

PREDICTORS OF AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT AMONG HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

by

Wilbert D. Hawkins

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Dr. David J. Parks, Chairman

Dr. Christina M. Dawson

Dr. Samuel D. Morgan

Dr. Stephen R. Parson

Dr. Mary E. Yakimowski

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**Dr. David J. Parks, Chairman
Department of Educational Leadership
and Policy Studies**

(ABSTRACT)

This study was an assessment of the importance of age, gender, organizational tenure, perceived organizational support, perceived fairness, and perceived autonomy in explaining affective organizational commitment among high school principals in the United States. Stepwise multiple regression was used to determine which independent variables explained a portion of the dependent variable, affective organizational commitment.

A sample of 396 high school principals, stratified by gender, was drawn from a national data base developed by Quality Education Data of Denver, CO. The sample consisted of 132 females and 264 males. Data were collected from responses to a questionnaire that was mailed to all persons in the sample. Usable responses were received from 60 females and from 142 males.

Results of the stepwise multiple regression indicated

that 58 percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment among high school principals was explained by perceived fairness, organizational tenure, perceived organizational support, and high school principals' age. Perceived fairness explained the greatest percentage of variation; age, which entered the regression equation last, explained the least amount of variation.

This study indicates that high school principals, first and foremost, valued fairness from school districts in return for their commitment to school districts. The challenge for superintendents and others who work with high school principals is to maintain fairness in educational settings where there are many diverse and competing student needs in the same school district.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated with gratitude and affection to my wife, Lillie, and to my daughter, Tamika.

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CHAPTER I
BACKGROUND FOR
THE RESEARCH QUESTION

There has been a steady increase in the study of organizational commitment as a workplace construct. Commitment has been defined and operationalized in many ways; researchers agreed that commitment can take different forms, and that it is a complex construct (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Mottaz, 1988). Organizational commitment researchers have devoted much attention to the matter of identifying the predictors of organizational commitment. Predictors of commitment have been studied, not merely to produce commitment as an end in itself, but as a means of linking commitment to desirable organizational outcomes such as improved attendance and improved performance (Mottaz).

The current employee work environment is one in which at least two specific organizational commitment issues come to the forefront. One of those issues is that employees, including high school principals, work in a multiple-commitment world. The job itself, the school district, and the profession compete for principals' loyalty. Principals may develop commitment to a boss or to professional association membership (Morrow & McElroy, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991; Tyree, 1996). Principals may also experience different degrees of commitment to various school district aspects such as organizational philosophy (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The second issue is that organizational commitment itself is viewed as a multidimensional construct. In the past, some researchers presented organizational commitment as a unidimensional construct. Research, however, does not present readers with any standard set of dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This researcher's focus was on one

of the dimensions of organizational commitment that was identified as affective organizational commitment. In organizational commitment literature, affective organizational commitment was defined as the magnitude with which an employee identifies with the organization (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993).

As the broad context of organizational commitment was reviewed, research indicated that some writers raised a concern as to whether or not commitment was a reasonable expectation for employers to hold for their employees in today's work environment where changes in leadership and organizational focus may occur rapidly. Laabs (1996) stated, "The old employment contract--lifetime employment in exchange for loyalty--is gone. Unfortunately for many companies, commitment fled with it" (p. 60). Morrow and McElroy (1993) reported, however, that the notions concerning the lack of commitment to organizations today have

served as a catalyst for the further study of organizational commitment. The maintenance of employee organizational commitment remains as a viable organizational goal. Organizations that are downsized and schools that are characterized by organizational change still need a core of employees, especially leaders, who are committed to the values and goals of the organization (Caudron, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organizational commitment remains as a suitable topic for study in today's rapidly changing work world.

Statement of the Problem

Little research with respect to affective organizational commitment has been conducted in the educational arena. Industrial, organizational, and occupational psychologists were the ones who have most frequently studied the general subject of organizational commitment (Mueller, Wallace, & Price, 1992). This researcher sought to determine

the extent to which hypothesized independent variables explained affective organizational commitment among high school principals in the United States.

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent that a selected organizational characteristic and other selected personal and work experience characteristics explained affective organizational commitment among high school principals in the United States. Personal characteristics were gender, age, and length of service (organizational tenure) within the school district. The work experience characteristics were perceived school district support and perceived fairness. An organizational characteristic, autonomy, was also examined. These variables (Figure 1) were examined to determine the extent to which they explained affective organizational commitment, the dependent variable.

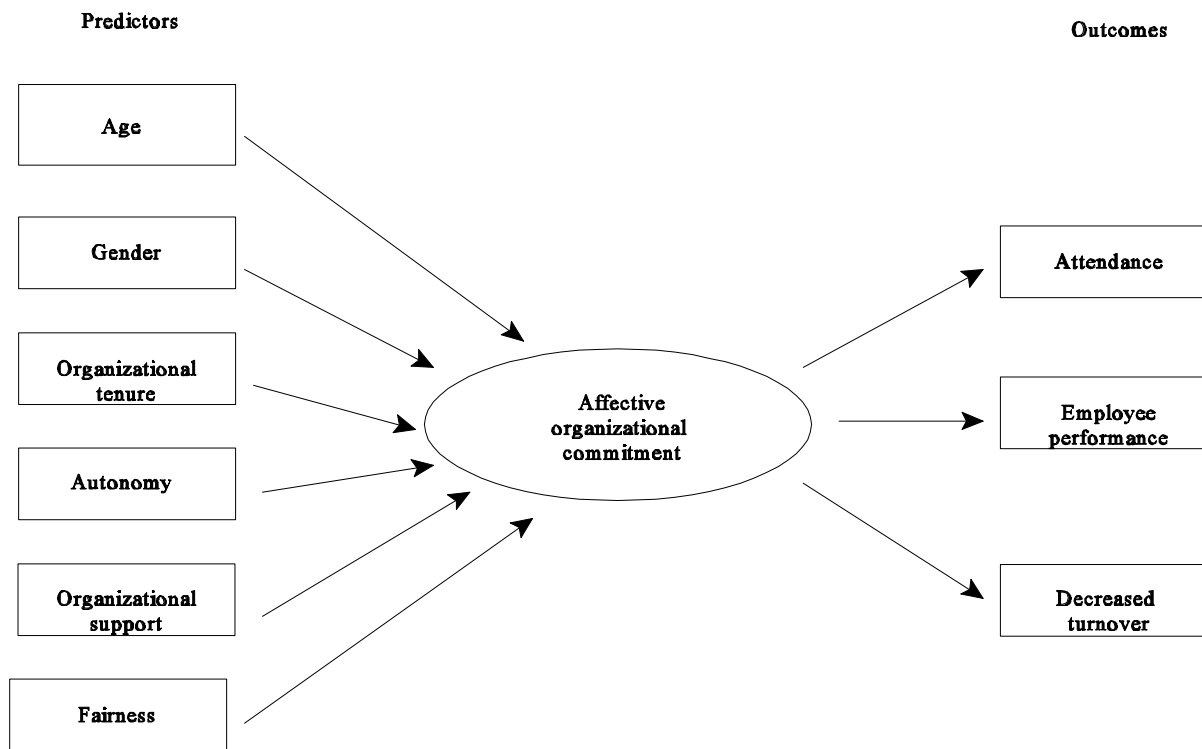


Figure 1. Predictors and outcomes of affective organizational commitment

Finally, affective commitment is expected to produce some organizational outcomes (Figure 1) such as improved performance (Chelte & Tausky, 1987); therefore, some expected outcomes were included in the affective commitment model but not investigated in this study.

Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study added to the body of knowledge on the general subject of employee commitment. From a practical point of view, there is a link between affective organizational commitment and productivity (Meyer & Allen, 1997) in terms of outcomes such as job performance and attendance. Therefore, it was assumed that this study would be of interest to superintendents, human resource administrators, and persons who work directly with school principals.

Definitions of Variables

All variables of the study were defined. Constitutive and operational definitions were provided in Table 1.

Organization of the Study

A four-chapter dissertation format was employed in this study. In the initial sections of Chapter 1, the researcher included the background for the research question, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and the definitions of variables. In Chapter 1, there is also a review of literature related to affective organizational commitment; a related topic, job satisfaction, was reviewed briefly. Commitment outcomes were also reviewed briefly so that the reader would be informed of the full model and rationale for affective organizational commitment.

Table 1**Constitutive and Operational Definitions of Variables**

Variable	Constitutive definition	Operational definition
Age	Years as of last birthday	Item number two, Part A of the survey ^a
Gender	Female = 1 Male = 2	Item number one, Part A of the survey
Organizational tenure	Length of time worked in the current school division	Item number three, Part A of the survey
Perceived autonomy	Freedom to act independently and to make various administrative decisions with respect to the operation of a school	The mean of items 9, 12, 15 and 16 from Part B of the survey
Perceived organizational support	The care and respect that a principal receives from a school district	The mean of items 10, 13, and 18 from Part B of the survey
Perceived fairness	Administration of rules, procedures, and general school district resources in a just manner	The mean of items 11, 14, and 17 from Part B of the survey
Affective organizational commitment	The strength of one's identification with an organization	The mean of items 1-8 from Part B of the survey

^aThe survey is in Appendix A.

In Chapter 2, the researcher focused on the investigation of the problem. The research question, sampling procedures, instrumentation, data-gathering procedures, and the method of analysis were discussed.

In Chapter 3, the results of the study were presented. Results were presented based on the independent variables addressed in this study. A conclusion, a discussion, limitations, implications and recommendations are in Chapter 4.

Review of Literature

In the following paragraphs, there is a review of the literature pertaining to affective organizational commitment, the hypothesized predictors of affective organizational commitment, the predicted outcomes of affective organizational commitment, and the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Organizational Affective Commitment:
The Dependent Variable

Meyer and Allen (1997) reported that there have been "hundreds of studies" (p. 42) where researchers analyzed the relationship between affective organizational commitment and variables that were predicted to account for some degree of affective organizational commitment. These researchers also reported that the predictors of affective organizational commitment generally occurred in three categories: (a) organizational characteristics, (b) personal characteristics, and (c) work experiences. Organizational characteristics are those such as organizational size, autonomy, and decentralization. Personal characteristics include those such as gender, age, and organizational tenure. Work experiences include factors such as organizational support and fairness. Most of the organizational commitment research effort has been directed toward the

discovery of predictors for and outcomes of organizational commitment (Becker, 1990).

Affective commitment occurs, with continuance and normative commitment, under the large umbrella of attitudinal commitment. Attitudinal commitment is defined as, "both a state of positive obligation to an organization and a state of obligation developed as a by-product of past actions" (Brown, 1996, p. 232). Past actions are comprised of employee and employer deeds. Under the umbrella of attitudinal commitment, principals with strong affective commitment tend to remain in a school district because they want to remain. Principals with strong continuance commitment tend to remain in a school district because the options to do otherwise are limited. Principals with strong normative commitment tend to remain in a school district because they feel a moral obligation to remain in the school district (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Affective organizational commitment, therefore, is one dimension of a multi-commitment work environment. Explaining what it is that contributes to affective organizational commitment was the challenge that was selected by this researcher.

Predictors of Affective Organizational Commitment

Employee Age and Affective Organizational Commitment

Employee age has consistently resulted in positive correlations with commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990), in a meta-analysis involving 41 samples, reported a positive mean correlation of .20 ($p \leq .01$). There was a total of 10,335 subjects involved in the studies that were analyzed.

Allen and Meyer (1993) also studied the relationship between age and affective organizational commitment. They obtained a positive mean correlation of .36 ($p \leq .05$) between age and affective organizational commitment. Two groups

were included in this study. Respondents in one group ($n = 123$) were university library employees. Respondents in the other group ($n = 168$) included hospital employees at various levels--clerical, supervisory, and managerial.

Angle and Perry (1981) conducted an organizational commitment study which involved 24 organizations that operated fixed-route bus services in the western United States. The total number of employees in the sample for the study was 1,340; the majority of the subjects (91%) was bus drivers. The remainder of the sample consisted of transit managers. Commitment was measured by an affective-oriented instrument, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulain, 1974). Results from this study indicated a positive correlation of age with commitment ($r = .17$, $p \leq .01$).

A study conducted by Morrow and McElroy (1987) was one in which the researchers reported

differences in the levels of organizational commitment based on career stages that were defined by employee age ranges. The sample for this study consisted of 2,200 employees (78% male) from a midwestern department of transportation. The sample was comprised of a variety of employee groups including: administrators, technical and professional employees, clerical and office workers, and service workers. The average age of persons in the sample was 42.7 years. In this study, employees were categorized by age as follows: trial employment period, ages 30 and under; stabilization employment period, ages 31-44; and maintenance employment period, ages 45 and above. Trial period employees obtained a mean organizational commitment rating of 4.13 ($SD = 1.01$), stabilization period employees obtained a mean rating of 4.31 ($SD = 1.03$), and maintenance-level employees obtained a mean rating of 4.76 ($SD = .92$). Seven-point Likert scales were used to

measure commitment in the study. The F ratio was 73.33 ($df = 2, 2175$), and this was significant at the .01 level.

In contrast to the findings of Morrow and McElroy (1987), Alluto, Hrebiniak, and Alonso (1973) conducted a study in which they discovered a curvilinear relationship between age and employee organizational commitment. In this study, usable data were obtained from 318 elementary and secondary school teachers and from 395 professional nurses. Mean levels of employee commitment by age categories were: 26 years or less, 10.68; ages 27-44, 10.53; and, ages 45 years and up, 10.94 ($F = 3.01, p \leq .05, df = 2,710$). The scoring of commitment in this study ranged from a low of 4 to a high of 12. Meyer and Allen (1993) indicated that analyses of organizational tenure generally showed a mild curvilinear relationship whereby middle-tenure employees possessed less measured commitment than new or senior level (by age) employees.

