervisors, colleagues, and, if applicable, subordinates, resided here. For the contract employee, the

immediate government work unit represented the specific office for which the contract employee had been hired to provide goods or services. The government organization represented the specific agency to which the government employee was employed or contract employee was hired.

The study included the employer for each type of employee. As stated, the Federal Service was the variable studied for government employees. This variable represented the concept of being a public servant and one's commitment to civil service. For the contract employee, the employer represented the organization to which the contract was directly employed. This organization provided the contractor's pay and benefits.

The occupation was a broader characterization of the type of work an employee performs. According to Hall (1975), an occupation is "the social role performed by adult members of society that directly and/or indirectly yields social and financial consequences and that constitutes a major focus of the life of an adult" (p. 6). He categorized occupations into five types: professions, e.g., doctors, lawyers, scientists; management, i.e., those who occupy middle to high positions in organizations of all types; white-collar workers in non-decision-making roles, e.g., clerical workers, sales workers; craftsmen and foremen who engage in manual rather than mental work; and semi-skilled and unskilled workers who focus on production work. For purposes of this research, the groups under study were from the professions. The professions stressed intellectual techniques and were organized around bodies of knowledge.

### **Research Overview**

This research was an exploration of the differences among and between two groups of employees in terms of their levels of socialization-related learning and commitment to various work entities. The study did not attempt to discover causal relationships, however, it did seek to find if any relationships existed among several of the variables.

The focus was on employees who make up a federal organization's workforce: core government and contract employees. The type of employee, core or contractor, served as the independent variable. Affective commitment, representing the employee's identification with and involvement in the organization, was the dependent variable (Meyer & Allen, 1997). It was chosen because it is both a more desirable and easily influenced form of commitment. Socialization-related learning was the chosen work environment variable due to the desire to explore any relationships with commitment levels for each group.

Commitment level was studied in terms of various work entities. In addition to the organization, other work-related entities for both government and contract employees were studied: occupation, work unit, and employer (i.e., Federal Service for government employees and employing company for contractor employees). A multiple-entity approach was adopted to help gain an understanding of whether government and contract employees display different commitments to the many factions that they support.

For purposes of this study, employee demographic variables were those acquired as a function of membership in the organization because studies on the relationships between personal characteristics and organizational commitment have had unimpressive results (DeCotiis

& Summers, 1987). Variables acquired as a function of membership in the organization included: time with various work entity, employment type (supervisor or non-supervisor), retirement plan (core employees only), percentage of time spent on-site (contract employees only). Only one personal characteristic demographic variable was included, education level, due to interest in comparing the two groups' level of professionalism in relation to the nature of the work performed. Some theorize that more educated individuals have a greater number of job options and are less likely to become entrenched in one organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Although commitment outcomes are an important area of research, this study only concentrated on the antecedents of commitment. The intent was to uncover some indications regarding the factors that may correlate with commitment. This may be valuable information for organizations that wish to foster commitment in both government and contract employees.

### **Summary**

The changing face of government employment arrangements warrants analysis. This research was one attempt to investigate the contracting out phenomenon. Specifically, the study provided a comparison of core government and contract employees to determine if differences exist between their commitment levels to various work entities. In addition, the research explored whether relationships existed between select antecedents and levels of commitment.

## CHAPTER III METHOD

### Introduction

This chapter addresses the approach to the study, details regarding the sample, definition of terms, the variables to be examined, chosen measurement instruments, means of data collection, and data analysis. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research questions and the statistics that were used to answer them.

### Exploratory Study

This study explored levels of employee commitment to various work entities to identify differences among and between government and contract employees. The focus of the research was on affective commitment; this approach depicts a high-intensity orientation toward the organization (Morris & Sherman, 1981). Specifically, the study utilized the approach of Meyer and Allen (1997) who view affective commitment as a measurement of “the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (p. 11). The research, however, went beyond just a focus on the organization and required participants to record their commitment to additional work entities.

In addition to commitment levels to various work entities (i.e., the dependent variable), the study also gathered data on the employees’ level of socialization-related learning and demographic information. The four areas of socialization-related learning under study were job knowledge, acculturation, establishing relationships, and satisfaction with the learning environment (Morton, 1993). The study included mainly demographic variables acquired as a function of membership in the organization, not personal characteristics such as age or gender.

The study allowed for the comparison of two groups of employees: full-time government employees and full-time contract employees who worked for a private firm that directly supported the Government. To note that the contract employees were not considered contingent is important. They were not temporary employees on limited-duration work contracts. They were, in fact, full-time employees within private industry, termed *indirect employment* in the literature. They did not, however, belong to the Government as federal employees do. One question was, therefore, whether the contract employees exhibited the characteristic of a lack of attachment to the assignment agency.

The research was conducted through administration of an anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire required both groups to provide socialization-related learning and demographic information. The federal employees responded to statements regarding their commitment level to not only the organization, but also to their immediate work unit, the Federal Service, and their overall occupation. Similarly, the survey required contract employees to assess their commitment level to not only the government organization, but also to their immediate government work unit, their employer, and their overall occupation.

There were two major purposes of this study. One was to identify if there were difference between the two groups of employees. The study looked at differences in terms of levels of socialization-related learning. The other difference probed was commitment levels to

various work entities (both within and between groups). The second purpose was to identify potential relationships between variables and commitment levels. The study looked at relationships between demographic variables and commitment level to work entities. The relationship between levels of socialization-related learning and commitment levels was the other area researched.

### **Sample**

The sample for this study was drawn from a population comprised of two organizations: a government agency and private firms that provide services and products for the agency. The government agency employed approximately 50,000 employees. The study was conducted in a technical division of the agency that employed 160 personnel. The mission of the division was to perform project management of hardware and software acquisition.

The support contractor company employed approximately 77,000 employees worldwide. In terms of the specific sample, the study was conducted with the employees who performed management and technical work to directly support the government agency sample's project. The project began initially in 1990 with a contract renewal occurring in 1996. Of the approximately 380 contracting employees, 240 worked for the lead support contractor. The remaining employees worked for small businesses that served on the contract as subs. The support contractor brought these sub contractors into the project because each had their own area of expertise (e.g., safety, information management) required to support the government's needs.

The 380 contract employees, regardless of employing company, are physically co-located at the support contractor's facilities and work together as a seamless organization on a daily basis. No more than twelve contractors have office space at the government agency; allowances are only made for this arrangement when the contracting organization is filling a government position and must be on-site with the customer. These employees maintain office space at the contracting organization as well.

To insure adequate sample size, the survey instrument was distributed to all of the division's 160 full-time government employees and to all 380 contract employees who supported the contract; 220 individuals completed and returned the questionnaire. The overall response rate was 41 percent. The response rate was somewhat higher among government employees; 85 returned their questionnaires, representing a response rate of 53 percent. Among the contract employees, 135 questionnaires were returned resulting in a response rate of 36 percent. Four contract employee surveys, however, were eliminated due to missing data in entire sections (e.g., commitment to immediate office). The total number of subjects for the study was 216 with a final response rate of 40 percent). Ideally, a comparison of the sample would be done with the demographics of the population. This was not possible so the readers is cautioned that one cannot conclude that the sample is not without bias.

The organizations were selected to participate in this study on the basis of representing the desired employment model of a mixed workforce. This research was unique due to these samples selected. First, these workers engaged in white-collar work. Traditionally, blue-collar professions engaged in the practice of contracting out. Contracting out is a relatively new practice to white-collar industries and has not been studied in this context. The subjects under

study were employed in the professional occupations (e.g., engineering, information technology, business management, human resources). Second, researchers have not studied the Federal Government employees' commitment levels in the relation to the flexibility model. Nor have researchers studied the commitment levels of the contract employees described herein. The contractors in this study were not temporary employees without a home organization. Rather, they were full-time professionals working for an organization with which they identified as their permanent employer.

### **Definition of Terms**

The instrument required the participants to respond in terms of different work entities. For the socialization-related learning section, both groups of employees answered in terms of the organization for which they were employed.

For the commitment section, government employees answered in terms of: (1) immediate office, i.e., the immediate office for which they produced services or products, (2) government organization, i.e., the government organization where they worked, (3) Federal Service, i.e., working in the public sector, and (4) occupation, i.e., the employee's current overall occupation (e.g., information technology, engineering, administration, human resources, etc.). Contractors answered commitment in terms of: (1) immediate customer office within government organization, i.e., the government office for which they produced services or products (if they supported more than one customer office, they were requested to base responses on the one with which they spent the highest percentage of time), (2) government organization, i.e. the government organization which they supported (if they supported more than one agency, they were requested to base responses on the one which they spent the highest percentage of time), (3) employing organization, i.e., the employee's employer, and (4) occupation, i.e., the employee's current overall occupation.

### **Variables**

The variables were grouped into four areas, with the selected instruments for measurement and their subscales (see Table 1). The variables included: type of employee, work entity commitment level, socialization-related learning level, and demographic variables. The dependent variables were commitment level and socialization-related learning level for each group of employees. Type of employee served as the independent variable. When examining differences between the two groups, demographics served as an independent variable.

Table 1

Variables, Measures, and Subscales

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Variable Subscales</b>
<b>Dependent</b>		
Commitment	Affective Commitment Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Government Employees:</li> <li>• Immediate Office</li> <li>• Government Organization</li> <li>• Federal Service</li> <li>• Occupation</li>   <li>• Contract Employees:</li> <li>• Immediate Customer Office</li> <li>• Government Organization</li> <li>• Employing Organization</li> <li>• Occupation</li> </ul>
Socialization-Related Learning	Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job knowledge</li> <li>• Acculturation</li> <li>• Establishing relationships</li> <li>• Satisfaction with learning experiences</li> </ul>
<b>Independent</b>		
Type of Employee	Version of Survey Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Government</li> <li>• Contract</li> </ul>
Demographics	Background Information Section	



### **Instrumentation**

The survey was developed by combining two separate instruments, plus adding a section for gathering background information. Each survey was tailored to the specific sample under study: core government employees and contract employees. The selected measures were pencil-and-paper, self-reported scales. Following is an overview of the three-part survey. The questionnaires appear in Appendix B.

#### **Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire**

The first section of the survey focused on socialization-related learning. The questions contained in this section were identical for both samples. It was determined through a modified version of the self-report instrument, the 19-item Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire (WAQ) (Morton, 1993). Reio (1997) added three additional high-loading job knowledge questions from the original Morton study to balance the instrument. The 22-item instrument used Likert scale items (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The WAQ consists of three subscales developed to measure employee socialization-related learning and one to measure satisfaction with learning experiences.

The four subscales measure job knowledge (JK), acculturation to the company (AC), establishing relationships (ER), and satisfaction with learning experiences (LE). See Table 2 for a summary of the WAQ subscales which includes the number of items per subscale, a description, and a sample item.

Table 2

Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire Subscales

Subscale	Number of Items	Description	Sample Item
Job Knowledge (JK)	8	Measures extent to which respondents report job task mastery	I can complete most of my tasks without assistance.
Acculturation (AC)	5	Measures extent to which the employee has learned the norms, culture, and values of the organization	I know what the rules are for getting ahead in the organization.
Establishing Relationships (ER)	5	Measures the ability to identify coworkers who could provide useful information and who knew their way around the organization	I know who has the power to get things done around here.
Satisfaction with Learning Experiences (LE)	4	Measures the employee's satisfaction with organizational learning experiences	I am satisfied with my learning experiences on the job.

A measure of overall JK, AC, ER, and LE for each respondent was obtained by taking the mean score across the subscale items. It was intended that the subscale items, when taken together, would provide a consistent indicator of employee workplace adaptation levels for most working populations. It is important to note that, although the WAQ was “developed primarily for new employees (0-24 months), it should also be appropriate for assessing the socialization-related learning of employees of any tenure” (Reio, 1997, p. 35). Employees change offices, divisions, or projects so the socialization-related learning process begins anew, despite years of incumbency at the organization (Schein, 1988). According to Reio, the socialization-related learning that the instrument measures could be considered vital to all productive individuals in the organization, not just trainees or new employees.

JK, AC, and ER were designed to measure the learning associated with the socialization process and are based on Morton's 1993 extensive factor-analytic research. Morton derived a large number of socialization-related learning items from the literature, included them in a pilot study, and subsequently screened them using a retention criterion of .5 and above-factor loadings (Reio & Wiswell, 2000). To add further reliability and a technical balance to the JK subscale, Reio (1997) added three of the next highest loading items from Morton's study. The researcher believed that the AC and ER subscale primarily tapped interpersonal skills.

Examination by Reio and Wiswell (2000) of the instrument through factor-analytic work provided substantial support for continued use of the instrument. Internal reliabilities and item-factor loadings on each subscale were virtually identical to those reported by Morton (1993). This provides evidence for the instrument's subscale factor stability and generalizability in the researcher's study conducted with workers in a government agency. Reio's 1997 study with a sample of employees from four service industry organizations resulted in reliabilities for the JK, AC, ER, SLS subscales of .96, .86, .85, and .81, respectively. Acceptable subscale internal consistencies and the results of the subscale factor analyses from Reio's study indicated that the WAQ would be an appropriate research instrument for the purpose of examining socialization-related learning in the workplace.

### **Affective Commitment Scale**

The second section of the survey focused on commitment. Researchers have used a multitude of instruments to measure employee commitment. The most widely administered measure appears to be the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Porter et al., 1974), along with its 9-item subset. The OCQ, however, has received criticism over the years. According to McCaul, Hinsz, and McCaul (1995), the OCQ reflects primarily an attitude, possibly contaminated with other related but distinct items that measure beliefs and intentions. The OCQ has been criticized because of the overlap between some of its items with desired organizational outcomes such as turnover and performance (Reichers, 1985). Mowday et al. (1979) concede that compared to evidence for other measures, the OCQ possess acceptable, but far from perfect levels of convergent and discriminant validity.

Inconsistencies in the conceptualization and measurement of commitment led Meyer and Allen (1984, 1991) to the development of a three-component model and measures of commitment in the areas of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The model has received favorable attention in the literature; some researchers may view the Meyer and Allen approach as a possible replacement to the organizational commitment approach of Porter et al. (1974).

The ACS measures the affective component of commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) define affective commitment as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Three ACS items are negatively worded in an effort to reduce response bias and were reverse-scored during data entry. In addition to the ACS items, a short section for "additional comments" was included for open-ended responses. This information was analyzed to identify any themes provided by respondents. Any significant response patterns were included in the research results at Chapter V.

The ACS was modified to reflect the different work entities. Reichers (1985), suggested that commitment could be dismantled to reflect multiple commitments, e.g., management, co-workers, clients, customers, etc. This moves the commitment construct from a general concept focused on organizational goals to one focused more specifically on whose goals serve as the foci for multiple commitments. Survey participants responded to the same 6-items of the ACS for four work entities, i.e., immediate government office, government organization, employer, and occupation, resulting in a 24-item instrument. The six Likert scale items (rated from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) contained in this section were identical for both samples.

A measure of overall commitment per work entity was obtained by taking the mean score across the 6-items. It was intended that the scale items, when taken together, would provide a consistent indicator of employee commitment levels for most working populations.

ACS scale wording was re-phrased so that participants recorded their level of commitment for each constituency. This approach was modeled after a study conducted by Aranya et al. (1981) who modified the OCQ to measure accountants' levels of commitment to the profession (internal consistency for the questionnaire measuring commitment to organization and to profession, as determined by Cronbach's alpha, was .91 and .87 respectively). A meta-analysis by Wallace (1993) found that almost half of 25 studies used this modification approach and reported reliabilities for the entire sample or for each of its subsamples. In addition, Irving, Coleman, and Cooper (1997) measured occupational commitment by modifying the ACS to reflect general occupations; they reported Cronbach's alpha of .79. Core government employees provided responses in terms of the immediate office, the government organization, the Federal Service, and the occupation. Contract employees provided responses in terms of the immediate customer office, the government organization, the employing organization, and the occupation. The different work entities represented the subscales for commitment for each employee group. Following is an example of a modified item used in the study:

ACS: *I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.*

Modified ACS: *I do not feel "emotionally attached" to \_\_\_\_\_ .*

#### **ACS factor analysis.**

Examination in the literature provides substantial support for continued use of the instrument. Benkhoff (1997) favors this conceptualization over the OCQ because it represents three separate components – not three separate dimensions of the same concept. Confirmatory factor analysis of data by Hackett et al. (1994) supported a three-facet construct (nonnormed fit index = .86). Using canonical correlation analysis, Allen and Meyer (1990a) provided evidence that the three components were conceptually and empirically distinguishable with different correlates. Three significant canonical roots were produced: .81= affective, .56=continuance, and .38=normative.

Although Meyer and Allen developed a three-component measurement, for purposes of this research, only the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS) was utilized. Affective commitment was the chosen dependent variable. Continuance and normative commitment do not apply to contract employees in relation to the immediate customer office and government organization because contractors often do not have a choice as to whether to remain with these entities. The ACS was written to assess only the affective orientation towards the organization and not employees' behavior or behavioral intentions, as some have suggested about the OCQ (Reichers, 1985).

In addition, of the three measurements, the literature does cast doubts on the validity of the continuance commitment scale (CCS) noting that the scale has been found to comprise two related dimensions: lack of alternatives and high personal sacrifice (Hackett et al., 1994; McGee

& Ford, 1987). The Normative Commitment Scale (NCS) has not been tested extensively and Allen and Meyer (1990a) note that more evidence is required before the NCS can be used with confidence. Price (1997) concludes that the ACS is recommended as an alternative to the OCQ but the CCS and NCS “require considerable work before they are psychometrically acceptable” (p. 345).

### **ACS reliability.**

An Allen and Meyer (1990a) study indicated that the ACS can be measured reliably with coefficient alpha = .87 and in 1997, Meyer and Allen reported that the median reliability for the ACS is .85. Ko (1996) obtained coefficient alpha reliabilities with two samples of .86 and .87. McGee and Ford (1987) reported that the ACS had good internal consistency reliability (.88) and was unidimensional. Yousef (2000) cited use of the Meyer and Allen questionnaire rather than the OCQ due to criticism for lack of homogeneity; Cronbach’s alpha (1951) was .85 for the ACS.

In terms of temporal stability, Allen and Meyer (1996) reviewed the body of research in which the ACS was used and reported that all test-retest reliabilities were within acceptable range (.94 between time 1 and time 2, .78 between time 2 and 3). The researchers noted that lower reliabilities were obtained in samples taken on the first day at the organization. This suggests that employees may find it difficult to respond meaningfully when they have had no experience with the organization. For example, the .94 test-retest reliability coefficient was found when the ACS was administered 7 weeks apart to a sample of employees with an average tenure of more than 5 years (Blau et al., 1993). Temporal stability was .60 when the measures were obtained after at least remaining 1 month on the job (Meyer et al., 1989).

### **ACS validity.**

Allen and Meyer (1996) also reviewed the evidence concerning relations between the scales and other variable to be antecedents and outcomes of commitment as part of their validation process. The examination of construct validity involved over 40 samples, representing 16,000 employees from a variety of organizations. The overall pattern of relations was consistent with that proposed, providing evidence that the scales are measuring the constructs intended, e.g., job performance, retention. The authors focused on patterns across studies and concluded that the measures “relate to measures of ‘antecedent’ and ‘consequence’ variables largely in accordance with theoretical prediction” (p. 271).

### **Demographic Variables**

The final section addressed demographic variables that were predominantly acquired as a function of membership in the organization, i.e., work-related attribute such as type of retirement plan v. personal characteristics such as age or gender. Items for both respondents included: time with immediate government office, government organization, time with employer, time with occupation, type of occupation, employment type, and education level. In addition, for government employees, type of retirement plan were required. For contract employees, the additional item was percentage of time spent on-site at the government agency. Length of time supporting the work entities and education level were obtained in continuous, numeric form. The others were grouped into appropriate categories.

Demographic variables as a function of being in the workplace were chosen because personal characteristics have not been found to have strong relationships to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). One personal characteristic, education level, was retained. Although findings regarding education and commitment have been somewhat contradictory, education level was of interest in terms of understanding the level of professionalism of each group. Studies have more frequently found that education (inversely), influenced commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Lewis, 1992; Steers, 1977; Stevens et al., 1978) while others have found a positive relationship (Becker, 1960).

Type of occupation was included due to the multi-faceted approach of the study which included occupational commitment, i.e., a psychological link between individuals and the occupation that is based on an affective reaction to the occupation (Lee et al., 2000). This was included to obtain an understanding of the workforce composition of the two groups. This variable would identify any difference between the two and also inform whether there were any relationships with commitment levels. The interest in time with the various work entities, i.e., tenure, was included because this variable has been found to be positively associated with commitment levels (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Hackett et al., 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Stevens et al., 1978).

The distinction between being supervisory or non-supervisory was included because some theorize that employees at a higher organizational level may have more at stake than employees in lower levels (e.g., Aranya et al., 1981, found accounting firm partners and supervisors to exhibit higher levels of professional commitment than seniors and semi-seniors). A Wallace (1993) meta-analysis found that the individual's position in the employing organization (supervisor versus staff professionals) was one of four potential factors that had a moderating effect on the correlation between professional and organizational commitment. This suggests that the relation between organizational and occupational commitment may vary to some degree according to one's position (i.e., organizational and professional commitment were more highly correlated for supervisors than staff).

