

6 Commitment

Commitment to the organization is a research subject quite established for the last 20 years in the Anglo-American environment (Griffin & Bateman, 1986). Already at the beginning of the 90ties Mathieu and Zajac (1990) produced a meta-analysis. Even looking at the younger literature (Meyer, 1997) the interest in the subject not only seems to stay even, but increase. In the German-speaking environment this ideas seem to proliferate since the end of the 80ties (Moser, 1996; Schmidt et al., 1998). In the Spanish-speaking environment one will find more recent works about the factorial structure of the organizational commitment (De Frutos et al., 1998; González & Antón, 1995; Tomás & Espejo, 1994).

Unfortunately, many approaches have been developed around the construct in a parallel manner and different measure scales have proliferated. Therefore, it has been difficult to obtain precise conclusions. However, during the last ten years some integrated propositions appeared. They should help to organize the diversity of ways the commitment study has taken (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995).

6.1 Traditional Perspectives

The first division in the literature about organizational commitment refers to the perspective which deals with the construct. This can be an attitudinal or a behavioral perspective. The first one has concentrated primarily on the study of the antecedents and outcomes of commitment. The second one, has been centered on the analysis of the conditions under which organizational commitment behavior tends to reappear and the attitudinal changes it causes.

There also exists a third and not very examined perspective, which dwells on the importance of moral values and their strength and continuity for the commitment to the organization (Wiener & Vardi, 1980). Loyalty and fidelity originate when the respective norms are internalized.

In the attitudinal perspective the best representation is maybe the work of Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) who define organizational commitment as an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization. This implies a strong acceptance of the goals and values of the organization, a willingness to exert the necessary efforts to achieve the organizational objectives and the desire to maintain membership in the organization. This authors developed the OCQ (Organizational Commit-

ment Questionnaire) that has been used in many studies because of its psychometric qualities (Morrow, 1983). The questionnaire consists on 15 items where the employee express his/her agreement or disagreement level in a Likert scale of seven points.

The attitudinal approach coincides with was called the affective dimension of commitment. It is defined as an attitude which expresses the emotional link between the person and his/her organization (De Frutos et al., 1998). Commitment is considered an affective or emotional attachment to the organization such that the strongly committed individual identifies with, is involved in, and enjoys membership in the organization. This view was taken by Kanter (1968) who described “cohesion commitment” as “the attachment of an individual’s fund of affectivity and emotion to the group” and later by Buchanan (1974) who conceptualized commitment as a “partisan, affective attachment to (1) the goals and values of the organization, (2) to one’s role in relation to the goals and values, and (3) to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth” (Mowday et.al.,1979)

In regard of the behavioral perspective, the main focus is around the “side bets” theory developed by Becker (1960). In this theory commitment is described as a disposition to engage in “consistent lines of activity” as a result of the accumulation of “side bets” that would be lost if the activity were discontinued. The line of activity refers to the collaboration of the employee with the organization by achieving its objectives and also maintaining membership.

With the time employees accumulate investments that could be lost if he or she leaves the organization. Changing his/her position suppose sacrificing the investments made (de Frutos et al., 1998). It is the cost of losing these investments what makes the employee develop this line of action that characterizes organizational commitment. This dimension is called calculated or continuance commitment.

There are many ways that lead to accumulation of investments, age and tenure has been analyzed, however others should also be considered like salary, position, marital status and the perception of alternatives (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995). The investments made by the employees are also varied, for example time or efforts the employee devote in the organization, development of organizational-specific skills or even friendly relationships with work colleagues. The investments might include

contributions to nonvested pension plans, status, use of organizational benefits such as reduced mortgage rates, and so on.

The perceived cost of leaving may be intensified by a perceived lack of alternatives to replace the foregone investments. At any rate, it is the fear of loss that commits the person to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984). At the same time McGee and Ford (1987) discuss the composition of the calculated dimension. They consider it as being sub composed by two factors: One component of “high personal sacrifice” (associated to the cost of leaving the organization) and a second factor of “lack of alternatives” (related to the scarcity of alternatives or lack of possibilities of finding a job that represent a current alternative). This aspect has been empirical studied by Meyer, Allen and Gellalty (1990) and Hackett, Bycio and Hausdorf (1994), however there are still some critic elements around this proposition and the one-dimensional version of the calculated dimension is still frequently used

Not all of the investigators agree considering both commitment perspectives (calculated and attitudinal) as different types of commitment.