Shin and Reyes (1991a) studied organizational commitment of school administrators. In their study of 162 public school and private school (Catholic) administrators, a positive correlation ($r = .09$) was obtained between organizational commitment and age; however, this correlation was not significant at the .01 or the .05 level.

Overall, age has a consistent, although moderate, correlation with organizational commitment. Various researchers have reached this conclusion (Brief & Aldag, 1980; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Kushman, 1992; Morrow & Wirth, 1989).

Gender and Affective Organizational Commitment

With respect to the study of gender and affective organizational commitment, some ambiguity has occurred because of the manner in which this subject has been studied. Gender, as a topic in organizational commitment literature, has been

approached from both the gender-model and the job-model (Aven, Parker, & McEvoy, 1993). The gender approach to the study of women and organizational commitment was described as one where the basic belief was that, "women accept family roles as a chief source of their identity and fulfillment, leading to a different orientation to work for men, for whom work is paramount" (Loscocco, 1990, p. 155). In contrast, proponents of the job-model view concerning the study of organizational commitment and women indicated that there were no differences in the work attitudes of women and men, and that work attitudes of both sexes developed in similar ways (Loscocco).

Aven, Parker, and McEvoy (1993) completed a meta-analysis of studies of the relationship between gender and organizational commitment. Following a comprehensive search procedure, these researchers identified 26 studies with 27 samples that concerned organizational commitment. There was a total of

14,081 subjects in the samples. In the studies that were reviewed, sample size ranged from a low of 65 to a high of 2,164. There were both positive and negative correlations identified during the research process; the range of correlations was $-.37$ to $.29$. Correlations were categorized as follows: negative, 17 samples; positive, 9 samples; and zero, one sample. The mean correlation of all studies was $.02$. These overall results negated the argument that there are gender differences with respect to organizational commitment. Aven, Parker, and McEvoy (1993) concluded that similar commitment can be won from both males and females when organizations treat all employees fairly.

In another meta-analytic study, researchers (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) discovered a correlation that indicated a stronger, although weak, advantage for female employees with respect to organizational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac reviewed 14 studies involving gender and organizational commitment. There

was a total of 7,420 subjects involved in these studies, and a mean uncorrected correlation of $-.089$ was obtained for organizational commitment and gender. The mean weighted correlation was $-.145$ after corrections were made for attenuation. Correction for attenuation allows a researcher to estimate what a correlation between variables might be if the instruments used to measure the variables had perfect reliability (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Ratings for males were coded with higher values.

In a gender effect study, Aranya, Kushmir, and Valency (1986) collected data from a sample of 1,040 Canadian Charter Accountants (equivalent of American Certified Public Accountants) and Certified Public Accountants from the California Society of Certified Public Accountants. The sample consisted of 1,000 men and 40 women; the purpose of the research was to test the commitment level of women in a male-dominated profession. The female accountants in this study demonstrated less organizational commitment than male

accountants. The Pearson correlation between organizational commitment and gender was $-.13$ ($p \leq .01$).

Aranya, Kushmir, and Valency (1986) conducted some important analyses of their own research. First, they reported that the male accountants in their study were older than the female accountants ($M = 38.6$, $SD = 10.65$; $M = 33.9$, $SD = 10.75$, respectively). Also the males in this study tended to rank higher in the organizational hierarchy than the females. However, when the study's results were analyzed by covarying age and organizational level, male accountants still ranked higher than females with respect to organizational commitment.

Kushman (1992) used the job-model research approach in a study involving urban elementary and middle school teachers. In the job-model approach, one assumes that gender is not a determinant of commitment. Results of the study indicated that gender was not a factor that influenced

organizational commitment. There was no statistically significant relationship between sex and organizational commitment for subjects in the 63 schools of the sample for this study.

The foregoing research suggested that gender is not a determinant of commitment. Job-model research indicated that men and women are similar with respect to organizational commitment.

Organizational Tenure and Affective Organizational Commitment

Organizational tenure was found to correlate positively with organizational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reviewed 38 samples that included 12,290 subjects and found an overall mean weighted correlation of .17 ($p \leq .01$). Kushman (1992) in his study of urban elementary and middle school teachers also found a positive correlation ($r = .17, p \geq .05$) between the number of years in teaching and organizational commitment, but the correlation was not significant at the .01 or the .05 alpha level.

Shoemaker, Snizek, and Bryant (1977) conducted an organizational tenure study that involved federal and state forest rangers. Positive correlations between organizational commitment and organizational tenure were obtained for both federal and state forest rangers. Federal rangers ($n = 62$) yielded a correlation of $.22$ ($p \leq .05$). The correlation between organizational commitment and organizational tenure for state rangers ($n = 58$) was $.17$; this correlation was not found to be statistically significant at the $.05$ alpha level.

There was general support in the literature for the notion that there is a positive correlation between organizational commitment and organizational tenure (Kushman, 1992; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Sheldon, 1971). What this finding really means may be difficult to determine. Meyer and Allen stated, "It is possible that employees need to acquire a certain amount of experience with an organization to become strongly attached to it, or

that long-service employees retrospectively develop affective attachment to their organization" (p. 43).

In a study that included 290 non-management employees (clerks, nurses, secretaries, radiologists, and cardiopulmonary specialists), Gregersen (1993) also found a positive correlation between the length of service in the organization and organizational commitment as measured by a modified version of the Occupational Commitment Questionnaire. The population for this sample was 90% female and 10% male. In this study, there was a statistically significant difference ($p \leq .01$) in the mean organizational commitment score for medical professionals with less than two years of service and for medical professionals with more than eight years of service.

Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Organizational Commitment

Researchers have discovered a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective organizational commitment (Meyer &

Allen, 1997; Mottaz, 1988; Reyes, 1992). Perceived organizational support was defined as "the extent to which employees perceived that the organization valued their contribution and cared about their well-being" (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990, p. 52). The support that is provided by the organization (school district) is directly related to employees' commitment. Employees exchange commitment to the organization for greater care, concern, and support from the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sava, 1986).

Perceived organizational support was studied among 383 employees and 231 supervisors in a large multinational firm. Organizational support was operationalized as, "employees' global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (Shore & Wayne, 1993, p. 774). Perceived organizational support was identified as an affective organizational commitment variable that also raised

questions about the role of the organization (i.e., school district) in terms of what the organization provided to employees. Shore and Wayne (1993) concluded that organizational support was an important factor with respect to employee organizational behavior. They obtained a correlation of .30 ($p \leq .05$) between affective organizational commitment and perceived organizational support.