For government employees, type of retirement plan was included because the older system, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), is considered to be inflexible. Once employees have been in the U.S. Government for a period of time, it is difficult to leave the Federal Service because of the investment they will lose. With the more recent system, Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), employees have more flexibility to move in and out of the Government because their investment will not be lost if they move to the private sector. For contract employees, the amount of time spent on-site at the government agency was included to determine if there was a relationship between exposure to the government work entities and the subsequent level of commitment.

For each group of respondents, the listing of occupations were developed with a primary point of contact for the respective organization. Different occupations were listed according to the in-house expertise provided. A category for "other" was included to capture miscellaneous occupations. In addition, the point of contact characterized the occupations regarding their overall level of responsibility, decision making, and accountability by providing a simple high, medium, and low rating. The purpose of this identification was to determine, if differences

among occupation types and commitment were found, whether levels of work duties correlated with commitment levels.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The first step in working with the organizations was to obtain approval for distribution of the survey. I met with the Director of the division within the government agency to discuss the purpose of the research and obtain his consent to conduct the study. I was informed that the survey would be approved as long as the contractor and the union agreed.

From there, I worked with a primary point of contact in the each organization --the government agency and the support contractor -- to obtain approval for the survey and facilitate its distribution. I met with the contractor's lead Program Manager (PM) to explain the study. The PM agreed to the study but requested that I remove two demographic variables: income (annual and family) and marital status because these were considered sensitive items. The PM believed that inclusion of these items was not pertinent to the survey and could possibly deter participation due to their personal nature. The PM also requested that he consult with the company's management team to determine if there were any concerns in advance of final approval.

Once the contractor's management team concurred, I worked with the government agency Director's Lead Organizational Development (OD) Manager to set up a meeting with the union. The union representative agreed to the study but requested that I remove two additional demographic variables: gender and age. The representative felt that these could be sensitive items for employees and believed them to be protected information under the privacy act.

Since overall the relationships between demographic variables are neither strong nor consistent (Meyer & Allen, 1997), I concurred with removal of the four items. Meta-analyses have shown that gender and affective commitment are unrelated (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Age has been shown to have a significant relationship with affective commitment but Meyer and Allen (1997) caution that this may be the result of differences among the generations studied. Marital status does not appear to be consistently related to affective commitment but rather may be moderated by other organizational factors (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The relationship between salary has been mixed. A meta-analysis by Mathieu & Zajac (1990) showed a low positive correlation with salary. Hodson & Sullivan (1985) found high earnings to be related to commitment while a 1992 Lewis study found no relationship. For purposes of the study, with the exception of education level, I retained demographics that were a function of being in the workplace.

Once both organizations approved participation in the study, the lead points of contact provided advance notification that the questionnaires would be distributed. In terms of the contracting organization, the lead PM for the contracting organization announced at three management staff meetings (which included the top prime and sub contractor managers for the project) that the survey would be distributed. The PM also sent out an advance announcement via email; he sent an email as a follow-up reminder 2 weeks after initial distribution.

In the government organization, the OD Manager sent an advance email to all employees announcing that the survey would be distributed in the near future. A special email to the division's management team was also sent, alerting them to the survey and announcing a short item on the next management staff meeting agenda. The OD Manager then took a few moments at the staff meeting to explain the survey. Two weeks after distribution, the OD Manager sent an email reminder to all employees about the survey.

I delivered sufficient copies to each point of contact for distribution. The contracting PM delivered multiple copies to each administrative staff area. The surveys were set out at the various administrative area workstations. The PM wanted to be clear that participation was voluntary. At the government organization, adequate numbers were delivered to each branch's secretary for distribution.

A cover letter accompanied each survey, informing respondents of the purpose of the study. The letter also emphasized that participation was voluntary and that all results would be provided in aggregate form only. The package contained a self-addressed, stamped envelope. I received government employee surveys postmarked between 10/10/00 and 12/12/00. From the contractor, I received return surveys postmarked between 10/3/00 and 11/4/00.

### **Data Analysis**

StatView was used for data analysis. I developed a codebook for the questionnaire and entered the raw data in a generic processing program, Excel 97. I printed the raw data file and manually double-checked all input. I then imported the data into StatView to conduct the statistical procedures required for this research.

I screened the data to examine for out-of-range values and none were found. I ran a frequency distribution to check for normalcy of data by group. Normal distributions were found for both the WAQ and ACS (See Appendix D). I examined the data for missing values. If a survey was missing data in an entire section, it was eliminated. For surveys where only a few data points were missing in a random pattern, procedures recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (1989) were utilized; the authors propose that missing values scattered randomly throughout a data set rarely pose serious problems.

I treated categorical data in the demographic section as if they were a nominal scale and coded them numerically. For the socialization-related learning portion, an overall mean score, plus mean subscale scores were summated for JK, AC, ER, and LE. For the commitment portion, a mean score was calculated for responses to the statements for each work entity variable. Scores for an individual work entity could range from 6 to 30. A high score indicated the participant's commitment to the particular constituency. I conducted standard analytical procedures, Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis, to evaluate the reliability of the survey items and unidimensionality of scales; results are included in Chapter IV.

### **Answering the Research Questions**

As stated previously, the goal of this research was to answer six questions. Following were the analyses that were conducted for each question:



- 1) Are there differences among work entity affective commitment levels for each group of employees? Analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to identify any differences among the scores for the four work entities. See Figure 1 and 2.
- 2) Are there differences between the two groups of employees among work entity affective commitment levels? Separate ANOVAs were conducted. To confirm results, additional analyses were performed: a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and a Fisher's Protected Least Significant Difference (PLSD) post hoc analysis, a 2-way ANOVA, and tests for interaction. See Figure 3.
- 3) Are there any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups? An ANOVA and a PLSD post hoc analysis were conducted to research differences. To confirm results, a 2-way ANOVA and tests for interaction were conducted. See Figure 4.
- 4) Are there any relationships between socialization-related learning variables and work entity affective commitment levels for each group? A correlational analysis was conducted to identify possible relationships.
- 5) Are there differences in work entity affective commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables? An ANOVA was conducted with nominal variables.
- 6) Are there any relationships between work entity affective commitment levels and certain demographic variables for each group? A correlational analysis was conducted to identify possible relationships.

# Commitment

## *First Within Group Analysis*

**Government Employee**

<b>Work Entity</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Federal Service</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Government Organization</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Immediate Office</b>	Commitment Score

Figure 1. First Within Group Analysis.

# Commitment

## *Second Within Group Analysis*

**Contractor Employee**

<b>Work Entity</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Employer</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Government Organization</b>	Commitment Score
	<b>Immediate Office</b>	Commitment Score

Figure 2. Second Within Group Analysis.

# Commitment

## *Between Group Analysis*

		Type of Employee	
		Government Employee	Contractor Employee
<b>Work Entity</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	Commitment Score	Commitment Score
	<b>Government Organization</b>	Commitment Score	Commitment Score
	<b>Immediate Office</b> (within government organization)	Commitment Score	Commitment Score
	<b>Employer</b> (Federal Service v. Company)	Commitment Score	Commitment Score

Figure 3. Commitment: Between Group Analysis.

# Socialization-Related Learning

## *Between Group Analysis*

		Type of Employee	
		Government Employee	Contractor Employee
<b>Socialization-Related Learning Subscale</b>	<b>Job Knowledge</b>	Workplace Adaptation Score	Workplace Adaptation Score
	<b>Acculturation</b>	Workplace Adaptation Score	Workplace Adaptation Score
	<b>Establishing Relationships</b>	Workplace Adaptation Score	Workplace Adaptation Score
	<b>Satisfaction with Learning Experience</b>	Workplace Adaptation Score	Workplace Adaptation Score
	<b>Total</b>	Workplace Adaptation Score	Workplace Adaptation Score

Figure 4. Socialization-Related Learning: Between Group Analysis.

### **Summary**

This chapter included a description of the study, the participants for the study, the survey instrument, procedures for the study, and data analyses. The unique focus of this study on government versus contract employee levels of commitment will enhance the literature base. The notion of differences in commitment levels within groups will also add to the literature. Finally, to determine if some traditional antecedents of commitment hold true for both groups of employees will be beneficial. Chapter IV will present the results of this study and Chapter V focuses on the conclusions and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER IV RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **Results**

There were two major purposes of this study. First, this study was an exploratory investigation of the differences between two groups of employees: core government and contractors. It focused on differences in terms of both levels of socialization-related learning and levels of commitment to various work entities. The second purpose was to identify potential relationships between variables and commitment levels. The study looked at relationships between demographic variables and commitment level to work entities. The relationship between levels of socialization-related learning and commitment levels was the other area researched.

To accomplish these purposes, the study was structured through exploring six questions:

- 1) Were there differences among work entity commitment levels for each group of employees?
- 2) Were there differences between the two groups of employees among levels of work entity commitment level?
- 3) Were there any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups?
- 4) Were there any relationships between the following socialization-related learning variables and levels of commitment for each group?
  - a) Job knowledge
  - b) Acculturation
  - c) Establishing relationships
  - d) Learning environment
- 5) Were there differences in work entity commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables?
  - a) Type of occupation
  - b) Employment type
  - c) Retirement plan (core government employees only)
  - d) Percentage of time spent on-site (contract employees only)
- 6) Were there any relationships between work entity commitment levels and certain demographic variables for each group?
  - a) Time with immediate office
  - b) Time with government organization
  - c) Time with employer
  - d) Time in occupation
  - e) Education level

This chapter first summarizes the instruments used in the study. Next, the sample is described. The remainder of the chapter is organized by presenting the results of the data analyses framed around each research question. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

### **Instrument Summary**

As described in Chapter III, this study utilized two instruments, the Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire (WAQ) and the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS). Though psychometric qualities reported in the literature seemed adequate, for this sample of respondents, I also conducted assessments of my own for reliability and validity. In regard to reliability, my tests supported previous studies. For the WAQ, Reio (1997) reported Cronbach's alpha of .96, .86, .85, and .81 for the subscales. My own Cronbach's alpha was similar, resulting in .90 overall and .81, .89, .88, and .84 for the subscales. Cronbach's alpha for the ACS also were similar. Meyer and Allen (1997) reported a .85 median reliability, compared to my results of .91 overall and .86, .87, .86, and .79 for each subscale.

To test the internal scale factor structures, I also compared my analyses to previous research. Earlier studies reported acceptable structures (Morton, 1993; Reio & Wiswell, 2000) and Tables 3 (WAQ) and 4 (ACS) below suggest that these instruments measure what was intended, as cited in the literature. The correlation matrixes for both exploratory factor analyses are shown at Appendix C.

The results of an exploratory factor analysis for the WAQ are located in Table 3. A factor is more easily interpreted when several variables correlate highly with it yet do not correlate with other factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). The items loaded clearly on their subscale factor (factor loadings  $> .30$  are considered significant). Orthogonal rotations were performed, retaining the simplest structure. The fifth establishing relationships (ER) subscale item also loaded on the acculturation (AC) subscale. The third job knowledge (JK) subscale item also loaded on the satisfaction with learning (LE) subscale. Although the two items loaded somewhat unclearly, they were retained to facilitate comparison with previous research. Overall, the acceptable test for reliability and the results of the subscale factor analyses indicated that the WAQ would be an appropriate research instrument for examining socialization-related learning in the workplace.

Table 3

Exploratory Factor Analysis for Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Job Knowledge	0.09	<b>0.40</b>	0.09	0.06
Job Knowledge	0.07	<b>0.79</b>	0.12	0.09
Job Knowledge	0.09	<b>0.63</b>	0.24	0.34
Job Knowledge	0.21	<b>0.67</b>	0.20	0.04
Job Knowledge	0.03	<b>0.57</b>	0.09	-0.03
Job Knowledge	0.00	<b>0.39</b>	0.13	0.17
Job Knowledge	0.09	<b>0.30</b>	0.17	-0.01
Job Knowledge	0.20	<b>0.31</b>	0.12	0.29
Acculturation	<b>0.81</b>	0.17	0.02	0.22
Acculturation	<b>0.91</b>	0.10	0.08	0.21
Acculturation	<b>0.75</b>	0.10	0.16	0.19
Acculturation	<b>0.66</b>	0.07	0.26	0.23
Acculturation	<b>0.57</b>	0.24	0.22	0.24
Establishing Relationships	0.07	0.16	<b>0.77</b>	0.17
Establishing Relationships	0.09	0.15	<b>0.75</b>	0.17
Establishing Relationships	0.10	0.18	<b>0.86</b>	0.11
Establishing Relationships	0.26	0.13	<b>0.69</b>	0.10
Establishing Relationships	0.40	0.20	<b>0.52</b>	0.25
Satisfaction with Learning	0.29	0.10	0.14	<b>0.65</b>
Satisfaction with Learning	0.21	0.06	0.14	<b>0.85</b>
Satisfaction with Learning	0.23	0.05	0.18	<b>0.83</b>
Satisfaction with Learning	0.23	0.12	0.17	<b>0.46</b>

Note: N=216

The results of an exploratory factor analysis for the ACS are located in Table 4. The items loaded clearly on their subscale factor (factor loadings > .30 are considered significant). The first item for the government organization work entity did not produce a significant loading. This question relates to one's happiness with spending the rest of the career with the work entity in question. One explanation may be that contractors had difficulty responding to this question due to fact that they have little choice in ability to remain with a government organization. The third government organization question also loaded on the immediate government office subscale. Since the loading was .31, it was retained. Overall, the results are acceptable, indicating that the ACS would be an appropriate instrument for exploring commitment levels among work entities.

Table 4

Exploratory Factor Analysis for Affective Commitment Scale

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Immediate Office	<b>0.47</b>	-0.05	-0.10	-0.01
Immediate Office	<b>0.44</b>	-0.08	0.07	-0.05
Immediate Office	<b>0.77</b>	-0.01	0.06	-0.02
Immediate Office	<b>0.74</b>	-0.09	0.11	0.09
Immediate Office	<b>0.60</b>	0.01	0.06	0.08
Immediate Office	<b>0.96</b>	0.06	0.00	-0.09
Government Organization	0.12	0.05	-0.05	<b>0.25</b>
Government Organization	-0.04	0.00	-0.10	<b>0.45</b>
Government Organization	0.31	0.06	0.00	<b>0.47</b>
Government Organization	0.01	0.00	0.09	<b>0.86</b>
Government Organization	0.08	0.09	0.06	<b>0.62</b>
Government Organization	0.17	0.17	-0.03	<b>0.70</b>
Employer	-0.14	<b>0.54</b>	-0.06	-0.05
Employer	-0.12	<b>0.60</b>	-0.07	-0.07
Employer	0.13	<b>0.68</b>	0.08	0.02
Employer	-0.07	<b>0.67</b>	0.12	0.10
Employer	0.00	<b>0.76</b>	0.01	-0.05
Employer	0.04	<b>0.83</b>	0.01	0.08
Occupation	-0.03	-0.08	<b>0.48</b>	-0.15
Occupation	-0.09	0.11	<b>0.35</b>	-0.14
Occupation	0.17	0.19	<b>0.56</b>	-0.02
Occupation	-0.05	-0.02	<b>0.85</b>	0.04
Occupation	0.00	-0.03	<b>0.62</b>	0.00
Occupation	0.09	0.04	<b>0.70</b>	0.08

Note: N=216

Finally, I conducted a normal data check and found normal distributions for each employee group in relation to both the WAQ and the ACS. See Appendix D for data distribution charts.



### Demographic Profile of the Sample

The sample for this study was drawn from a population comprised of two organizations: a government agency and the contractor that provide services and products for the agency. As shown in Table 5, 55% of the government employees had been employed with their immediate office less than 3 years. Overall, 86% had worked with the immediate office 6 years or less. Contract employees were similar with 52% having worked with the immediate customer office less than 3 years and overall, 81% with 6 years or less.

Table 5

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Time with Immediate Government Office

From( $\geq$ )	To( $<$ ) (In Months)	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
1	38	45	54.88	68	51.91
38	75	25	30.49	38	29.01
75	112	5	6.10	16	12.21
112	149	4	4.88	8	6.11
149	187	1	1.22	1	0.76
187	224	1	1.22	0	0.00
224	261	1	1.22	0	0.00
261	298	0	0.00	0	0.00
298	335	0	0.00	0	0.00
335	372	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total		82	100	131	100

About 30% of each employee group had been working for the government organization for approximately 4 years or less. Overall, contractors had worked less time for the government (87% reporting 11 years or less as compared to 73% for the government employees). Tenure for government employees extended up to 38 years while the most years that contractors reported was 19. See Table 6.

Table 6

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Time with Government Organization

From( $\geq$ )	To ( $<$ ) (In Months)	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
1	46.5	26	31.71	35	27.13
46.5	92	14	17.07	46	35.66
92	137.5	20	24.39	31	24.03
137.5	183	10	12.20	14	10.85
183	228.5	3	3.66	3	2.33
228.5	274	2	2.44	0	0.00
274	319.5	2	2.44	0	0.00
319.5	365	1	1.22	0	0.00
365	410.5	3	3.66	0	0.00
410.5	456	1	1.22	0	0.00
Total		82	100	129	100

Table 7 reports time with the employer. Employer was defined as Federal Service for government employees and the employing organization for the contract employees. Government employees had been with Federal Service longer than contractors had worked for their employer. Sixty-five percent of the contractors had worked 9 years or less as compared to 22% of the government employees for the same time period. The longest tenure recorded by contractors was 33 years as compared to 48 years for the government group.

Table 7

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Time with Employer

From( $\geq$ )	To ( $<$ ) (In Months)	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
1	58.5	10	12.05	49	37.69
58.5	116	8	9.64	35	26.92
116	173.5	13	15.66	18	13.85
173.5	231	21	25.30	16	12.31
231	288.5	2	2.41	9	6.92
288.5	346	12	14.46	2	1.54
346	403.5	9	10.84	1	0.77
403.5	461	6	7.23	0	0.00
461	518.5	1	1.21	0	0.00
518.5	576	1	1.21	0	0.00
Total		83	100	130	100

Note: Employer = Federal Service (Government Employees), Employing Organization (Contract Employees)

The range for time reported with occupation was similar; both groups reported tenure up to 42 years. About 50% of each group reported time with occupation being 12 years or less. See table 8.

Table 8

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Time with Occupation

From( $\geq$ )	To( $<$ ) (In Months)	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
1	51.3	19	23.17	37	28.46
51.3	101.6	12	14.63	13	10.00
101.6	151.9	12	14.63	11	8.46
151.9	202.2	11	13.42	15	11.54
202.2	252.5	15	18.29	17	13.08
252.5	302.8	2	2.44	7	5.39
302.8	353.1	4	4.88	5	3.85
353.1	403.4	5	6.10	15	11.54
403.4	453.7	1	1.22	8	6.15
453.7	504	1	1.22	2	1.54
Total		82	100	130	100

As reported in Table 9, contract employees reported higher education levels with 62% possessing a masters degree or above. This compared to government employees reporting 43% for the same levels. Yet only 15% of government employees and 10% of contract employees had not obtained a bachelors degree so overall, there was little variance between the two groups. All employees had obtained a high school degree.

Table 9

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Education Level

	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
Some High School	0	0.00	0	0.00
High School	1	1.19	2	1.53
Some College	12	14.29	11	8.40
Bachelors	35	41.67	37	28.24
Masters	33	39.29	72	54.96
Doctoral	3	3.57	9	6.87
Total	84	100	131	100

Table 10 shows how many employees reported being supervisors v. non-supervisors. For both groups, more employees reported being in non-supervisory positions. Only 28% of the government employees and 38% of contract employees were supervisors.

Table 10

Core Government and Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Employment Type

	Government Count	Government Percent	Contract Count	Contract Percent
Supervisor	23	27.71	49	37.69
Non-Supervisor	60	72.29	81	62.31
Total	83	100	130	100

Table 11 shows the type of occupations in which government employees served. The majority of government employees reported being in the engineering or program management occupation (72%).

Table 11

Core Government Employees: Frequency Distribution for Type of Occupation

	Count	Percent
Administrative	5	6.02
Business Management	8	9.64
Computer Specialist	4	4.82
Engineering	27	32.53
Human Resources	1	1.21
Information Technology	2	2.41
Program Management	32	38.55
Other	4	4.82
Total	83	100

Occupation types reported for contract employees were more varied. See Table 12. Thirty-six percent reported serving as engineers, 21% served in the information technology/computer specialist area, and 12% identified their occupation as consulting.

Table 12

Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Type of Occupation

	Count	Percent
Administrative	3	2.29
Business Management	9	6.87
Computer Specialist	9	6.87
Consulting	17	12.98
Engineering	47	35.88
Human Resources	2	1.53
Information Technology	19	14.50
Logistics	3	2.29
Other	22	16.79
Total	131	100

Table 13 shows the type of retirement plan for government employees. Overall, more employees reported being under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). FERS is the newer retirement plan which allows more flexibility for employees to move in and out of the Federal Service.