Jaros, Jermier, Koehler & Sinsich, 1993 (cited by Gonzalez & Antón, 1995) mention that organizational commitment is a *disposition* that suppose recognizing the cost associated with leaving a line of activity.

Contrary to the attitudinal commitment perspective, where exists a broad accepted and utilized scale of measure, in the behavioral one the instruments were not that generalized and broad utilized. Cost-induced commitment has typically been assessed using a measure developed by Ritzer and Trice (1969), and modified by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972), that requires respondents to indicate the likelihood that they will leave the organization given various inducements to do so (e.g. increases in pay, status, freedom, promotional opportunity). It is doubtful, however, that this measure actually reflects cost-based commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Stebbins, 1970). Indeed, the fact that high scores on the scale reflect an unwillingness to leave the organization, in spite of attractive inducements to do so, suggests that it may measure affective attachment rather than, or in addition to, cost-induced commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1984).

The “side bets” theory was not always confirmed empirically. The Becker’s hypothesis were evaluated by interrelating factors like age and tenure with the scores in the

Hrebiniak and Alutto scale. Age and tenure both imply the accumulation of investments and therefore organizational commitment induced by the cost of abandonment (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995). Meyer & Allen (1984) support Becker's theory in the extent they assert that the over mentioned scales measure attitudinal and behavioral commitment. A high score in them suppose a tendency to stay in the organization more than leaving it, although the good alternatives presented. Therefore failures in regard of the scale validation may be due to a scale contamination and not to the theory itself.

Finally, a less common but equally viable approach has been to view commitment as a belief about one's responsibility to the organization. Wiener (1982) defined commitment as the "totality of internalized normative pressures to act in a way which meets organizational goals and interests", and suggests that individuals exhibit behaviors solely because 'they believe it is the "right" and moral thing to do'.

The only measure of this obligation-based commitment in the literature is the three-item scale used by Wiener & Vardi (1980). Respondents are asked the extent to which they feel "a person should be loyal to his organization, should make sacrifices on its behalf, and should not criticize it" (Wiener & Vardi, 1980). Other than internal consistency, the psychometric properties of the scale are not reported (Meyer & Allen, 1984).

6.2 The Meyer and Allen conceptualization

Both authors start from an initial distinction between two types of organizational commitment: one affective and the other calculated or continuance. Both matches two of the three traditional perspectives over mentioned (Meyer & Allen, 1984). Lately the authors develop to a unique organizational commitment concept, with many components. The change to this proposition of various components ends with the incorporation of the third component: the normative commitment based on the work of Wiener (1982).

Allen and Meyer (1990) argue that like many constructs in organizational psychology, however, commitment, has been conceptualized and measured in various ways. Common to all the conceptualizations of commitment found in the literature is a link with turnover; employees who are strongly committed are those who are at least likely to leave the organization. Perhaps more important than this similarity, how-

ever, are the differences between the various conceptualizations of commitment. These differences involve the psychological state reflected in commitment, the antecedent conditions leading to its development, and the behaviors (other than remaining) that are expected to result from commitment. Not surprisingly, confusion surrounding the conceptual distinctions is reflected in attempts to measure the construct. Indeed, relatively little attention has been given to the development of measures of commitment that conform closely to the researcher's particular conceptualization of the commitment construct.

Like mentioned before, one of the characteristics of commitment research is the fragmentation of the investigations and the use of instruments that not always match with the theory frame since they are proposed (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995).

Allen and Meyer (1990) were responsible for bundling up these three a. m. ideas into an integrated concept. Their three-component-model integrates affective commitment, i.e. the commitment of the employees surges from the wishes and wants, calculating commitment (continuance commitment), i.e. their commitment is based on a rational consideration to stay in the organization and normative commitment, i.e. the employees believe they have to respond to social and ethical norms.