Perceived Fairness and Affective Organizational Commitment

Perceived fairness is considered in the literature under several names such as procedural justice, distributive justice, and organizational justice. Perceived fairness concerns the way in which employees are treated by the employer (Martin & Bennett, 1996; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Procedural justice is the manner and processes that a school district or other organization uses to operationalize major functions. It is the means by which the school district or

organization gets things done. Distributive justice, on the other hand, concerns outcomes or the end product of the means and processes used by a school district or organization. Organizational justice is basically a combination of procedural and distributive justice (Greenberg, 1990; Martin & Bennett, 1996).

In a study concerning procedural justice (fairness), Moorman, Niehoff, and Organ (1993) reported a correlation of .50 ($p \leq .001$) between affective commitment and procedural justice (fairness). Subjects in the study were 1500 employees and managers in a national cable television company. From the 1500 surveys that the researchers distributed, 420 usable surveys were returned. Job assignments among these 420 employees were as follows: office staff (43%), field staff (35%), supervisors (12%), and managers (10%). Females represented 49% of the sample.

The issue of fairness was also tested in a study that involved 400 employees and their families. These employees, who worked for a Fortune 500 company, were relocated from one geographical area to another area. One of the variables tested in the study was "treatment." The researchers in the study obtained information from employees about the manner in which the company handled the relocation. A weak (.10), but positive, correlation was obtained between affective commitment and treatment. This correlation was not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level (Angle & Lawson, 1993).

Witt(1993) conducted a study in which he examined the relationship between fairness of work assignment and commitment. Subjects for the study included 82 employees of a military training center and 90 employees of a research and development laboratory. Employees in this study represented a mixture of trainers, support staff, and supervisory personnel. Witt reported a correlation of .43 ($p \leq$

.01) between organizational commitment and fairness in work assignment. Work assignment concerned the manner in which work was assigned to employees.

Perceived Autonomy and Affective Organizational Commitment

Autonomy is recognized as a salient factor in the study of affective organizational commitment. If management only emphasizes discipline, authority, and control, commitment to the organization will be eroded, or it simply will not develop in the first place (Hart & Willower, 1994). Affective organizational commitment and autonomy are positively related (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mottaz, 1988; Posehn, 1988) reasonable autonomy creates an organizational climate where affective organizational commitment can be nurtured and developed.

A study conducted by Colarelli, Dean, and Konstans (1987) yielded a positive correlation of .31 ($p \leq .01$) between organizational commitment and autonomy. The full sample for this study consisted of

468 accountants in eleven "Big Eight" accounting firms in the United States. The analyzed sample for the study was comprised of 280 subjects. Colarelli, Dean and Konstans defined autonomy as a construct that permits employees to use fully their "talents and ingenuity," (p. 599) and as a construct that causes employees to assume personal responsibility for work. They also indicated that the lack of autonomy and the use of close supervision in organizations result in diminished performance and employee stress.

Durham, Grube, and Castaneda (1994) presented further evidence in support of the trend for positive correlation between affective organizational commitment and autonomy. Subjects for this study consisted of police officers, professional and administrative personnel, volunteers for a cancer, health, and education organization, and part-time employees from various organizations. The total sample consisted of 2,724 subjects. Positive

correlations of .17 to .47 were obtained for seven tests that were designed specifically to measure task autonomy and affective commitment. In five out of the seven tests, statistically significant relationships were obtained. The level of significance was not reported in this study.

Affective Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment are related but different constructs. Commitment, as a construct, is more global than the construct, "job satisfaction." Affective commitment concerns feelings about the organization or school district as a whole (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Job satisfaction, on the other hand, is a construct that concerns how an employee feels about a given job or the related experiences of the job (Shin & Reyes, 1991b).

One issue in the debate with respect to job satisfaction and general organizational commitment is

causality. Does job satisfaction lead to commitment, or does commitment lead to job satisfaction? There are studies in which job satisfaction was viewed as the cause of commitment (Shin & Reyes, 1991b; Steers, 1977). In other studies (Bateman & Strasser, 1984), general organizational commitment was viewed as a cause of job satisfaction. Additional research is needed to clarify these issues of causality.

The debate regarding causality with respect to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, notwithstanding, there is a moderate to strong correlation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Aranya, Kushnir, & Valency, 1986; Cohen, 1993; Mathieu & Hamel, 1989; Shin & Reyes, 1991b; Shoemaker, Snizek, & Bryant, 1977). Specifically, Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) reported a correlation of .49 ($p \leq .01$) between affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The subjects for this study were 1000 randomly selected registered nurses.

Consequences of Affective Organizational Commitment

The researcher's purpose in this study was to explain the variance in the affective organizational commitment of secondary school principals. Because affective organizational commitment is not an end product, but a means to desired outcomes, the issue of commitment outcomes was reviewed to provide readers with information about the full model and rationale for affective organizational commitment. Some illustrative affective commitment outcomes were reported in Figure 1. The outcomes reviewed here are employee attendance, performance, and turnover.

One major interest for school districts, as well as for other organizations, concerns what they might gain by having principals and other employees who possess high levels of organizational commitment (Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly, 1990). The outcomes--attendance, employee performance, and decreased turnover--that are discussed in this review of

literature represent only a sample of the possible outcomes of affective organizational commitment. However, they are among the most frequently investigated outcomes of affective organizational commitment (Randall, 1990).

Concerning attendance, there is a positive, but modest, correlation between affective organizational commitment and attendance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall, 1990; Steers, 1977). One caveat that must be considered is that some studies do not differentiate between voluntary absenteeism and absenteeism that is beyond the employee's control. Highly committed employees are less likely than marginally committed employees to be absent for reasons that they can control (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Affective commitment and performance correlations range from a very weak positive relationship ($r = .05$) to a moderate ($r = .25$) one (Meyer, Sampo, Ian, Coffin, & Jackson, 1989; Steers, 1977). Several variables, other than commitment

level, can affect job performance. For example, availability of resources, time management skills, and control over the evaluated outcomes are some of these variables. These variables may also affect the outcome of a study (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

With respect to the outcome, "turnover," researchers have consistently found an inverse relationship between affective organizational commitment and employee turnover (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; McCaul, Hinsz, & McCaul, 1995). In a meta-analysis, for example, involving 26 studies and 8,197 subjects, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reported a mean weighted correlation of $-.283$ between turnover and affective organizational commitment.

In this chapter, the researcher's major purpose was to present background information on the dependent variable, affective organizational commitment, and to present background information on the six independent variables. The six independent variables are: age, gender, organizational tenure,

perceived autonomy, perceived organizational support, and perceived fairness. In varying degrees, all of the independent variables, except gender, were reported in the literature as having positive correlations with affective organizational commitment. Gender was not a factor that explained affective organizational commitment. Employee attendance, employee absenteeism, and employee turnover were variables that were reviewed but not studied. The relationship between job satisfaction and commitment was also reviewed but not studied.