Table 13

Core Government Employees: Frequency Distribution for Retirement Plan

	Count	Percent
CSRS	32	40.51
FERS	47	59.49
Total	79	100

A survey question unique to the contract employees asked how much time they spent on-site at the government organization. Table 14 shows that half of the employees spent 20% or less time working at the government location. Another 25% did work on-site up to 40% of the time. The final quarter spent 40-100% of their time working on-site.

Table 14

Contract Employees: Frequency Distribution for Percentage of Time Spent On-Site at Government Organization

	Count	Percent
0-20%	64	50.00
21-40%	32	25.00
41-60%	17	13.28
61-80%	2	1.56
81-100%	13	10.16
Total	128	100

**Data Analysis: Exploring Differences in Commitment Levels**

I conducted ANOVAs for the first two research questions, i.e., exploration of differences among and between the two groups of employees in terms of commitment levels to the work entities.

*Research Question #1: Were there differences among work entity affective commitment levels for each group of employees?*

For the first question, I conducted an ANOVA to study each group of employees. The results are depicted for core government employees in Table 15 . Results indicated an F-value of 3.175 which is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 15

Core Government Employees: ANOVA for Commitment Level

	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Entity	3.00	326.71	108.90	3.175	0.02
Residual	336.00	11523.72	34.30		

See Table 16 for the means for commitment level to each work entity. The immediate office and the occupation vary the most with means of 18.85 and 21.33 respectively.

Table 16

Core Government Employees: Work Entity Commitment Level Means

	Count	Mean	Std Dev	Std Err
Immediate Office	85	18.85	6.84	0.74
Government Organization	85	19.12	5.90	0.64
Federal Service	85	19.34	5.20	0.56
Occupation	85	21.33	5.35	0.58

A PLSD test for comparing means between the work entity commitment levels confirmed a significant difference at the .05 level between the immediate office and occupation. See Table 17.

Table 17

Core Government Employees: Fisher's PLSD Post Hoc Analysis for Commitment

	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Federal Service and Government Organization	0.22	2.52	0.9960
Federal Service and Immediate Office	0.49	2.52	0.9595
Federal Service and Occupation	-1.99	2.52	0.1815
Government and Immediate Office	0.27	2.52	0.9929
Government and Occupation	-2.21	2.52	0.1108
Immediate Office and Occupation	-2.48	2.52	<b>0.0560</b>

The results of the ANOVA for contract employees are depicted in Table 18. Results indicated an F-value of 20.333 which is statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ).

Table 18

Contract Employees: ANOVA for Commitment Level

	df	Sum of Squares	Mean	F-value	P-value
Entity	3	1609.64	536.55	20.333	<.0001
Residual	520	13721.56	26.39		

See Table 19 for the means for commitment level to each work entity. The government organization and the occupation vary the most with means of 17.86 and 22.43 respectively.

Table 19

Contract Employees: Work Entity Commitment Level Means

	Count	Mean	Std Dev	Std Err
Immediate Office	131	19.24	5.38	0.47
Government Organization	131	17.86	5.05	0.44
Employing Organization	131	21.17	5.56	0.49
Occupation	131	22.43	4.48	0.39

A PLSD test for comparing means between the work entity commitment levels confirmed significant differences in level of commitment between several entities: the employer and the government organization ( $p < .0001$ ), the employer and immediate office ( $p < .05$ ), the government organization and occupation ( $p < .0001$ ), and the immediate office and occupation ( $p < .0001$ ). See Table 20.

Table 20

Contract Employees: Fisher's PLSD Post Hoc Analysis for Commitment

	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Employer and Government Organization	3.31	1.78	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
Employer and Immediate Office	1.93	1.78	<b>0.0269</b>
Employer and Occupation	-1.26	1.78	0.2695
Government Organization and Immediate Office	-1.37	1.78	0.1976
Government Organization and Occupation	-4.57	1.78	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
Immediate Office and Occupation	-3.19	1.78	<b>&lt;.0001</b>

*Research Question #2: Were there differences between the two groups of employees among work entity affective commitment levels?*

I initially conducted separate ANOVAs for exploring the differences in work entity levels of commitment between the two groups. Results are included at Table 21. Only commitment level to the employer was significant. An F-value of 5.851 is statistically significant at the .01 level.



Table 21

Core Government and Contract Employees: Separate ANOVAs for Commitment


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ANOVA for Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	7.82	7.82	0.218	0.6414
Residual	214	7696.68	35.97		

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ANOVA for Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	81.20	81.20	2.784	0.0967
Residual	214	6242.35	29.17		

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ANOVA for Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	172.03	172.03	5.851	<b>0.0164</b>
Residual	214	6291.41	29.40		

---



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ANOVA for Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	62.16	62.16	2.652	0.1049
Residual	214	5014.84	23.43		

---

Note: Group = Core Government and Contract Employees

Analysis of variance is more robust than MANOVA for violations of sample distribution and normalcy. However, I also conducted a MANOVA for several reasons. The first reason was to mitigate the chances of a Type I error due to multiple tests of likely correlated dependent variables (Pedhazur, 1982; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). Second, conducting analysis on each set of dependent variables separately ignores “the very essence and richness of the multifaceted phenomenon being studied” (Pedhazur, 1982). Third, under different conditions, it may reveal differences not shown in separate ANOVAs. Since groups were not equal, the results were cautiously analyzed and compared to the separate ANOVAs (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). The results, depicted in Table 22, supported a significant difference,  $F(4, 211) = 5.927$ ,  $p < .0002$ . Due to unequal group size, although all four conventional MANOVA statistics are displayed, the Pillai Trace criterion was used to determine significance.

Table 22

Core Government and Contract Employees: MANOVA for Commitment

	Value	df		F-value	P-value
		Num	Den		
Wilks' Lambda	0.899	4	211	5.927	0.0002
Roy's Greatest Root	0.112	4	211	5.927	0.0002
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	0.112	4	211	5.927	0.0002
Pillai Trace	0.101	4	211	5.927	0.0002

In order for the reader to readily compare the two groups, Table 23 provides the means for each work entity. It is interesting to note that the government employees' commitment scores generally increase from immediate office to occupation. For contractors, one can see a marked decrease to the government organization, then a gradual increase to the occupation.

Table 23

Core Government and Contract Employees: Work Entity Commitment Level Means

	Count	Immediate Office	Govt Organization	Employer	Occupation
Core Government Employees	85	18.85	19.12	19.34	21.33
Contract Employees	131	19.24	17.86	21.17	22.43

A PLSD test for comparing means between the work entity commitment levels confirmed significant differences at the .01 level for the employer. See Table 24.

Table 24

Core Government and Contract Employees: Fisher's PLSD Post Hoc Analysis

Immediate Office			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-0.39	1.65	0.6414

Government Organization			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	1.26	1.48	0.0967

Employer			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-1.83	1.49	<b>0.0164</b>

Occupation			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-1.10	1.33	0.1049

Note: Group = Core Government and Contract Employees

The results of the separate ANOVAs and MANOVA were consistent. There were no significant differences in levels of commitment to immediate office, government organization, and occupation between the two groups. In regard to the employer, however, results showed a significant difference with the average for commitment to the employing organization being higher than that of core government employees' level of commitment to Federal Service. See Table 25.

Table 25

Core Government and Contract Employees: Employer Commitment Means

	Government	Contract
Mean	19.34	21.17
Std Dev	5.20	5.56
Std Error	0.56	0.49
Count	85	131

In order to explore differences further; a 2-way ANOVA was conducted. There was no main effect for group, i.e., government employee or contract employee membership. Work entity does have an influence on the variable commitment level. The interaction of group and work entity under study also has an influence. See Table 26.

Table 26

2-Way ANOVA for Work Entity Commitment

2-Way Analysis of Variance					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	54.657	54.657	1.853	0.1738
Work Entity	3	1394.573	464.858	15.762	<.0001
Group * Work Entity	3	268.555	89.518	3.035	0.0285
Residual	856	25245.275	29.492		

To test for interaction three 2 x 2 ANOVAs were conducted. An interaction between (1) government organization and employer, and (2) government organization and occupation were found. See Table 27.

Table 27

2 x 2 ANOVAs for Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office and Government Organization					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	19.307	19.307	0.593	0.4418
Work Entity	1	31.385	31.385	0.964	0.3268
Work Entity * Group	1	69.718	69.718	2.141	0.1442
Residual	428	13939.026	32.568		

Government Organization and Employer					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	8.425	8.425	0.288	0.592
Work Entity	1	320.98	320.98	10.961	0.001
Group * Work Entity	1	244.804	244.804	8.36	<b>0.004</b>
Residual	428	12533.761	29.284		

Government Organization and Occupation					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	0.635	0.635	0.024	0.8766
Work Entity	1	1183.686	1183.686	45.004	<.0001
Group * Work Entity	1	142.723	142.723	5.426	<b>0.0203</b>
Residual	428	11257.188	26.302		

In summary, government employees' level of commitment was consistent across immediate office, organization, and federal service, with a marked increase to the occupation. See Figure 5.

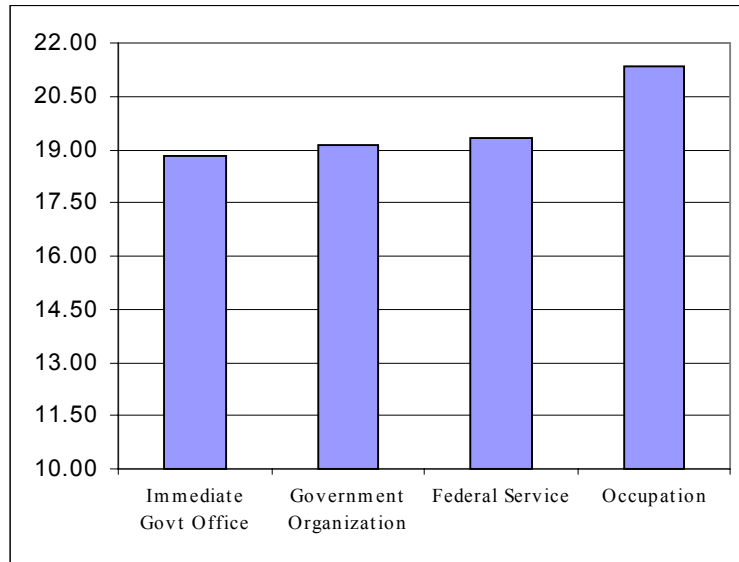


Figure 5. Core Government Employees: Work Entity Commitment Levels

For contractors, commitment level started at about same point for the office, with a marked dip to the government organization and marked increase to employer and occupation. See Figure 6.

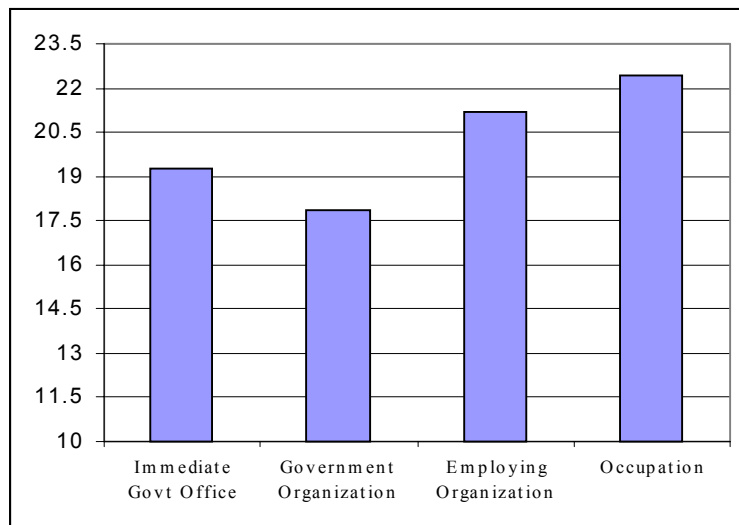


Figure 6. Contract Employees: Work Entity Commitment Levels

Figure 7 shows both groups of employees together for comparison purposes.

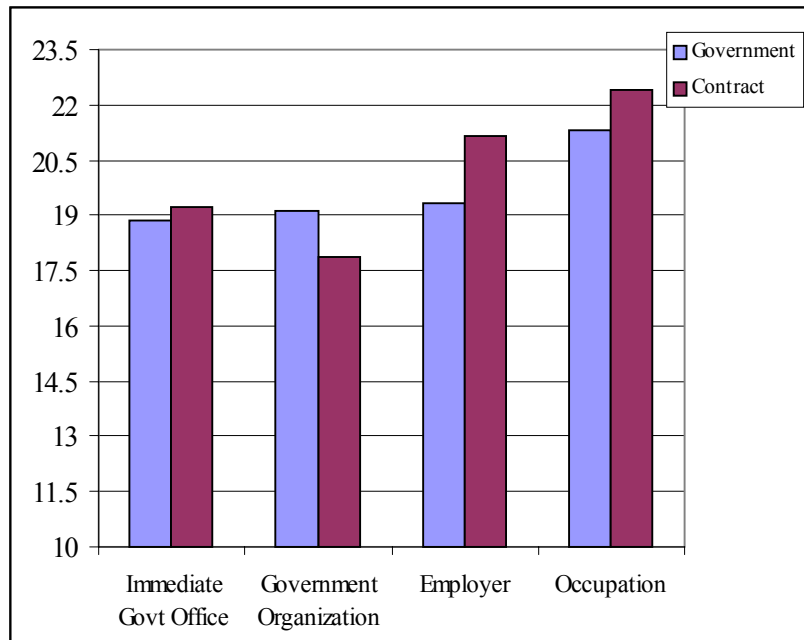


Figure 7. Core Government and Contract Employees: Work Entity Commitment Levels

Figure 8 depicts a line graph showing the interactions.

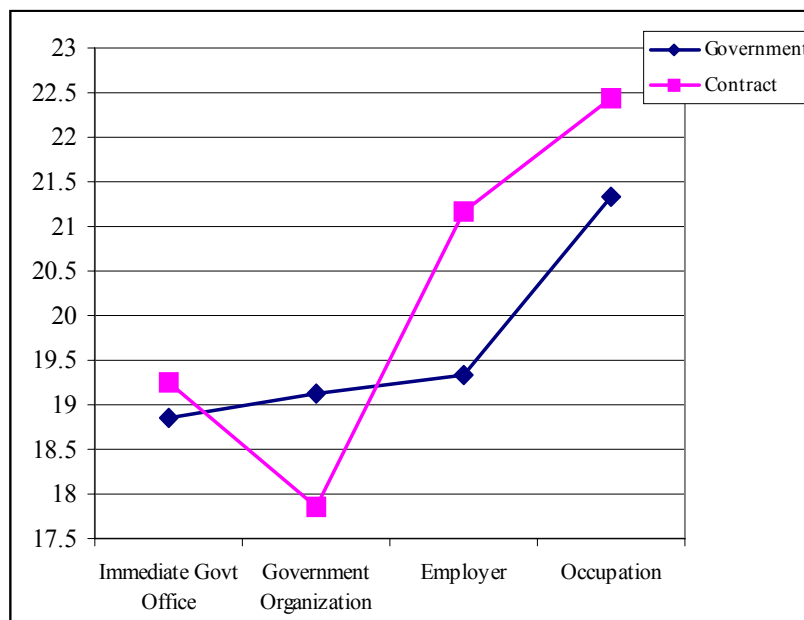


Figure 8. Core Government and Contract Employees: Interaction Line Graph for Commitment

**Differences and Relationships: Socialization-Related Learning and Demographics**

The purpose of the second part of the study was to explore socialization-related learning and demographic variables in relation to commitment levels. Following is a summary of the results.

**Socialization-Related Learning**

The first research question in this section focused on whether there were any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups.

*Question #3: Were there any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups?*

A one-way ANOVA found a significant difference between the socialization-related learning levels for the two employee groups. Results indicated an F-value of 9.475 which is statistically significant at the .01 level. See Table 28.

Table 28

Core Government and Contract Employees: ANOVA for Socialization-Related Learning

	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	1227.26	1227.26	9.475	0.0024
Residual	214	27718.58	129.53		

Note: Group=Core Government and Contract Employees

In order to determine where the differences may be, I first conducted a MANOVA on the WAQ subscales JK, AC, ER, and LE. The results of a MANOVA, depicted in Table 29, found a significant difference among subscales,  $F(4, 211) = 5.442, p < .0003$ . Due to unequal group size, although all four conventional MANOVA statistics are displayed, the Pillai Trace criterion was used to determine significance.

Table 29

Core Government and Contract Employees: MANOVA for Workplace Adaptation Subscales

	<u>Value</u>	<u>df</u>		<u>F-value</u>	<u>P-value</u>
		<u>Num</u>	<u>Den</u>		
Wilks' Lambda	0.906	4	211	5.442	0.0003
Roy's Greatest Root	0.103	4	211	5.442	0.0003
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	0.103	4	211	5.442	0.0003
Pillai Trace	0.094	4	211	5.442	0.0003



In order to explore that difference further, I conducted a Fisher's PLSD post hoc analysis. There were no differences between reported levels of JK and ER. There were, however, differences between the two groups in terms of AC ( $p < .0001$ ) and LE ( $p < .05$ ). See Table 30.

Table 30

Core Government and Contract Employees: Fisher's PLSD Post Hoc for Workplace Adaptation

Job Knowledge			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-0.32	1.14	0.5832

Acculturation			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-2.70	1.17	<b>&lt;.0001</b>

Establishing Relationships			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-0.74	0.88	0.0976

Satisfaction with Learning			
	Mean Diff	Crit Diff	P-value
Group	-1.13	0.96	<b>0.0215</b>

Note: Group = Core Government and Contract Employees

A 2-way ANOVA found that the main effect of group, i.e., government employee or contract employee membership, had an influence. See Table 31. Subscales under study had an influence on socialization-related learning level, however, this is not a meaningful finding because the magnitude of subscales differ. There was a significant group and subscale interaction and 2 x 2 ANOVAs were performed to explore this further.

Table 31

2-Way ANOVA for Workplace Adaptation Subscales

2-Way Analysis of Variance						
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value	
Group	1	306.814	306.814	21.214	<.0001	
WAQ Subscale	3	50957.258	16985.753	1174.46	<.0001	
Group * WAQ Subscale	3	166.633	55.544	3.841	0.0095	
Residual	856	12380.007	14.463			

To test for interaction, three 2 x 2 ANOVAs were conducted. An interaction was found between (1) acculturation and job knowledge, (2) acculturation and establishing relationships, and (3) acculturation and satisfaction with learning. See Table 32 and Figure 9.

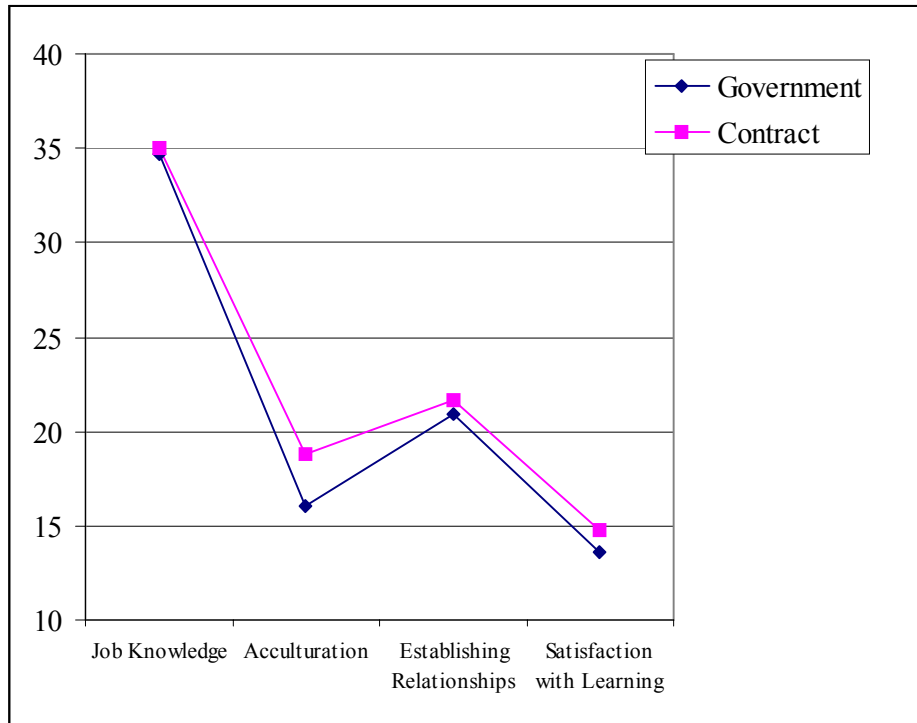
Table 32

2 x 2 ANOVAs for Workplace Adaptation Subscale

Acculturation and Job Knowledge					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	234.235	234.235	13.196	0.0003
WAQ Subscale	1	31170.183	31170.183	1756.06	<.0001
Group * WAQ Subscale	1	145.757	145.757	8.212	<b>0.0044</b>
Residual	428	7597.041	17.75		

Acculturation and Establishing					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	304.262	304.262	21.434	<.0001
WAQ Subscales	1	1515.048	1515.048	106.731	<.0001
Group * WAQ Subscales	1	98.696	98.696	6.953	<b>0.0087</b>
Residual	428	6075.463	14.195		

Acculturation and Satisfaction with Learning					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Group	1	376.414	376.414	24.78	<.0001
WAQ Subscale	1	1101.038	1101.038	72.482	<.0001
Group * WAQ Subscale	1	63.622	63.622	4.188	<b>0.0413</b>
Residual	428	6501.511	15.19		



**Figure 9.** Core Government and Contract Employees: Interaction Line Graph for Workplace Adaptation

The second research question in this section focused on whether there were any relationships between the socialization-related learning subscales and work entity commitment levels. Correlational analyses were performed. This procedure does not distinguish between independent and dependent variables, but rather seeks to study the degree of association between two variables (Pedhazur, 1982).