This integrated concept includes the behavioral point of view inside the basic attitudinal concept of organizational commitment but enhancing his multidimensional characteristics. The three dimensions (affective, continuance and normative) characterize the relationships between employees and the organization and on the other side affects the decision of collaborating and maintaining membership in the organization (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995).

To measure these three components Meyer and Allen have developed a commitment-scale containing 24 items. The three dimensions of their model were repeatedly confirmed empirically (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Irving, Coleman & Cooper, 1997).

Allen and Meyer (1990) based their integrative approach on the assumption that all three forms of commitment could appear at the same time and in different degrees. Each component of the commitment develops from the different work experience of the employees and have different effects on their behavior in the organization.

This differentiation is of quite practical importance when possible ways of increasing the commitment are viewed. There is for example quite a high risk of employees leaving for a more attractive offer if they are only bound to the organization by a calculating commitment. The organization and their leaders should then try to increase the affective commitment by changing the work-tasks and –conditions. In this case Meyer and Allen (1997) talk about an active commitment-management.

Meyer and Allen (1997) continue their idea by proposing to generalize their model for other areas. They start from the thesis that their model, being a universal commitment-model, can also be applied to the commitment on the activity, the profession, the team, etc. Already Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) mentioned that it can also be used in the commitment to the task or the profession (occupational commitment) and proved it empirically. This generalization was also confirmed in a more recent work of Irving, Coleman and Cooper (1997) cited in Felfe 2002.

6.3 Antecedents and outcomes of commitment

In the last years, the concept of organizational commitment (OC) has grown in popularity in the literatures of industrial/organizational psychology and organizational behavior. The concept has received a great amount of empirical studies both as a consequence and as an antecedent of other work-related variables of interest. As a consequence, organizational commitment has been linked to several personal variables, role states, and aspects of the work environment ranging from job characteristics to dimensions of organizational structure. As an antecedent, organizational commitment has been used to predict employee's absenteeism, performance, turnover, and other behaviors. In addition, several other variables of interest, perhaps best referred to as correlates (job involvement and job satisfaction), have demonstrated relationships with organizational commitment (Morrow, 1983; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Reichers, 1985; and Steers, 1977).

Mowday et.al. (1982) have suggested that gaining a greater understanding of the processes related to organizational commitment has implications for employees, organizations, and society as a whole. Employee's level of commitment to an organization may make them more qualified to receive both extrinsic (e.g., wages and benefits) and psychological (e.g., intrinsic job satisfaction and relationship with coworkers) rewards associated with membership. Organizations value commitment among

their employees, which is typically assumed to reduce withdrawal behaviors such as lateness and turnover. In addition, committed employees may be more likely to engage in “extra role” behaviors, such as creativeness or innovativeness, which are often what keeps an organization competitive (Katz & Kahn, 1986). From a larger perspective, a society as a whole tends to benefit from employee’s organizational commitment in terms of lower rates of job movement and perhaps higher national productivity or work quality or both.

6.3.1 Antecedents

Commitment has been studied, a large amount of empirical and theoretical literature has been dedicated to an exploration of the antecedents (or correlates) of organizational commitment. At least three, more- or- less distinct classifications of antecedents variables have been identified: a) psychological variables, such as job satisfaction and identification with organizational goals and values (Reichers, 1985); b) behavioral variables that cause individuals to make the attribution that they are committed, for example, the irrevocability and volitionality of job choice (Reichers, 1985) and c) structural variables associated with long-term organization membership such as nonportable benefits and sunk costs (Reichers, 1985)

Recall that the antecedents of commitment can be roughly classified as psychological (expectations, challenge, conflict), behavioral (volitional, irrevocable acts) and/or structural (tenure in the organization, accumulated investments/sunk costs), these three classes of antecedents (correlates) may not all operate in the same way at the same point in time. That is, commitment to an organization may develop over a long period, and each class of antecedent variables may be primarily associated with early, mid or late career commitments (Mowday et.al., 1982). First employees become the psychological attachments to the organization, then the behavioral linkages and finally over the time the structural variables such as investment and lack of opportunity elsewhere, may combine to cement the individual’s attachment to the organization. That’s why only a longitudinal approach can be particularly meaningful for an understanding of the antecedents of organizational commitment (Reichers, 1986)