CHAPTER II

FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this chapter was to address the methods used in this study. Items that were addressed include the research question, population and sample, instrumentation, reliability and validity of the instrumentation, scoring techniques, data-gathering procedures, and the method of analysis.

Research Question

The researcher addressed the following question:
To what extent and in what manner is affective organizational commitment explained by secondary principals' age, gender, organizational tenure, perceived autonomy, perceived school district support for the respective principal, and perceived fairness?

Population and Sample

Population

The population for this study was high school principals who were included in a telephone verified, national data bank maintained by Quality Education Data, 1700 Lincoln, Suite 3600, Denver, Colorado 80203. The total number of principals in the data base at the time of the study was 18,000.

The Sample

For the purpose of this study, officials at Quality Education Data provided a random sample of United States' high school principals stratified by gender. Stratification by gender was requested to ensure that males and females were included in the sample in a representative manner (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The sample consisted of 396 subjects, 132 females and 264 males, from 46 states. The random sample included high school principals from public,

Catholic, and private schools. The majority (355) of the subjects was from public high schools that served students in grades nine through twelve. In Tables 2, 3, and 4, data are provided regarding the grade span and the enrollment range for the public, private, and Catholic high schools served by the principals in this study.

After the postcard reminder to complete and return the questionnaire, a total of 202 usable questionnaires was returned, providing a return rate of 51 percent. The means of survey variables from early and late returns were compared to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between early and late returns. There were no statistically significant differences between variables with respect to early and late returns (Table 5). Because non-respondents tend to be similar to late respondents, and because there were no statistically significant differences between the responses of early and late respondents,

Table 2**Sampled Public Schools by Grade Span and Enrollment**

Grade span	Enrollment							Total
	Under 100	100- 299	300- 499	500- 749	750- 999	1000- 1499	1500+	
7-12	2	21	17	6	4	3	1	54
9-12	6	22	35	34	19	61	38	215
10-12	1	1	1	0	1	1	5	10
Vo-tech	2	8	7	7	0	2	7	33
Alt. sch.	20	18	1	2	2	0	0	43
Total	31	70	61	49	26	67	51	355

Table 3

Sampled Catholic Schools by Grade Span and Enrollment

Grade span	Enrollment							Total
	Under 100	100- 299	300- 499	500- 749	750- 999	1000- 1499	1500+	
7-12	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	4
9-12	0	3	4	5	3	2	0	17
Total	0	6	4	5	3	3	0	21

Table 4
Sampled Private Schools by Grade Span and Enrollment

Grade span	Enrollment							Total
	Under 100	100- 299	300- 499	500- 749	750- 999	1000- 1499	1500+	
7-12	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	6
9-10	7	1	0	3	0	0	0	11
10-12	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Total	10	1	2	6	1	0	0	20

Table 5

A Comparison of Means from Early and Late Returns

Variables	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t</u> ^a
Commitment				
Early	157	5.29	1.05	-1.01
Late	45	5.47	0.88	
Autonomy				
Early	157	5.76	1.00	-0.39
Late	45	5.82	0.09	
Fairness				
Early	157	5.35	1.29	-0.46
Late	45	5.45	1.07	
Organizational support				
Early	157	5.32	1.38	-0.56
Late	45	5.44	1.14	
Age				
Early	157	48.38	6.48	-0.64
Late	45	49.07	6.33	
Organizational tenure				
Early	157	5.32	1.38	-0.62
Late	45	5.44	1.14	

^at-values were not significant at $p \leq .05$.

the researcher is able to generalize the results to the total population (Lehman, 1963).

Instrumentation

Measurement of Variables

Affective Commitment

The dependent variable, affective commitment, was measured by the Affective Commitment Scale which was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). Allen and Meyer (1990) created a pool of 51 items for the purpose of developing affective, normative, and continuance measures of employee commitment. Subjects in this process included approximately 500 employees from two manufacturing firms and a university; clerical, managerial, and supervisory employees were represented in the sample. Females represented 57 percent of the sample. Scale items for measuring affective, normative, and continuance commitment--

were selected for inclusion in the scales on the basis of a series of decision rules that took

into account responses on the 7-point agree-disagree scale for each item, item-scale correlations, content redundancy, and the desire to include both positively and negatively keyed items (Meyer & Allen, 1997, p. 117).

Gender

Respondents were asked their gender. In the data compilation, gender was coded as follows: female = 1 and male = 2. Females constituted 30 percent of all respondents; males constituted 70 percent.

Age

Respondents were requested to report their age in years as of their last birthday. Some respondents reported their age rounded to the nearest tenth. Tenths equal to or greater than five-tenths were rounded upward to the next highest whole number.

Years in School District

Respondents were asked to report the total number of years that they had been employed in their current school district in any capacity, including the current assignment as a high school principal. As

was the case with age, some respondents reported years of experience rounded to tenths. Tenths greater than or equal to five-tenths were rounded to the next highest whole number.

Autonomy

Autonomy was measured by using a seven-point Likert scale with items that were developed by the researcher. These items were as follows:

Within the bounds of any applicable school board policy and applicable laws, I have freedom to act on student issues.

I have reasonable freedom to make decisions about instructional issues in the school in which I am employed.

I have reasonable freedom to manage the fiscal affairs of my school.

I have freedom to direct student activities in the school in which I am employed.

Autonomy was measured by obtaining the mean of the scores of the scale items associated with this construct.

Fairness

Fairness was also measured by items that were constructed by the researcher. The items used in the questionnaire to measure fairness were as follows:

I believe that rules and procedures are administered fairly by school district leaders.

District resources are allocated without favoritism.

I trust my school district to make decisions on my behalf.

The mean of these items constituted the measure of fairness.

Organizational Support

Additionally, organizational support was measured by items that were developed by the researcher. Questionnaire items that measured organizational support were as follows:

I receive support from my school district when I have to make tough, unpopular decisions.

My school district shows concern for the needs which I express regarding the school at which I work.

My school district appreciates any extra time and effort that I spend to do efficient and effective work.

The mean of the scores for these items provided the measure of organizational support.

Reliability

Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a scale with eight items for the purpose of measuring affective organizational commitment. The median reliability estimate for the Affective Commitment Scale from more than 40 samples representing more than 16,000 employees from various employment groups was .85 (Allen & Meyer, 1996). The reliability estimate (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) for the Affective Commitment Scale for respondents in this study was .78. Reliability estimates, determined by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, for autonomy, organizational support, and fairness were .77, .81, and .80, respectively.

Validity

Content validity was established for items that were developed by the researcher through the use of specific feedback from eight independent reviewers who are current school administrators or supervisors. One additional reviewer was a college professor who works in the area of educational leadership. The results of this content review are reported in Table 6. In an attempt to enhance content validity, the questionnaire for this study was composed of only those items on which the nine independent reviewers indicated 100 percent agreement.

