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ANTECEDENTS OF SUPERVISOR COMMITMENT: A CAUSAL MODEL

A DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * * *

The Ohio State University
1996

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ABSTRACT

This study developed and tested a causal model of supervisor commitment. Based on the organizational commitment and leadership literatures in conjunction with research and theory in the area of interpersonal relationships, three variables — similar work goals/values, supervisor support, and trust in the supervisor — were proposed as direct antecedents of supervisor commitment. Additional variables were also proposed to indirectly influence supervisor commitment. Data was gathered from questionnaires completed by 645 employees of The Ohio State University Hospitals. Although hypotheses concerning direct links in the model were supported, a path analysis of the overall fit of the proposed model did not demonstrate a good fit. A modified model was developed in which direct paths between some of the proposed indirect antecedents and supervisor commitment were added to the hypothesized model. Thus, most of the hypothesized relationships were included in the modified model, which did demonstrate a good fit. Psychological similarity and support appeared to be the strongest predictors of supervisor commitment. It was also found that supervisor commitment was positively related to organizational commitment, and fully mediated the effects of the antecedents on organizational commitment.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Overview

Organizational commitment has long been of interest to researchers largely because of its relationship with important organizational outcomes such as absenteeism and turnover (e.g., Koch & Steers, 1978), job satisfaction (e.g., Bateman & Strasser, 1984), motivation (e.g., Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), prosocial behaviors (e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), and innovativeness (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Because organizational commitment can result in such positive outcomes, researchers, as well as practitioners, have been interested in understanding its causes. However, the research on commitment antecedents has mostly resulted in a "laundry list" of varied and inconsistent variables, rather than a clear understanding of the causal mechanisms of organizational commitment (Reichers, 1985).

One reason that antecedent research has produced varied and inconsistent results may stem from its failure to conceptualize organizational commitment in terms of a multiple commitment viewpoint. Reichers (1985) was one of the first to propose that organizational commitment be thought of as a collection of multiple commitments to various foci or constituencies that comprise the organization. Further
research has found that employees do develop commitments to specific foci within the organization such as to co-workers, supervisors, and top management (Becker, 1992). Furthermore, Hunt and Morgan (1994) demonstrated that these constituency-specific commitments directly influence global organizational commitment.

By viewing commitment to specific foci as direct antecedents of organizational commitment, it becomes evident that researchers need to examine the antecedents of constituency-specific commitments in order to more clearly understand the development of global organizational commitment. If commitments to different organizational foci are formed, it also follows that the causal mechanisms affecting the various commitments will be different. For example, Zacarro and Dobbins (1989) found that work-group commitment and organizational commitment were differentially associated with antecedent variables. Therefore, researchers should focus on examining the specific antecedents of commitment foci.

One important constituency in the work life of an employee is the supervisor. The supervisor is not only a person with whom the employee may frequently interact, but the supervisor can control significant aspects of an employee's work experience, such as job assignments, promotions, working conditions, schedule flexibility, bonuses, raises, resources, relationships with other organizational members, and so forth. Consequently, a supervisor has the potential to be one of the most significant influences on an employee's work behavior, attitudes, and performance. Furthermore, because the supervisor is a more specific, tangible entity than the organization or other foci, such as top management and work groups, an organization may be better
able to implement training and selection practices that influence antecedent variables of supervisor commitment. The research on supervisor commitment is sparse, therefore, studies focusing on this construct and its antecedents could make a valuable contribution to the field. The purpose of the proposed study is to develop and assess a causal model of supervisor commitment.

Because the area of supervisor commitment has remained largely unexplored, it is necessary to examine some of the issues associated with the organizational commitment literature. Therefore, this chapter will first review the nature of organizational commitment, followed by a section discussing research related to antecedents of organizational commitment. Most research examining the relationship between individuals and their supervisors has occurred in the literature pertaining to leadership. Thus, the third section will examine relevant theory and research in this area. The final section will present the proposed model of supervisor commitment as well as testable hypotheses based on the model.

The Nature of Organizational Commitment

In order to more clearly define supervisor commitment, as very few researchers have studied this construct, it is first necessary to examine the construct of organizational commitment. Researchers have taken varied approaches to studying and defining organizational commitment. In fact, Morrow (1983) identified over 25 different commitment-related concepts and measures. In order to make sense of this
literature, the different conceptualizations have been broadly categorized into two main areas, behavioral and attitudinal (Mowday et al., 1979).

The behavioral approach views commitment as the binding of an individual to an organization that results from his/her past behaviors. This approach has been linked to Becker's (1960) notion of "side bets" in which an individual becomes bound to an organization because of investments made with the organization over time that make it costly to leave. Therefore, according to this theory, individuals will stay with the organization because of the perceived costs of leaving, such as the loss of attractive benefits and seniority.

Salancik (1977) also viewed commitment from a behavioral perspective, defining it as the binding of the individual to behavioral acts. According to Salancik (1977), there are certain characteristics of behaviors that increase the probability that individuals will become committed to them. For example, individuals are more likely to be committed to a behavior when they have performed similar behaviors in the past, when they see themselves as having choice in behaving that particular way, when their behavior is irrevocable, and when their behavior is public. Overall, the behavioral approach to commitment emphasizes a process by which individuals become bound to the organization by their own actions.

Researchers adhering to the attitudinal approach view organizational commitment as an attitude reflecting a psychological attachment and identification with the organization. One of the most popular conceptualizations of attitudinal commitment stems from the work of Porter and his associates who define
commitment in terms of the strength of an individual's identification and involvement with an organization (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Porter et al. (1974) further characterized this attitude as consisting of three main attributes including a belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. This conceptualization of organizational commitment is most often measured with the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ, Porter et al., 1974).

Although this view of commitment is a popular one, some researchers have criticized the Porter et al. (1974) conceptualization. One of the main problems is that their definition and measurement of organizational commitment includes both antecedents and consequences of an individual's attachment or commitment to an organization (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Reichers, 1985). For example, acceptance of an organization's goals and values could be considered a possible antecedent, whereas motivation and the intent to remain, both have been viewed as outcomes of organizational commitment. This approach has also been criticized because it does not consider the multidimensionality of the construct.

**Components of Commitment**

Researchers have further developed conceptualizations and measurements of organizational commitment in an attempt to better represent the multidimensionality of the construct as well as to provide a more theoretically sound basis. Two main lines of research have developed in response to this need.
One focus has evolved from the work of Meyer and Allen who have developed a three-component model of organizational commitment in order to synthesize past areas of research as well as to capture the complexity and multifaceted aspects of the construct (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1987). In this model, commitment is viewed as a psychological state which reflects an employees' relationship with an organization. According to the model, employees can experience three components of commitment to varying degrees; thus, an individual's total commitment reflects their level at each of the three components. Meyer and Allen postulate that each component develops as the result of different experiences and has different implications for on-the-job behavior.

The first component, labeled affective commitment, reflects an individual's emotional attachment to the organization characterized by identification and involvement with the organization. This component is basically synonymous with the conceptualization of commitment depicted by Porter and his colleagues. The second component, continuance commitment, describes a state based on behavioral commitment notions, such as those postulated by Becker (1960). This form of commitment reflects an individual's attachment to the organization because of the perceived costs associated with leaving. Finally, normative commitment is related to an individual's belief about one's responsibility to the organization. Individuals experiencing this psychological state feel obligated to remain in the organization because it is the "right" thing to do. In summary, employees with strong affective commitment remain in an organization because they want to, those with strong
continuance commitment remain because they need to, and those with strong
normative commitment remain because they feel they should do so (Allen & Meyer,
1990). Scales used to assess the three components of commitment have been
developed by Allen and Meyer (1990).

Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested that affective commitment is the
component most likely to be related to positive organizational outcomes beyond just
remaining with the organization. For example, because affective commitment is
related to the desire to remain in the organization as the result of shared values and
goals, individuals will be more likely to put forth effort to work towards the success of
that organization than those who are committed because they need to be or feel they
should be (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989).

In summary, Meyer and Allen's (1990) conceptualization of organizational
commitment is more useful than the one proposed by Porter et al. (1974) in that it
recognizes the multidimensionality of the construct. It follows that commitment to
other foci besides the organization would also be multidimensional. Therefore,
commitment to a supervisor could have affective, continuance, or normative
components. In other words, employees can be committed to their supervisors
because they want to, need to, or feel obligated to.

Bases of Commitment

Another line of research in this area which has arisen in response to the
realization that commitment may be multifaceted began with the work of O'Reilly and
Chatman (1986). Based on Kelman's (1958) research, which examines the different
reasons that individuals adopt attitudes, O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) proposed that there are three different motives or bases for commitment: compliance, identification, internalization. According to Kelman, an individual will adopt an attitude based on compliance in order to gain specific rewards or avoid specific punishments. Identification occurs in order for an individual to establish and maintain a satisfying, self-defining relationship with another person or group. Finally, internalization is the basis for developing an attitude when its content is congruent with the individual's own value system.

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) designed measures of the three bases of commitment and found that they were differentially related to prosocial organizational behavior, turnover, and intent to stay. Commitment based on identification and internalization was strongly associated with prosocial behaviors and turnover, whereas commitment based on compliance was unrelated to extrarole behaviors or actual turnover. Identification and internalization are thought to have positive implications for organizational outcomes, because organizational norms and values accepted by employees have lasting effects. On the other hand, compliance is believed to have more negative implications because this type of attachment is fleeting and does not involve acceptance of norms and values beneficial to an organization (Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

Although research on the bases of commitment conceptually distinguishes among the three bases, empirical results do not show a clear distinction between the identification and internalization bases (Caldwell et al., 1990; O'Reilly, Chatman,
Caldwell, 1991). For example, results of factor analyses are unable to often show support for two separate constructs, and even when they do, the variables are highly correlated (Becker, 1992). In addition, the identification and internalization bases of commitment do not demonstrate differential relationships with other variables such as job satisfaction, prosocial behavior, intent to stay, and turnover (Becker, 1992; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). It appears that the identification and internalization bases of commitment both assess a type of attitudinal commitment.

In summary, organizational commitment based on identification and commitment based on internalization are not clearly distinguishable. By combining both constructs, the resulting construct would represent a type of commitment that could be described as a strong, psychological bond based on an employee's similar value system and identification with the organization. Essentially, this type of commitment would represent a "deep, psychological attachment." Further, commitment to the supervisor could also be conceptualized according this viewpoint. This type of supervisor commitment would be defined as an employee's deep, psychological attachment to a supervisor with whom the employee identifies and shares a value system. In terms of the different types of possible commitments to a supervisor, it would be the most interesting, as well as fruitful, to understand what causes employees to form this type of deep, psychological bond. Therefore, this study advocates studying a type of supervisor commitment defined as a deep, psychological bond based on identification and internalization.
Foci of Commitment

While some research has recognized the dimensionality of commitment in terms of its bases, others have argued that commitment has multiple foci as well (Becker, 1992; Reichers, 1985). Using research on organization theory, role theory, and reference groups, Reichers (1985) proposed that commitment be defined as a process in which individuals identify with the goals of the organization's multiple constituencies or foci, such as co-workers, supervisors, top management, customers, and unions. In other words, she views organizational commitment as a collection of multiple commitments to various groups that form the organization. However, relatively few studies have examined commitment based on this conceptualization.

One research direction that has examined multiple foci of commitment began with Becker's (1992) work. This research combined the bases of commitment conceptualization (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986) with the multiple foci viewpoint. Becker's (1992, Becker & Billings, 1993) findings supported the idea that individuals develop commitments to supervisors, top management, and work groups, as well as to the organization overall. Commitments to each of the specific foci were also found to be negatively related to the intent to quit, and positively related to job satisfaction and prosocial organizational behaviors.

Reichers (1985) also pointed out that her multiple foci conceptualization of commitment suggests that the level of commitment to one constituency can affect the level of commitment to the organization overall. This idea was supported by Hunt and Morgan (1994) who used Becker's (1992) data to demonstrate that commitment to
supervisor, co-workers, and top management were each antecedents of global organizational commitment. Therefore, one way to increase global organizational commitment would be to increase commitment levels to specific organizational foci, such as the supervisor.

In addition to influencing organizational commitment, commitment to specific foci may result in different consequences than commitment to the overall organization. For example, Becker, Billings, Eveleth, and Gilbert (1996) found that commitment to the supervisor was positively related to in-role performance and was more strongly associated with this performance than was commitment to the organization. Becker et al. (1996) argued that norms regarding in-role behaviors are more likely to be established by the supervisor than the organization overall. Therefore, commitment to the supervisor is likely to lead to an acceptance of performance norms, resulting in higher performance. They further suggested that researchers and human resource professionals concerned with employee performance should focus their efforts on supervisor commitment rather than organizational commitment.