On the other side, the three dimensions proposed by Allen and Meyer (1990) develop as a function of different antecedents and also have a different impact on the behav-

ior of employees. It has been suggested that the antecedents of affective attachment to the organization include personal characteristics- age, gender, organization tenure, educational level etc-, organization structure characteristics – organizational centralization and formalization etc- (Gonzalez & Antón, 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1991, Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). The continuance component will develop on the basis the magnitude and/or number of investments made by the employees, the costs perception and the perceived lack of alternatives (Rusbult & Farrell, 1983). Finally, it is proposed that in regard of the antecedents of normative commitment, which study currently is more theoretical than empirical, employees develop an obligations feeling to continue in the organization as a result of a familiar/cultural and organizational process (Wiener, 1982).

Later Meyer and Allen (1997), proposed a specific model for the antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment. The model establishes two main blocks of variables that can be considered as antecedents for the construct, and classified as proximal and distal. Distal variables are those associated with the characteristics of the organization (e.g. size, structure), personal characteristics, socialization experiences (e.g. cultural, familial), management practices (e.g. recruiting, training), and environmental conditions. The main clusters of variables considered as proximal antecedents are: work experiences (e.g. support, justice), role states (e.g. conflict, overload) and psychological contracts.

In spite of the fact, that some organizational characteristics such as policies and structure, or some personal characteristics as values, tenure, and gender have been studied as antecedents of affective commitment, no consistent results of causality have been found. On the contrary, it seems that work experiences are the most consistent predictors of affective commitment according to the main cited reviews of the variable (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1997). Among the work experiences that leads to affective commitment are: job challenge, degree of autonomy, variety of skills used by the employee, knowing the role that the employee plays in his or her company, and also, the relations of the employee and his or her co-workers and supervisor (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

6.3.2 Outcomes

In the last years, one of the main reasons for the interest in organizational commitment is its presumed relationship with important organizational outcomes such as turnover, performance, and absenteeism. (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Research evidence has demonstrated significant relationships, particularly between organizational commitment and turnover (Lee & Mowday, 1987; Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974) and between organizational commitment and other behavioral outcomes such as performance (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989; Wiener & Vardi, 1980) and absenteeism (Farrel & Peterson, 1984; Steers & Rhodes, 1978). However many literature, based on quantitative summary of findings (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall, 1990), argues that, in general the relationships between commitment and its outcomes have produced few large correlations. Because the overall magnitude of the relationships between commitment and outcomes were found to be relatively weak, researchers began to question the importance of organizational commitment as a research topic and as an organizationally desirable attitude.

One explanation for the relatively low commitment-outcomes correlations might be that these relationships are not simple or direct, but moderated by other variables (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Quite surprisingly, however, in the literature can be found little empirical research and few proposed conceptual models of any moderating effects on the relationships between organizational commitment and its outcomes. However, career development and organizational commitment development theory (e.g., Mowday et.al.,1982) does suggest that career stage may moderate the relationship between organizational commitment and its outcomes.

These theories include career development models forwarded by Super, 1957, Super, Zerkowitz and Thompson, 1981, and Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson and McKee, 1978 (cited by Cohen, 1991), and organizational commitment development model forwarded by Mowday et.al. (1982), and Reichers (1986).

Super (1957) and Levinson et.al. (1978), argue that people, no matter what their occupation or background, pass through specific career stages characterized by various crucial activities and psychological adjustments. Individuals need both to master work activities and resolve important psychological issues at each point in their ca-

reers. According to Super's (1957) theory, there are three stages in a person's vocational career (age 25-65): exploration, establishment, and maintenance. Levinson et.al. (1978) identified four 'life areas': childhood (0-20 years), early adulthood (20-40), middle adulthood (40-60) and late adulthood (over 60). Despite some differences, both of these career development models posit that career stage will influence the strength of the relationship between commitment and outcomes (Cohen, 1991).

