

A Multidimensional Approach to the Relation between Organizational Commitment and Nonwork Participation

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This study examined the relation between organizational commitment and nonwork participation using a multidimensional approach. Female nursing staff of two hospitals in western Canada were surveyed and a total of 227 useable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 47%. The affective, continuance, and normative dimensions of organizational commitment were measured. The nonwork variables included personal resource enrichment and depletion from nonwork participation, work interference with nonwork, organizational support for nonwork, and personal strategies used to manage multiple domains. Although the nonwork variables explained a significant percentage of the variance for all three dimensions of organizational commitment, their individual contributions differed across the dimensions. Continued attention both to nonwork participation and to the various dimensions of organizational commitment was recommended in future research. © 1995 Academic Press, Inc.

The concept of organizational commitment continues to receive considerable attention from both social scientists and managers in work settings. Most of the organizational commitment research has focused on determining its situational and personal antecedents and on testing its ability to predict work outcomes (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Far less attention has been paid to its relation with nonwork participation (Romzek, 1989). Moreover, although there has been a trend in the literature to view organizational commitment as a multidimensional concept (Allen &

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Meyer, 1990; Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, & Sincich, 1993; Reilly & Orsak, 1991), studies involving nonwork concerns have focused largely on the affective dimension. In this study of female nurses, we examined relations between three dimensions of organizational commitment (that is, the affective, continuance, and normative ones identified by Allen & Meyer, 1990) and multiple domain experiences and interdomain management. Women even in demanding occupations continue to carry many responsibilities for family life (e.g., Biernat & Wortman, 1991; Yogev, 1981). Such individuals who experience high demands in both work and nonwork domains may be most likely to reveal important work-nonwork relations.

Of all the proposed antecedents of the affective dimension of organizational commitment, those concerning the work experience itself have demonstrated the strongest predictive power (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In turn, the more nonwork participation enhances the work experience, the more an individual should identify with, be involved in, and enjoy membership in the employing organization. In general, favorable experiences outside of work have been associated with enhanced organizational commitment, whereas unfavorable experiences have been associated with reduced organizational commitment (Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Kirchmeyer, 1992; Romzek, 1989; Steffy & Jones, 1988). Although organizational thinkers now hold little doubt about the ability of nonwork participation to influence affective commitment, they remain uncertain as to how it occurs. Kirchmeyer (1992) argued that personal resources gained through nonwork involvement become available for work and favorably influence work attitudes. Such resource enrichment could involve increasing not only the individual's capacity to meet work demands and his or her value to the employer but also his or her sense of personal competence as well. Organizational commitment has correlated with feelings of one's importance to the organization (Buchanan, 1974) and personal competence (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Because the three dimensions of organizational commitment develop somewhat independently of each other and are functions of different antecedents (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1992; Randall, Fedor, & Longenecker, 1990), the effects of nonwork participation on affective commitment may be unlike those on other dimensions. In terms of continuance commitment, an individual who is committed to an organization remains in that organization due to a reluctance to lose personal investments made during his or her tenure or to a lack of employment alternatives. Allen and Meyer (1990) found pensions and employment alternatives to predict this dimension: benefits and options that should not be affected by the resource outcomes from nonwork participation. In contrast, an individual who is normatively committed believes that people ought to be loyal to their employers and are obliged to remain with them. Although socialization largely influences this dimension, cer-

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