Based on the literature related to the nature of commitment, it is clear that more research focused on the specific foci of commitment is needed. As mentioned previously, this study focuses on the supervisor as the foci of interest. Although different bases of commitment have been identified, it appears that attitudinal commitment, a psychological rather than behavioral attachment, has a greater number of positive outcomes for the individual and the organization. Consequently, the
proposed research pursues an attitudinal approach, specifically one that defines commitment as a deep, psychological attachment based on identification and internalization. In other words, supervisor commitment will be viewed as the degree to which an employee has formed an attachment with his/her supervisor based on a self-defining relationship and the level of perceived value similarity.

**Antecedents of Organizational Commitment**

Although no published studies have specifically examined antecedents of supervisor commitment, many have looked at proposed antecedents of organizational commitment. Therefore, this section will provide a brief overview of the literature related to organizational commitment antecedents. This review specifically focuses on three main themes within this literature that imply some relevance to the understanding of supervisor commitment antecedents. First, this section focuses on the need for more sophisticated conceptualizations of the causal process. Next, the way in which individual differences may function is discussed. Finally, the role of organizational support and its theoretical basis is presented.

**Need for More Sophisticated Causal Models**

Much of the research in this area consists of correlational studies between organizational commitment and a wide range of proposed antecedent variables. Many of these studies have been based on Steer's (1977) model of organizational commitment in which he suggested that there are three categories of antecedents. The first category consists of personal characteristics believed to influence commitment
such as age, sex, education, and tenure. The second category includes job
caracteristics such as skill variety and task autonomy. Work experiences, such as
organizational characteristics and leader behaviors, comprise the third category. A
fourth category, composed of role related characteristics such as role ambiguity and
role conflict, was later added by Mowday et al. (1982).

Although over 25 different antecedent variables based on this model have
shown some type of predictive relationship with organizational commitment in one
study or another, few of the variables have demonstrated a strong, consistent
relationship with commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982;
Reichers, 1985). (For a more thorough review of this literature, see Mathieu & Zajac,
1990; Morrow, 1983; Mowday et al., 1982; and Reichers, 1985). One reason for the
inconsistent findings may result from the several different ways in which commitment
has been defined and measured (Reichers, 1985). Another problem stems from the
lack of theory used to support the hypothesized relationship between antecedents and
organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). In other words, researchers
often fail to explain why a specific variable would affect an employee's level of
psychological attachment to the organization.

Mowday et al. (1982) has suggested that another problem is reflected in the
lack of research addressing complex predictions among antecedent variables.
Because much of the research simply examines a direct correlation between
antecedents and commitment, there is a need for more causal models of commitment.
This implies that the relationships between organizational commitment and many of
the proposed antecedents may be mediated by other variables. This assertion can also be supported by research on psychological proximity in the area of field theory, which suggests that elements in one's psychological environment are interrelated in a way such that the influences of more distal factors will be mediated by their influence on more proximal factors (Lewin, 1951). For example, it may be more likely that the influence of such antecedents as job characteristics are mediated by constructs more psychologically proximal such as job satisfaction.

One research study, which developed a causal model of organizational commitment using such psychological proximity notions, was conducted by Mathieu and Hamel (1989). They postulated that elements more proximal in the work environment, such as job characteristics, would have more influence than elements more removed from individuals such as organizational characteristics. In their model, mental health and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between job characteristics (including skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, job feedback) and organizational commitment. In addition, the influence of organizational formalization and organizational decentralization was mediated by job characteristics. This study demonstrates the use of more sophisticated delineation of the causal processes involved in the development of commitment which is desperately needed in this research area.

In summary, it is clear that more attention to the causal mechanisms of commitment is needed. This implies the development of models with both mediating and moderating variables. There are few examples of this type of research within the
organizational commitment literature. Furthermore, the need for sophisticated causal models is also relevant to the study of supervisor commitment and its antecedents.

Individual Differences

Based on their meta-analysis of commitment antecedents, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) recommended that more researchers need to examine individual difference variables as moderators of the influence of other variables, rather than as direct antecedents of commitment. They suggested that individual differences may affect employee perceptions of various aspects of the organization, and thus their reactions to it. Related to this notion, some models of organizational commitment have focused on the importance of person-organization fit. The premise of person-organization fit notions is that when individuals fit or match the requirements of a situation, positive responses will occur (O'Reilly et al., 1991).

Luthans et al. (1987) assessed the role of person-organization fit by examining the influence that a fit between employee personality (locus of control) and leader behavior (initiating structure behavior) would have on organizational commitment. Although they found a significant interaction effect, the effect size was small. However, this could be related to the failure to conceptualize supervisor commitment as a mediating variable.

The influence of person-organization fit on organizational commitment has also been studied by examining the congruence or similarity between employee values and those represented in the organization (Boxx, Odom, & Dunn, 1991; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989; O'Reilly et al., 1991). Meglino et al. (1989) found
that employees had higher levels of organizational commitment when their values were congruent with the values of their supervisor. Using a Q-sort method, O'Reilly et al. (1991) found that when employee value preferences were similar to the values expressed in the organization's culture, they were more likely to be committed and satisfied. In addition, person-organization fit was related to affective commitment, but not to continuance commitment.

The research on person-organization fit as an antecedent of organizational commitment can also be viewed in the context of supervisor commitment. One implication is that individual differences, such as personality characteristics, may also play a moderating role in a causal model of supervisor commitment. Commitment to one's supervisor as well as the organization may be influenced by a person-environment interaction. For example, certain supervisor behaviors may be more likely to lead to commitment for individuals with certain personality characteristics. In addition, the notion of congruence seems to be one of the key points, indicating that congruence or similarity between the subordinate and supervisor will play a role in the commitment process. These points will be elaborated on further in the last section which presents the causal model.

**Organizational Support**

One line of antecedent research, which also has implications for supervisor commitment, tends to be more theoretically based than others. This research direction has examined the relationship between organizational commitment and employee's perception of the organization's commitment to them, referred to as perceived
organizational support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Using a social exchange framework, Eisenberger et al. (1986) argue that employees who perceive a high level of organizational support are more likely to "repay" the organization in terms of affective commitment and work-related behavior. They further argue that perceived support would promote the incorporation of organizational membership and role status into employees' self-identity. Researchers have subsequently demonstrated a strong positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment to the organization (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

This same framework could be applied to the formation of supervisor commitment. In other words, if employees infer that their supervisors are committed to them based on the demonstration of supportive behaviors, the employees would be more likely to be committed to their supervisors in return. Basically, employees would be more likely to form a deep, psychological attachment to supervisors who demonstrated support and commitment to the employees.

In summary, although much of the research on antecedents of organizational commitment does not explicitly address specific antecedents of supervisor commitment, there are some applicable issues that can be drawn from this literature. First, antecedents of commitment should be viewed in terms of complex, causal models rather than a "laundry list" of predictive variables. In addition, individual differences are likely to play a role as moderating variables in causal models, as commitment seems to be influenced by a person-environment interaction, especially
one based on congruence. Finally, social exchange theory appears to provide a theoretical basis for the relationship between possible antecedent variables and commitment. For example, social exchange theory directly points to a link between an employee's perception of their supervisor's commitment to them and the deep, psychological attachment or commitment that the employee develops in exchange.

**Leadership Theories**

As there is no specific literature on the antecedents of supervisor commitment, examining a related literature is one way to gain more understanding of this area. Because supervisor commitment is based on the supervisor-subordinate relationship, theory and research on leadership is likely to provide some insight into the area as it deals with this relationship. Although there are several theories and research directions in the field of leadership, only a few address issues that are relevant to an employee's commitment to his/her supervisor. These include transformational leadership, vertical dyad linkage theory, path-goal theory, and leadership behavior taxonomies. In addition, of these theories which contain some relevance, only small portions of the theory may be applicable to the development of a deep, psychological attachment to the supervisor. The common themes found in these theories which allude to the causal mechanisms involved in this type of attachment include the importance of congruence or similarity between the work goals of the subordinate and the supervisor, the importance of trust in the relationship, the value of supervisor supportiveness and consideration, and the role of individual differences. This section
will provide a brief overview of the four leadership theories which address these themes to varying degrees.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership can be defined as the process of influencing these attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization's goals (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders have been described as admired, respected, and trusted role models with whom followers identify and wish to emulate (Bass & Avolio, 1994). According to Bass (1985), a leader can influence followers by making them more aware of the importance and value of task outcomes, inducing them to transcend their own self interest for the sake of the organization, and activating higher-order needs. Transformational leadership involves influencing others and building commitment by using one or more of the "Four I's": idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991).

*Idealized influence* involves earning the respect and trust of employees by considering their needs over one's own needs. Leaders behaving in such a way would avoid using power for personal gains, could be relied on to do the "right thing", and would be consistent rather than arbitrary. Gabarro (1978) identified similar types of supervisor actions which serve as character-based sources of trust. For example, he found that employees developed trust based on evaluation of their supervisor's integrity, motives and intentions, consistency of behavior, and openness and
 discreetness. Therefore, idealized influence involves behaving in such a way that
engenders trust in employees.

_Impirical motivation_ is described as behavior that motivates and inspires
those around by providing meaning and challenge to their work. Leaders engaging in
such behaviors arouse enthusiasm and optimism by clearly communicating
expectations that employees want to meet in addition to demonstrating commitment to
goals and the shared vision. In essence, this type of behavior involves creating a
shared set of goals and demonstrating commitment to them.

_Intellectual stimulation_ includes stimulating subordinate’s efforts by
encouraging creativity without publicly criticizing mistakes. The leader solicits new
ideas and creative problem solutions from employees. This type of behavior is similar
to a participatory style of management in which employees are included in the process
of addressing problems and finding solutions.

Finally, _Individualized consideration_ involves developing employee need for
achievement and growth as well as supporting the specific needs of each individual.
This type of behavior includes recognizing individual differences and matching
behavior to the needs of the employee. In addition, communication is encouraged and
interactions are personalized.

Although the transformational leadership model has been used to train leaders
in the private sector and community (Avolio & Bass, 1990), little research has
specifically assessed its relationship to employee commitment. However, a fairly
recent study conducted by Niehoff, Enz, and Grover (1990) examined the relationship
between top management behavior based on the transformational model and organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and role ambiguity. They found that employees who perceived top management actions as inspiring a shared vision, modeling the vision, encouraging innovativeness, supporting employee efforts, and allowing decision influence, reported lower levels of role ambiguity and higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

**Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory**

One leadership theory based on social exchange theory is referred to as vertical dyad linkage theory, or leader-member exchange theory (LMX) (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Cashman, 1975; Graen, Liden, & Hoel, 1982). Graen and his colleagues propose that leaders differentiate among their subordinates in terms of leader behavior. The basic premise of this theory is that supervisors usually establish a special relationship with a small number of subordinates based on their competence and skill, the extent to which they can be trusted, and their motivation to assume greater responsibility. According to the theory, these selected subordinates, referred to as the in-group, receive greater discretion, influence, support, attention, information, sensitivity, and other resources from their supervisors. In exchange, the in-group members tend to work harder, to be more committed to task objectives, and to be more loyal to their leader. On the other hand, subordinates that are not chosen by their supervisor, who are referred to as out-group members, tend to perform more routine, mundane tasks and experience a more formal exchange of merely complying with formal role requirements.

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Several studies have found a significant positive relationship between vertical-exchange quality and job satisfaction (Seers & Graen, 1984; Vecchio, 1987; Vecchio & Gobdel, 1984). Although the theory hypothesizes that in-group members tend to be more committed to their supervisor and task objectives, no studies have empirically tested this proposition. However, one study conducted by Nystrom (1990) proposed that the quality of vertical exchange would show a strong positive relationship with organizational commitment. Using a sample of 171 business managers from different organizations, Nystrom (1990) found that the quality of vertical exchange was positively related to organizational commitment even after controlling for four situational variables (tenure in position, tenure in company, job level, and organizational size).

LMX theory also suggests that the type of relationship which forms between a leader and member is influenced by the expectations, job performance, and compatibility between leader and member (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Cashman, 1975). Liden, Wayne, and Stillwell (1993) investigated the relationship between these three variables and LMX quality. They found ratings of subordinate performance were less important in predicting LMX than perceived similarity, liking, and expectations. Liden et al. argued that a supervisor with more positive expectations of a subordinate may give more support and guidance. In addition, they asserted that perceived similarity between the dyad leads to liking which has a positive influence on LMX. Another study associating similarity with LMX found a relationship between leader-member agreement on job-related issues and LMX.
(Steiner & Dobbins, 1989). One explanation for the effect of similarity on LMX may be that perceived similarity between the subordinate and supervisor leads to increased trust because greater similarity implies a greater likelihood that they will both be working towards similar work goals.