Scoring

Age, length of service in the school district (organizational tenure), and gender were reported in accordance with the personal information provided by respondents in Section A of the questionnaire. Affective organizational commitment--the dependent

Table 6

**Validation of Survey Content for Perceived Autonomy,
Perceived Organizational Support, and Perceived Fairness, N =
9**

	Items	Researcher's category	<u>n</u>	Percent agreement
1.	Praise, recognition, and awards for principals are issued in a fair and appropriate manner.	C	6	66.6*
2.	Clear communication is provided concerning the major expectations that the school district has for me.	C	6	66.6*
3.	My ideas and suggestions are respected by my school district's leaders.	B	7	78.0*
4.	Within the bounds of any applicable school board policy and applicable laws, I have sufficient freedom to act on student issues.	A	9	100.0
5.	I receive support from my school district when I have to make tough, unpopular decisions.	B	9	100.0
6.	I believe that rules and procedures are administered fairly.	C	9	100.0
7.	I have reasonable freedom to make decisions about instructional issues within the school where I am employed.	A	9	100.0
8.	My school district shows concern for the needs which I express regarding the school at which I work.	B	9	100.0
9.	District resources are allocated without favoritism.	C	9	100.0
10.	I have freedom to manage the fiscal affairs of my school.	A	9	100.0

(Table continues)

Table 6

	Items	Researcher's Category	<u>n</u>	Percent Agreement
11.	My school district values my accomplishments.	B	8	89.0*
12.	A general sense of fairness governs administrative responses in my school district.	C	8	89.0*
13.	I have reasonable freedom to direct student activities in the school at which I am employed.	A	9	100.0
14.	My school district appreciates any extra time and effort that I spend to do efficient and effective work.	B	9	100.0
15.	I trust my school district to make fair decisions on my behalf.	C	9	100.0

Note. Category A: Perceived Autonomy, Category B: Perceived Organizational Support, Category C: Perceived Fairness

*Items deleted and not used in this instrument.

variable--perceived autonomy, perceived organizational support, and perceived fairness were measured with a seven-point Likert scale where one equals strongly disagree and seven equals strongly agree. Mean scores were calculated for each subject for each of these constructs. Missing scale data were recorded as a "four" on the seven-point scale. The mean scores were used in making various statistical comparisons in this study. When the Affective Commitment Scale was developed, a mean affective commitment rating of 4.63 ($SD = 1.33$) was obtained. This rating was obtained on a seven-point Likert scale similar to the one that was used in this study (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Data Gathering Procedures

A survey, "Factors Contributing to Affective Organizational Commitment Among High School Principals," was sent in the United States mail to

all members of the sample. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was enclosed for respondents' convenience in returning completed questionnaires. Respondents were given approximately three weeks from the date of mailing to return the questionnaires. Approximately one week after mailing the questionnaires, a postcard reminder was sent to all potential respondents. This postcard served both as a friendly reminder for non-responding individuals to please respond and as a thank you to individuals who had responded already (Dillman, 1978). All surveys were treated confidentially, and any reports based on questionnaire results were reported in statistical form only.

Method of Analysis

The researcher used a stepwise multiple regression technique to determine the extent, if any, that the independent variables were useful in explaining affective commitment among the sample of

high school principals in this study. Of the several types of regression techniques, the stepwise multiple regression technique was used because this procedure is one in which the stepup and stepdown procedures of multiple regression are used. Multiple regression is a recognized statistical procedure for determining the relationship between a criterion variable and two or more predictor variables that have been chosen by a researcher (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Furthermore, a researcher may use stepwise multiple regression for "commonality analysis" (Pedhazur, 1973, p. 199). By using this process, a researcher can determine proportions of variation that two or more independent variables explain with respect to a dependent variable (Pedhazur). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used by the researcher to perform the required calculations. The amount of variance explained by each variable was presented. The total amount of variance explained in the regression equation was summarized.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this chapter was to present the analyses and findings of the study. The dependent variable was affective organizational commitment. The six independent variables were age, gender, years of experience in the school district (organizational tenure), fairness, autonomy, and organizational support. Age, gender, and organizational support are demographic variables or personal characteristics. Fairness and organizational support are work characteristics which can be strongly influenced by an employer. Autonomy is a general organizational characteristic that can also be strongly influenced by an employer. Following are findings with respect to the variables of this study.

Descriptive Data for Variables Studied

Means and standard deviations are provided in Table 7, and correlation coefficients are provided in Table 8.

High School Principals' Age and Affective Organizational Commitment

Age has a consistent, but moderate, positive correlation with affective organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Angle & Perry, 1981). In this study of high school principals ($n = 202$), however, there was little correlation ($r = -.004$) between high school principals' age and affective organizational commitment. The average age of respondents in this study was 48.53 ($SD = 6.44$).

High School Principals' Gender and Affective Organizational Commitment

Gender (male or female) was not a predictor of the level of affective organizational commitment among the high school principals in this study. As illustrated in Table 9, the means for affective

Table 7**Descriptive Data on Variables in the Study**

Variable	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Age	202	48.53	6.44		
Gender					
Male				142	70
Female				60	30
Organizational tenure	202	14.55	9.94		
Autonomy	202	5.78	0.97		
Organizational support	202	5.35	1.33		
Fairness	202	5.38	1.24		
Affective organizational commitment	202	5.33	1.02		

Table 8
Intercorrelation Matrix of All Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Commitment	1.000						
2. Age	-.004	1.000					
3. Gender	-.025	-.155	1.000				
4. Org. tenure	.248**	.476**	-.153	1.000			
5. Autonomy	.545**	.119*	.018	.156*	1.000		
6. Support	.661**	.032	.045	.027	.683**	1.000	
7. Fairness	.686**	-.036	.087	-.012	.654**	.793**	1.000

Note. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$.

Table 9
A Comparison of the Means for Males and Females' Affective Organizational Commitment

<u>Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t</u>
Commitment				
Females	60	5.37	1.14	
Males	142	5.31	0.96	0.35 ^a

Note. ^aNot significant at $p \leq .05$.

organizational commitment are nearly identical for female and male high school principals. There was no significant difference in the mean level of commitment for female and male high school principals. This finding is consistent with research findings concerning the job-model view of organizational commitment. As was discussed in the literature review of this study, proponents (Aven, Parker, & McEvoy, 1993; Kushman, 1992; Lorence, 1987; Powell, 1990) of the job-model view suggest that men and women demonstrate equal amounts of commitment in a fair and equitable work environment.

High School Principals' Organizational Tenure and Affective Organizational Commitment

Consistent with other research findings (Gregersen, 1993; Kushman, 1992; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), high school principals' ($n = 202$) research results for organizational tenure (years of experience in the school district) produced a positive correlation of .25 ($p \leq .05$) with affective

organizational commitment. The mean number of years for organizational tenure was 14.6 ($SD = 9.94$). The range was 38; the distribution of respondents by experience category is presented in Table 10.