*Question #4: Were there any relationships between the socialization-related learning variables and work entity affective commitment levels for each group?*

- a) *Job knowledge*
- b) *Acculturation*
- c) *Establishing relationships*
- d) *Learning environment*

Table 33 focuses on government employees and depicts the correlation matrix for the total WAQ level, four socialization-related learning subscales, and the four work entity commitment levels. Positive correlations significant at  $p < .05$  were as follows: total WAQ level and immediate office commitment, total WAQ level and government organization commitment, total WAQ level Federal Service commitment, AC and immediate office commitment, AC and government organization commitment, AC and Federal Service commitment, ER and immediate office commitment, ER and government organization commitment, ER and Federal Service

commitment, ER and occupation commitment, LE and immediate office commitment, LE and government organization commitment, and LE and Federal Service commitment. This is consistent with Morton's 1993 study that found those employees who mastered socialization-related learning were more committed to the organization.

Although, not specifically related to this research question, it is also interesting to note that government employee levels of commitment to the various work entities were correlated (Reichers, 1996; Wallace, 1993) as opposed to being in conflict (Gunz & Gunz, 1994). This suggests that it was possible for government employees in this study to simultaneously feel committed to more than one entity.

Table 33

Government Employees: Correlational Analysis for Socialization-Related Learning and Commitment Levels

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Knowledge	–	0.307	0.494	0.401	0.757	0.106	0.139	-0.015	0.131
2. Acculturation		–	0.411	0.407	0.735	<b>0.226</b>	<b>0.300</b>	<b>0.215</b>	-0.067
3. Establishing Relationships			–	0.432	0.750	<b>0.317</b>	<b>0.436</b>	<b>0.245</b>	<b>0.245</b>
4. Satisfaction with Learning				–	0.735	<b>0.488</b>	<b>0.519</b>	<b>0.288</b>	0.147
5. Workplace Adaptation Total					–	<b>0.364</b>	<b>0.446</b>	<b>0.232</b>	0.136
6. Immediate Office Commitment						–	0.617	0.301	0.373
7. Government Organization Commitment							–	0.599	0.507
8. Employer Commitment								–	0.428
9. Occupation Commitment									–

Note: N=85

As Table 34 shows, relationships between the WAQ and commitment levels were also found for the contract employees. The correlation matrix for the total WAQ level, four socialization-related learning subscales, and the four work entity commitment levels shows positive correlations significant at  $p < .05$  as follows: total WAQ level and immediate office commitment, total WAQ level and government organization commitment, total WAQ level and employer commitment, total WAQ level and occupation commitment, JK and immediate office commitment, AC and immediate office commitment, AC and government organization commitment, AC and employer commitment, ER and immediate office commitment, ER and government organization commitment, ER and occupation commitment, LE and immediate government office commitment, LE and government organization commitment, LE and employer commitment, and LE and occupation commitment. This is consistent with Morton's 1993 study that found those employees who mastered socialization-related learning were more committed to the organization.

Although, not specifically related to this research question, it is also interesting to note that contract employee levels of commitment to the various work entities were correlated (Reichers, 1996; Wallace, 1993) as opposed to being in conflict (Gunz & Gunz, 1994). This suggests that it was possible for contract employees in this study to simultaneously feel committed to more than one entity.

Table 34

Contract Employees: Correlational Analysis for Socialization-Related Learning and Commitment Levels

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Knowledge	--	0.426	0.447	0.276	0.721	<b>0.211</b>	0.148	0.108	0.146
2. Acculturation		--	0.453	0.606	0.834	<b>0.279</b>	<b>0.374</b>	<b>0.386</b>	0.089
3. Establishing Relationships			--	0.414	0.738	<b>0.410</b>	<b>0.192</b>	0.075	<b>0.183</b>
4. Satisfaction with Learning				--	0.744	<b>0.358</b>	<b>0.416</b>	<b>0.355</b>	<b>0.230</b>
5. Workplace Adaptation Total					--	<b>0.404</b>	<b>0.372</b>	<b>0.310</b>	<b>0.207</b>
6. Immediate Office Commitment						--	0.691	0.275	0.348
7. Government Organization Commitment							--	0.451	0.342
8. Employer Commitment								--	0.476
9. Occupation Commitment									--

Note: N=131

**Demographic Variables**

The first research question in this section focused on differences in certain demographic variables in relation to commitment level

*Question #5: Were there differences in work entity affective commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables?*

- a) *Employment type*
- b) *Type of occupation*
- c) *Retirement plan (core government employees only)*
- d) *Percentage of time spent on-site (contract employees only)*

For government employees, a significant difference was found between employment type and commitment level. Those who indicated a supervisory position reported a higher commitment level to the immediate office ( $p < .0003$ ), government organization ( $p < .002$ ), and employer ( $p < .0016$ ). See Table 35. Findings are consistent with other studies (Aranya et al., 1981; Wallace, 1993) in which one's position as a supervisor correlated more highly with organizational commitment than non-supervisors.

Table 35

Core Government: ANOVA for Employment Type and Work Entity Commitmen

Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	579.48	579.48	14.058	<b>0.0003</b>
Residual	81	3338.81	41.22		

Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	326.46	326.46	10.195	<b>0.002</b>
Residual	81	2593.80	32.02		

Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	263.05	263.05	10.661	<b>0.0016</b>
Residual	81	1998.62	24.67		

Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	60.62	60.62	2.144	0.147
Residual	81	2289.89	28.27		

Results for retirement plan were significant for employer commitment ( $p < .0006$ ) with the mean commitment level for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) being higher ( $M = 21.9$ ) than for Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employees ( $M = 17.8$ ). See Table 36. Employees under the CSRS plan may display higher commitment level to Federal Service because they have less ability to move outside of the Federal Service without losing long-term investments.

Table 36

Core Government: ANOVA for Retirement Plan and Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Retirement Plan	1	1.37	1.37	0.028	0.8676
Residual	77	3761.57	48.85		

Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Retirement Plan	1	67.79	67.79	1.88	0.1743
Residual	77	2776.36	36.06		

Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Retirement Plan	1	311.53	311.53	12.896	<b>0.0006</b>
Residual	77	1860.14	24.16		

Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Retirement Plan	1	21.55	21.55	0.735	0.3939
Residual	77	2256.81	29.31		



One might assume that a highly professional occupation such as engineering may have produced a difference in terms of commitment level to various work entities (Hall, 1968; Wallace, 1993), however, that was not the case in this study. See Table 37.

Table 37

Core Government: ANOVA for Occupation Type and Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	7	318.22	45.46	0.949	0.4746
Residual	75	3592.75	47.90		

Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	7	344.77	49.25	1.455	0.1965
Residual	75	2538.75	33.85		

Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	7	171.62	24.52	0.879	0.5272
Residual	75	2091.54	27.89		

Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	7	143.99	20.57	0.696	0.6756
Residual	75	2218.08	29.57		

For contractors, there was one significant differences found between supervisory status and employer commitment level ( $p < .04$ ). See Table 38. Those who indicated a supervisory position report higher commitment levels for this entity.

Table 38

Contractors: ANOVA for Employment Type and Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	3.83	3.83	0.131	0.7183
Residual	128	3745.75	29.26		

Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	3.01	3.01	0.116	0.7336
Residual	128	3315.76	25.90		

Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	129.81	129.81	4.274	<b>0.0407</b>
Residual	128	3887.76	30.37		

Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Supervisor Status	1	59.89	59.89	3.018	0.0848
Residual	128	2540.33	19.85		

One may have expected to find a difference depending on the amount of time spent on-site with government organization and commitment level, i.e., the more time spent, the higher the commitment level, however, no significant results were found. One might have also expected to find a difference between the more highly professional occupations such as engineering and commitment level. Again, however, no significant difference was found. See Tables 39 and 40.

Table 39

Contractors: ANOVA for % of Time on Site and Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
% of Time on Site	4	73.35	18.34	0.618	0.6504
Residual	123	3648.53	29.66		

Government Organization Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
% of Time on	4	75.35	18.84	0.741	0.5658
Residual	123	3126.62	25.42		

Employer Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
% of Time on	4	88.33	22.08	0.7	0.5931
Residual	123	3877.89	31.53		

Occupation Commitment					
	<u>df</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
% of Time on	4	62.33	15.58	0.757	0.5551
Residual	123	2530.89	20.58		

Table 40

Contractors: ANOVA for Occupation Type and Work Entity Commitment

Immediate Office Commitment					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	8	192.70	24.09	0.822	0.5847
Residual	122	3574.97	29.30		

Government Organization Commitment					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	8	83.33	10.42	0.393	0.9228
Residual	122	3236.20	26.53		

Employer Commitment					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	8	329.97	41.25	1.363	0.2195
Residual	122	3692.34	30.27		

Occupation Commitment					
	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Occupation Type	8	262.13	32.77	1.701	0.1047
Residual	122	2349.94	19.26		

The second research question in this section focused on whether there were any relationships between the certain demographic variables and levels of commitment for each group:

*Question #6: Were there any relationships between work entity affective commitment levels and certain demographic variables for each group?*

- a) *Time with immediate office*
- b) *Time with government organization*
- c) *Time with employer*
- d) *Time in occupation*
- e) *Education level*

For government employees, a relationship between the following was found: (1) time with immediate office and immediate office commitment, government organization commitment, and Federal Service commitment, (2) time with government organization and government

organization commitment and Federal Service commitment, and (3) time with Federal Service and Federal Service commitment. See Table 41. The literature has found organizational tenure to be positively related with commitment levels (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Buchanan, 1974a; Hackett et al., 1994; Hall et al., 1970; Stevens et al., 1978).

Table 41

Core Government Employees: Demographic Variables and Work Entity Commitment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Immediate Office Commitment	–	0.611	0.289	0.371	0.143	<b>0.359</b>	0.095	0.146	0.028
2. Government Organization Commitment		–	0.59	0.484	0.031	<b>0.336</b>	<b>0.223</b>	0.183	0.12
3. Employer Commitment			–	0.398	0.148	<b>0.291</b>	<b>0.339</b>	<b>0.392</b>	0.121
4. Occupation Commitment				–	0.155	0.192	-0.01	0.05	0.17
5. Education Level					–	-0.08	-0.06	0.004	0.049
6. Time with Immediate Office						–	0.567	0.455	0.361
7. Time with Government Organization							–	0.616	0.435
8. Time in Federal Service								–	0.13
9. Time in Occupation									–

Note: N=80

For contractors, one relationship was found between time with immediate customer office and employer commitment. See Table 42. This is inconsistent with literature findings which generally find a relationship between tenure and commitment. This result is, however, consistent with a study by Pearce (1993) which focused on contractors and found no relationship between time spent with the organization and commitment level.

Table 42

Contract Employees: Demographic Variables and Work Entity Commitment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Immediate Office Commitment	–	0.687	0.293	0.335	-0.115	-0.02	-0.077	-0.01	0.057
2. Government Organization Commitment		–	0.457	0.322	-0.073	0.016	-0.026	-0.01	0.054
3. Employer Commitment			–	0.473	-0.105	<b>0.266</b>	-0.03	0.05	-0.029
4. Occupation Commitment				–	-0.011	-0.053	-0.124	0.006	0.121
5. Education Level					–	0.136	0.22	-0.146	0.239
6. Time with Immediate Office						–	0.107	0.209	0.33
7. Time with Government Organization							–	0.426	0.168
8. Time with Employer								–	0.171
9. Time in Occupation									–

Note: N=127

### **Chapter Summary**

The findings of the study indicate that the WAQ and ACS were reliable research instruments for the purpose of researching organizational socialization-related learning and affective commitment levels for a variety of work entities. The results suggested that both groups of employees did vary in commitment levels to various work entities. Government employees displayed the most commitment to the occupation and least to the immediate office. Contract employees also displayed the most commitment to the occupation but the least to the government organization. Between the two groups, commitment level to the employer differed significantly with contractors displaying a higher level to the employing firm than government employees recorded to the Federal Service. Work entity had a significant effect and a significant employee group-by-work entity interaction was found.

A difference was found between the two group's socialization-related learning levels. Contractors reported higher levels of acculturation and satisfaction with learning experiences. Total socialization-related learning level, acculturation, establishing relationships, and satisfaction with learning experiences correlated with work entity commitment levels for both groups. For contractors, job knowledge also correlated with immediate office commitment level. Regarding demographics, a significant difference found was for government and contract employees in terms of their supervisory status and commitment level to certain work entities. For government employees, those under the CSRS retirement plan reported a higher commitment level to Federal Service. Numerous relationships were found for government employees in terms of time with work entity and work entity commitment level. For contractors, a relationship was only found between time with immediate customer office and employer commitment level. Chapter V will present possible implications of the study and make tentative recommendations for practice within the limitations of this research. Suggestions for future research will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER V SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **Discussion**

Commitment has been a topic of considerable research interest within organizational behavior during the past 25 years (Mowday, 1998). Interest has seemed to grow over time; there is no evidence of diminished interest in organizational commitment. According to Morrow (1993):

Work commitment is among the most challenging organizational behavior concepts. It embraces a constellation of concepts, each focusing on a different aspect of commitment connected with work: the work itself, one's profession or career, the job, and the employing organization. (p. 157)

Determinants of work commitment are still not well understood; situational variables, personality and culture factors, among others, have been hypothesized to be determinants (Morrow, 1993). Organizational socialization has been studied as one possible antecedent to commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Saks, 1995). In addition, commitment has not been widely studied in the context of the flexible workplace comprised of a mix of core government and contract employees.

The goal of this research was to answer six research questions:

- 1) Were there differences among work entity affective commitment levels for each group of employees?
- 2) Were there differences between the two groups of employees among work entity affective commitment levels?
- 3) Were there any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups?
- 4) Were there any relationships between the following socialization-related learning variables and work entity affective commitment levels for each group?
  - a) Job knowledge
  - b) Acculturation
  - c) Establishing relationships
  - d) Learning environment
- 5) Were there differences in work entity affective commitment levels in relation to certain demographic variables?
  - a) Employment type
  - b) Type of occupation
  - c) Retirement plan (core government employees only)
  - d) Percentage of time spent on-site (contract employees only)

- 6) Were there any relationships between work entity affective commitment levels and certain demographic variables for each group?
  - a) Time with immediate office
  - b) Time with government organization
  - c) Time with employer
  - d) Time in occupation
  - e) Education level

A survey containing an organizational socialization-related learning instrument and an affective commitment scale was administered to 85 core government employees and 135 contract employees who supported the government organization. After screening, 4 contract employee surveys were removed due to incomplete responses resulting in a sample of 216. I conducted standard analytical procedures, Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis, to evaluate the reliability of the survey items and unidimensionality of scales.

### **Significance of Commitment in Today's Workplace**

The Government has traditionally fostered a work environment in which long-term commitment was an expectation of its employees. If expectations are changing, we must understand what the implications are to the Government, federal employees, and contractors who support the Government. Should the Government expect commitment from its own employees and contract employees? If so, how can the Government foster commitment? If commitment is no longer expected, how should work be organized and managed to accomplish organizational goals effectively and efficiently? What types of training and learning activities should be provided to meet organizational needs? Conversely, if commitment is no longer expected and long-term employment not guaranteed, how should government and contract employees manage their career development? What learning opportunities should they seek to remain competitive? Only by understanding the commitments that exist, and how they develop and shape attitudes and behavior, can the Government be in a position to manage employees effectively.

Today, Federal agencies are increasingly contracting out their non-core services. According to Musell (1987), between 1983 and 1987, contracts awarded for commercial-type services increased from \$32.8 billion to \$36.0 billion (measured in 1983 dollars). Between 1993 and 1999, federal contract spending in the Washington area grew by 44 percent (28.7 billion), overtaking the area federal payroll of 23.1 billion for the first time (Hsu, 2000). Hsu reports that federal jobs in just the Washington area have been slashed by 56,000 since 1993 and the tasks are now performed by workers of private companies who work under contract. Union representatives claim that the Government already contracts out for services worth more than \$110 billion annually while the payroll costs, including benefits, for government employees is just \$108 billion (Friel, 1998a).

"Politicians want to limit government without having to cut programs that have popular support" (Pfiffner, 2000, p. 23). The solution is to deliver the appearance of a reduced federal workforce while maintaining the same level of service. According to Pfiffner, this solution has in some cases led to the fragmenting of public service.



When agencies hire contractors, they are introducing a new type of employee into the workplace. Federal employees are expected to accomplish their mission by working with non-government employees who may only stay on a project or team for a short duration. Contractors may move frequently among projects, and even agencies, while the federal employees tend to work on the same projects for long periods of time. In contrast, some government agencies are so short-staffed, long-term contractors may provide the main support to the same project for many years, thus obtaining the historical context of the project in lieu of the federal employees. Work arrangements for contract employees also vary. Some are provided at on-site workspace where they work on a daily basis. Others work from the employer's site and travel to the agency only when necessary.

In addition, within 5 years, approximately 30 percent of the Government's 1.6 million full-time employees will be eligible to retire (Barr, 2000). An additional 20 percent could seek early retirement. This represents the potential for a large talent drain, with losses heaviest at the top. Officials are concerned about finding high quality replacements with the right skills. With budget cuts and downsizing, little has been done to bring employees into the pipeline. According to Barr, some fear that this may erode the ability to manage multimillion-dollar programs and will create knowledge gaps.

These factors increase the importance of the Government not only retaining the high performers but also recruiting top quality individuals to join public service. Yet federal personnel experts seem uncertain whether the Government will employ lifelong careerists like the "New Dealers" who entered in the 1930s and the crop inspired by Kennedy in the 1960s. They acknowledge that many young people do not see in public service what they want: high starting pay, training that gives them an edge, a casual work environment, and high-impact assignments (Barr, 2000).

According to Barr (2001a), even the landscape of civil service is starting to look different, citing *Memos to the President: Management Advice from the Nation's Top Public Administrators*. One report memo points to the emergence of a new public service in which there will be fewer permanent federal employees, more temporary workers, and more functions performed by contractors and grantees (Abramson, 2001). The report posits that there will no longer be a uniform civil service with a rigid personnel system; there will also no longer be a single employer; individual agencies rather than the Federal Government will be the employers of the future. The report also includes warnings that employees afraid of losing their jobs to contractors have no incentive to improve agency operations and will summon a lot of energy to fight job loss.

One of the drivers of contracting is that there is a political need to make government look smaller. There is also the delegitimizing of the government; it is easier for politicians to say that money is being spent efficiently in the private sector (Pfiffner, 2000). The author asks, "How can accountability for public programs be enforced when the workers managing programs are one or several times removed from those responsible for the accomplishment of the mission?" (p. 27).

Blanchard, Hinnant, and Wong (1998) express a similar concern citing that, although formal government administrations may have decreased in size, the growth of a contracting arrangements has created an informal government administration where some of the business of government is performed by private organizations. For example, many government reform projects were managed by the Big Six consulting firms. Market-based reform, by creating informal administrative arrangements, may have actually increased the scope of government administration with the net effect being an environment where political accountability is obtained through informal means, weakening the traditional social contract (Blanchard et al.)

Pfiffner (2000) also expresses concern regarding the possible erosion of the public service ethos. Many of the most talented and dedicated public employees join the government workforce in order to contribute to the public good. They choose this over more lucrative careers because of the challenge, nature of work, and chance to make a difference. How can America preserve the best of a public service ethic – a commitment to the public interest and willingness to sacrifice – when much of the public’s work is being carried out by non-governmental organizations? Pfiffner urges, “The commitment of workers ought to be determined by the mission to be accomplished, not who signs their paycheck” (p. 32). The challenge is to engender a public service ethic and commitment to mission accomplishment in organizations carrying out public purposes.

Regardless of whether employees have job security (e.g., serving in the public service or private sector), work in general is becoming less stable and more contingent (Doeringer, 1991). One notion is that employees will display commitment to one’s skills because a career is now a series of interorganizational moves to temporary or short-term jobs. Hall and Moss (1998) label this new career contract the “protean career,” where the contract is no longer with the organization but instead with the self and one’s work. What then is role of the organization in areas such as learning? According to the authors, forward-thinking companies will take responsibility for the continuous learning of core employees.