**Path-Goal Theory**

Path-goal theory is a contingency model of leadership which was developed to explain how leader behavior influences subordinate satisfaction and performance (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974). The essential premise of this theory is that a leader can influence a subordinate by knowing what goals are important to the individual and by operating on the means or behaviors required to accomplishing these goals. According to House and Mitchell (1974), there is no one particular type of leader behavior that is always motivating, rather any behavior can be a source of subordinate satisfaction to the extent that it increases subordinate goal attainment and clarifies the path of these goals.

The path-goal theory draws from expectancy theory to propose an intervening motivational process which mediates the relationship between supervisor behavior and subordinate satisfaction and effort. According to expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), in choosing how much effort to expend, a person considers the probability that a given level of effort will lead to successful completion of the task and the probability that task completion will result in desirable outcomes. Also included in the path-goal model are situational moderator variables, including task characteristics and subordinate characteristics, which influence subordinate preferences for leader.
behavior, thus influencing the impact of the leader on subordinate satisfaction. This concept is similar to the notion of *individualized consideration* discussed in transformational leadership. Basically, both concepts reflect the need for the supervisor to individualize his/her behavior based on the specific needs and goals of the subordinate.

Path-goal theory considers four main types of leadership styles which are proposed to interact with situational variables (House & Mitchell, 1974). These four styles include supportive leadership, directive leadership, participative leadership, and achievement-oriented leadership. Although some of these styles have been found to interact with situational variables, supportive leadership tends to have a main positive effect on satisfaction, only weakly moderated by task structure (Yukl, 1989). Supportive leadership involves giving consideration to the needs of subordinates, displaying concern for their welfare, and creating a friendly climate in the work unit.

In a test of path-goal theory, Klimoski and Hayes (1980) investigated the effect that specific supervisor behaviors had on the key motivational constructs of expectancy, effort, and performance. The supervisor behaviors included explicitness in giving instructions, frequency of communication about job related matters, allowing involvement in determining performance standards, support for efforts to perform effectively, frequency of performance reviews, and behavior consistency. They postulated that these behaviors are likely to increase the clarity of expectations as well as the explication of the rewards or punishments associated with conformity to these expectations. Their findings supported the proposed relationship between leader
behavior and perceived performance-reward contingencies, role strain, work facet satisfaction, and effort. Other research investigating path-goal theory has also focused on satisfaction and effort, but none have examined commitment as a dependent variable.

Leadership Behavior Taxonomies

Some theories of leadership effectiveness have focused more on identifying categories of effective behaviors. The Ohio State University Leadership Studies played an important role in this area (Fleishman, 1953; Halpin & Winer, 1957; Hemphill & Coons, 1957). This research program involved the collection of a list of over 1800 examples of leadership behavior which were reduced to 150 examples of leadership functions. Factor analysis revealed that two main dimensions, labeled consideration and initiating structure, emerge as categories of leadership behavior.

Consideration involves the degree to which a leader demonstrates consideration, acceptance, and concern for the needs and feelings of subordinates. Leaders exhibiting consideration behaviors are generally concerned with relationships, mutual trust, and interpersonal warmth (Bass, 1990). Overall, these type of behaviors are believed to aid in building and maintaining effective interpersonal relationships (Yukl, 1989). Initiating structure indicates the extent to which leaders define, organize, and initiate the work that is to be done. The behaviors associated with this dimension include an insistence on meeting or maintaining standards, deciding what work will be done, how it should be done and who will do it, and ensuring that deadlines are met. Essentially, initiating structure involves actively
defining and structuring work roles. Consideration and initiating structure are often measured with the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (Stogdill, 1963).

The two dimensions of leader behavior have been identified in other research and have been described in terms such as relationship oriented and task oriented (Bass, 1967; Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fiedler, 1967), employee centered and production centered (Katz, Maccoby, & Morse, 1950; Likert, 1967), relations skilled and administratively skilled (Mann, 1965), and supportive and work facilitative (Bowers and Seeshore, 1966). In fact, these factors arise so frequently that most conclude they are essential parts of the leadership role (Forsyth, 1983). Generally, relationship oriented behaviors have shown a stronger association with leader effectiveness than task oriented behavior (Schriesheim, House, & Kerr, 1976). Based on this research which demonstrates that the supervisor role contains distinct relationship and task dimensions, it is likely that the development of supervisor commitment involves both relationship and task components.

Summary

Some common themes that are present in the four areas of leadership discussed above also have some relevance to the understanding of supervisor commitment, described as the deep, psychological bond an employee may form with his/her supervisor. The first theme implies the importance of similarity or congruence between the subordinate and supervisor work goals and values. According to transformational leadership theory, supervisors should create a shared set of goals and demonstrate commitment to them. This type of behavior is believed to create
inspiration and motivation within the employee because the employee and supervisor are working together toward the same goals. In addition, Bass and Avolio (1994) point out that this type of transformational leader behavior causes subordinates to respect and identify with such leaders.

Vertical dyad linkage theory discusses the difference between in-group and out-group supervisor-subordinate relationships. In-group relationships, also referred to as high quality leader-member exchanges (LMXs), are characterized by the type of deep, psychological attachment defined as supervisor commitment in the proposed research. According to vertical dyad linkage theory, one of the main antecedents to the development of high quality LMX is the perceived similarity between the subordinate and supervisor. In addition, perceived similarity in terms of attitudes towards job-related issues may be especially important. Again, similarity is presented as an important component of a "close" subordinate-supervisor relationship.

The second important theme present in some of the leadership research involves trust in the supervisor-subordinate relationship. For example, vertical dyad linkage theory views trust as an important antecedent of high quality LMX. Transformational leadership theory stresses the importance of developing follower trust by considering their needs, doing the "right thing", and behaving consistently. In addition to supervisor-subordinate relationships, trust is also a significant aspect of close, interpersonal relationships (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). Therefore, it follows that trust would play a significant role in an employee's development of a close, psychological bond with his/her supervisor.
The importance of supervisor behaviors directed at giving support and showing concern for the well-being of the employee is incorporated into all of the theories in one way or another. Supportive behaviors are those demonstrating consideration, acceptance, and concern for the needs and feelings of subordinates. Essentially, these are the types of behaviors that promote effective interpersonal relationships because they show care and liking for the other person.

Transformational leadership theory asserts the value of demonstrating individual consideration for subordinates, whereas vertical dyad linkage theory describes supportiveness as an aspect of high quality LMXs. Research on leadership behavior taxonomies delineates consideration as one of the main dimensions of effective leadership behavior. In order for an employee to feel a strong bond with a supervisor, it is evident that supportive supervisor behavior will play a significant role. It is clear that employees need to feel liked and cared about before they could form an affective attachment to their supervisors.

Finally, the role of individual differences as a moderating influence is seen in path-goal theory. In this theory, individual differences are viewed as moderators of the relationship between supervisor behavior and subordinate satisfaction. Although path-goal theory does not provide much insight into the types of individual differences that would be important moderators in a model of supervisor commitment, it is the only theory that explicitly points to their role in this capacity.

Review of research in the leadership area has pointed to some concepts and themes which are important to the understanding of supervisor commitment.
Therefore, the next section will incorporate these themes with those found in the antecedents of organizational commitment literature in order to develop a causal model of supervisor commitment, defined as an employee’s deep, psychological attachment to the supervisor.

**Causal Model of Supervisor Commitment**

Based on incorporation of research and theory in the area of interpersonal relationships with the relevant themes pointed out in the organizational commitment and leadership literatures, I have developed the causal model of supervisor commitment seen in Figure 1. As can be seen in the model, the three psychological variables that are proposed as the most proximal antecedents of supervisor commitment are similar work goals and values, supervisor support, and trust. This section will discuss these three variables as well as their relationship with supervisor commitment and other variables in the model. Hypotheses based on the model will also be proposed.

**Similar Work Goals and Values**

The first proposed antecedent of supervisor commitment is *similar work goals and values*, which refers to the degree of perceived similarity between the work goals and values of employees and their supervisors. The theoretical basis for the relationship between similar work goals and values and supervisor commitment can be drawn from the literature related to interpersonal attraction. A great deal of
Trust

Support

Openness in Communication

Psychological Similarity

Frequency of Interaction

Similar Work Goals/Values

Promise Fulfillment

Fairness

Integrity

Competence

Trust

Supervisor Commitment

Support

Figure 1: The proposed causal model of supervisor commitment.
research within this area has demonstrated that people tend to like and be attracted to those who are similar (Berscheid, 1985). One explanation for this phenomenon is that when individuals discover that others hold similar attitudes and values, they are given support for the notion that their own attitude is the correct one; essentially, they are given social validation (Berscheid & Walster, 1969). According to Byrne (1961), this type of consensual validation is rewarding to our self-esteem, and, therefore, positively influences attraction or liking for the other individual. In other words, when another individual holds similar values, it validates our own values, so we are attracted to this person because they make us feel good about ourselves. In addition, we also may be attracted to similar others because we assume that they are more inclined to like us, and thus we in turn like them (Aronson & Worchel, 1966).

Researchers have demonstrated that the anticipation of being liked often generates attraction in return (Jones, Bell, & Aronson, 1972). In summary, it is clear that similarity is strongly related to attraction and positive affect for another person.

Much of the research demonstrating the role of similarity in interpersonal relationships has been conducted in the context of social or intimate relationships, rather than those which occur in a work environment. Huston and Levinger (1978) point out that the relationship between similarity and attraction is dependent upon the nature of the similarity and the context in which the relationship occurs. As pointed out by Gabarro (1987), work relationships differ from social or intimate ones, in that their main purpose is to accomplish task-based goals. Therefore, in the context of supervisor-subordinate relationships, it is logical to assume that the most significant
types of similarity will be those related to the work environment and task achievement. Consequently, similarity in terms of work goals and work values should be the most influential for the development of attraction and commitment to a supervisor. An employee would be more likely to identify with and internalize values of a supervisor who is perceived as similar in terms of work goals and values. This similarity would engender validation for the employee's self-concept as an "employee" in this particular department, organization, profession, and so forth. Because this type of validation is psychologically and emotionally rewarding, the employee would be more likely to form a close bond with the supervisor. In addition, the feeling of working together towards a shared set of work goals and values would also foster the feeling of identification and internalization. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

\textbf{Hypothesis One:} Employees who tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor will be more committed to their supervisor than employees who do not tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor.

Newcomb (1961) argued that the importance of an attitude to the person will influence how much similarity affects liking. Based on this argument, Byrne (1971) demonstrated that individuals will be more likely to be attracted to others who have similar attitudes or values in areas that are more important to the individual. It can be
assumed that individual differences will influence the degree of importance placed on certain issues and values. For example, two individuals may both value achievement, yet one person may view it as the most important value, whereas the other individual may view positive relationships with family and friends as more important than achievement. In other words, individuals can have similar goals and values, yet they may place different degrees of importance upon the goals and values. As noted earlier, similarity is more likely to generate attraction when the similarity involves goals and values that are important to the individual.

One individual difference variable that may affect the value placed on work goals and values is work centrality. Work centrality can be defined as the beliefs that individuals have regarding the degree of importance that work plays in their lives (Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). It follows that for those who view work as an important part of their lives (high work centrality), work goals and values would be more important to them as compared to those who do not view work as an important part of their lives (low work centrality). Therefore, similarity in terms of work goals and values would be more likely to lead to attraction and commitment for individuals who were high in work centrality because work goals and values would be more important to them. This relationship is supported by the research and theory described above. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Two:** The relationship between similar work goals and values and supervisor commitment will be moderated by work centrality such that the
relationship between similar work goals and values and supervisor commitment will be stronger for those high in work centrality. For those low in work centrality, the relationship will still be a positive one, but will be weaker.

If similar work goals and values influence supervisor commitment, it is also important to understand what causes the perception of similar work goals and values. Therefore, in the supervisor commitment model three main variables are proposed to directly influence similar work goals and values, and, thus, indirectly influence supervisor commitment through their influence on similar work goals and values. These three variables are referred to as psychological similarity, openness in communication, and frequency of interaction.

**Psychological Similarity.** The first variable believed to influence similar work goals and values is referred to as *psychological similarity*. Psychological similarity in this context can be defined as the degree to which employees perceive themselves and their supervisor similar in terms of such psychological attributes as personality, interests, attitudes, and values. It is proposed that employees who perceive their supervisors as more similar psychologically will be more likely to perceive that their supervisor has similar work goals and values. It is reasonable to assume that psychological similarity would influence work goal and work value similarity. Psychological similarity is merely a more general concept, whereas work goal and value similarity involves psychological similarity in a specific area. Because more
general attitudes and preferences influence specific attitudes and preferences, it is logical to assume that general psychological similarity would be related to similarity in a work context. Furthermore, as argued earlier, individuals who are more psychologically similar are also more inclined to like each other. Therefore, the more they like each other, the easier it would be for them to develop a shared set of work goals and values. For example, if two individuals like each other, they would be more likely to cooperate and develop agreement about work goals. Gabarro (1987) points out that similarities in values and attitudes can affect the ease with which further mutuality can develop. Therefore, the more similar psychologically, the more likely that subordinates and supervisors will be to develop similar work goals and values.