While age is the most common career stage indicator, the organizational commitment development models also employ tenure as a career stage indicator. Mowday et.al. (1982) developed a conceptual framework that proposes three stages in the development of organizational commitment: a) the pre-entry stage, which deals with the influence of job choice on commitment; b) the early employment stage; and c) the middle and late career stages in the organization. A slightly different model which excludes the pre-employment stage was suggested by Reichers (1986) who concentrated on three stages of development: early, mid and late career stages. This categories partially correspond to the exploration, establishment, and maintenance stages of Super's (1957) theory and similarly to the 'entering the adult world' stage (early), 'thirties transition' and 'setting down' stages (mid), and 'middle adulthood' stage (late) of Levinson et. al.'s (1978) typology (Cohen, 1991).

6.3.2.1 Turnover and turnover intentions

Actual turnover and turnover intentions are considered to be the strongest outcomes of low levels of employee commitment. Highly committed employees by definition are desirous of remaining with the organization (Mowday et.al., 1982).

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have stated in their meta-analysis the correlations of commitment to a number of outcome variables. There are quite clear negative correlations between the intention to search for job alternatives ($r = -.59$) resp. the intention to leave ones job ($r = -.46$) and turnover ($r = -.27$). The correlations shown by Bycio et al. (1995) are on the same level: the commitment and the intention to leave one's job correlate in a negative way with $r = -.42$. Also the correlation found by Clugston (2000), cited in Felfe 2002 of $r = .50$ between affective commitment and intent to leave is affirmative to these results.

However, it can be expected that the relationship between commitment and turnover (actual and intended) will vary across career stages. In the early career stage, levels

of organizational commitment vary dependent on an individual's opportunities and the availability of attractive alternatives (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Rusbult & Farrel, 1983). According to career development models (Cohen, 1991) those in the early career stage face the contradictory tasks of making commitments while keeping options open. An individual in the early career stage attempts to establish her/himself in a job which interests her/him, but should this job prove inappropriate s/he has little hesitation in choosing another. Employees at this stage express greater intention to leave their organization and more willingness to relocate than those in other age groups (Cohen, 1991). The earliest period of membership is, therefore, the most critical period for turnover, and employee's attitudes toward the organization, especially commitment at this stage, will be important factors in their decisions to stay or leave.

Super's (1957) and Levinson et.al.'s (1978) career models hold that propensity to leave an employer and chosen field of work decreases as one moves into the mid and late stages. People in the mid-career stage are more interested in developing stable work and personal lives and in making strong commitments to work, family, and community. People in the late stage of their career are in a stage of relative tranquility. These persons are more oriented to 'settling down' and are less willing to relocate or leave the organization for purposes of promotion. Thus, one would expect a weaker relationship between commitment and turnover in the mid-and late-career stages than in the early career stage, because in the later career stages turnover is relatively low regardless of commitment.

Mowday et.al., (1982) argued that the development of commitment during the early stage appears particularly important to the continued attachment of employees because it decreases the likelihood of early termination. They also argued that commitment levels among new employees have been found to vary and many reflect different propensities to become committed to the organization. Based on this, it can be expected that levels of organizational commitment would be an important determinant of turnover in the early career stage. Additionally, Mowday et.al. (1982) argued that levels of commitment developed during the early employment period appear to remain stable. Moreover, increased investments in the form of time and energy make it increasingly difficult for employees to leave their job voluntarily. The relative stability in commitment levels along with increased difficulties in leaving the organiza-

tion decrease the magnitude of the relationship between commitment and turnover in the mid- and late-career stages.

Aided by structural equation models it was investigated how the influence of job satisfaction mediates on the intent to leave through commitment (Clugston, 2000 quoted in Felfe 2002). A combined model with mediating and direct influences gave the best models. Overall it showed that the job satisfaction has a higher, more direct influence on the intent of leaving than commitment. Therefore the statement of Tett and Meyer (1993) that in respect to fluctuation a commitment has a stronger foresight as opposed to job satisfaction is not totally acceptable. In the end, Tett and Meyer (1993) and Moser (1996) recommend a combination of the two factors to predict fluctuation (Felfe, 2002).