### **Multidimensionality of Commitment**

The identification of both multiple bases and foci of commitment has been a recent contribution to commitment research. The bases of commitment are the motives engendering the attachment (Becker, 1992; O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986). For example, as previously stated, Meyer and Allen (1984, 1991) developed a three-component model and measures of commitment in the areas of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment is an employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving an organization and normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). While it is important to note these distinctions, this study focused solely on the affective commitment basis. This was chosen because, in the indirect employment relationship studied, it is the most desired and relevant form.

Regarding the foci of commitment, although organizational commitment has been the most widely studied entity, recent efforts in the field of work-related commitment has taken into consideration commitment to a variety of foci (Becker, 1992; Becker & Billings, 1993; (Clugston, Howell, & Dorman, 2000; Irving et al., 1997; Lee et al., 2000; Meyer et al., 1993;

Reichers, 1985; Vandenberghe, Stinglhamber, Bentein, & Delhaise, in press). Employees may be committed to any or all of the constituencies (Reichers, 1986). Studies have indicated relationships between organizational and professional commitment, suggesting that it is possible for employees to simultaneously feel commitment to multiple entities (Lee et al., 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Wallace, 1993). Research by Becker (1992) found that commitment to various entities (top management, supervisor, and workgroup) were important determinants of various important variables such as job satisfaction, intent to quit, and prosocial organizational behaviors.

This study provides support for expanding the level of understanding of commitment to more than just the organization. For purposes of this research, the focus was on both the government and contract employees' levels of commitment to the immediate government work unit, the government organization, the employer, and the occupation.

### **Socialization-Related Learning**

Some researches advocate viewing the socialization process as an information seeking process or a learning process (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Reio & Wiswell, 2000). Research by Morton (1993) indicated that employees develop job proficiency through learning that occurred formally, informally or incidentally. This process applies to both new and seasoned workers because socialization is required whenever individuals enter new areas of responsibilities (Fisher, 1986; Morton, 1993; Schein, 1988). Morton's model suggests that the socialization process is ongoing and builds upon experiences and knowledge gained from socialization-related learning experiences, informal learning, on-the-job training, and formal learning.

Human resource development practices such as orientations indicate a potential link between perceived socialization experiences and commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Saks (1995) found training, as a part of the socialization process, to be positively associated with commitment. This was attributed in part to the role of training to help newcomers feel competent to perform their tasks. Feelings of competence may play a role in development of affective commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Gaertner and Nollen (1989) concluded that psychological commitment is higher among employees who believe they are "treated as resources to be developed rather than commodities to buy and sell" (p. 987).

Another employment practice is how managers incorporate their employees into the culture of the workplace. For example, contingent employees may, or may not, be invited to participate in organizational functions, i.e., events and rituals organized socially to bond organizational members. Mixing core and contract employees, but not integrating the latter into the culture of the organization, can lead to tension and conflict. The dynamics created by employing a non-integrated workforce may become a concern to managers if it affects the level or quality of work. Van Dyne and Ang (1998) study results suggest that when organizations treat contingent workers with respect and do not view them as peripheral, some will have high commitment to the organizations and will engage in citizenship behaviors.

### **Summary and Discussion of Findings**

The major concern of this study was to research if there were differences in commitment levels to various work entities between core government and contract employees. The research also focused on the differences in levels of socialization-related learning and the relationship it may have with commitment levels. The third goal was to identify any differences in or relationships between certain demographic variables and commitment.

The reader is cautioned that, although some significant findings are reported in this section, the results must be viewed with care. Commitment is a complex issue, not easily defined and affected by many variables. Commitment surveys need to be improved to more accurately obtain a true measure of the concept. These findings may be statistically significant, but their practical implications should be questioned before drawing any conclusions. For example, a 2-point difference in work entity commitment levels is statistically significant, but is it meaningful in relation to such a complex construct? Obviously, due to the complicated nature of commitment, one cannot assume that an individual will score higher or lower solely due to their membership in one group or other.

The first section of research questions asked whether either group of employees exhibited differing levels of commitment among the immediate office, government organization, the employer, and the occupation and whether there were differences between the two groups. The results suggested that both groups of employees did vary in commitment levels to various work entities.

Government employees displayed the most commitment to the occupation and least to the immediate office. Commitment levels gradually rose from immediate government office to government organization to Federal Service to occupation. One might not expect this result since government employees are sometimes perceived to be “lifelong public servants.” Over the past decade, however, government, like private sector, has experienced downsizing and many functions are being contracted out in part or in whole. Government agencies, in some cases, have encouraged employees to adopt a career philosophy of being “employable” versus being “employed.”

Contract employees also displayed the most commitment to the occupation but the least to the government organization. Level of commitment to the employer and occupation were significantly higher on average ( $M = 21.8$ ) as compared to the immediate government office and government organization ( $M = 18.55$ ). One might expect these results since contractors are in an indirect employment relationship with the government and may not feel the same levels of commitment. This result may raise possible considerations for government organizations that rely on contractors to support major projects.

The fact that both groups of employees displayed the highest commitment to the occupation may be explained due to the changing workplace model. When a long-term individual-employer exchange relationship is disrupted due to corporate restructuring, commitment may be less important to individual employers; career or occupational commitment may replace organizational (Morrow, 1993). If government employees view the federal downsizing, personnel reforms, and/or re-organizations unfavorably, the commitment to the

occupation may increase. The trend of contracting out has created a strain in the federal public service because it has increased uncertainty and it was based, in part, on the perception that government employees are inefficient (Pfiffner, 2000).

At the same time, the effort to reduce “big government” over the last decade has conditioned government workers that lifetime employment is no longer guaranteed. The message conveyed by many government organizations, through management practices, career planning centers, and outplacement efforts, is that employees should focus on their employability, not their employment.

In addition, the particular government organization under study was highly technical. Government engineers and professionals in this case may be more similar to a contracting group due to the fact that they are very grounded in the occupation regardless of where they are employed. If they were to leave government, they would most likely find similar work unlike an individual in a generalist position, e.g., program manager in a non-technical agency. This study may have produced different results if the government employees could not occupy the positions in other employment sectors. In addition, Irving et al. (1997) propose that individuals who undergo a considerable amount of training or education in acquiring a specific skill set, might be more tied to occupation. The results support this proposal because in the case of both employees, the majority were engineers with bachelors degrees and above.

Carson and Bedeian (1994) have suggested that to cope with uncertainty due to mergers, acquisitions, and lay-offs, better educated employees have increasingly committed to their own careers. As opposed to the former loyalty model, employees no longer work for one organization until retirement. For contract employees, if they view their skills as highly portable, they may display greatest commitment to the occupation because it represents their marketability. Contract employees may also possess special knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed to support projects required by the U.S. Government; therefore, when contracts are awarded to a new company, contract employees may move easily from one employer to the next winning bidder.

Also of note is the fact that a high level of commitment to the occupation may be viewed as a positive outcome which management should cultivate. Research has found positive relationships with occupational commitment and job-related attitudes such as job involvement and satisfaction and with job performance (Lee et al., 2000). Although not a specific focus of the study, it was also noted that commitment levels for both groups were correlated, as opposed to being in conflict. Studies have suggested that if organizational and occupational commitment are compatible, the relation should be strengthened if the employee’s occupation is more professional (Hall, 1968; Wallace, 1993). The Wallace study found this to be true; correlation between professional and organizational commitment was .505 for those characterized by high professionalization and .321 for those characterized by low. Technical professions, e.g., engineering or science, may be more compatible with organizations than personal professions, e.g., teaching. It is important to note that, even though there is a positive correlation, it does not necessarily mean that there is not tension between the two – e.g., commitment to occupation may be much greater.

Between the two groups, only commitment level to the employer differed significantly with contractors recording a higher level to the employing firm than government employees recorded to the Federal Service. This result suggests that, between the work entities, commitment levels were generally the same between the two groups. If contractors are expected to team with government employees to support the project, this is a more encouraging finding, i.e., both groups share similar commitment levels to the immediate office and government organization. In terms of the difference in employer level, this may be due to fact that contract employees feel a direct connection with their employing firm while government employees have a more general relationship to the work entity of the Federal Service. One would argue that this comparison needs further research before making any conclusions.

In addition, work entity had a significant effect and a significant employee group-by-work entity interaction was found. Work entity has a strong influence on work entity commitment level. The interaction of group and work entity also had a strong influence. The main effect of group does not, however, have a significant influence.

The second section of research questions focused on whether there were any differences in levels of socialization-related learning between the two groups and any relationships with work entity commitment levels. A difference was found between the two group's socialization-related learning levels. Contractors reported higher levels of acculturation (AC) and satisfaction with learning experiences (LE). It is interesting to note that there was no formal orientation program or informal socialization process in the government organization. There were no explicit expectations from top leadership that supervisors or coworkers would coach or assist new employees. There was, however, the expectation that on a quarterly basis, supervisors would give individual coaching sessions but it was explained that, in general, this practice was inconsistent at best and non-existent at worst. This is the current culture even though managers have received "how to coach" sessions over the last several years.

At the same time, in the contract organization, the contractor provided a new employee orientation for all employees on the government project. The first session included general information about the project policies and procedures and the second session focused on the background of the government customer. The contract organization supervisors provided some mentoring and coaching for new employees, but execution was described as being inconsistent.

Total socialization-related learning level, AC, establishing relationships (ER), and LE correlated with various work entity affective commitment levels for both groups. For contractors, job knowledge (JK) also correlated with immediate office affective commitment level. The findings tentatively support other researchers (Mowday et al., 1982; Morton, 1993) who state that commitment develops, in part, a result of an individual's organizational socialization work experiences.

The final section of questions focused on differences in certain demographic variables and relationships between certain demographic variables and levels of commitment for each group. A significant difference found was for government employees in terms of supervisory status and commitment level. This supports other findings that propose supervisors experience higher levels of commitment due to their position in the organization (Aranya et al., 1981;

Wallace, 1993). A significant difference was also found for government employee's retirement plan and commitment level to Federal Service. One might have expected employees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) plan to have recorded higher overall commitment levels because they have less ability to move outside of the Federal Service without losing long-term investments. This observation, however, raises the point of whether retirement plan more closely relates to the continuance commitment basis. It would be interesting to determine if government employees under CSRS display higher continuance commitment levels than those under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and is suggested as a future area of study.

Finally, type of occupation produced no significant differences. One might have expected those positions identified to possess higher levels of responsibility, decision making, and accountability to have produced higher commitment levels. As no differences were found, no post hoc analyses were run. As this is a preliminary study, however, it is suggested that the type of occupation and the nature of the work be explored further.

For contract employees, one significant difference was found for supervisory status; supervisors reported a higher commitment level to the employer. As with government employees, this is consistent with other findings that propose supervisors experience higher levels of commitment due to their position in the organization (Aranya et al., 1981; Wallace, 1993). No significant results were found for percentage of time working on-site with government organization or occupation. One may be most surprised that spending time on-site with the government organization did not produce differences in commitment level. One might expect that the increased amount of time spent with the government organization would foster stronger commitment levels. This was a preliminary study and it is suggested that researchers explore these demographic variables and others to explore possible difference further.

Relationships between demographics and commitment level were found for government employees in terms of time with immediate office, time with organization, and time with employer with those three work entity commitment levels. The more time spent with the entity, the higher the commitment level reported. This finding is consistent with the literature which reports positive relationships for tenure (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Hackett et al., 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Stevens et al., 1978). Only time with occupation did not produce a significant relationship.

Only time with immediate customer office and employer were related for the contract employees. One explanation may be that consistent work, i.e., steady employment, with the immediate government office influences a positive relationship with the employer. One might have expected more positive relationships for tenure, (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Hackett et al., 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Stevens et al., 1978). This minimal finding, however, is consistent with a study by Pearce (1993) which focused on contractors and found no relationship between time spent with the organization and commitment level. This is an interesting finding and exploration of this result could be important to understand why time with the immediate customer office was related to the employer commitment level.

No relationship between education and work entity commitment levels was found for either group. One might have expected negative relationships for education and commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Lewis, 1992; Steers, 1977; Stevens et al., 1978). Higher levels of education provide opportunities for better jobs which may reduce organization commitment and increase occupational commitment. No significant relationship, however, was found in this study due to the fact that there was little variance in education levels among employees. The majority of participants possessed bachelors and masters degrees. The limited variance makes it impossible to determine if there was a relationship in this study.

As a summary to this section and an introduction to the next, a sampling of responses from the additional comments section of the survey are provided. These comments also helped to inform the recommendations presented in Chapter V. Approximately 17 contract employees and 10 government employees took the opportunity to comment. In general, contract employee comments were mixed. But one can detect a theme, on the part of contractors, for the need for fostering positive, respectful work relationships in order for success. Some contract employees commented favorably regarding the government customer/organization and/or negatively regarding the employer:

In general, the key government people are great. The company management could care less, as long as you turn in a time sheet so they can get paid.

Big organizations do not make you feel at home or that you belong. You are as good as your last 15 minutes; they would never back you when the going gets tough. My engineering peers and the group I support directly at the [government organization] are friends and cohorts (we are in it together).

Current customer/contractor working arrangement provides “seamless” interface and interaction between the two groups. No barriers to working relationship.

I really see myself, my contractor teammates and the [government organization] customer as a bonded team dedicated to enhancing the [project] goal through timely and cost effective fielding of new technologies and updated systems.

Other contract employees commented negatively regarding the government customer/organization. Comments here generally focused on negative feelings regarding how they are not treated as equals.

Contractors are not always treated with respect. Too many times contractors are treated as less knowledgeable than their government counterparts, when in most cases, they are more knowledgeable.

The Government/Customer draws a line of distinction between themselves and their contractors excluding even the most involved and committed from some meetings and events.



My biggest frustration is that I am highly task orientated and results oriented. My Government customer and Government organization are more process oriented, so our perspectives on what the task really is are sometimes different.

Being a support contractor, many times our opinions of how things are accomplished, or should be accomplished, are unacceptable to the customer. Most of the times our opinion was the “correct” solution. It’s then difficult to “be part” of the group/family etc.

The [government organization] doesn’t allow us – contractors to be listed on phone lists or website locator. This makes it hard to contact the people who do the work. There is a feeling in this [government organization] that the contractors are temporary and not relevant to the real work. However in many cases we are better educated and have much more experience - even [government organization] experience – than the people we report to in the agency.

Core government employees did not comment on the contractors or their relationship with them; rather, they generally focused on comments regarding the government organization.

As above indicates, I feel "a part of" my specific office and program, the [government organization] in general. I do not spend much time "contemplating" fact that we are also federal employees. Am also very attached to my position as a systems engineer and with my education-based field of Electrical Engineering.

Some of us want to do a good job in spite of our management not caring about us. Management talks of caring but do not value us enough to pay us what we are worth. The good employees are going to the private sector.

I have great pride in working for the [government organization] and I love my profession. However, I feel that management does not care and look out for the "everyday workers.”

Too much stability/comfort for non-performers, thus downsizing of Government hasn't been completed and will not be until we more accurately reflect the "real" world where "performance is everything".

### **Recommendations for Practice**

According to Mowday (1998), the study of commitment is more relevant today than ever; researchers have reported relationships between human resource management practices and intermediate employee outcomes such as turnover and productivity and measures of corporate financial performance (Huselid, 1995). Tsui, Pearce, Porter, and Triploi (1997) also found organizational investment in employees associate with higher levels of employee affective commitment as well as higher levels of citizenship behavior, greater intention to stay, and fewer unexcused absences. Mowday:

There is evidence that many organizations are pursuing strategies of downsizing and cost-reduction. For these firms, developing high levels of employee commitment is apparently perceived as a less relevant strategy for achieving economic success than one

that might be characterized as “lean and mean.” Thus, in terms of actual management practice, one might argue that employee commitment has become less relevant simply because fewer organizations seem to be pursuing strategies to enhance it (p. 395).

Mowday continues:

On another dimension, however, there is mounting evidence that organizations pursuing higher performance, high commitment human resources strategies can produce superior economic returns. From this perspective, employee commitment is very relevant as a management construct because it can lead to competitive advantage and financial success. In fact, it may be the key source of competitive advantage (p. 395).

DeCotiis and Summers (1987) also concluded that commitment is “central to organizational life” (p. 467), stating that when an organization commits to meeting the needs and expectations of its employees, they also commit to the service of the organization's goals and values. According to Beer and Gibbs (1993), although not all organizations necessitate the same commitment level, the challenge that most face is increasing commitment above current levels. They note several forces that tend to increase the importance of commitment for all firms: “Increasing competition and globalization, technological advances, and more emphasis on complex ‘knowledge work’ imply that commitment is more an issue today than ever before” (p. 2-3).

This study provides possible recommendations for practice for government organizations that are presented with major, long-term projects which require a large degree of contract employee support. Practitioners should revise programs and policies to more effectively accommodate the increased number of provisional employees (Hall, 1996; Sullivan, Carden, & Martin, 1998). Socialization practices, the role management plays, employee treatment, and the nature of the work are key areas to this study’s recommendation.

### **Socialization and Continuous Learning**

When presented with a government agency-contract organization relationship, this study’s recommendation is to take advantage of developing a partnership between the top management of the government and contract organizations to foster higher commitment levels among both groups. See Figure 10 for a Model of Recommendation for Practice.

Together, the two groups could proactively strategize how to make the most of the arrangement, as opposed to not addressing the issues and enabling ambiguous understandings and unclear expectations. The two groups should consider agreeing to a “co-philosophy” (i.e., core/contractor ) regarding how managers and employees should operate among the groups, i.e., treat both with respect, regardless of employer affiliation. The importance of fostering job knowledge and establishing relationships with peers, both core government and contractors, to accomplish the mission should be encouraged. For example, government managers should set expectations with employees that contract employees are a part of the team; they are required to accomplish mission so sharing information is an acceptable practice. In addition, other key messages such as accountability, meaning of public service ethos, and managing one’s career should be discussed and agreed upon.

# Model of Recommendation for Practice

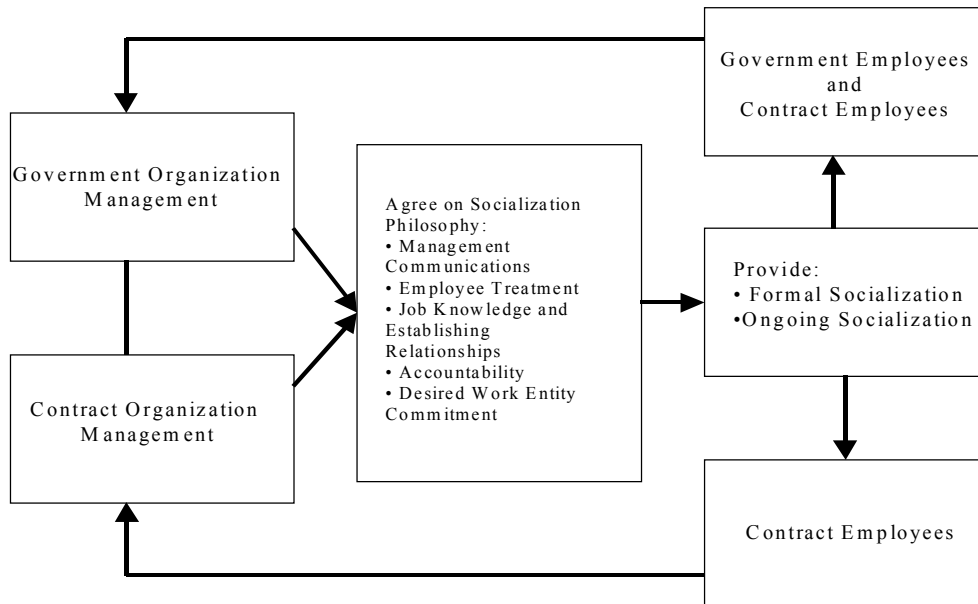


Figure 10. Model of Recommendation for Practice.

Subsequently, the two sides could agree on what this behavior would look like and how they would encourage it. One recommendation within the overall model is to agree that both sides will build the behaviors into an initial orientation program and an ongoing socialization process (among peers and managers). Provisions for training supplied by the government organization would need to be built into the formal contract

Research by Saks (1995) suggests that the relationship between training during socialization is not just related to affecting job attitudes but also to becoming an effective employee. It appears to be especially important for newcomers with low self-efficacy. Saks suggests early job training may provide newcomers with job and organizational information to reduce newcomers' uncertainty, anxiety, and stress, which should lead to subsequent increases in self-efficacy. Although speculative, there is evidence that job and organizational information lowers newcomers uncertainty and anxiety (Miller & Jablin, 1991). This supports the notion that significant relationships between training and job attitudes support increasing emphasis on the socialization process. Positive attitudes may increase the rate of newcomers socialization and even have lasting effects on future behaviors. At the same time, Ashford and Saks (1996) found that a relatively structured approach to socialization had a positive affect on organizational

commitment. The authors suggest for future research possibly looking at integrating socialization tactics with the information seeking approach; a formal socialization process could help provide newcomers with access to important sources of information and opportunities to practice information-seeking behavior.