The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Three:** Employees who tend to perceive themselves as psychologically similar to their supervisor will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to perceive themselves as psychologically similar to their supervisor.

**Openness in Communication.** Another variable believed to directly influence similar work goals and values is communication. According to Hollander (1978), communication is the key to establishing mutual goals. Specifically, openness in communication has found to be an important component in effective supervisor-
subordinate communication (e.g., Baird, 1974). Researchers have argued that openness concerning task or organizational issues is critical to the development of effective working relationships (Gabarro, 1978; Gaines, 1980). Gabarro (1987) argues that task-relevant openness in working relationships plays a role similar to self-disclosure in intimate relationships in that it provides mutual knowledge and investment in the relationship.

Openness consists of two basic dimensions: openness in message sending and openness in message receiving (Jablin, 1979). Openness in message sending involves the open disclosure of feelings and important company facts, whereas openness in message receiving involves permitting and encouraging the expression of others' views and the willingness to listen (Redding, 1972). If a supervisor and employee are open to listening to each other's work goals and values and also disclose information about their work goals and values, they will be more likely to understand each other's focus, and more easily arrive at a mutual set of work goals and values. The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Four**: Employees who tend to perceive communication with their supervisor as open will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to perceive communication with their supervisor as open.
Frequency of Interaction. It is not only important that open communication between the subordinate and the supervisor occurs, but their frequency of interaction can influence the development of similar work goals and values. For example, if they do not interact frequently, the employee may be less clear about the supervisor's work goals and values. If the employee does not know what the supervisor's work attitudes are, the employee will not be likely to view their work goals and values as similar. However, if the supervisor and employee interact frequently, it is more likely that the employee and supervisor will be aware of each other's work goals and values and clearly understand them. In addition, by interacting more frequently and getting to know each other better, the employee and supervisor can develop a shared set of goals. Because goals can change over time, by interacting frequently the subordinate and supervisor can also keep their goals congruent. Gabarro (1978) suggests that mutual goals and expectations are typically worked out over time during a succession of frequent interactions such as ad hoc encounters, meetings, progress reviews, and discussion of task-based problems. Therefore, even if the employee and supervisor do not begin their relationship with mutual work goals and values, through frequent discussions and encounters they can arrive at a shared set of them (Gabarro, 1987).

With frequent interaction, the employee and supervisor are able to work out mutual goals and values based on their experiences working together and the types of goals, behaviors, roles, etc. that have worked the best in the past. The employee and supervisor are able to get to know each other better by interacting frequently, and,
thus can more easily clearly define and understand work goals and values. The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Five:** Employees who tend to interact frequently with their supervisor will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to interact frequently with their supervisor.

**Supervisor Support**

Another proposed antecedent of supervisor commitment is referred to as *supervisor support*. Based on social exchange theory, Eisenberger et al. (1986) argued that an employee’s sense of commitment is affected by their sense of the organization's commitment to them; in other words, commitment is a "two-way street." In addition, employees infer an organization's commitment and the organization's readiness to meet needs for praise and approval by the degree to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, which is referred to as perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Subsequent studies have found that perceived organizational support is positively related to organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Therefore, it can be argued if perceived organizational support is related to organization commitment, then it follows that perceived supervisor support would be related to supervisor commitment for the same theoretical reasons. In other words, in exchange for a supervisor's commitment to the employee, which is inferred by a
supervisor's supportive behavior in which he/she values the employee's contributions and cares about the employee's well-being, the employee would become committed to the supervisor. In addition, this type of supportive behavior demonstrates care and liking of the employee, and, as mentioned earlier, people tend to like and be attracted to others who demonstrate liking for them. This occurs because another person liking us fulfills needs for esteem and approval, and we are attracted to people who give us such rewards (Berscheid & Walster, 1969). Therefore, it is likely that employees would be more likely to form a close, psychological bond which supervisors who demonstrate support and care, as this type of behavior demonstrates the supervisor's commitment to the employee and is emotionally rewarding to the employee. The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Six:** Employees who tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive will be more committed to their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive.

The role of individual differences as a moderator of this relationship must also be considered. According to Blau (1964), our social interactions involve an exchange of rewards in which we desire exchanges that provide us with rewards that meet our needs. However, there are individual differences in the types and levels of needs that people are trying to fulfill. Supportiveness involves meeting needs for esteem and approval (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Therefore, it is likely that individuals who have a
higher need for approval would be more likely to value supportiveness in an exchange relationship. It then follows that perceived supervisor support, which helps meet needs for approval, would tend to be a more positive influence on supervisor commitment for employees who have a higher need for approval. The following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis Seven: The relationship between perceived supervisor support and supervisor commitment will be moderated by need for approval such that for employees high in need for approval, the relationship between perceived supervisor support and supervisor commitment will be a strong, positive one. For those low in need for approval, the relationship will also be positive, but will be a weaker one.

Supervisor Trust

Researchers have consistently asserted that trust is one of the fundamental dimensions of interpersonal relations and organization life (e.g., Atwater, 1988; Gibb, 1965). As mentioned earlier, several leadership theories, such as vertical dyad linkage theory and transformational leadership theory, also view trust as an important element in an effective supervisor-subordinate relationship, but few studies have specifically assessed and outlined its role. As pointed out by Porter, Lawler, and Hackman (1975), "Trust . . . is widely talked about, and it is widely assumed to be good for organizations. When it comes to specifying just what it means in an organizational
context, however, vagueness creeps in" (p. 497). In the proposed research, it is believed that the significance of trust lies in its influence on supervisor commitment.

In general, trust refers to the extent to which one expects good intentions and has confidence in the words and actions of the other (Cook & Wall, 1980). Furthermore, trust involves the extent to which one can expect predictability in terms of the other's actions, especially behavior described as reliable, dependable, and concerned with providing expected rewards (Rempel et al., 1985). Therefore, in the context of the supervisor-subordinate relationship, it follows that a high level of trust will translate into a high degree of certainty or confidence that the supervisor will have good intentions and feel concerned with providing expected rewards, thus increasing the level of supervisor commitment.

The role of trust as an antecedent to supervisor commitment can be supported by social exchange theory. For example, because trust involves an increased certainty in another's predictability and dependability in the future (Rempel et al., 1985), it allows an employee to exchange their commitment to the supervisor for supervisor actions and attitudes that are expected in the future. In other words, trust allows the employee to feel confident that the supervisor will continue to behave in the employee's best interest. Trust also serves to dampen or buffer the impact of particular behaviors because they are likely to be given little weight or meaning in the broader scheme of things (Holmes, 1991). For example, if a supervisor is having a "bad" day and is not her usual supportive self, a subordinate who has developed trust for the supervisor will continue to be committed despite some infrequent displays of
unsupportive behavior. Essentially, trust is the glue that holds the bond to the supervisor in tact. The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Eight:** Employees who tend to trust their supervisor will be more committed to their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to trust their supervisor.

Researchers studying trust in the context of organizational settings have found that trust is activated and sustained by a multidimensional set of conditions (Butler, 1991; Drehmer & Grossman, 1984; Gabarro, 1978; McAllister, 1995). For example, in a qualitative study, Gabarro (1978) identified two main sources of trust in supervisors, sources related to character and those related to competence. Character-based sources of trust included perceptions of the supervisor's integrity, motives, and intentions. Competence-based sources involved perceptions of the supervisor's functional or specific competence, interpersonal competence, and business judgment. Because no prior researchers had developed a measurement tool of the multiple determinants of supervisor trust, Butler (1991) integrated Gabarro's (1978) findings with other past research to develop an instrument that measures the different antecedents of trust in a subordinate-supervisor relationship. Based on factor analysis, in addition to prior conceptual and qualitative work, subscales of the instrument were identified as determinants of trust. All subscales were positively related to overall trust in the supervisor, including perception's of the supervisor's competence,
integrity, fairness, and promise fulfillment. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis Nine:** Employees who tend to perceive their supervisor as acting with fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment, and competence, will be more likely to trust their supervisor than employees who do not tend to perceive their supervisors as acting with fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment, and competence.

In addition to this research examining trust in organizational settings, research focused on the study of trust in close relationships can also provide some insight into the causes of supervisor trust. Researchers studying close interpersonal relationships have argued that trust develops out of the affective component of a relationship (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Rempel et al., 1985). In other words, trust develops in a relationship where care and concern is expressed and it is believed that emotional sentiments are reciprocated (Pennings & Woiceshyn, 1987; Rempel et al., 1985). This type of affective-based trust is associated with feeling of confidence and security in the caring responses of the partner (Rempel et al., 1985). Essentially, these researchers have found that trust develops in close relationship where the individuals act in a supportive manner towards one another. Therefore, if a supervisor's behavior is perceived as supportive, it is also likely that a subordinate's level of trust will be positively influenced. The following hypothesis is proposed:
Hypothesis Ten: Employees who tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive will be more likely to trust their supervisor than those who do not tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive.

Finally, because trust is characterized by confidence in predicting another's actions, it is also likely that the perception of similar work goals and values will positively influence the level of supervisor trust. Because attitudes often predict another's future behavior (Berscheid & Walster, 1969), we would feel most confident about predicting the future behavior of others who are similar to us, because they would be likely to act as we would. Therefore, employees would feel more confident in their predictions about work behaviors of supervisors who had similar work goals and values. Further, the employee would feel that a supervisor with similar work goals and values would act with these goals and values in mind; this would also serve the employee's best interests, and, thus, further trust in the supervisor. In addition, Gabarro (1978) found that the development of trust in a supervisor was partly a function of how clearly goals had been worked out and become shared by both parties. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis Eleven: Employees who tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor will be more likely to trust their supervisor than those who do not tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor.
Summary Hypothesis

The previously mentioned hypotheses each involve propositions concerning specific direct links in the causal model seen in Figure 1. However, this study also proposes that the overall model taken as a whole is a good depiction of the causal processes involved in supervisor commitment. Therefore, the following is proposed:

Hypothesis Twelve: The proposed causal model of supervisor commitment as a whole will be a good representation of the relationships among the variables.

Additional Hypotheses

As mentioned early in the chapter, one reason for investigating the antecedents of supervisor commitment is to gain a better understanding of the development of global organizational commitment. For example, past researchers have shown that supervisor commitment directly influences organizational commitment. Therefore, based on field theory notions, antecedents of supervisor commitment would influence organizational commitment though their effect on supervisor commitment. The following hypotheses are based on this assertion:

Hypothesis Thirteen: Employees who are more committed to their supervisors will tend to be more committed to the organization than those who are less committed to their supervisors.
Hypothesis Fourteen: Supervisor commitment will fully mediate the influence of the proposed model of antecedents on organizational commitment.

An additional way of evaluating the validity of the proposed antecedents as a predictor of supervisor commitment is to establish discriminant validity. Essentially, the causal model should be a better predictor of supervisor commitment than of similar constructs, such as supervisor satisfaction. Therefore, last hypothesis proposes:

Hypothesis Fifteen: The proposed model of antecedents as a predictor of supervisor commitment will fit the data better than the proposed model of antecedents as a predictor of supervisor satisfaction.

Additional Research Question

An additional research question to be addressed by this study involves employee perceptions concerning the causes of their own level of supervisor commitment. In other words, it is of interest to understand what factors employees will spontaneously evoke when they are asked about what causes them to feel committed to their supervisors. Therefore, employees will be asked in an open-ended format about what has caused and influenced feelings of commitment for their supervisor. It is expected that employees will mention variables similar to those in the hypothesized model of supervisor commitment.
Subjects and Procedure

The data used to test the hypotheses was gathered by a survey that was sent to the home addresses of a sample of 1,800 employees working for The Ohio State University Hospitals (OSUH), which employs a total of 3,800 individuals. The sample was randomly selected from all employees, with the exception of those who were members of the Communication Workers of America union. Surveys were sent to 96 incorrect addresses, resulting in an original sample size of 1,704. Questionnaires were returned by 645 employees, resulting in a response rate of 38%.

Respondents were asked to return completed questionnaires anonymously by a deadline set at sixteen days after the questionnaires were mailed. One week after the questionnaires were sent, respondents were mailed a reminder card. In order to increase the response rate, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to all employees in the sample (since returned questionnaires could not be identified), at two and a half weeks after the initial questionnaires were mailed. The follow-up questionnaire was the same as the first one except for the cover letter, which asked employees to return the completed questionnaire if they had not already done so, in addition to thanking them
for their participation if they had already returned the questionnaire. (See Appendix
A for cover letters, Appendix B for questionnaire, Appendix C for reminder card).