6.3.2.2 Performance

It is logical and consistent with theory that employees who are highly committed will behave in ways that are facilitative of organizational goal attainment. However, Mowday et.al. (1982) found a rather weak relationship between commitment and job performance.

The career development models (Levinson et.al., 1978; Super, 1957) provide some arguments for expecting that the commitment-performance relationship varies across career stages. According to these theories, it is expected that individuals in the early career stage, based on the process of exploration and lack of experience, will perform more poorly than people in other stages. Because of less work experience, job performance of employees in the early stage will be lower than that of individuals in the mid- and late life stages (Cohen, 1991). Because of the employees lack of experience, what is the main obstacle in the early stage, organizational commitment will have a limited effect on performance. Even if committed, employees may keep their level of performance relatively low. Variables expected to affect performance strongly are more specific task environment variables. For example, research evidence has demonstrated strong relationship between variables such as job satisfaction, role ambiguity, and intersender role conflict and performance in the early career stage (Cohen, 1991). At mid- and late-career stages, employees have gained the experience and knowledge of the job that enable them to perform better. The adjustment process has been completed and establishing commitments to work and family

becomes a more salient issue. Task-related variables will have a weaker effect upon performance at the mid and late stages and more general attitudes such as commitment will have a stronger role in increasing performance at these stages. Therefore, it is expected that organizational commitment, as a general attitude toward the organization, would affect performance more strongly at the mid-and late-career stages than in the early career stage.

The performance characteristics stated by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) indicate few correlations to commitment ($r=.13$). Podsakoff et al. (1996) also inform about a low correlation of $r=.14$ between commitment and performance. The conclusion seems to be that there is a low influence of commitment on performance. But also the question has to be taken into account as how far affective and normative commitment was differentiated. Meyer and Allen (1993) for example inform about a negative correlation between performance and calculative commitment, but a positive correlation to affective commitment.

6.3.2.3 *Absenteeism*

Theory predicts that highly committed employees should be motivated to attend to facilitate organizational goal attainment (Mowday et.al., 1982). However, commitment was not found to be one of the major determinants of absenteeism. Farrel & Stamm (1988) in their meta-analysis of absenteeism correlates found that stronger determinants of absenteeism were task environment variables such as task significance, task variety, and feedback.

Absenteeism is also a not wished consequence for that was often investigated.

Employees with a high commitment should show fewer absences than the other way round. But the correlation shown by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) is rather low. There is more specific relation when a differentiation is made between voluntary and influenced times of absence (didn't feel like going to work, adding days to holidays or long weekends, frequency versus time length) and times of absence where no fault could be detected. Independently of the fact of how certain and valid this differentiation could be made, in several studies there were found stronger correlations between affective commitment and „voluntary“ times of absence (Hackett et al., 1994; Meyer et al., 1993; Sommers, 1995).

However, following Super's, 1957 and Levinson et.al.'s, 1978 (cited by Cohen, 1991) career development theories it can be expected that the negative relationship between commitment and absenteeism would be stronger in the mid- and late-career stages than in the early career stage. The logic of this expectation is quite similar to the expected moderator effect of career stage upon performance.

The career development theories argue that the main concern of individuals in the early career stage is to identify their interests, capabilities, and the fit between self and job. During this stage, individuals attempt to build skills and develop the competency to make an occupational choice. As with performance, variables expected to affect absenteeism at the early stage are specific task environment variables. Employee satisfaction with the task environment represents a major influence on attendance (Mowday et.al., 1982). From this, it appears that organizational commitment will have only a limited effect upon absenteeism in the early career stage because employee perception of the task environment is the major influence.

In the mid-and late-career stages, employee's attitudes toward their jobs become less important relative to the early stage. According to the career development models, there is a tendency, if the work situation and occupational choice are at all satisfactory, for leveling off in terms of career aspirations and advancement and an identification with the company and the field. Thus, it appears that in these late career stages it is not just the immediate task environment variables which affect absenteeism, as in the early stage, but also more general attitudes such as the attachment developed during the years with the organization, namely organizational commitment. Therefore, it is expected that organizational commitment affects absenteeism more strongly at the mid- and late-career stages.