Related to this is the notion that any socialization process adopted should be viewed as an on-going process, not a singular training event. Training interventions such as self-management, goal-setting, and behavioral modeling may be more affective than traditional methods of training and appropriate in this situation, e.g., helping contract employees learn on the job to be the best they can be to support to project at hand. In general, changes are affecting the nature of organizations and the way we conceive careers (Kozlowski, 1995). Change creates the need for adaptation by organizations and individuals. In the past, organizations often called upon formal training as an intervention, but now the far-reaching and fast-paced nature of this change requires a new strategy. Organizations often need to access new skills or upgrade existing ones quickly; there is no room for “lag time.” The author proposes that this environment lends itself to informal learning, i.e., the “natural process by which people acquire information, learn, and adapt” (p. 3). Firms should adopt a continuous learning philosophy where self-development is the responsibility of every employee. It is important to emphasize socialization-related learning areas in this study, such as obtaining job knowledge and establishing relationships, are not one-time situational specific needs for employees. Throughout one’s career, employees must remain continually cognizant of these.

Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) view newcomers as having to develop a learning strategy (e.g., inquiry of supervisors, inquiry of coworkers, observation, self-experimentation) to make sense of a setting. They found observation and experimentation to be most effective early on and those employees that shifted to inquiry of supervisors over time had greatest adjustment and commitment. When supervisors actively provide information, it helps employees be more proactive on their own. It may be important to organizations for supervisors and coworkers to share appropriate information, regardless of organizational affiliation. “As organizations increasingly demand self-managing, continually learning, and highly flexible employees, the need to make better use of informal learning opportunities as a means to build and enhance formally required skills will become more pressing” (Kozlowski, 1995, p. 9).

The new model reinforces the notion that continuous learners will survive, even thrive, and nonlearners or slower learners will not (Hall & Moss, 1998). Today’s emphasis is on self-reliance; career resilient workers are dedicated to continuous learning. They need to stand ready to keep pace with change, take responsibility for their own career management, and be committed to their company’s success (Waterman, Waterman, & Collard, 1994). This implies that organizations must make it easy for employees to learn and workers should have the right to obtain ongoing training. Training is often not seen as an investment but as an expense. But if employees work to keep their skills updated so that they can work for any employer, they build more job security with their current employer as well. Similarly, organizations that provide a lot of training and learning opportunities is more likely to retain workers because this creates an interesting and challenging environment (Cascio, 1995).

According to Hall (1996), a major source of learning will be new work challenges and relationships with other people, with adaptability in developing new competencies as the business environment changes. One key to success is clarity of purpose and direction, i.e., people seek to base careers on doing work where people fulfill values and goals. “This sense of meaning and purpose, along with good opportunities for continuous learning and development, has become the new corporate contribution to the contract, replacing job security” (Hall, 1996, p. 5).

Finally, managers in both organizations need to determine the type of commitment they wish to foster. One of the recommendations for management, based on work by Meyer & Herscovitch (in press) to develop a general model of workplace commitment, is to carefully consider the most appropriate target of commitment in any given situation. This will help employees see how the desired course of action is relevant to the goals and values of the target.

Although in many cases, the organization would be the desired target of members’ commitment, sometimes this may not be desirable or possible. During unstable conditions, when one cannot guarantee employment, it might not be reasonable to expect life-long employee commitment to the organization. It may also be difficult to get employees to work toward organizational goals for the sake of organization. It might be possible to get employees to work toward these same goals, however, if they can be shown to be relevant to alternative targets, e.g., the occupation or personal career. Employees would tend to work hard on projects that they see as instrumental for the development of marketable skills. Some organizations have stressed the notion of being employable - not employed - to motivate one to do the best work possible during unstable times.

### **Management Practices**

Management communication strategies are a key part of the on-going socialization process. “Management’s failure to articulate the strategic aims of the organization leaves a void that professionals will instinctively try to fail” (Raelin, 1989, p. 218). In the traditional hierarchy that used to comprise most bureaucratic organizations, rules were simple: managers ruled by command from the top with the goal of stability, predictability, and efficiency (Cascio, 1995). But this philosophy is now out of step with today’s organizations that have to be able to respond quickly to market conditions. It is critical for managers to articulate a vision of what the organization stands for and what it is trying to accomplish.

According to Buchanan (1974b), “The factor most important for a positive organizational view among members of a group is a collective respect for and identification with its mission” (p. 345). Meyer and Allen (1997) cite that thorough communications about organizational policy is a key organizational characteristic that has been related to higher affective commitment. This suggests that both sides of the contracting relationship should be kept well informed about the organization’s mission, vision, and policies related to the project within the contracting relationship. Government managers should provide information that helps both groups of employees understand the mission of the immediate office, how it fits into the organization and its larger goals. Managers may want to go even farther to stress that the mission of the government organization is to serve the nation, thus, at a minimum, pointing out how ultimately the work ties to the public service.

For employees to feel committed to work organizations, agencies need a socialization program that effectively communicates important organizational values to its employees (Romzek, 1990). In the contractor – government relationship, it would be important for the government to look for private companies that share similar values. In theory, both organizations should employ hiring practices that identify individuals with similar goals and values. Regardless of affiliation, employees must be aware of the agency's values before they can develop a sense of commitment to it.

In order for managers to be affective, however, organizations would need to consider investing in programs that help managers in motivating and leading individuals who may not have strong attachments or knowledge of the organization (Sullivan, Carden, & Martin, 1998). This implies that organizations must actively address the new employment relationship by identifying what it means for managers and how they orient both groups of employees most effectively. Organizations must set expectations, give managers the tools they need to work in the new environment, set aside time to educate the employees, and hold the managers accountable for execution. Possible topics of instruction may include coaching skills, providing feedback, structuring work experiences, and providing rewards (Morton, 1993).

### **Employee Treatment**

Shore and Wayne (1993) suggest that the extent to which employees feel that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being may be an important predictor of behavior. Work by Konovsky and Pugh (1994) demonstrated that when individuals feel they are treated well by their organizations, as exemplified by fair treatment of employees by supervisors, they reciprocate and engage in organizational citizenship behavior. When workers feel that organizations view them as dispensable they reciprocate by performing only the minimum duties required. Results of a Van Dyne and Ang study (1998) also suggested that when organizations treat contingent workers with respect and do not view them as peripheral, they may have high commitment to the organizations. Although this study was with contingent employees, it is suggested that the same principles may apply in a contractor relationship.

According to Nyhan (1999), when employees lack confidence that their decisions will be supported, organizational entropy often occurs. His study in three public sector organizations found that employees' degree of trust with supervisors was linked to affective commitment. He suggested that if interpersonal trust is key to increasing affective commitment in public organizations, managers need to develop practices that increase interpersonal trust among workers and between workers and supervisors. These include participation in decision making, creating an environment where employees take responsibility and have more authority for accomplishing their work tasks, and providing feedback to and from supervisors.

The new employment relationship presents challenges because the government organization cannot allow contractors to make decisions for it. But at the same time, it is important for the core organization not to relegate contractors to second class citizens (Filipczak, 1997). The author suggests that organizations create consistent guidelines and standards about what competencies are required for each group; share information regarding the organization's culture; provide a mentor or peer supporter to socialize employees; follow up with both groups to see how they were treated by co-workers.

## **Nature of the Work**

Another factor for government organizations to consider is how important commitment is for the work assignments, i.e., government managers should determine the nature of work that is most appropriate for contract versus government employees. According to Davenport (1999), it is difficult to build commitment among people who do not know whether or when they might move to another company. Therefore, if government organizations do not adopt strategies to enhance commitment, they should be careful that contract employees not participate in work that would be better served by a highly committed employee (e.g., producing a strategic plan or other core work). It would be important to have contract employees serve in positions that do not require the employee to be highly connected to the government organization's mission, values, and vision. For example, positions, which require the employee to exhibit behaviors that reflect on a positive public service ethos would not be appropriate for contractors. Government organizations should carefully consider the nature of the project itself before contracting with external organizations.

Managers should also carefully determine which government employees will monitor the work of contractors. The key competencies required to oversee a project must be identified and those project managers should be trained in overseeing contract employee performance. It is too important a role to leave to chance. Managers should be clear with the core government employees that they are responsible for the work of the contract employees (Filipczak, 1997). Managers should educate permanent employees about the expected treatment of contract employees, their role in the organization, and how they will affect core workers. Employees who train and oversee contract work become quasi-managers. The author emphasizes that these employees should be recognized for any extra work created by the relationship or added tension between the two groups may be created.

If the duties of a government contract are easy to specify, then accountability is relatively simple. But much of what is acquired is not simple to outline and this requires high level skills on the part of government employees overseeing the contract. Blanchard, Hinnant and Wong (1998) ask whether market-based reforms post accountability problems for public administration. This is an important area to consider as work is managed.

## **Limitations**

One of the limitations of this study is the exclusive use of self-report measures; external measures independent of the respondents' perceptions were not obtained. Self-report measures should be viewed with caution as both groups of employees may be prone to inflate their scores if they view commitment as a desirable trait. Since the survey was distributed by the government organization, through the Director, participants may feel an obligation to respond favorably in particular to the organization work entity. This reliance raises questions about bias and respondents' willingness to respond honestly. In contrast, the anonymous nature of the survey may mitigate this potential limitation. Regardless, it is recommended that further research is conducted with core government and contract employees using objective measures from independent observers such as supervisors and peers.

The sample was not purely random but rather was targeted in two specific organizations. This limits the generalizability of the study due to the homogeneous nature of the sample. On

the other hand, the targeted nature of the sample may make the results more valid due to the fact that it does represent the intended population for research, i.e., a core government organization that performs its work in close conjunction with a group of contractors.

The generalizability of research finding is limited to the particular work relationship studied. Further research would be beneficial; examples include those where contract workers work more on-site, the length of the contract is shorter, the relationship is contractor to contractor, the nature of work is less professional, or the focus is on new employees.

Different sample sizes between the two groups may be a factor in the study results. But in nonexperimental work, unequal  $n$  often results from the nature of the population (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). In this case, differences in sample size may reflect true differences in nature since the contract support is greater than the core government population for this project.

In addition, for purposes of this study, the ACS questions were modified to include the particular entity under study. It is recommended that specific items relevant to the various entities be developed in order to eliminate fitting items that were written to apply to a specific entity.

For the reasons just cited, results of the study should be viewed as informative, not prescriptive. The purpose was exploratory and poses more questions than provides answers. One cannot make causal conclusions regarding relationships reported and all finding should be viewed with caution.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The widespread use of contract employees to support core organizations such as federal agencies suggests a radical approach to studies of workplace attitudes and behaviors. Traditionally, studies in commitment have focused on permanent employees and their relationship to the employing organization. Very little research has been conducted on the indirect workforce, the nature of the work, and the various entities to which this employee may be committed. In addition, the possible work relationships vary widely and each should be studied. Types of contingent work range from temporary employees who work short duration contracts to contractors employed full-time by companies who support long-term projects. There are even relationships among contingent work arrangements. For example, the relationship between the sub contractor and the prime was not addressed in this study. This is also an excellent area for further research. Conducting further research to gain a better understanding of what types of work to contract is recommended. Finally, the culture and nature of work within government organizations vary widely and studies could be done in a range of agencies.

As the number of contract employees continues to rise in the workplace, the role of commitment will continue to increase in importance. Researchers must develop methodologies that analyze the various worker-work entity relationships. The current study's major focus was on identification of differences between the two groups, with limited attention to possible antecedents and no attention on outcomes. Therefore, as the workplace flexibility model takes hold, both the outcomes (e.g., job performance, turnover, citizenship behavior, profitability, quality) and further research into the antecedents of commitment (e.g., role clarity,



communications, human resource practices) are key areas for research. There is a need to look at other moderators, e.g., size of organizations and job satisfaction, to see if relationships exist (Wallace, 1993). There is also a need to further explore, e.g., using path analysis, the tentative relationship found between socialization-related learning and commitment.

In addition, the approach to commitment as a multidimensional construct warrants further attention. This study focused on only one of many potential bases for commitment, i.e., affective commitment. Further research in terms of continuance and normative commitment should be explored in both groups of employees. In the flexibility model, where work arrangements vary, the possibility to display commitment to various work entities increases in probability. There is a need to determine if commitment to multiple entities pose a potential conflict or are complementary. Research should explore not only the potential work entities themselves, but also what determines to which constituencies employees will become committed and, as appropriate, how to help employees cope with conflicts among them or enhance complementary relationships. According to Morrow (1993), a better understanding of the various types of work commitment may be useful for persons seeking to sustain work commitment; organizations should strive to choose strategies that would elevate the desired form.

Finally, researchers should explore the definition of commitment applicable to the different types of employees. Accordingly, commitment surveys need to be improved to more accurately obtain a true measure of this complex concept. It should be determined if a general commitment model can be applied to various employee types or if a distinct conceptualization is required.

### **Conclusion**

Commitment is more important today than ever because of the competitive world of work. Yet, as one survey respondent commented, “In today’s marketplace, any sense of ‘loyalty’ could be considered foolhardy or at best naïve...”. In order to remain as viable contenders, organizations must have the employees dedicated to producing the highest quality services and products. Committed employees identify and feel loyalty toward the organization; they share the values of the organization and have a personal sense of importance regarding its mission (Mowday et al., 1982; Romzek, 1990).

In addition to the organization itself, employees may feel commitment to other entities. Those committed to their immediate work unit may show citizenship behaviors due to their sense of camaraderie with fellow employees. Employees committed to their occupations may strive to be outstanding professionals in their work. Employees who are committed to the Federal Service may exhibit a public service ethos that citizens expect from civil servants. Affectively committed employees care about what happens to the entity because they share its goals and values.

A case in point, at the time of this writing, is the active debate of the contracting out of the airport screening function. Due to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the Federal Government is now reviewing the system to improve security and the confidence of travelers. In today’s world, it is absolutely critical that research is continued on the determinants and outcomes of committed employees in the continually changing workplace.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**SUMMARY OF RESEARCH STUDIES**

### Summary of Research Studies

Studies have identified a large number of variables that are thought to be related to commitment. Following is a summary of research studies organized chronologically. Although a variety of conceptualizations of commitment exist in the literature, the indications are that employee commitment is desired by organizations. Research suggests that levels of commitment both *affect* individual and organizational variables and *are affected by* individual organizational and variables.

Table A-1  
Summary of Research Studies

Study	Participants and Data Collection	Results	Implications
Hall, Schneider, & Nygren (1970)	Survey of 156 foresters.	It was hypothesized and found that identification increased as a function of time and commitment to a pivotal organizational goal, public service.	Generalizations: the right type of person would be most likely to identify strongly with a particular organization and organizational identification is related to the individual's satisfaction of needs, not necessarily his higher-order needs. Commitment was a dependent variable.
Hrebiniak & Alutto (1972)	Sample of 318 teachers, 395 nurses.	When role tension increases, commitment decreases. When job satisfaction and tenure increase, commitment increases.	Commitment was a dependent variable. Results suggest that commitment is an exchange and accrual phenomenon, dependent on the employee's perception of the ration of inducements to contributions and accumulation of side bets in the employing system.
Mowday, Porter, & Dubin (1974)	Survey of 411 bank clerical workers.	Employees rated high in performance had higher level of attitudes toward their bank branch and the larger organization.	Results suggest that for high levels of performance it is important that employees have positive orientations toward such characteristics of the overall organization as its values, goals, and policies, plus toward aspects of the branch as the work, supervision, and co-workers.
Buchanan (1974a)	Questionnaire survey of 279 business and government managers.	Found that different experiences during stages of managers' careers impact commitment to organization: years of service, social interaction with peers and superiors, job achievement, and hierarchical advancement.	Sharp variations in commitment-relevant experience suggest that this is an area for investigation. Commitment was dependent variable.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian (1974)	Longitudinal study of 33 recently employed psychiatric technician trainees.	Significant discrimination was found between stayers and leavers in time period 3 (2 weeks after training) and 4 (6 weeks after training). Attitudes are a more accurate predictor of subsequent behavior the closer an individual is to leaving the organization. Organizational commitment, as opposed to job satisfaction, was the more important variable in differentiating between stayers and leavers.	Results suggest that commitment and satisfaction are related but distinguishable attitudes, each contributing unique information about the individual's relationship to the organization. Commitment may be more important in decision to remain than a specific attitude toward a particular job.
Porter, Crampon, & Smith (1976)	Longitudinal study of 156 managerial trainees in large merchandising company.	Trainees who voluntarily left during the initial 15-month period had begun to show definite decline in commitment prior to termination; early leavers showed an early decline while later leavers showed a later decline.	It suggests that a marked decline in commitment is likely, but not invariably, to signal voluntary termination in the near future. Perhaps an early warning system can help prevent early turnovers.
Steers (1977)	Surveys of two samples: 382 hospital employees and 119 scientists and engineers.	Commitment was found to be strongly related to personal characteristics, job characteristics, and work experiences for both samples. Commitment was related to desire to remain and intent to remain for both samples and moderately related to attendance and turnover for one sample. Performance was generally unrelated to commitment.	This study suggests that highly committed employees will perform well to extent that organization stress high achievement orientations with good employee relations, passive commitment can be translated to active commitment, and employees possess requisite skills and understand and accept their organizational roles.
Stevens, Beyer, & Trice (1978)	Study of 634 managers in 71 federal government organizations.	Tenure was positively associated with organizational and Federal Service commitment. Work overload was negatively associated with both. Job involvement was positively associated with organizational commitment while attitude toward change was negatively associated. Level of education was negatively associated with Federal Service commitment.	Results suggest that even though certain personal factors were significant, role factors appeared to be more important predictors of commitment.
Hom, Katerberg, & Hulin (1979)	Survey of 252 National Guard members.	Organizational commitment significantly predicted reenlistment intention and reenlistment.	Although satisfaction with the organization was a stronger correlate of reenlistment than was satisfaction with other aspects, satisfaction with work was similar in predictive accuracy.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979)	The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was administered to 2,563 employees working in a variety of jobs in nine different organizations.	Satisfactory test-retest reliabilities (e.g., $r = .72$ for retail management trainees over a 2-month period and $r = .62$ for 3 months) and internal reliabilities (coefficient alpha ranging from .82 to .93) were found. Cross-validated evidence of acceptable levels of predictive, convergent, and discriminant validity emerged. Absenteeism and turnover were outcomes.	If employees feel threatened by completing the questionnaire, they may distort their responses. This caution should be noted in how one administers the survey. Commitment was an independent variable.
Morris & Sherman (1981)	Sample of mental health workers.	When role stress increased, commitment decreased; self-efficacy, age, and education were correlates of commitment.	To the extent researchers are representing dissimilar constructs among differing measures of commitment, little progress can be made toward providing convergent empirical documentation for a general theory of commitment processes. Commitment was a dependent variable.
Angle & Perry (1981)	Questionnaire was administered to a sample of 1,244, employees mostly transit workers.	Organizational commitment was found to be associated with organizational adaptability, turnover, and tardiness rate, but not with operating costs or absenteeism.	Study attempted to uncover a commitment-performance outcome relationship but results were mixed, indicating there is not a simplistic relationship. Commitment was an independent variable.
Aranya, Pollock, & Amernic (1981)	Survey of 1,206 Chartered Accountants.	Commitment to the organization is shown to be the most powerful predictor of professional commitment. Professional-organizational conflict has a negative impact on professional commitment.	Evidence suggests that organizational commitment of accountants is compatible with their professional commitment.
O'Reilly & Chatman (1986)	Surveys of 82 university employees and a second of 162 graduating business students at both undergraduate and MBA level.	Identification and internalization are positively related to prosocial behaviors and negatively related to turnover. Internalization is predictive of financial donations.	Examined three forms of psychological attachment and argued that they constitute the basis for organizational commitment.
Reichers (1986)	Measure of 124 mental health professionals.	Antecedents of commitment were job satisfaction (positive), psychosocial conflict (negative), and role conflict (negative). Of four constituencies (professionalism, clients, funding agencies, and top management), only commitment to top management goals was positively associated with organizational commitment.	This study suggests that organizational commitment is both a general and a multi-faceted construct. Other relevant constituencies should be identified and studied.