High School Principals' Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Organizational Commitment

In this study of high school principals ($n = 202$), there was a moderately strong correlation ($r = .66, p \leq .05$) between organizational support and affective organizational commitment. Other researchers (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Reyes, 1992; Shore & Wayne, 1993) also have found a positive correlation between affective organizational commitment and perceived organizational support.

High School Principals' Perceived Fairness and Affective Organizational Commitment

Moderately strong correlations have been discovered between affective organizational commitment and perceived fairness (Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Witt, 1993). In this study of high

Table 10**Distribution of the Sampled High School Principals According to Years of Experience in Their School District**

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
1-5	46	22.1
6-10	40	19.9
11-15	29	14.4
16-20	28	14.0
21-25	20	10.0
26-30	28	14.0
31+	11	5.5
Total	202	100.0

school principals, there was a moderate to strong correlation between perceived fairness and affective organizational commitment. Of all the independent variables, fairness resulted in the highest correlation with affective organizational commitment. The correlation between principals' ($n = 202$) perceived fairness and affective organizational commitment was $.69$ ($p \leq .05$).

High School Principals' Perceived Autonomy and Affective Organizational Commitment

The literature indicated that there were positive correlations between perceived autonomy and affective organizational commitment (Colarelli, Dean, & Konstans, 1987; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Posehn, 1988). In this study of high school principals ($n = 202$), there was a moderately strong correlation ($r = .55$, $p \leq .05$) between affective organizational commitment and perceived autonomy.

Variables Explaining Affective Organizational Commitment

Statistics on the four variables that entered the stepwise multiple regression equation and that, collectively, explained portions of the variance in the dependent variable, affective organizational commitment, are in Table 11. Perceived fairness was the first and most salient ($\beta = .44$) of the four variables that entered the stepwise multiple regression equation. Perceived fairness accounted for 47 percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment. At step 2, years of experience entered the regression equation and accounted for an additional seven percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment. At step 3, organizational support entered the equation and accounted for an additional three percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment. Age entered the regression equation at step 4 and

Table 11

Stepwise Multiple Regression of Variables with Affective Organizational Commitment

Step	Variable Entered	R	SE_{est}	R^2	Increase in R^2	R^2 Adjusted	b	S	t	Signif.
1	Fairness	.69	.74	.47	-	.47	.36	.44	5.79	**
2	Org. Tenure	.72	.70	.54	.07	.52	.03	.32	6.05	**
3	Support	.75	.67	.57	.03	.57	.24	.31	4.10	**
4	Age	.76	.66	.58	.01	.58	-.02	-.15	-2.84	**
	(Constant)						2.80			
Not in the Equation										

Gender										
Autonomy										

** $p \leq .01$.

accounted for only one percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment.

It is worth noting that both of the work experience variables, fairness and organizational support, entered the stepwise multiple regression equation. This is noteworthy because these are variables over which school districts can exercise some control. Autonomy, which is considered an organization characteristic, did not enter the equation. Of the three demographic variables, age, gender, and organizational tenure, only age and organizational tenure entered the equation.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to add to the general body of knowledge about employee commitment and to provide some useful explanations about the matter of high school principals' affective organizational commitment. The researcher's belief was that such information might be useful to superintendents, human resource professionals, and others who work with high school principals. In this section of the study, the researcher offers a conclusion based on the research findings and discusses the findings, limitations, and implications and recommendations for practice and further study.

Conclusion

The basic conclusion is that results of the stepwise multiple regression performed in this study

indicated that 58 percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment was explained by perceived fairness, organizational tenure, perceived organizational support, and high school principals' age. Perceived fairness was the most powerful of the four variables that entered the regression equation ($\beta = .44$). Age explained the least amount of variance in affective organizational commitment ($\beta = -.15$). Gender and perceived autonomy were not significant enough to enter the stepwise multiple regression equation.

Discussion

Only a small amount of organizational commitment research has been conducted in education-related settings. This study helps to open the door to a new and different venue for the study of organizational commitment. It is not unusual to hear educators speak about the importance of commitment, and to see slogans about the value of commitment at work.

Studies such as this one can assist with the understanding of educators' commitment from an empirical point of view.

Affective organizational commitment is important because of the link between such commitment and such desired organizational outcomes as regular attendance, less employee turnover, and increased productivity. The study of commitment is not static or dead-end; the intent should be to use any new information about employee commitment to help school districts achieve worthwhile goals.

It was not surprising to discover that perceived fairness was the most salient independent variable with respect to explaining affective organizational commitment. This result indicates that respondents in this study valued fair play from their school district's leaders in return for their affective organizational commitment. The perception of fairness depends upon how employees are treated by their employers (Martin & Bennett, 1996; McFarlin, &

Sweeney, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Practicing favoritism in the process of working with and supervising personnel could have a damaging effect on the level of employee commitment and morale.

The study also indicated that there was a direct, positive relationship between organizational tenure and affective organizational commitment. From this study, one could determine that this direct relationship existed; however, there was no attempt to analyze the underlying reasons for the direct relationship. Research (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Shoemaker, Snizek, & Bryant, 1977) also indicated a positive correlation between organizational tenure and organizational commitment.

Perceived organizational support was another logical variable to enter the regression equation. Researchers (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mottaz, 1988; Reyes, 1992) have found a positive relationship between the care, concern, and support from an

organization (school district) and the affective commitment of employees.

Researchers (Angle & Perry, 1981; Kushman, 1992; Morrow & Wirth, 1989) have consistently found a positive correlation between age and employee commitment. In this study, however, there was no statistically significant correlation ($\alpha \leq .05$) between age and affective organizational commitment. Age did enter the regression equation, but it explained a mere one percent of the variation in affective organizational commitment. The high school principals in this group were basically homogeneous with respect to age ($M = 48.53$, $SD = 6.44$). One might speculate the high school principals, regardless of age, have high levels of affective organizational commitment; therefore, the study of age and commitment becomes inconsequential. Furthermore, the homogeneity of the studied sample resulted in a relatively narrow age range on which to test for possible differences in affective organizational

commitment. Autonomy and gender did not enter the stepwise multiple regression equation as factors that explained any of the variation in affective organizational commitment.

Limitations

This study was limited to a national sample of high school principals in the United States. Results may be considered generalizable to a group of public, private, and parochial principals such as the ones in this study. Such generalization may be assumed from the fact that there were no significant differences between the means of early and late returns on the dependent and independent variables in the study. The overall response rate was a moderate 51 percent.

Another limitation of this study occurred because of multicollinearity among some of the independent variables. Multicollinearity is a term that is used to describe relationships between independent variables which are highly correlated.

High multicollinearity (researchers have not agreed on the meaning of "high") may affect the results of a regression analysis (Pedhazur, 1973). A high correlation was noted between fairness and support. Moderately high correlations were noted between fairness and autonomy and between support and autonomy. The researcher assumed (Figure 1) that these variables would have had more independence between them than they actually did.