Questionnaires consisted of a title page, cover letter and five separate sections. The first section consisted of items measuring organizational commitment. The second section included the items measuring antecedents of supervisor commitment, supervisor commitment, and supervisor satisfaction; the items in these scales were interspersed and presented in a random order within the section. Items measuring work centrality and need for approval were shown in the third section. The three open-ended questions comprised the fourth section. The final section contained items measuring the demographic variables.

Measures  (See Appendix D for the individual items of each scale.)

Commitment. Supervisor commitment was measured by combining the identification and internalization scales developed by Becker (1992; Becker & Billings, 1993), as well as four additional items developed by the author. Other research has also combined the identification and internalization scales to measure overall supervisor commitment (e.g., Becker et al., in press; Billings, Gilbert, Becker, & Pfaltzgraff, 1995). The combined scale contains thirteen items with a seven-point response scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The alpha coefficient for the combined scale has been reported as .92 (Billings et al., 1995). A sample from this scale includes: “I have a close bond with my supervisor".
Organizational commitment was measured with a scale containing the same identification and internalization items as the supervisor commitment scale. However, "supervisor" was replaced with "UH" (which stood for University Hospitals). Billings et al. (1995) reported coefficient alpha for the organizational commitment scale as .95. “I am proud of UH” was an item from this scale.

**Similar Work Goals and Values.** The author developed five items measuring similar work goals and values in order to meet the specific needs of this study. Responses were measured with a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." This scale includes the item: “My work goals are similar to those of my supervisor.”

**Work Centrality.** A twelve-item scale developed by Paullay et al. (1994) was used to measure work centrality, defined as the belief regarding the degree of importance that work plays in one's life. Responses were measured on a seven-point rating scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Four of the items were reverse-scored. Paullay et al. (1994) reported a coefficient alpha of .80 for this scale. One item measuring work centrality was: “Work should be considered central to life”.

**Psychological Similarity.** Psychological similarity was measured with a scale used by Pfaltzgraff (1995) containing five items, one which is reverse-scored, that measure perceived similarity between employees and their supervisor in terms of interests, personality, and values. Responses were measured on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The coefficient alpha for this
scale was reported as .85 (Pfaltzgraff, 1995). This scale includes the following item: “In general, my supervisor and I have similar attitudes”.

**Openness in Communication.** Openness in communication was measured using relevant items from the Managing People Inventory (Drehmer & Grossman, 1984). Nine items from this inventory were relevant to the issue of openness in communication. The word "manager" in the items was replaced with "supervisor" to keep it consistent with the other scales. Responses were measured on a seven-point rating scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The following item is included in this scale: “My supervisor informs me about important matters that affect me or the department”.

**Frequency of Interaction.** A four-item scale developed by McAllister (1995) was used to measure frequency of interaction. Responses were measured on a seven-point rating scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Coefficient alpha for the scale was reported as .91 (McAllister, 1995). “I interact with my supervisor at work frequently” is one of the items comprising this scale.

**Supervisor Support.** The Survey of Perceived Supervisor Support (SPSS; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988) was used to assess employee perceptions of their supervisor's supportiveness. Kottke and Sharafinski (1988) modified a short version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS; Eisenberger et al., 1986) to measure the supervisor as the foci of interest, rather than the organization. The SPSS contains sixteen items, two which are reverse-scored, with a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Coefficient alpha for the scale was
reported as .98 (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). One item from this scale is: “My supervisor shows a lot of concern for me”.

**Need for Approval.** Need for approval was measured with items from the Dysfunctional Attitudes Scale (Weissman & Beck, 1978) which comprise a factor measuring the need for approval by others (Blatt, Quinlan, Pilkonis, & Shea, 1995; Cane, Olinger, Gotlib, & Kuiper, 1986). The Need for Approval scale consists of ten items, two which are reverse-scored, rated on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Blatt et al. (1995) reported an alpha of .91 for the scale. “What other people think about me is very important” is one of the items from this scale.

**Supervisor Trust and Determinants of Trust.** Overall trust in the supervisor and the determinants of trust were measured with items from Butler’s (1991) Conditions of Trust Inventory (CTI). This instrument contains items which measure overall trust with four items (alpha = .97), as well as proposed antecedents of trust, each measured with four items. Each scale contains one item that is reverse-scaled. The scale measuring trust includes: “I can count on my supervisor to be trustworthy”.

The four antecedents measured in this study include: competence (alpha = .91), fairness (alpha = .93), integrity (alpha = .92), and promise fulfillment (alpha = .96) (Butler, 1991). All items were rated on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Sample items include: “My supervisor does things competently” (competence); “My supervisor treats me fairly” (fairness); “My
supervisor deals honestly with me” (integrity); and “My supervisor follows through on promises made to me” (promise fulfillment).

**Supervisor Satisfaction.** Supervisor satisfaction was measured with three variables that assess an employee's overall level of satisfaction with their supervisor and their working relationship. Items were rated on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." One of the items from this scale is: “In general, I am satisfied with my supervisor”.

**Open-ended items.** Three open-ended items were included to understand employee perceptions concerning the influences of their own commitment. These questions asked about why or why not respondents felt committed to their supervisor, if they were more or less committed to their supervisor than they were six months ago, and what would it take for them to feel more committed to their supervisor.

**Demographics.** The following demographic data was also collected: education level, management level, age, sex, ethnicity, tenure with the organization, tenure with present supervisor, and job title.

**Analyses**

The type of analyses used to test hypotheses were based on the type of hypothesis. Three main types of hypotheses were tested in this study. They included those concerning individual direct links in the model, those hypothesizing moderating relationships, and those making propositions about the fit of various models. In addition, an exploratory research question using open-ended items was investigated.
Ten of the hypotheses in this study were concerned with individual direct links in the model, which were propositions about the relationship between two variables. These hypotheses were tested using zero-order correlations.

Two of the hypotheses concerned proposed moderating relationships. These two hypotheses were tested using hierarchical moderated regression. For these regression analyses, main effects were each entered first, followed by the effect of the interaction term.

The fit of causal models was the focus of three other hypotheses. Covariant structure analyses using the Reticular Action Model or Near Approximation program (RAMONA, Browne & Mels, 1993) were used to assess these hypotheses. RAMONA supplies a variety of fit indices by which a model can be evaluated. Among the most important are the sample discrepancy function value, the Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the confidence interval for the RMSEA, and the Expected Cross Validation Index (ECVI).

Finally, an exploratory research question was analyzed with frequency analyses of the coded responses to three open-ended questions. Each open-ended question was coded and analyzed separately. Coding of the questions was conducted by the author. The coding scale included the a priori antecedent variables as well as variables that were added as they were discovered. In other words, variables that were not included in the hypothesized model were added to the coding scale when they were first encountered. Each question was coded for multiple responses. Subjects mentioned a maximum of four variables for any one question.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Subjects

The data used to test the hypotheses were gathered by surveys returned from 645 employees of The Ohio State University Hospitals (OSUH). Table 1 provides descriptive information for the sample compared to the OSUH population. There were no significant differences between the sample and the OSUH population with regard to sex (chi-square=0.42, p > .05), ethnicity (chi-square=3.30, p > .05), or education (chi-square=5.18, p > .05). However, the sample tended to contain more older employees (chi-square=155.76, p < .05) and those with more organizational tenure (chi-square=232.20, p < .05) than the OSUH population.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 contains descriptive statistics for the scales used to measure the variables in the study. Scales used to measure supervisor commitment, similar work goals/values, psychological similarity, frequency of interaction, openness in communication, support, trust, competence, fairness, promise fulfillment, integrity, organizational commitment, work centrality, need for approval, and supervisor satisfaction are presented. Means for the scales range from 3.43 to 5.07.

54
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<th>Sample</th>
<th>OSUH</th>
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<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<td>36-45</td>
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<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 55</td>
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<td>4%</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
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<td>81%</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>86%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Associate's/2-yr Degree</td>
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<td>12%</td>
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<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7 years</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 years</td>
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<td>7%</td>
</tr>
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<td>More than 10 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 7 years</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tr>
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Table 1: Descriptive statistics for demographic variables.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Supervisor Commitment</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Similar Work Goals/Values</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Psychological Similarity</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Frequency of Interaction</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Openness in Communication</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
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<td>6. Support</td>
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<td>1.59</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Trust</td>
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<td>1.77</td>
<td>641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Competence</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Fairness</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Promise Fulfillment</td>
<td>4.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Integrity</td>
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<td>1.70</td>
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<td>12. Organizational Commitment</td>
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<td>13. Work Centrality</td>
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<td>14. Need for Approval</td>
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<td>627</td>
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<td>15. Supervisor Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**
All items are on a 1-7 scale with “1” indicating “Strongly Disagree” and “7” indicating “Strongly Agree”.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for scales.
Scale reliabilities can be seen in Table 3 which shows Cronbach’s alpha, as a measure of internal consistency, and the number of items for each scale. With alphas ranging from .80 to .98, all the scales demonstrate good internal consistency. In addition, in those scales containing reverse-scored items, item analyses revealed that response bias did not appear to be present. The reverse-scored items had high item-scale correlations and their inclusion did not lower the alpha coefficients of their respective scales.

The intercorrelations of scales are presented in Table 4. Most of the scales show very strong correlations with one another except for those measuring work centrality and need for approval.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis One stated that employees who tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor will be more committed to their supervisor than employees who do not tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor. The results showed a correlation of .85 (p < .01) between similar work goals/values and supervisor commitment. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship between similar work goals/values and supervisor commitment.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis Two proposed that the relationship between similar work goals/values and supervisor commitment will be moderated by work centrality such
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th># of items</th>
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<td>6. Support</td>
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<td>10. Promise Fulfillment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Integrity</td>
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<tr>
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<td>13. Work Centrality</td>
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<td>14. Need for Approval</td>
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<td>15. Supervisor Satisfaction</td>
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Table 3: Scale reliabilities.
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>2. Similar Work Goals/Values</td>
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<td>.85*</td>
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<td>3. Psychological Similarity</td>
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<td>.87*</td>
<td>.84*</td>
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<td>4. Frequency of Interaction</td>
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<td>.86*</td>
<td>.80*</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Support</td>
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<td>.84*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9. Fairness</td>
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<td>.81*</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.08 .03</td>
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</table>

*p < .01.

Table 4: Scale intercorrelations.
that this relationship will be stronger for those high in work centrality, and somewhat weaker, but still positive, for those low in work centrality. Table 5 shows the moderated, hierarchical regression analysis used to test this hypothesis with main effects of similar work goals/values, work centrality, and their interaction term each entered one at a time. As the table indicates, the main effects of the two variables were significant, but their interaction term was not. This indicates that work centrality does not appear to moderate the relationship between similar work goals/values and supervisor commitment, and, thus, the hypothesis is not supported.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis Three proposed that employees who tend to perceive themselves as psychologically similar to their supervisor will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to perceive themselves as psychologically similar to their supervisor. The results showed a correlation of .84 (p < .01) between psychological similarity and similar work goals/values. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship between psychological similarity and similar work goals/values.

Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis Four proposed that employees who tend to perceive communication with their supervisor as open will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to perceive communication with their supervisor as open. The results showed a correlation of .86 (p < .01) between openness in communication and similar
<table>
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<th>Cum. Change RSQ</th>
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<th>F For Change In RSQ</th>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p<.01.

Table 5: Hierarchical moderated regression for predicting supervisor commitment from similar work goals/values and work centrality.
work goals/values. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship
between openness in communication and similar work goals/values.

**Hypothesis Five**

Hypothesis Five proposed that employees who tend to interact frequently with
their supervisor will be more likely to perceive their work goals and values as similar
to those of their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to interact frequently
with their supervisor. The results showed a correlation of .70 (p < .01) between
frequency of interaction and similar work goals/values. As predicted, this correlation
indicates a positive relationship between frequency of interaction and similar work
goals/values.

**Hypothesis Six**

Hypothesis Six proposed that employees who tend to perceive their supervisor
as supportive will be more committed to their supervisor than will employees who do
not tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive. The results showed a correlation
of .90 (p < .01) between support and supervisor commitment. As predicted, this
correlation indicates a positive relationship between support and supervisor
commitment.

**Hypothesis Seven**

Hypothesis Seven proposed that the relationship between support and
supervisor commitment will be moderated by need for approval such that this
relationship will be stronger for those high in need for approval, and somewhat
weaker, but still positive, for those low in need for approval. Table 6 shows the
moderated, hierarchical regression analysis used to test this hypothesis with main
effects of support, need for approval, and their interaction term each entered one at a
time. As the table indicates, only the main effect of support was significant, whereas
the main effect of need for approval and the interaction term were not. This indicates
that need for approval does not appear to moderate the relationship between support
and need for approval, and, thus, the hypothesis is not supported.