Study	Participants and Data Collection	Results	Implications
DeCotiis & Summers (1987)	Attitudinal model of organizational commitment was tested using sample of 367 managerial employees.	Perceived structure, process, and climate, as well as job satisfaction were found to be predictive of commitment. Job satisfaction and commitment were found to be equally predictive of voluntary turnover. Commitment was found to be predictive of individual motivation and objective job performance.	Individuals are not predisposed to commit to an organization by virtue of personal characteristics. Environment is characterized by participation in decision-making processes, clear communication about organizational intentions, activities and performance, autonomy, and sense of cohesion among members. Commitment is central to organizational life. Further research is necessary in other settings among different groups of employees.
Gaertner & Nollen (1989)	Questionnaire administered to random sample of 600; 496 completed and company records were then analyzed of 151 of those individuals.	Employee perceptions of internal mobility, employment security, and training and development are more strongly related to psychological commitment than participation, supervisory relations and instrumental communication.	Results suggest 1) psychological commitment is higher for employees who believe they are treated as resources to be developed (not commodities), 2) long service and internal promotions may contribute to psychological commitment, 3) firms may want to focus on career orientation and make some internal mobility opportunity and security available to employees.
Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson (1989)	Inventory of 65 unit managers in a large food service organization.	Affective commitment corresponded positively and continuance commitment negatively with the three measures of performance obtained from immediate supervisors.	Results suggest that it is important to distinguish between commitment based on desire and commitment based on need and also support importance of organizational efforts to foster employees' affective commitment.
Allen & Meyer (1990a)	One sample of 256 non-unionized employees (two manufacturing firms and one university) and one sample of 337 non-unionized employees in a retail store, hospital, and university library.	Canonical correlation analysis suggested that the affective and continuance components of organizational commitment are distinguishable constructs with different correlates. Affective and normative are distinguishable but appear to be somewhat related.	The Affective Commitment Scale and Continuance Commitment Scale generally correlated with proposed antecedent variables, providing preliminary evidence that they are valid measures of commitment. More evidence is required before Normative Commitment Scale can be used with confidence.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Williams & Anderson (1991)	Surveys of 127 supervisors of employees with technical and professional backgrounds.	Internalization and identification scales combined to form organizational commitment scale; commitment was not correlated with forms of performance studied: organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) and in-role behavior (IRB).	Although commitment and OCB and IRB were not found to be significant, the authors suggest further research is needed because there is strong theoretical support for its impact on OCB performance.
Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday (1992)	4-year longitudinal study of a sub-group of cadets (sample varied from 385 to 762) in the US Air Force Academy.	Found commitment propensity predicted subsequent organizational commitment. Initial commitment predicted voluntary turnover.	One suggestion is that greater emphasis be placed on valid personnel selection.
Mayer & Schoorman (1992)	Longitudinal field study of 188 employees of financial services organization.	Turnover was more strongly related to continuance than value (i.e., affective) commitment while performance was more strongly related to value commitment	Continuance and value commitment are not theoretically independent but there is utility in examining them separately.
Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992)	Data collected from 151 new organizational members across a variety of organizations, after an average of 17 weeks on the job and again several months later.	Newcomers differentially relied on sources to gather information, different sources were of varying importance for gaining knowledge, and supervisors, coworkers, task and role mastery were related to the assimilation process.	Findings suggest alternative approaches to facilitating the socialization of new members, e.g., providing incentives for initiative, such as experimentation and active observation of other workers; also, train insiders to facilitate newcomers' socialization.
Allen & Meyer (1993)	Survey of two samples: 123 university library employees and 168 clerical, supervisory employees in a general hospital.	Affective and normative commitment increased significantly with age, but increases in continuance commitment were more closely related to increases in organizational and positional tenure.	Results were modest, suggesting that career stage as a concept may be overstated.
Blau, Paul, & St. John (1993)	Sample of 328 repeat-respondent part-time MBA students in study 1 and 339 nurses in study 2.	Indicates that individuals make distinctions between their job, organization, occupation, and work in general.	Research testing the stability of work commitment facet measures over a longer time frame is needed.
Bolon (1993)	Sample of 202 hospital employees and their supervisors two separate questionnaires (attitudinal = independent, and behavioral = dependent).	Satisfaction with co-workers and affective commitment were the two most important predictors of co-worker and supervisor rated citizenship behaviors directed toward other individuals.	Implications for selecting candidates who identify with the organization's goals and values. Used a behavioral survey (completed by supervisor).

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Shore & Wayne (1993)	Surveys of 383 employees and 231 supervisors (276 pairs) who work in a large multinational firm.	Perceived organizational support (POS) and affective commitment were positively associated with citizenship behavior. Continuance commitment was negatively associated. POS was the best predictor.	Suggests that the extent to which employees feel the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being may be an important behavior predictor. This suggests feeling of obligations may be the basis for citizenship behavior.
Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993)	Two samples: data collected from student nurses in both Sept (366) and March (296) and from 603 registered nurses.	Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the 3-component measure of commitment was distinguishable from one another: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Occupational and organizational commitment contributed independently to the prediction of professional activity and work behavior.	Suggests the importance of considering different forms of commitment and the different entities to which one can become committed.
Pearce (1993)	Survey of 199 employees (50 categorized as working alongside contractors) and 24 contractors.	Employees did not engage in more citizenship behavior nor express more organizational commitment than contractors; results provide weak support for expectation that organizations shift interdependent task to employees v. contractors; employees who work alongside with contractors did report lower trust in their organization.	Results suggest that supervisors give work to contractors which require less monitoring; contractors may have faced social pressures to conform thus expressing similar levels of extrarole behavior and commitment; the lack of trust is a potentially important finding because it can lead to lessen performance or turnover.
Leong, Randall, & Cote (1994)	Survey of 308 of full-time life insurance agents in Singapore.	Organizational commitment was mediated by working hard and to a lesser extent, working smart; a strong positive relationship between working hard and performance was found.	Results suggest that the relationship between organizational commitment and performance can be explained by mediating effects of working hard and working smart.
Baugh & Roberts (1994)	Survey of 114 engineers in a bureaucratic work environment.	Organizational commitment had a significant effect on job satisfaction and job performance and a significant inverse effect on job problems. Professional commitment was marginally significant with respect to job performance. Highest levels of satisfaction and performance were reported for those with high commitment on both; those with lowest satisfaction and performance reported low organizational but high professional commitment.	Results suggest that managers seeking enhanced job satisfaction and performance should build organizational commitment, then professional commitment.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Gunz & Gunz (1994)	Secondary analysis of data from larger survey of corporate counsel and a follow-up study of a sample drawn from first population.	Lawyers did not experience organizational and occupational conflict; they could be committed to both and commitment to one can predict the other.	Organizational-professional conflict does not appear to be an issue, particularly among those with strong commitment to the organization.
Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf (1994)	Two samples: survey of 2,301 nurses and 80 bus drivers.	Affective commitment had the strongest positive relationship with job satisfaction and organizational commitment; continuance commitment was negatively correlated with same measures. Facets of commitment generally did not relate to rating and nonrating measure of job performance.	Results suggest that the challenge lies in demonstrating that commitment components have differential relationships to other variables, especially work outcomes.
Somers (1995)	Survey of 388 staff nurses for analyses of intent to remain and turnover and 303 for absenteeism.	Affective commitment was positively related to intent to remain, turnover, and absenteeism. Normative commitment was only related with withdrawal intentions. Continuance commitment was not related directly but it did interact with affective commitment in predicting job withdrawal intentions and absenteeism.	Statistical significance of results were modest, suggesting that level of commitment has a limited rather than a pervasive effect on employee retention and absenteeism.
Ganster & Dwyer (1995)	Survey of 684 workers from 160 blue-collar and 55 white-collar groups.	Understaffing was associated with higher levels of affective commitment for both groups. Understaffing had a positive effect on individual performance of white-collar workers. Yet, at group level of analysis, understaffing was associated with lower levels of group performance.	Results suggest that groups that are adequately or over-staffed appear to be more productive than overstaffed groups.
Gellatly (1995)	Survey of 166 nursing and food service employees in a mid-size chronic care hospital.	Affective commitment was found to be inversely related to absence frequency and total days absent. Continuance commitment was positively related with absence frequency.	Results suggest it may be reasonable to expect that activities aimed at increasing affective commitment may increase attendance.
Allen & Meyer (1996)	Data summarized is based on over 40 employee samples representing more than 16,000 employees from a wide variety of organizations.	Overall, evidence points to the construct validity of the three commitment measures.	Results strongly support the continued use of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales in substantive research.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants and Data Collection</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Ashforth & Saks (1996)	Longitudinal field study of business school graduates at 4 months (295) and 10 months (222) of starting new job.	Institutionalized socialization tactics were negatively related to stress symptoms, intentions to quit, and role innovation, ambiguity, conflict and positively associated with organizational commitment. Individualized socialization was associated with self-appraised performance.	Results suggest that institutionalized socialization induces employee conformity and loyalty while individualized socialization promotes role innovation.
Bradach (1997)	Interviewed staff, contractors, clients of four staffing agencies.	Qualitative study explored how the flexibility model works: what motivates firms to use contractors, what motivates people to be contractors, and the role of staffing agencies.	1) Flexibility model appears to meet employees' needs not being met in conventional organizations. People feel more in control. The model exhibits characteristics of kind of high commitment organizations managers are trying to produce with their employees. 2) Firms now have to manage a multitude of different kinds of work relationships.
Van Dyne & Ang, (1998)	Survey of 155 (45 contingent workers and 110 regular employees) professional workers from two large service organizations in Singapore.	Contingent employees exhibited less organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), expected less from their employers, and had lower affective commitment than regular employees. But the relationship between attitudes and OCB was positive for contingent workers.	Results suggest that employees who choose contingent status may be less involved in their jobs and exhibit less positive attitudes and behavior. If they do view their relationship with the organization positively, they may go beyond what is required of them (behavior is contingent upon their attitude).
Reio & Wiswell (2000)	Survey of 233 service industry employees.	Demonstrated that both state and trait curiosity influenced technical and interpersonal job performance through the mediational effects of socialization-related learning.	Fostering curiosity may be an important strategy to include in instructional models of motivational learning.

**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY FOR CORE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**  
**SURVEY FOR CONTRACT EMPLOYEES**

## Workplace Adaptation and Commitment Questionnaire

### PART I. Workplace Adaptation

**Instructions:** The following statements concern the organization for which you are employed. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement according to the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

To make your selection, circle the desired number.

	SD		Neutral		SA
1. I can complete most of my tasks without assistance.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know how to perform my job in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know the tasks I <u>must</u> perform on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can judge which projects are <u>really</u> important.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know how to prioritize assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Overall, I am pleased with the quality of my work performance.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I know the “short cuts” I can take on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I know what resources are available to help me do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I know what is <u>really</u> valued in my organization to get ahead.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I know what the rules are for getting ahead in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I know what the reward systems are for my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know what the acceptable image is for my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I know the informal rules, policies, and procedures of my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I know which of my coworkers are likely to be able to answer my questions correctly.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know which of my coworkers are interested in helping me.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I know which of my coworkers to go to when I want to get something done.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I know which of my coworkers are respected around here.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I know who has the power to get things done around here.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am satisfied with the support I have received on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am satisfied with my learning experiences on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Generally, I have had positive learning experiences on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am satisfied with the feedback I have received about my performance on the job.	1	2	3	4	5

(continued on next page)

**PART II. Commitment**

**Instructions:** Listed below are statements that represent feelings that you might have about: (A) your immediate office, (B) your government organization, (C) the Federal Service, and (D) occupation (see below for explanations). Please respond under **all four** columns for each statement provided. For each statement, consider each work entity (A, B, C, D) and indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each by circling the number in each column. Use the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

**(A) MY IMMEDIATE OFFICE:** Think about your immediate office for which you produce services or products.

**(B) MY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION:** Think about the government organization where you work (e.g., [2 sample organizations were provided here]).

**(C) THE FEDERAL SERVICE:** Think about working in the public sector.

**(D) MY OCCUPATION:** Think about your current overall occupation (e.g., information technology, engineering, administration, human resources, etc.)

**EXAMPLE: Be sure to provide responses for each statement under all 4 columns (A, B, C, D):**

	(A) My Immediate Office	(B) My Govt Organization	(C) The Federal Service	(D) My Occupation
	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA
1. I really care about the fate of ____.	1 (2) 3 4 5	1 2 (3) 4 5	1 2 (3) 4 5	1 2 3 (4) 5

	(A) My Immediate Office	(B) My Govt Organization	(C) The Federal Service	(D) My Occupation
	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2. I really feel as if ____'s problems are my own.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3. I do not feel like "part of the family" in ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5. ____ has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

(continued on next page)



**PART III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

a. Total time in federal service (including military service): \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

b. Time with current government organization: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

c. Time with current immediate office: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

d. Time in current occupation: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

e. Type of current occupation (please mark only one):

\_\_\_ Administrative      \_\_\_ Business Management      \_\_\_ Computer Specialist      \_\_\_ Engineering

\_\_\_ Human Resources      \_\_\_ Information Technology      \_\_\_ Program Management

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please provide)

f. Retirement Plan: \_\_\_ CSRS \_\_\_ FERS

g. Employment Type: \_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_ Non-Supervisory

h. Education Level: \_\_\_ Some High School \_\_\_ High School \_\_\_ Some College \_\_\_ Bachelors \_\_\_ Masters \_\_\_ Doctoral

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!**

**Please return in the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope within 2 weeks of receipt.**

## Workplace Adaptation and Commitment Questionnaire

### PART I. Workplace Adaptation

**Instructions:** The following statements concern the organization for which you are employed. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement according to the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

To make your selection, circle the desired number.

	SD	2	Neutral	4	SA
1. I can complete most of my tasks without assistance.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know how to perform my job in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know the tasks I <u>must</u> perform on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can judge which projects are <u>really</u> important.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know how to prioritize assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Overall, I am pleased with the quality of my work performance.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I know the “short cuts” I can take on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I know what resources are available to help me do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I know what is <u>really</u> valued in my organization to get ahead.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I know what the rules are for getting ahead in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I know what the reward systems are for my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know what the acceptable image is for my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I know the informal rules, policies, and procedures of my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I know which of my coworkers are likely to be able to answer my questions correctly.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know which of my coworkers are interested in helping me.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I know which of my coworkers to go to when I want to get something done.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I know which of my coworkers are respected around here.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I know who has the power to get things done around here.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am satisfied with the support I have received on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am satisfied with my learning experiences on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Generally, I have had positive learning experiences on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am satisfied with the feedback I have received about my performance on the job.	1	2	3	4	5

(continued on next page)

**PART II. Commitment**

**Instructions:** Listed below are statements that represent feelings that you might have about: (A) the immediate customer office within the government organization, (B) the government organization, (C) your employing organization, and (D) occupation (see below for explanations). Please respond under **all four** columns for each statement provided. For each statement, consider each work entity (A, B, C, D) and indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each by circling the number in each column. Use the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

**(A) THE IMMEDIATE CUSTOMER OFFICE WITHIN GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION:** Think about the immediate client, i.e., the government office for which you produce services or products. If you support more than one customer office, base your response on the one with which you spend the highest percentage of time.

**(B) THE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION:** Think about the overall government organization which you support (e.g., [2 sample organizations were provided here]). If you support more than one agency, base your response on the one with which you spend the highest percentage of time.

**(C) MY EMPLOYING ORGANIZATION:** Think about working for your employer (e.g., [3 sample organizations were provided here]).

**(D) MY OCCUPATION:** Think about your current overall occupation (e.g., information technology, engineering, administration, human resources, etc.)

**EXAMPLE:** Be sure to provide responses for each statement under all 4 columns (A, B, C, D):

	(A) The Immediate Customer Office	(B) The Govt Organization	(C) My Employing Organization	(D) My Occupation
	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA
1. I really care about the fate of ____.	1 2 <b>3</b> 4 5	1 2 <b>3</b> 4 5	1 2 <b>3</b> 4 5	1 2 3 <b>4</b> 5

	(A) The Immediate Customer Office	(B) The Govt Organization	(C) My Employing Organization	(D) My Occupation
	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA	SD Neutral SA
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2. I really feel as if ____'s problems re my own.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3. I do not feel like "part of the family" in ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5. ____ has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to ____.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

(continued on next page)

**PART III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

a. Time supporting current immediate customer office within government: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

b. Time supporting current government organization: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

c. Time with current employing organization: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

d. Time in current occupation: \_\_\_ Yr \_\_\_ Mos

e. Type of current occupation (please mark only one):

Administrative       Business Management       Computer Specialist       Consulting  
 Engineering       Human Resources       Information Technology       Logistics  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please provide)

f. Percentage of time spent on-site at govt agency: \_\_ 0-20% \_\_ 21-40% \_\_ 41-60% \_\_ 61-80% \_\_ 81-100%

g. Employment Type: \_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_ Non-Supervisory

h. Education Level: \_\_ Some High School \_\_ High School \_\_ Some College  
                          \_\_ Bachelors                    \_\_ Masters                    \_\_ Doctoral

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!**

**Please return in the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope within 2 weeks of receipt.**

**APPENDIX C**  
**CORRELATION MATRICES**

Table C-1

Correlation Matrix, Workplace Adaption Questionnaire

	Job Knowledge, Quest 1	Job Knowledge, Quest 2	Job Knowledge, Quest 3	Job Knowledge, Quest 4	Job Knowledge, Quest 5	Job Knowledge, Quest 6	Job Knowledge, Quest 7	Job Knowledge, Quest 8	Acculturation, Quest 9	Acculturation, Quest 10	Acculturation, Quest 11	Acculturation, Quest 12	Acculturation, Quest 13	Establishing Relationships, Quest 14	Establishing Relationships, Quest 15	Establishing Relationships, Quest 16	Establishing Relationships, Quest 17	Establishing Relationships, Quest 18	Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 19	Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 20	Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 21	Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 22
Job Knowledge, Quest 1	<b>1.00</b>	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.36	0.35	0.20	0.15	0.10	0.12	0.14	0.21	0.24	0.14	0.17	0.19	0.19	0.25	0.17	0.07	0.10	0.20
Job Knowledge, Quest 2	0.34	<b>1.00</b>	0.60	0.57	0.47	0.42	0.32	0.33	0.20	0.19	0.18	0.13	0.28	0.26	0.20	0.25	0.24	0.31	0.12	0.17	0.17	0.16
Job Knowledge, Quest 3	0.34	0.60	<b>1.00</b>	0.47	0.33	0.39	0.23	0.36	0.24	0.23	0.22	0.25	0.41	0.34	0.35	0.39	0.30	0.34	0.37	0.34	0.37	0.32
Job Knowledge, Quest 4	0.34	0.57	0.47	<b>1.00</b>	0.57	0.33	0.30	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.24	0.28	0.27	0.30	0.29	0.30	0.29	0.40	0.18	0.16	0.17	0.22
Job Knowledge, Quest 5	0.36	0.47	0.33	0.57	<b>1.00</b>	0.52	0.33	0.20	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.20	0.23	0.18	0.24	0.05	0.07	0.07	0.13
Job Knowledge, Quest 6	0.35	0.42	0.39	0.33	0.52	<b>1.00</b>	0.43	0.32	0.14	0.13	0.07	0.13	0.26	0.24	0.22	0.25	0.27	0.36	0.15	0.17	0.25	0.23
Job Knowledge, Quest 7	0.20	0.32	0.23	0.30	0.33	0.43	<b>1.00</b>	0.29	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.16	0.21	0.26	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.22	-0.04	0.07	0.10	0.19
Job Knowledge, Quest 8	0.15	0.33	0.36	0.30	0.20	0.32	0.29	<b>1.00</b>	0.34	0.27	0.24	0.21	0.32	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.34	0.33	0.32	0.32	0.19
Acculturation, Quest 9	0.10	0.20	0.24	0.32	0.11	0.14	0.09	0.34	<b>1.00</b>	0.83	0.64	0.50	0.54	0.10	0.14	0.16	0.29	0.46	0.36	0.37	0.38	0.29
Acculturation, Quest 10	0.12	0.19	0.23	0.28	0.10	0.13	0.17	0.27	0.83	<b>1.00</b>	0.76	0.63	0.61	0.18	0.20	0.22	0.32	0.49	0.39	0.40	0.41	0.33
Acculturation, Quest 11	0.14	0.18	0.22	0.24	0.13	0.07	0.15	0.24	0.64	0.76	<b>1.00</b>	0.65	0.53	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.32	0.41	0.39	0.37	0.35	0.31
Acculturation, Quest 12	0.21	0.13	0.25	0.28	0.10	0.13	0.16	0.21	0.50	0.63	0.65	<b>1.00</b>	0.59	0.31	0.32	0.34	0.35	0.48	0.41	0.34	0.40	0.35
Acculturation, Quest 13	0.24	0.28	0.41	0.27	0.18	0.26	0.21	0.32	0.54	0.61	0.53	0.59	<b>1.00</b>	0.36	0.25	0.35	0.34	0.41	0.38	0.32	0.38	0.34
Establishing Relationships, Quest 14	0.14	0.26	0.34	0.30	0.16	0.24	0.26	0.20	0.10	0.18	0.25	0.31	0.36	<b>1.00</b>	0.65	0.73	0.57	0.49	0.25	0.27	0.33	0.22
Establishing Relationships, Quest 15	0.17	0.20	0.35	0.29	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.22	0.14	0.20	0.27	0.32	0.25	0.65	<b>1.00</b>	0.73	0.55	0.47	0.26	0.28	0.30	0.26
Establishing Relationships, Quest 16	0.19	0.25	0.39	0.30	0.23	0.25	0.22	0.22	0.16	0.22	0.25	0.34	0.35	0.73	0.73	<b>1.00</b>	0.65	0.52	0.23	0.24	0.26	0.29
Establishing Relationships, Quest 17	0.19	0.24	0.30	0.29	0.18	0.27	0.20	0.23	0.29	0.32	0.32	0.35	0.34	0.57	0.55	0.65	<b>1.00</b>	0.67	0.24	0.24	0.26	0.28
Establishing Relationships, Quest 18	0.25	0.31	0.34	0.40	0.24	0.36	0.22	0.34	0.46	0.49	0.41	0.48	0.41	0.49	0.47	0.52	0.67	<b>1.00</b>	0.38	0.39	0.45	0.30
Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 19	0.17	0.12	0.37	0.18	0.05	0.15	-0.04	0.33	0.36	0.39	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.25	0.26	0.23	0.24	0.38	<b>1.00</b>	0.59	0.58	0.49
Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 20	0.07	0.17	0.34	0.16	0.07	0.17	0.07	0.32	0.37	0.40	0.37	0.34	0.32	0.27	0.28	0.24	0.24	0.39	0.59	<b>1.00</b>	0.83	0.48
Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 21	0.10	0.17	0.37	0.17	0.07	0.25	0.10	0.32	0.38	0.41	0.35	0.40	0.38	0.33	0.30	0.26	0.26	0.45	0.58	0.83	<b>1.00</b>	0.43
Satisfaction with Learning, Quest 22	0.20	0.16	0.32	0.22	0.13	0.23	0.19	0.19	0.29	0.33	0.31	0.35	0.34	0.22	0.26	0.29	0.28	0.30	0.49	0.48	0.43	<b>1.00</b>