Also as a career indicator, age affected turnover intentions significantly, while tenure yielded significant differences between the subgroups for performance and absenteeism.

One explanation for this difference could be that age and tenure represent different processes which affect different organizational outcomes. Age as an indicator is affected by both career and organizational issues and important psychological issues in one's life-events. Therefore, it has stronger effect upon turnover which is a behavior that goes beyond merely affecting one's status in the organization to having strong

implications for one's family, social life and other non-work factors (Mowday et al., 1982).

Tenure is an indicator that reflects mainly career issues with fewer effects upon life-events. Therefore, tenure affects internal organizational outcomes such as performance and absenteeism more strongly (Cohen, 1991).

6.4 Further studies

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have made a meta-analysis with the results of 124 studies, where commitment (attitude commitment) was in general measured with Mowday's et al. (1979) instrument. New results, for example Schmidt et al. (1998), Podsakoff et al. (1996) and Bycio et al. (1995) have used the instrument of Allen and Meyer (1990). The conditional factors can be divided in factors, which are attributed to the individual, and factors which can be attributed to the work task.

Very clear relations (average, corrected correlations) referring to personal characteristics were shown for the perceived personal competence ($r=.63$) and for "protestant work ethic" as $r=.28$ (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). According to this results, individuals that engage to a protestant work ethic (readiness to work hard, to work itself as an objective, work seen as „sense of life,,) and have a high need of performance and competence, have a strong sense of commitment. Also the study of Podsakoff et al. (1996) confirms this, but also found a high negative correlation between „indifference to reward" and commitment. As opposed to Mathieu and Zajac (1990), Schmidt et al. (1998) found a higher relation between life age and job age to calculative than to affective commitment. Schmidt et al. (1998) as well as Mathieu and Zajac (1990) inform about negative correlations for the level of education. According to this, increasing independence seems to be correlated to lower commitment.

In the job scope there is a high average correlation to the work contents (variability, complexity, autonomy) of $r=.50$. The conditions of the work task correlate in comparison to other antecedent factors as highest with affective commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). There seems to be no connection between organizational characteristics like size and centralization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Schmidt et al. (1998) arrive at similar results.

Bycio, Hackett and Allen (1995) have studied as the main focus the connection between leadership and commitment and expected high correlations between transfor-

mational leadership and affective commitment. The transformational leadership dimensions (MLQ) correlate to affective commitment between $r=.39$ and $r=.45$, whereby the charisma scale shows the highest connection with $r=.45$. Also Podsakoff et al. (1996) inform about medium correlations from $r=.25$ to $r=.34$ between commitment and different dimensions of transformational leadership. In their resume of the state of investigation to commitment Meyer and Allen (1997) give leadership also an important role in the development of affective commitment.

Increasing organizational change in the last two decades has brought with it new forms of employment. Felde and Gohl (2002) argue for example that people work in more than one jobs (multiple employment), do temporary work or become entrepreneurs self employed. Those people are working under conditions that might make it difficult for them to develop high commitment to their firm or job. As transformational and charismatic leadership should influence values and regard the emotional needs of subordinates, significant influences on commitment were expected by this authors. In their study of different organizations (profit, non-profit, large and small size, entrepreneurial) they search for systematic differences. They also tried to explain how much transformational leadership contribute to explain organizational commitment in comparison to other predictors, such as working conditions and personal characteristics. Significant influences on affective commitment were expected from transformational leadership while continuance commitment should be predicted by age and satisfactory payment. The results they achieve were following: by using structure equation models they conclude that the influence of leadership is smaller than assumed, when other predictors are involved. Nevertheless there are significant contributions for affective and normative commitment but no effects on continuance commitment.

6.5 Studies in Spanish spoken countries

Regression analysis with Spanish spoken employees were recently carried out. Arciénega and González, (2002) analyzed possible commitment predictors in their study in Mexico. Three different blocks were composed to measure the influence of each variable group. Block (1) was composed of four organizational factors (training practices, communication practices, empowerment and knowledge of organizational objectives). Block (2) was composed of four facets of job satisfaction (satisfaction

with security, compensation, opportunities for development and supervision). Finally block (3) were included in the regression, it was composed of the four high-order values: openness to change, conservation, self-enhancement and self-transcendence.