**Hypothesis Eight**

Hypothesis Eight proposed that employees who tend to trust their supervisor
will be more committed to their supervisor than will employees who do not tend to
trust their supervisor. The results showed a correlation of .85 (p < .01) between trust
and supervisor commitment. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive
relationship between trust and supervisor commitment.

**Hypothesis Nine**

Hypothesis Nine proposed that employees who tend to perceive their
supervisor as acting with fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment, and competence, will
be more likely to trust their supervisor than employees who do not tend to perceive
their supervisors as acting with fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment, and
competence. The correlations of trust with fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment,
and competence were .87, .84, .84, and .80, respectively. As predicted, these
significant correlations (p < .01) indicate positive relationships between trust and four
of the proposed determinants -- fairness, integrity, promise fulfillment, and
competence.

63
Table 6: Hierarchical moderated regression for predicting supervisor commitment from support and need for approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable Entered</th>
<th>Cum. RSQ</th>
<th>Change in RSQ</th>
<th>F For Change In RSQ</th>
<th>Final Beta</th>
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<td>Need for Approval</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Interaction of Support and Need for Approval</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.01.
Hypothesis Ten

Hypothesis Ten proposed that employees who tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive will be more likely to trust their supervisor than those who do not tend to perceive their supervisor as supportive. The results showed a correlation of .87 (*p < .01*) between support and trust. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship between support and trust.

Hypothesis Eleven

Hypothesis Eleven proposed that employees who tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor will be more likely to trust their supervisor than those who do not tend to perceive their work goals and values as similar to those of their supervisor. The results showed a correlation of .83 (*p < .01*) between similar work goals/values and trust. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship between similar work goals/values and trust.

Hypothesis Twelve

Hypothesis Twelve proposed that the hypothesized causal model of supervisor commitment will be a good fit of the data. To test this hypothesis, a covariant structure analysis was run using the Reticular Action Model or Near Approximation program (RAMONA, Browne & Mels, April, 1993 version). The hypothesized model contains seven manifest variables and three latent variables. The latent variables are the three error terms necessary for the endogenous variables in the model. The path analysis of the hypothesized model can be seen in Figure 2. The sample discrepancy function value of .333 and the RMSEA value of .14, which can be seen in Table 7,
both indicate that the model does not fit the data well. Therefore, the results do not support Hypothesis Twelve.

Because hypotheses concerning individual links in the model were supported, it was decided that there should be some modifications made to the hypothesized model in order to find a better fit to the data. Modifications were made keeping in mind that it was desirable to keep the model as similar as possible to the hypothesized model. The first modification was to remove the non-significant path from frequency of interaction to similar work goals/values. Because the correlation between frequency of interaction and supervisor commitment was a significant positive one, a direct path was added from frequency of interaction to supervisor commitment. Because all other paths were significant, it was apparent that the lack of fit in the model was due to the absence of paths. As the variables were all thought to be antecedents of commitment either directly or indirectly, it was possible that the influence of some of the proposed antecedents may not be fully mediated by the three main antecedents. Therefore, various direct paths from these antecedents were added to the model in the search for an alternative model that fit well, while trying to keep additional paths at a minimum. This resulted in the addition of direct paths from both psychological similarity and competence to supervisor commitment. These two antecedent variables were still mediated by similar work goals/values and trust, respectively, but only partially. The last modification to the model was a path from psychological similarity to trust rather than from similar work goals/values to trust.
The result of these modifications is the model seen in Figure 3. The fit measures, presented in Table 7, indicate that this modified model is a good fit. The sample discrepancy function value of .09 and RMSEA of .07 both demonstrate that the modified model fits the data fairly well. In addition, comparison of fit measures between the hypothesized model and the modified model demonstrates that the modified model is a much better fit of the data.

The modified model indicates that the proposed three main antecedents of supervisor commitment do not fully mediate the relationship between other proposed variables and supervisor commitment, but rather partially mediate some of these relationships. Path analysis of the modified model indicates that psychological similarity and support are the strongest predictors of supervisor commitment. In terms of similar work goals/values, both openness in communication and psychological similarity were equally strong predictors. When comparing the four determinants of trust, integrity clearly emerged as the strongest predictor of trust.

**Hypothesis Thirteen**

Hypothesis Thirteen proposed that employees who are more committed to their supervisors will tend to be more committed to the organization than those who are less committed to their supervisors. The results showed a correlation of .50 (p < .01) between supervisor commitment and organizational commitment. As predicted, this correlation indicates a positive relationship between supervisor commitment and organizational commitment.
Note.
Numbers represent the point estimates for the paths.
Two headed arrows for the three error terms represent their variances.
* indicates those paths that are significant at <.05.

Figure 2: Path analysis of hypothesized causal model of supervisor commitment.
Note.
Numbers represent the point estimates for the paths.
Two headed arrows for the three error terms represent their variances.
* indicates those paths that are significant at <.05.

Figure 3: Path analysis of modified causal model of supervisor commitment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Fs</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>RMSEA CI</th>
<th>ECVI</th>
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<td>(.126, .161)</td>
<td>.505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modified</td>
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<td>.074</td>
<td>(.054, .094)</td>
<td>.272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**
- Hypothesized: Hypothesized causal model of supervisor commitment.
- Modified: Modified causal model of supervisor commitment.
- Fs: Sample discrepancy function value.
- RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.
- RMSEA CI: Confidence interval of the RMSEA at p < .05.
- ECVI: Expected cross-validation index.

Table 7: Fit measures for path analyses of supervisor commitment models.
Hypothesis Fourteen

Hypothesis Fourteen proposed that in a model of organizational commitment, supervisor commitment would fully mediate the influence of supervisor commitment antecedents on organizational commitment. This hypothesis was tested by comparing the path analyses of two models. In the first model, organizational commitment Model A, supervisor commitment fully mediates the influence of the modified antecedents on organizational commitment. In the second model, organizational commitment Model B, the modified antecedents directly influence organizational commitment, as well as indirectly influence it with supervisor commitment as a mediator. In other words, supervisor commitment fully mediates the influence of antecedents on organizational commitment in Model A, and only partially mediates their influence in Model B. Because it is difficult to represent all of the multiple linkages in these models in a figure, a representation of the basic idea behind these two models is presented in Figure 4.

Comparison of the two path analyses support the hypothesis which stated that supervisor commitment fully mediates the influence of the modified antecedents on organizational commitment (Model A). In Model A, a positive significant path of .50 was found for the path from supervisor commitment to organizational commitment. However, in Model B, the additional direct paths from the six main antecedents to organizational commitment did not demonstrate significant positive effects on organizational commitment. Five of these paths were non-significant, and
Figure 4: Conceptualization of fully mediated model of organizational commitment versus partially mediated model.
The sixth path from competence to organizational commitment was significant, but negative. This negative path appears to be a trivial, non-interpretable finding. The lack of any significant positive direct effects between the antecedents and organizational commitment when they are partially mediated by supervisor commitment supports the hypothesis that the effects of the antecedents are fully mediated by supervisor commitment.

Hypothesis Fifteen

Hypothesis Fifteen proposed that a model of the antecedents as a predictor of supervisor commitment would fit the data better than a model of the antecedents as a predictor of supervisor satisfaction. In order to test this hypothesis, a path analysis was run using the modified model of antecedents to predict supervisor satisfaction. The results of this path analysis can be seen in Figure 6. A comparison between the fit measures of the modified model as a predictor of supervisor commitment versus supervisor satisfaction can be seen in Table 8. Compared to the supervisor satisfaction model, the supervisor commitment model shows lower values for the sample discrepancy function value, the RMSEA, and the expected cross-validation index, thus indicating a better fit of the data. Therefore, these results support Hypothesis Fifteen.
Note. Numbers represent the point estimates for the paths. Two headed arrows for the three error terms represent their variances. * indicates those paths that are significant at <.05.

Figure 5: Path analysis of modified model as predictor of supervisor satisfaction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Fs</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>RMSEA CI</th>
<th>ECVI</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Modified</td>
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<td>.074</td>
<td>(.054, .094)</td>
<td>.272</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
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<td>(.078, .117)</td>
<td>.322</td>
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</table>

**Note.**
- **Modified:** Modified causal model of supervisor commitment.
- **Satisfaction:** Modified model as predictor of supervisor satisfaction.
- **Fs:** Sample discrepancy function value.
- **RMSEA:** Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.
- **RMSEA CI:** Confidence interval of the RMSEA at p < .05.
- **ECVI:** Expected cross-validation index.

Table 8: Fit measures for path analyses of modified antecedent model predicting supervisor commitment versus supervisor satisfaction.
Ancillary Analyses

Because of the high intercorrelations found among the antecedent variables, as well as the high correlation between supervisor commitment and supervisor satisfaction, there was some concern that the relationships between the antecedents and commitment were artifactual. In other words, there was the possibility that an overall liking or general feeling of satisfaction with the supervisor could produce a halo effect, causing subjects to rate their supervisors positively on all variables without making much distinction between the behaviors. Therefore, some ancillary analyses were conducted to determine if this was a plausible alternative explanation for the findings reported above.

Two analyses were conducted in order to test the possibility of such a halo effect. First, partial correlation analyses which controlled for supervisor satisfaction were run for the antecedents and supervisor commitment. The partial intercorrelation matrix can be seen in Table 9. When controlling for supervisor satisfaction, the overall strength of the partial correlations were somewhat lower than the zero-order correlations, but most were still significant. In addition, there was somewhat more variability between the strength of the correlations between the antecedents and supervisor commitment. The partial correlations between supervisor commitment and the modified direct antecedents remained fairly strong ranging from .39 to .58, except for the correlation with competence which was .19. Therefore, examination of the partial correlations indicates that supervisor satisfaction plays some role in the result of high zero-order intercorrelations among the variables. However, the relationships
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<td>.30*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
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</table>

* p < .01.

Table 9: Partial intercorrelations controlling for supervisor satisfaction.
between the antecedents and supervisor commitment do not appear to be an artifact of a halo effect or general satisfaction with the supervisor because the partial correlations were still all significant and remained fairly strong even after controlling for supervisor satisfaction.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis with supervisor commitment as the dependent variable was also conducted. To control for the effects of supervisor satisfaction, this variable was entered on the first step of the analysis, whereas the six main antecedents from the modified model were entered on second step. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 10. The results indicate that supervisor satisfaction does not actually contain a significant beta weight in the final equation. When supervisor satisfaction is entered into the multiple regression first, all the antecedents, except for competence, still have significant regression weights in the final equation. In addition, the beta weights are similar to the path coefficients found in the path analysis of the modified model. As with the partial correlations, this analysis also indicates that the relationship between the antecedents and supervisor commitment is not the result of a general satisfaction with the supervisor causing subjects to rate all variables in a similar positive manner. The only variable whose effect may be influenced by supervisor satisfaction appears to be competence. Overall, these ancillary analyses show support for the idea that the results found in this study are true representations of the relationships between the antecedents and supervisor commitment.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
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<th>Final Beta</th>
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<th>Change In RSQ</th>
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<td>Support</td>
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<td>Frequency of Interaction</td>
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<td>Similar Work Goals/Values</td>
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<td>Competence</td>
<td>.05</td>
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*p<.01.

Table 10: Hierarchical multiple regression of supervisor commitment controlling for supervisor satisfaction.
An additional research question was concerned with how employees will perceive the causes of their commitment feelings. Coded responses to the three open-ended questions addressing this research question are presented in Table 11. All the antecedent variables in this study were mentioned as antecedents in at least one question. Support from the supervisor appears to be the most likely to come to mind when considering causes of one's own commitment. In addition to mentions of the antecedent variables proposed in this study, some additional variables were also mentioned. For example, some subjects stated that they were committed because they felt that it was appropriate to be committed to someone in a supervisor role or position (role/legitimacy), because they were committed to their jobs (job commitment), and because of other job specific behaviors. Additionally, in response to the question that asked why employees were more or less committed to their supervisors than they were six months ago, about a third (35%) who responded mentioned the reengineering or changes that were occurring in the Hospital as an influence of their commitment. These results suggest that the employees are able to perceive the variables proposed in this study as antecedents of commitment.
<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
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<th>Qb (N=238)</th>
<th>Qc (N=234)</th>
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<td>9%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<td>Support</td>
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<td>38%</td>
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<td>Trust</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>Competence</td>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role/Legitimacy</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure with Supervisor</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job commitment</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change/Reengineering</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job specific</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**

Qa: Why/why not do you feel committed to your supervisor?
Qb: Why are you more or less committed to your supervisor than you were 6 months ago?
Qc: What would it take for you to feel more committed to your supervisor?

**Table 11:** Coded responses to three open-ended questions.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

Summary of Results

This study was designed to develop and test a causal model of supervisor commitment. Analyses were conducted to test five main categories of research questions. The first type focused on hypotheses concerning individual direct links in the hypothesized model. The second area addressed proposed moderating relationships. The third category involved propositions about the overall fit of proposed models. The fourth area was concerned with employee perceptions of commitment antecedents. The final question was one which arose out of some of the research results, so it was tested with ancillary analyses.