Note: N=216

Table C-2

Correlation Matrix, Affective Commitment Scale

	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 1	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 2	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 3	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 4	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 5	Immediate Govt Office, Quest 6	Govt Organization, Quest 1	Govt Organization, Quest 2	Govt Organization, Quest 3	Govt Organization, Quest 4	Govt Organization, Quest 5	Govt Organization, Quest 6	Employer, Quest 1	Employer, Quest 2	Employer, Quest 3	Employer, Quest 4	Employer, Quest 5	Employer, Quest 6	Occupation, Quest 1	Occupation, Quest 2	Occupation, Quest 3	Occupation, Quest 4	Occupation, Quest 5	Occupation, Quest 6
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 1	<b>1.00</b>	0.37	0.37	0.52	0.51	0.48	0.63	0.31	0.33	0.34	0.42	0.36	0.27	0.12	0.12	0.19	0.08	0.14	0.23	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.12
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 2	0.37	<b>1.00</b>	0.36	0.46	0.49	0.49	0.30	0.67	0.30	0.32	0.36	0.36	0.14	0.36	0.20	0.13	0.22	0.16	0.25	0.44	0.23	0.19	0.33	0.29
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 3	0.37	0.36	<b>1.00</b>	0.57	0.46	0.71	0.31	0.18	0.52	0.31	0.28	0.39	0.08	-0.04	0.25	0.11	0.12	0.18	0.10	0.06	0.32	0.14	0.14	0.27
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 4	0.52	0.46	0.57	<b>1.00</b>	0.65	0.78	0.35	0.24	0.43	0.56	0.43	0.46	0.07	0.07	0.15	0.27	0.15	0.19	0.17	0.06	0.23	0.30	0.20	0.27
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 5	0.51	0.49	0.46	0.65	<b>1.00</b>	0.63	0.40	0.36	0.40	0.41	0.63	0.42	0.17	0.12	0.27	0.19	0.30	0.26	0.18	0.10	0.26	0.20	0.32	0.27
Immediate Govt Office, Quest 6	0.48	0.49	0.71	0.78	0.63	<b>1.00</b>	0.32	0.25	0.46	0.39	0.38	0.56	0.11	0.12	0.25	0.19	0.21	0.27	0.11	0.09	0.27	0.16	0.22	0.34
Govt Organization, Quest 1	0.63	0.30	0.31	0.35	0.40	0.32	<b>1.00</b>	0.45	0.37	0.48	0.50	0.49	0.48	0.18	0.23	0.31	0.18	0.24	0.29	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.22
Govt Organization, Quest 2	0.31	0.67	0.18	0.24	0.36	0.25	0.45	<b>1.00</b>	0.39	0.50	0.54	0.51	0.27	0.53	0.25	0.20	0.27	0.22	0.25	0.43	0.19	0.11	0.26	0.24
Govt Organization, Quest 3	0.33	0.30	0.52	0.43	0.40	0.46	0.37	0.39	<b>1.00</b>	0.57	0.47	0.65	0.18	0.19	0.36	0.17	0.22	0.27	0.19	0.11	0.28	0.13	0.23	0.25
Govt Organization, Quest 4	0.34	0.32	0.31	0.56	0.41	0.39	0.48	0.50	0.57	<b>1.00</b>	0.68	0.72	0.26	0.18	0.23	0.43	0.25	0.34	0.13	0.13	0.24	0.32	0.23	0.33
Govt Organization, Quest 5	0.42	0.36	0.28	0.43	0.63	0.38	0.50	0.54	0.47	0.68	<b>1.00</b>	0.69	0.34	0.22	0.31	0.32	0.40	0.38	0.17	0.15	0.27	0.26	0.36	0.33
Govt Organization, Quest 6	0.36	0.36	0.39	0.46	0.42	0.56	0.49	0.51	0.65	0.72	0.69	<b>1.00</b>	0.27	0.28	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.46	0.18	0.17	0.25	0.19	0.27	0.37
Employer, Quest 1	0.27	0.14	0.08	0.07	0.17	0.11	0.48	0.27	0.18	0.26	0.34	0.27	<b>1.00</b>	0.39	0.34	0.46	0.54	0.48	0.33	0.24	0.10	0.13	0.19	0.15
Employer, Quest 2	0.12	0.36	-0.04	0.07	0.12	0.12	0.18	0.53	0.19	0.18	0.22	0.28	0.39	<b>1.00</b>	0.47	0.47	0.54	0.51	0.25	0.50	0.20	0.15	0.25	0.21
Employer, Quest 3	0.12	0.20	0.25	0.15	0.27	0.25	0.23	0.25	0.36	0.23	0.31	0.37	0.34	0.47	<b>1.00</b>	0.55	0.53	0.62	0.12	0.19	0.55	0.26	0.22	0.34
Employer, Quest 4	0.19	0.13	0.11	0.27	0.19	0.19	0.31	0.20	0.17	0.43	0.32	0.37	0.46	0.47	0.55	<b>1.00</b>	0.59	0.64	0.13	0.23	0.29	0.44	0.21	0.27
Employer, Quest 5	0.08	0.22	0.12	0.15	0.30	0.21	0.18	0.27	0.22	0.25	0.40	0.34	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.59	<b>1.00</b>	0.67	0.19	0.27	0.32	0.21	0.36	0.24
Employer, Quest 6	0.14	0.16	0.18	0.19	0.26	0.27	0.24	0.22	0.27	0.34	0.38	0.46	0.48	0.51	0.62	0.64	0.67	<b>1.00</b>	0.10	0.21	0.33	0.26	0.20	0.44
Occupation, Quest 1	0.23	0.25	0.10	0.17	0.18	0.11	0.29	0.25	0.19	0.13	0.17	0.18	0.33	0.25	0.12	0.13	0.19	0.10	<b>1.00</b>	0.31	0.24	0.33	0.47	0.37
Occupation, Quest 2	0.08	0.44	0.06	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.13	0.43	0.11	0.13	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.50	0.19	0.23	0.27	0.21	0.31	<b>1.00</b>	0.32	0.31	0.38	0.34
Occupation, Quest 3	0.09	0.23	0.32	0.23	0.26	0.27	0.14	0.19	0.28	0.24	0.27	0.25	0.10	0.20	0.55	0.29	0.32	0.33	0.24	0.32	<b>1.00</b>	0.51	0.40	0.52
Occupation, Quest 4	0.09	0.19	0.14	0.30	0.20	0.16	0.13	0.11	0.13	0.32	0.26	0.19	0.13	0.15	0.26	0.44	0.21	0.26	0.33	0.31	0.51	<b>1.00</b>	0.48	0.61
Occupation, Quest 5	0.07	0.33	0.14	0.20	0.32	0.22	0.13	0.26	0.23	0.23	0.36	0.27	0.19	0.25	0.22	0.21	0.36	0.20	0.47	0.38	0.40	0.48	<b>1.00</b>	0.47
Occupation, Quest 6	0.12	0.29	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.34	0.22	0.24	0.25	0.33	0.33	0.37	0.15	0.21	0.34	0.27	0.24	0.44	0.37	0.34	0.52	0.61	0.47	<b>1.00</b>

Note: N=216

**APPENDIX D**  
**NORMAL DATA CHARTS**



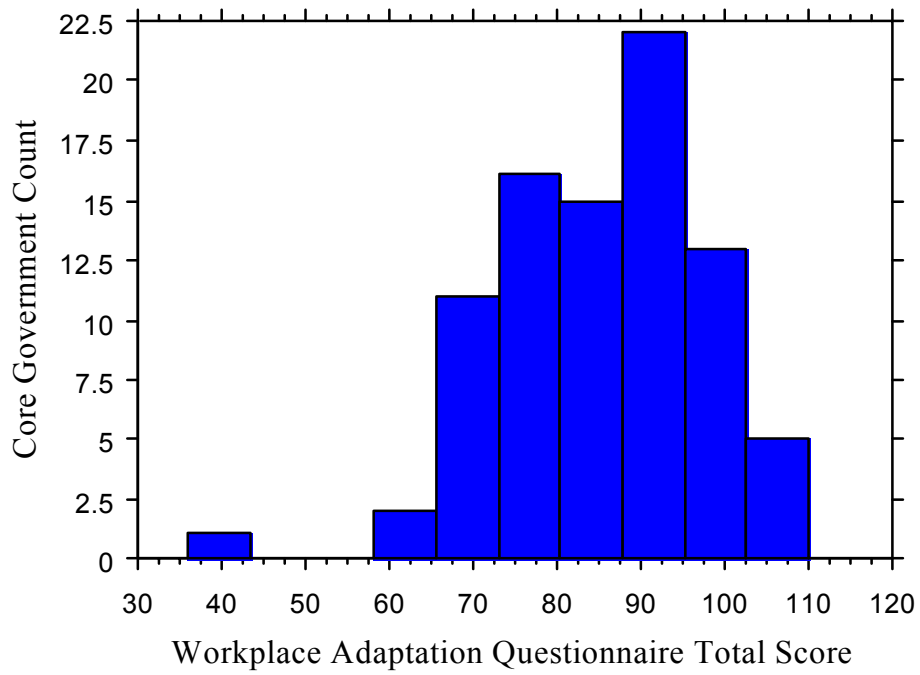


Figure D-1. Core Government Employees: Distribution for Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire

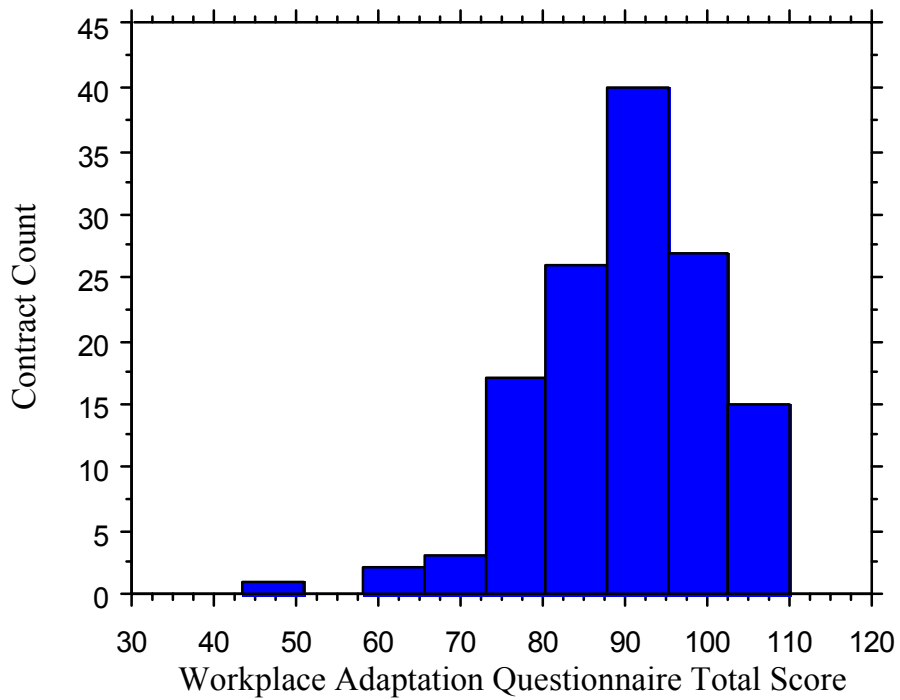


Figure D-2. Contract Employees: Distribution for Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire

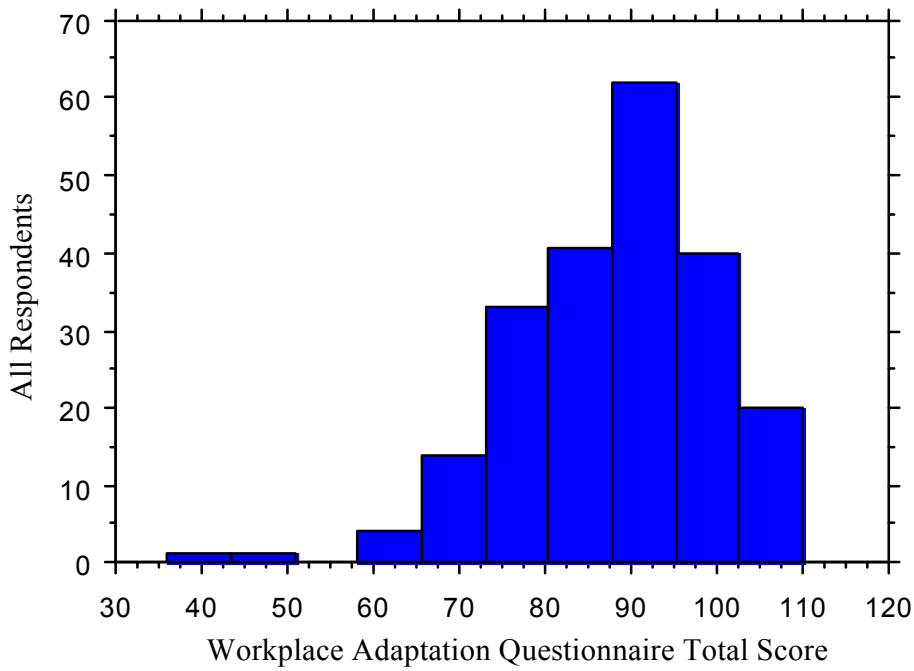


Figure D-3. Core Government Employees and Contract Employees: Distribution for Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire

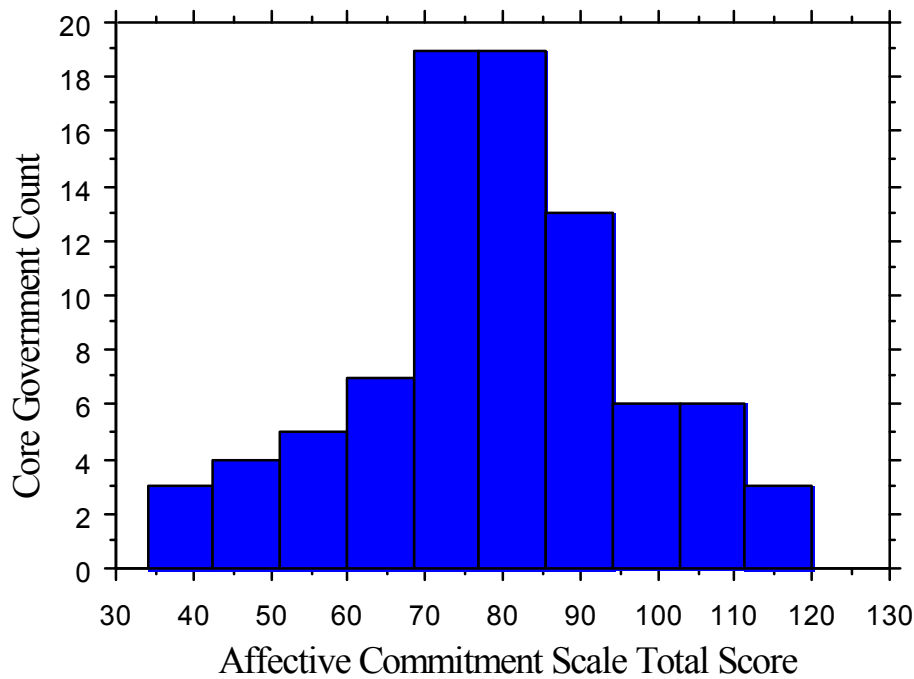


Figure D-4. Core Government Employees: Distribution for Affective Commitment Scale

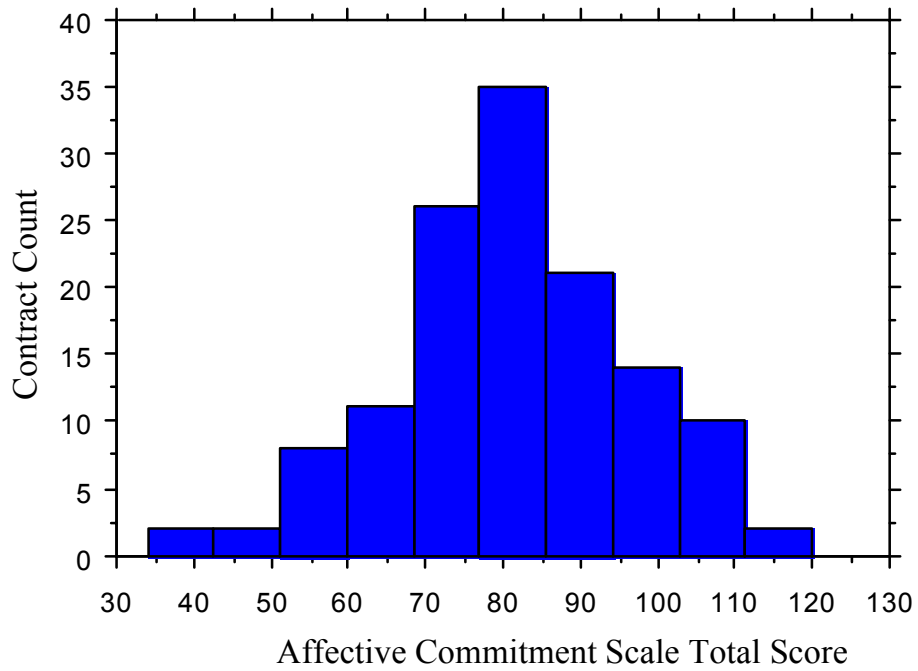


Figure D-5. Contract Employees: Distribution for Affective Commitment Scale

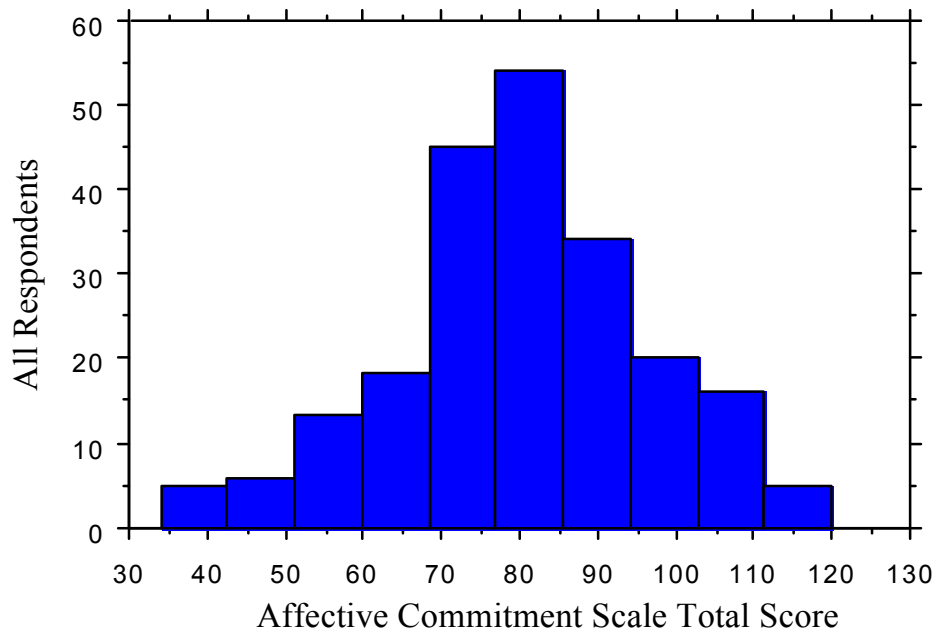


Figure D-6. Core Government and Contract Employees: Distribution for Affective Commitment Scale

## VITA

Julie DeLoria received a Bachelor of Arts in communications from the University of Michigan in 1988. In 1994, she earned a Master of Science in Adult and Continuing Education from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Julie was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1965. After graduation from college, she moved to the northern Virginia to assume a position as an Associate Manager at the area's first Macy's. In 1990 she found her life-long career interest when she accepted a position as an Employee Development Assistant with the Federal Government. Julie has over 10 years of experience in human resource development and is currently the Assistant to the head of Training and Development for a large government agency. Julie recently won recognition from the Training Officers Conference for her work on an agency-wide needs assessment process. Upon completion of her studies, Julie hopes to pursue research further and contribute to the field of human resource development.