They conclude that the best predictors for affective commitment were knowledge or organizational goals, satisfaction with security, satisfaction with opportunities for development as job satisfaction factors and the high-order work value self-transcendence.

The best predictors for continuance commitment were empowerment, satisfaction with compensation, the high-order value conservation and communication practices.

Finally for the normative dimension the best predicting variables were, knowledge of organizational goals, satisfaction with security, empowerment, satisfaction with compensation, and the high-order value openness to change.

As can be compared, knowledge with organizational goals, and satisfaction with security were the two better predictors of both the affective and the normative dimension and this result is consistent with the theory, because of the common nature of both constructs.

In general terms they conclude that the contribution of the high-order values tends to be lower than contribution of organizational factors and facets of work satisfaction. Employees commitment to the organization are predicted better from their evaluations of organizational factors and their satisfaction to specific facets of their jobs than from their priorities assigned to the four high-order values (Arciénega & González, 2002)

6.6 Amplified commitment model

Meyer and Allen (1997) start from the fact that the commitment model is not only valid for the relationship to the organization as a whole but can also be applied as a universal commitment model also to the commitment to the tasks, the profession, the team, etc. Already Meyer et al. (1993) have shown empirically the appliance of the three-component model to the occupational commitment.

Felfe (2002) argues that due to the organizational changes, i.e. increasing uncertainty of jobs and the general changes in the working environment (computerized work, job sharing, the new „independent workers“) the previously important attachment to an

organization will play a rather unimportant role in the future. There will be taken into account an amplification concerning job centered commitment and commitment referring to the form of employment (Felfe 2002). Therefore three different objects resp. goals of commitment are to be distinguished:

Organizational commitment: here is meant the attachment to the organization and/or firm

The commitment to the job or the profession: here the attachment and/or identification to a certain work or activity is meant.

Commitment to the form of employment: „here neither the WHAT (profession) nor the WHO (organization) but the HOW is important.

Individuals with a strong commitment to a certain form of work are particularly interested in a firm employment and therefore envisage a long and secure perspective or are independent or job-sharing and so stay flexible and independent (Felfe, 2002).

Felfe et al. (2002) developed a COBB questionnaire, which integrates not only the commitment aims (organization, profession and form of work) but also the different types of commitment (affective, rational and normative). An instrument containing nine different commitment facets was used and confirmed empirically several times by an explorative factor analysis. Additionally a structural equation model with the following fit-indices was specified: χ^2 (df)=52,76 (12), GFI=0.98, AGFI=0.93, RMR=0.03. With exception of the factor organizational commitment it was shown that the studied indices predict both factor groups and therefore the theoretical assumption between a differentiation of aims and types of commitment can be confirmed (Felfe, 2002). The empirical part is also confirmed, but only recently. Felfe et al. have worked through several studies with this instrument and have analyzed commitment with personality features, factors of work conditions and correlates as job satisfaction, absenteeism and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). This instrument is not yet available in Spanish speaking countries.

6.7 Summary

The study of the antecedents and consequences of commitment has been of great importance in the development of the construct. As Allen and Meyer (1990) mention, the majority of the literature has concentrated in this two aspects rather than on de-

veloping the construct itself. Both authors have been the ones that really developed an integrated proposition and their instruments has been broad utilized.

As a whole for the first three of the components – affective commitment –the strongest correlations are shown to different preceding factors and consequences. There are similar correlation patterns showing for normative commitment, but on a quite lower level. Specific negative correlations are shown for calculative commitment. Considering in a detailed way the research of the last years the affective commitment is the central component of the overall concept. Conceptionally important is the dissociation of the calculated commitment, which is based more on a rational thinking although the empirical proof is somehow weak. In respect to the precedent factors the research delivers quite a well-defined picture. Clearly the contents of work and the leadership as conditions of work are the central and most important precedence factors of affective commitment. The calculative commitment correlates firstly with the job age. The weakest correlations are shown for the normative commitment.