Hypotheses About Individual Links in the Model

All the hypotheses concerning the direct links in the model were supported. Strong, positive correlations were found between the variables in each of the individual links of the model.

Hypotheses About Moderating Relationships

The two hypotheses concerning proposed moderators were not supported. Hypothesis Two stated that the relationship between similar work goals/values and
supervisor commitment would be moderated by work centrality such that for those higher in work centrality there would be a stronger relationship between similar work goals/values than those lower in work centrality. This hypothesis was not supported by the hierarchical moderated regression analysis of the data.

Hypothesis Seven stated that the relationship between support and supervisor commitment would be stronger for those higher in need for approval than for those lower in need for approval. This hypothesis was also not supported by a hierarchical moderated regression analysis.

**Hypotheses About the Overall Fit of Proposed Models**

Hypothesis Twelve was the one which proposed that the overall fit of the proposed causal model would be a good one. This hypothesis was not supported, as a path analysis did not demonstrate a good fit. Therefore, the model was modified by testing various changes in order to find a better fit, while keeping relationships as consistent as possible with the hypothesized model. A modified model of supervisor commitment was found to be a better fit than the proposed model.

Most of the changes to the proposed model included adding direct paths from antecedents to supervisor commitment, whereas, originally, their influence was proposed to be fully mediated by other variables. The hypothesized model proposed that there were three main direct antecedents of commitment, which included similar work goals/values, trust, and support. The modified model includes these three variables as direct antecedents as well as three additional variables, including frequency of interaction, psychological similarity, and competence. Although
psychological similarity and competence are still partially mediated by similar work
goals/values and trust, respectively, the influence of frequency of interaction is not
mediated in the modified model. A non-significant path between frequency of
interaction and similar work goals/values was found in the path analysis of the
hypothesized model, so it was eliminated in the modified model. Path analysis of the
modified model demonstrated an overall good fit, and a much better fit than the
hypothesized model.

Hypothesis Fourteen proposed that supervisor commitment would fully
mediate the influence of the proposed model of supervisor commitment antecedents
on organizational commitment. This hypothesis was supported with the results of a
comparison of two path analyses, one in which supervisor commitment fully mediated
the influence of antecedents, and one in which it only partially mediated their
influence. The path analysis of the partially mediated model showed no significant,
positive paths between the antecedents and organizational commitment, thus
supporting the hypothesis that supervisor commitment was a full mediator of the
effects of its antecedents.

Hypotheses Fifteen was concerned with the discriminant validity of the
supervisor commitment model. It predicted that a model of proposed antecedents as a
predictor of supervisor commitment would be a better fit of the data than a model of
the antecedents as a predictor of supervisor satisfaction. This hypothesis was also
supported with the results of two path analyses. Various fit measures indicated that
the model of antecedents as a predictor of supervisor commitment was a better fit than
the model of antecedents as a predictor of supervisor satisfaction.

Employee Perceptions of Commitment Antecedents

The final research question was concerned with how employees perceive the
influences of their feelings of commitment. This research question was more
exploratory in nature and was addressed with three open-ended questions. Coded
responses to these questions revealed that the proposed antecedents in the model were
all mentioned in response to at least one of the questions. A few additional variables
that were not specified in the proposed model were also mentioned. These included
mentions of role/legitimacy, job commitment, job specific behaviors, and the hospital
reengineering.

Ancillary Question and Analyses

Because a high degree of strong intercorrelations were found among the
antecedent variables, there was some concern that a general satisfaction or liking of
the supervisor could have influenced the perceptions of all supervisor behaviors
resulting in a lack of distinction between variables. Thus, the concern was that the
relationships between the antecedents and supervisor commitment could have been an
artifact resulting from a possible halo effect. In order to test this possibility, two types
of ancillary analyses were conducted.

The first type of analysis involved partial correlations between the variables
controlling for supervisor satisfaction. The results showed that the partial correlations
between the antecedents and supervisor commitment were not quite as large as the zero-order correlations, but they were still fairly strong and significant.

A hierarchical regression analysis of supervisor commitment was also conducted. Supervisor satisfaction was entered on the first step, followed by the antecedents on the second step. The final regression equation revealed a non-significant beta weight for supervisor satisfaction. Beta weights for all the antecedents, except competence, were significant and similar to the path coefficients in the path analysis of the modified model.

Conclusions

Conclusions of this study can be focused around the main categories of research questions which include those concerning individual direct links in the model, the moderating relationships, the overall fit of proposed models, and employee perceptions concerning influences of their commitment.

Conclusions Concerning Individual Links in the Model

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the variables in the individual proposed links of the hypothesized model are positively related to each other. The individual zero-order correlations between the variables are one source of support for this assertion. Although correlations among variables declined slightly when controlling for supervisor satisfaction, the partial correlations were still fairly strong and significant between variables in the hypothesized relationships. This suggests that an overall liking or general satisfaction with the supervisor may inflate
the strength of the relationships slightly, but it does not support the possibility that the relationships are spurious. Therefore, it appears that the variables are in fact related to another.

One other possibility for the relationships among the variables is that certain variables may tend to covary in reality. In other words, it is possible that there are different supervisory styles, and supervisors who manage with one type of style may be likely to engage in all of the behaviors that comprise the different variables. Along the same lines, there may be an opposite type of supervisory style in which supervisors tend to not engage in any of the various behaviors resulting in very low supervisor commitment. Essentially, there may be a "good manager" style and a "bad manager" style. This does not negate the conclusion that there are true relationships among the variables, rather it offers a possible explanation for the strong intercorrelations among all the antecedents.

**Conclusions Concerning the Moderating Relationships**

Based on tests of moderating relationships, another conclusion of this study is that it is not likely that individual differences moderate the direct influence of antecedent variables on supervisor commitment. The strong correlations between the direct antecedents and supervisor commitment demonstrate that the relationships are already so strong overall, that there is little room for the influence of possible moderators. Essentially, a moderating influence suggests that it is possible for the relationship to be even stronger under certain conditions or individual differences. This does not appear likely with such strong relationships.
Conclusions Concerning the Models

Although there was support for hypotheses about individual links in the model, when these proposed causal mechanisms are tested with a path analysis of the entire hypothesized model, there is not a good fit of the data. Although the results generally do show support for the hypothesized relationships, additional un-hypothesized paths also seem to exist, resulting in a less parsimonious model. Although it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions about the causal mechanisms based on the modified model, one must consider that the modified model was data driven, and, therefore, should be tested with another sample before any solid conclusions can be drawn (Breckler, 1990; Cudeck & Browne, 1983).

Based on the modified model, one conclusion is that several variables may function as direct antecedents of supervisor commitment. In the modified model, six variables demonstrate a significant direct influence on supervisor commitment. These variables include the three variables originally hypothesized to directly influence commitment -- similar work goals/values, trust, and support -- as well as three variables whose influence was originally thought to be fully mediated -- psychological similarity, frequency of interaction, and competence. Although this suggests that supervisor commitment can be affected through a number of different mechanisms, the results also suggest that psychological similarity and support are the most likely to influence commitment. Additionally, results from the ancillary analyses suggest that the relationships between the antecedent variables and supervisor commitment are not
Artificial in nature because of an overall halo effect or general satisfaction with the supervisor.

Although there were some additional paths added in the modified model, the results actually support many of the proposed relationships in the hypothesized model. First, although similar work goals/values does not fully mediate the influence of both openness in communication and psychological similarity, there is support that it still fully mediates openness in communication and partially mediates psychological similarity. Second, it appears that trust fully mediates the influence of promise fulfillment, integrity, and fairness as proposed in the hypothesized model; however, trust seems to partially, rather than fully, mediate the influence of competence. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the three main hypothesized direct antecedents were still shown to be direct antecedents in the modified model. Overall, although the hypothesized model did not show a good fit, most of the hypothesized relationships were included in the modified model, which did demonstrate a good fit. Therefore, it can be concluded that the conceptual and theoretical support for the hypothesized model also supports the modified model.

Some conclusions can also be made about a model of organizational commitment comprised of the variables in this study. It appears that supervisor commitment both positively influences organizational commitment, as well as fully mediates the influence of the modified antecedents on organizational commitment. Therefore, it can be concluded that employees who are more committed to their supervisors will be more likely to be committed to the organization than those who
are less committed to their supervisors. It can also be concluded that the antecedents of supervisor commitment can affect organizational commitment only through their influence on supervisor commitment.

Finally, comparison of the modified model of supervisor commitment with a model of supervisor satisfaction which contains the same antecedents demonstrates support for the discriminant validity of the modified model. The model with supervisor commitment as the dependent variable showed a better fit than the one with supervisor satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Conclusions Concerning Employee Perceptions of Commitment

An additional exploratory research question involved what types of variables employees would spontaneously evoke when asked about the influences of their commitment. A wide range of variables were mentioned, including all of the proposed antecedents in this study. The variety of mentions provides more support for the assertion that there are several different mechanisms by which commitment can be influenced.

It appears that support is the most likely to come to mind when employees think about their own commitment. Support was also found to be a strong influence in the path analyses of commitment. This suggests that support may be one of the most important antecedents of supervisor commitment. As mentioned in the first chapter, organizational support has also been found to be a strong predictor of organizational commitment (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1990).
The types of variables that were mentioned in the open-ended questions, but not included in the study may be more likely to lead to normative commitment, rather than commitment based on a deep, psychological attachment. Because commitment was not defined in the open-ended questions, subjects could have interpreted “commitment” in different ways. Some subjects mentioned that they were committed because they felt that they “should” be committed to the person in the supervisory role (role/legitimacy), or that they were committed to their supervisor because they were committed to their jobs (job commitment). Both of these variables suggest that their commitment was more normative in nature. In other words, these employees felt that being committed to their supervisor was the “right thing to do” because of the supervisory role/position or because they were committed to their jobs.

Some other mentions that were not included in the proposed study tended to be more job specific or specific to this particular organization. For example, The Ohio State Hospitals is in the midst of a large amount of reengineering in which jobs are being changed and positions are being eliminated. This reengineering has also resulted in the consolidation of work units, resulting in larger numbers of employees reporting to a specific supervisor. These changes were mentioned by many subjects as a reason their commitment has changed since six months ago. This suggests that major organizational changes can have an effect on an employee’s commitment to their supervisor. However, because this study used a cross-sectional methodology, such influences could not be tested.
In general, responses to the open-ended questions provides some more validity for the set of antecedents included in this study. However, it must be acknowledged that in the survey the open-ended questions were presented after the presentation of all items measuring the variables in this study. Therefore, responses could have been somewhat influenced by these various “cues”.

**Implications for Theory and Practice**

**Implications for Theory**

Results from this study support a combination of two main theories as the theoretical basis for supervisor commitment. These theories include social exchange theory and attraction theory. The relationships between supervisor commitment and its three strongest predictors are supported by these two theories as described in the first chapter. The relationships of support and trust with supervisor commitment are supported by tenets from social exchange theory. The relationship between psychological similarity and supervisor commitment is defended by the ideas from attraction theory. This suggests that a combination of attraction theory and social exchange theory provides the most compelling support for a theoretical basis of supervisor commitment causality. Although many leadership theories allude to some of the points asserted in these two theories, none of them clearly articulate how a combination of the two theories could explain the development of commitment. Therefore, the present study implies that leadership theories should more clearly
consider and integrate the theoretical notions of social exchange theory and attraction theory.

The results also have some theoretical implications for the study of organizational commitment antecedents. Commitment to the supervisor and the organization may be slightly different conceptually with one involving commitment to a person and the other an abstract entity. Thus, the types of antecedents may be slightly different. However, the theoretical underpinnings of the two types of commitment may be quite similar, as both can involve a deep, psychological bond. Two lines of research in the organizational commitment area that were described in the first chapter both demonstrate the efficacy of social exchange theory and attraction theory as bases for understanding the causes of organizational commitment. For example, the research in which organizational support has been found to be a strong predictor of organizational commitment is based on social exchange theory (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1990). The findings of Meglino et al. (1989) in which perceptions of value similarity influenced organizational commitment can be supported by attraction theory. Therefore, results from this study combined with past research imply that a combination of social exchange theory and attraction theory would also provide a strong theoretical basis for the causal mechanisms of organizational commitment.

Implications for Practice

The results and conclusions from this study imply that if organizations want their employees to be committed to the organization overall, one way is to affect
supervisor commitment, which was also asserted by Hunt and Morgan (1994).

However, the results of this study also imply ways that supervisor commitment can be influenced, which can then ultimately affect organizational commitment.