Implications and Recommendations

Implications

One of the major implications that a study of this nature raises concerns the matter of how leaders manage with respect to the constructs that were deemed significant in the study. The construct "fairness" is a good one to consider for illustrative purposes. Fairness really is not as simple as merely dividing resources evenly. Equity concerns based on diverse student needs propel school leaders to think

beyond merely dividing evenly all human and material resources. Title I services are a prime example of the division of resources with both equity and equality issues in mind. This differentiation of resources can sometimes result in feelings of envy on the part of persons in schools that may not qualify for the extra services. The challenge is to devise a fair and equitable resource allocation system that is explained to and understood by all school district personnel.

This study was designed to be of assistance to superintendents, human resource professionals, and others who have the privilege of working with high school principals. A major implication of the study is that school district leaders must stay abreast of the formal and informal pulse of the school district. Issues related to fairness should be addressed promptly and justly. Lingering, unaddressed issues that relate to fairness are likely to erode commitment.

It is also important for school districts to provide support to principals when difficult decisions must be made by them. One of the best ways to do this is to implement and follow sound policies and procedures. Such procedures should be developed with staff, school board, and community involvement as appropriate.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further study are included in the following paragraphs. Three recommendations are offered for future researchers' consideration.

One logical avenue for future research is to replicate this study or do a similar one on elementary and middle school principals. The purpose of such a study would be to determine how affective organizational commitment is explained at the elementary and middle school levels. Superintendents and others who work with principals need to know how they can provide support and meet principals' needs.

Other researchers may consider examining the constructs that represent outcomes of affective organizational commitment. The outcomes reviewed but not studied in this research were attendance, employee performance, and turnover. A meaningful study could be designed to examine the relationship between affective organizational commitment and these outcomes. These outcomes are important to schools and to other organizations. Poor attendance of some employees, for example, is a problem in both the public and the private sector of employment and costs employers billions of dollars annually (Long & Ormsby, 1987).

Another interesting approach to the study of commitment is to determine how school employees' perceptions of principals' commitment levels relate to school employees' levels of commitment. Is there a correlation between high commitment levels among principals and high commitment levels among the

employees who work in a school building with the principals?

Summary

The results in this study serve to validate what may be considered conventional wisdom. Fairness emerged as the leading variable in the explanation of affective organizational commitment. This was not surprising, but it was important to subject conventional wisdom to empirical testing.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Factors Contributing to Affective
Organizational Commitment Among
High School Principals**

Directions

Included in this survey is a series of statements that represent perceptions that individuals may have about their school district. Please indicate in Part B the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each item by circling a number from 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree).

First, please provide the demographic information requested in Part A of this survey; then proceed to Part B.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL ITEMS. THANK YOU!

Part A: Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Female_____ b. Male_____

2. What was your age as of your last birthday?
Years_____

3. What is the total number of years that you have been employed by your current school district in any capacity (teacher, assistant principal, counselor, etc.), including your current assignment as a high school principal?

Total Number of Years_____

PLEASE PROCEED TO PART B ON THE NEXT PAGE.

Part B: Please circle the number that best represents your agreement with each statement.

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I enjoy discussing my school district with people outside it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this school district.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I do not feel like a part of the family in this school district (R).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I really feel as if this school district's problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I do not feel emotionally attached to this school district (R).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	This school district has a great deal of meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this school district.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I think I could easily become as attached to another school district (R).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	Within the bounds of any applicable school board policy and applicable laws, I have freedom to act on student issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I receive support from my school district when I have to make tough, unpopular decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I believe that rules and procedures are administered fairly by school district leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	I have reasonable freedom to make decisions about instructional issues in the school in which I am employed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	My school district shows concern for the needs which I express regarding the school at which I work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	District resources are allocated without favoritism.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I have freedom to manage the fiscal affairs of my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	I have reasonable freedom to direct student activities in the school in which I am employed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	I trust my school district to make decisions on my behalf.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	My school district appreciates any extra time and effort that I spend to do efficient and effective work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(R) = Reverse Score

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return the completed survey to:

Wilbert D. Hawkins
Home Address
City, State Zip

A stamped, pre-addressed envelope is included for your convenience in returning the survey.

APPENDIX B
VALIDATION OF SURVEY CONTENT

Validation of Survey Content

for

The Predictors of Affective Organizational
Commitment Among High School Principals

by

Wilbert D. Hawkins

November, 1997

Content Validation of Survey

Directions

The following items may be used in a survey to determine high school principals' perceptions about the following: (a) autonomy, (b) organizational support, and (c) fairness. The operational definitions for these terms are provided below:

Autonomy—freedom for a principal to make various administrative decisions with respect to the operation of a school

Organizational Support—the care and respect that a principal receives from the school district; school district openness to listening to new ideas and to providing assistance, as necessary, when tough decisions have to be made

Fairness—Administration of rules, procedures, and general district resources in a just manner by the school district

ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, PLEASE CIRCLE THE CATEGORY (AUTONOMY, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT, OR FAIRNESS) THAT YOU THINK BEST FITS THE STATEMENTS THAT ARE PROVIDED.

A DUPLICATE SHEET (BLUE COPY) WITH DIRECTIONS IS INCLUDED FOR CONVENIENT REFERENCE AS YOU COMPLETE THIS BRIEF CONTENT VALIDATION SURVEY.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

Content Validation

1.	Praise, recognition, and awards for principals are distributed in a fair manner by school district leaders.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
2.	Expectations are clearly communicated to me by the school district.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
3.	My ideas for where I want to take my school are accepted by my school district's leaders.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
4.	Within the bounds of any applicable school board policy and applicable laws, I have sufficient freedom to act on student issues.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
5.	I receive support from my school district when I have to make tough, unpopular decisions.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
6.	I believe that rules and procedures are administered fairly by school district leaders.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
7.	I have reasonable freedom to make decisions about instructional issues in the school in which I am employed.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
8.	My school district shows concern for the needs which I express regarding the school at which I work.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
9.	District resources are allocated without favoritism.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
10.	I have freedom to manage the fiscal affairs of my school.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
11.	My school district values my accomplishments.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness

12.	A general sense of fairness governs administrative responses in my school district.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
13.	I have reasonable freedom to direct student activities in the school at which I work.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
14.	My school district appreciates any extra time and effort that I spend to do efficient and effective work.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness
15.	I trust my school district to make fair decisions for me.	Autonomy	Org. Support	Fairness

Vita

The researcher, Wilbert Delanor Hawkins, is currently employed in the Portsmouth, Virginia, Public Schools as the Deputy Superintendent of Schools. The researcher has held various teaching and administrative positions, including: elementary and middle school teacher, elementary school assistant principal and principal, junior high school assistant principal, Director of Elementary Education, Director of General Administration, and Assistant Superintendent for Personnel.

The researcher earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Elizabeth City State University, a Master of Education Degree from the University of Virginia, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.