The results of this study imply that if supervisors engage more in certain behaviors and actions, their subordinates may become more committed. For example, if a supervisor interacted with an employee more frequently, communicated more openly with the employee, created more mutual work goals and values, was more supportive, acted with more integrity and fairness, and kept promises, the employee would be likely to develop a stronger deep, psychological attachment to the supervisor. Therefore, the most obvious way to influence supervisor commitment is to change supervisory behavior.

In an organization, there could be two main ways to change such supervisory behavior. One way would be to select and hire supervisors who are likely to engage in such behaviors or who have histories of such behaviors. The second means of changing behaviors would be the development of supervisory training programs. The results from this study imply that these training programs should focus on the variables in this study.

The finding that psychological similarity was a strong predictor of supervisor commitment also implies that organizations could increase commitment by matching employees with supervisors who are psychologically similar. This would increase the chances for trust, mutual work goals, and commitment in their relationships.
Limitations and Future Research Directions

There were at least four main limitations to this study. It is important to take note of these limitations, but also address how they could be overcome in future research.

One limitation was that the data was collected from one self-report survey in which all items were evaluated with the same 7-point Likert scale. This strategy creates the potential problem of shared method variance. Therefore, it is possible that the high intercorrelations among many of the variables were partially due to the use of the same measurement method. It is suggested that future research in this area use additional measurement methods in order to provide more validity to the results. Such methods could include coded observations and interviews.

A second limitation of the study was that the data was cross-sectional. This makes it more difficult to make strong conclusions about causal relationships. However, because this is the first study to examine antecedents of supervisor commitment, cross-sectional data can provide a foundation upon which further research can better test causality. Although it would probably be unrealistic to test the causality of supervisor commitment in a laboratory setting, in the future, longitudinal field research could provide more conclusive results by eliminating some alternative causal models.

Longitudinal field research such as an interrupted time series design or a field experiment could be used to provide further support of the model. For example, it has been suggested that changes such as organizational reengineering or training may
affect certain variables in the model, thus resulting in changes in commitment levels. Certain types of longitudinal studies could be conducted to investigate these propositions, in addition to providing further support of the model.

A third limitation of this study is that the sample came from one organization. By collecting data from one organization, the results have the potential to be less generalizable. For example, the culture of the organization, as well as other situational variables associated with the organization, could moderate the relationships among variables. In other words, the findings may accurately represent the relationships among the variables is this particular organization, but these relationships could be different in others. Therefore, future research in this area should use data from multiple organizations. However, it should be noted that the advantage to using this population was a large sample that was representative of employees at all different levels, tenures, and abilities, thus making the findings generalizable to a wide range of employees.

The final limitation of this study was that some of the conclusions were based on a data-driven model of supervisor commitment. Therefore, in order to validate these findings, future research should test the validity of the modified model identified in this study with other samples, as well as in other types of organizations (Breckler, 1990; Cudeck & Browne, 1983).

A final recommendation for future research, as well as for further validation of the modified model, would be the use of qualitative research methods to study the development of commitment and the relationship between the employee and
supervisor. One type of method would be to identify and study specific supervisors, ones who have a history of engendering commitment in their employees as well as those whose employees do not usually develop commitment. These supervisors as well as the relationships with their subordinates could be studied extensively with various qualitative methodologies, such as observation and interviews, in order to support the findings and conclusions of this study, as well as to gain any further understanding into the causal mechanisms.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTERS
Dear University Hospital Employee:

You have been randomly selected to participate in this very important survey which focuses on work attitudes and perceptions. This survey is being conducted by a Graduate Associate in the Department of Psychology, Nicole Gilbert, as part of the requirement for completing a Doctorate of Philosophy at OSU. This project has the full support and cooperation of University Hospitals Management.

In addition to providing valuable insight into the work experiences and attitudes of hospital employees, this survey will also provide University Hospitals with a better understanding of their employees' attitudes and perceptions.

This survey is completely ANONYMOUS, so please be very candid in your responses. This is an opportunity to voice your opinions in a completely confidential manner. For the results of this project to be accurate, it is very important that your survey be returned. Your participation is GREATLY appreciated!

Results of this survey will be shared with all employees through Newsline, Pulse, and other means in the Spring.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Nicole Gilbert at 447-0704 or Bob Billings at 292-8115.

Please return your survey in the enclosed postage paid envelope no later than Friday, March 8 to the OSU Department of Psychology, 140H Lazenby Hall, 1827 Neil Avenue Mall, Columbus, OH, 43210. Thanks again for your help!

Sincerely,

Nicole Gilbert, M.A.
Graduate Associate

Robert S. Billings, Ph.D
Associate Professor of Psychology
March 11, 1996

Dear University Hospital Employee:

A couple weeks ago you were sent this survey, which is part of a project conducted by Nicole Gilbert, a Graduate Associate in the Department of Psychology at OSU. Many of you have already returned a completed survey, which is greatly appreciated. However, we have not received surveys from several others. Because it is so important that more surveys are returned in order to have accurate results, this second survey has been sent to you.

If you have already returned a survey, there is no need to complete another one. Because responses are anonymous, we do not know who has already returned one, which is why a second survey has been mailed to everyone.

If you did not have a chance to complete the survey earlier, it would be extremely helpful if you were able to take the time to complete it within the next week, and return it in the enclosed postage paid envelope to the OSU Department of Psychology, 140H Lazenby Hall, 1827 Neil Avenue Mall, Columbus, OH, 43210.

Your opinion is important and can affect the results of the survey. In order to have the best possible understanding of employee attitudes and perceptions, we need to hear from you. Remember, your responses are completely confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Nicole Gilbert at 447-0704 or Bob Billings at 292-8115. Thanks for your help in this project!

Sincerely,

Nicole Gilbert, M.A.  Robert S. Billings, Ph.D
Graduate Associate  Associate Professor of Psychology
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNARIE
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1. | If the values of UH were different, I would not be as attached to UH            | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | When someone criticizes UH, it feels like a personal insult                  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | I am proud to work for UH                                                   | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. | I am very concerned about what others think about UH                       | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. | My attachment to UH is primarily based on the similarity of                  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | When I talk about UH, I usually say "we" rather than "they"                 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | UH's successes are my successes                                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. | I care about how well UH does                                                | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. | Since starting this job, my personal values and those of                   | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. | When someone praises UH, it feels like a personal compliment               | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. | What UH stands for is important to me                                       | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12. | The reason I tell UH to my friends as a great organization to work for     | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. | UH's values are similar to mine in terms of                                | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. | I defend UH when people say bad things about UH                             | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. | I am proud of UH                                                            | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. | I feel a sense of "ownership" for UH                                       | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. | I am committed to the goals of UH                                           | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
In this section, you are asked about your views concerning your immediate supervisor. Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement by placing a check in the appropriate circle next to each statement. Please check only one response for each question.

1. When a change in policy or procedures is necessary, my supervisor will explain the reasons for those changes...

2. My supervisor values my contributions to the well-being of our department...

3. My supervisor does things competently...

4. What my supervisor stands for is important to me...

5. My supervisor appreciates extra effort from me...

6. My supervisor and I have similar work values...

7. When important requests are made of me, my supervisor gives reasons for them...

8. My supervisor frequently initiates work-related interaction with me...

9. My supervisor treats me fairly...

10. When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult...

11. My supervisor and I agree on what the goals of our department should be...

12. I am satisfied with the working relationship I have with my supervisor...

13. People who know my supervisor and I would describe our personalities as alike...

14. My supervisor always tells me the truth...

15. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values...

16. My supervisor would not lie to me...

17. I have a close bond with my supervisor...

18. My work goals are similar to those of my supervisor...

19. The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values...

20. My supervisor wants to know if I have any complaints...

21. I trust my supervisor...

22. I frequently initiate work-related interaction with my supervisor...

23. In general, my supervisor and I have similar attitudes...

24. My supervisor keeps track of the promises made to me...

25. Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become more similar...
26. Unfortunately, my supervisor does things poorly.
27. I feel comfortable sharing my ideas with my supervisor.
28. My supervisor always gives me a fair deal.
29. Help is available from my supervisor when I have a problem.
30. If my supervisor could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary, he/she would do so.
31. My supervisor's successes are my successes.
32. My supervisor regularly asks about my wellbeing.
33. I interact with my supervisor at work frequently.
34. I am proud of my supervisor.
35. If I did the best job possible, my supervisor would be sure to notice.
36. My supervisor informs me about important matters that affect me.
37. My supervisor seriously considers any opinions or suggestions I offer.
38. When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "he" or "she".
39. In general, I am satisfied with my supervisor.
40. My supervisor is willing to help me when I need a special favor.
41. My supervisor and I value the same things in our work products.
42. Sometimes my supervisor does disagree.
43. I feel free to tell my supervisor what is on my mind.
44. My supervisor and I see things much the same way.
45. Keeping promises is a problem for my supervisor.
46. My supervisor treats me on an equal basis with others.
47. My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor.
48. My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work.
49. My supervisor does things in a capable manner.
50. If given the opportunity, my supervisor would take advantage of me.
51. When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment.
52. My supervisor lets me know what he or she expects of me.
Please read the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with them by placing a check in the appropriate circle. Please check only one response for each statement.

1. Work should only be a small part of one's life
2. In my view, an individual's personal goals should be work oriented
3. Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work
4. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work
5. The most important things that happen to me involve my work
6. I have other activities more important than my work
7. Work should be considered central to life
8. I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money
9. To me, my work is only a small part of who I am
10. Most things in my life are more important than work
11. If unemployment benefits were really high, I would still prefer to work
12. Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence
13. My value as a person depends greatly on what others think of me
14. What other people think about me is very important
15. If others dislike you, you are bound to be sad
16. It is awful to be disappointed by people important to you
17. My happiness depends more on other people than it does on me
18. I do not need the approval of other people in order to be happy
19. If you don't have other people to lean on, you are bound to be sad
20. I can find happiness without being loved by another person
21. I cannot be happy unless most people I know admire me
22. Being isolated from others is bound to lead to unhappiness

(Continues on back)
SECTION FOUR

1. a. Do you feel committed to your supervisor? (check one)  ○ Yes  ○ No
   b. Why or why not? (write in answer)

2. a. Are you more or less committed to your supervisor than you were 6 months ago? (check one)  ○ More  ○ Less
   b. Why? (write in answer)

3. What would make you feel more committed to your supervisor? (write in answer)

SECTION FIVE

The following questions will be used for classification purposes only. (Please fill in the correct response.)

1. What is your job title? (please print clearly)

2. How long have you worked for The Ohio State University Hospitals? _____ years and _____ months

3. How long have you worked for your immediate supervisor? _____ years and _____ months

4. How old are you? _____ years old
   (For questions 5-9, please check only one answer for each question)

5. How would you describe your position?
   ○ Management
   ○ Non-management

6. Are you?
   ○ White
   ○ Black/African-American
   ○ Asian or Pacific Islander
   ○ Native American
   ○ Other (specify)____________

7. Are you of Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

8. What is your sex?
   ○ Male
   ○ Female

9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   ○ Less than High School
   ○ Some High School
   ○ High School Graduate
   ○ Some College Experience
   ○ Associate's/2-year Degree
   ○ Bachelor's Degree
   ○ Nursing Diploma
   ○ Master's Degree
   ○ Doctoral Degree

THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!
Dear University Hospital Employee,

Last week a survey about your work attitudes and perceptions was mailed to you. If you have already returned it, thanks! If not, please do so no later than Friday, March 1. For the results to be accurate, it is very important that your completed survey be returned. In order to provide University Hospitals with useful feedback and information about their employees, your participation is needed. Remember, your responses are completely CONFIDENTIAL!

If by some chance you did not receive a survey, or your survey got misplaced, please call Nicole Gilbert at 447-070x and another survey will be sent to you immediately.

Thanks again for all your help!

Sincerely,

Nicole Gilbert, M.A.
Graduate Associate

Robert S. Billings, Ph.D
Associate Professor of Psychology
APPENDIX D

SCALE ITEMS
Supervisor Commitment

1. If the values of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor.
2. When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult.
3. I am very interested in what others think about my supervisor.
4. My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor.
5. When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "he" or "she".
6. My supervisor's successes are my successes.
7. Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become more similar.
8. When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment.
9. What my supervisor stands for is important to me.
10. I talk up my supervisor to my friends as a great person to work for.
11. I am proud of my supervisor.
12. The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values.
13. I feel a sense of "ownership" for my supervisor.
14. I value the relationship I have with my supervisor.
15. I have a close bond with my supervisor.
16. My supervisor is an important person to me.
17. I am committed to my supervisor.

Organizational Commitment

1. If the values of UH were different, I would not be as attached to UH.
2. When someone criticizes UH, it feels like a personal insult.
3. I am very interested in what others think about UH.
4. My attachment to UH is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by UH.
5. When I talk about UH, I usually say "we" rather than "they".
6. UH's successes are my successes.
7. Since starting this job, my personal values and those of UH have become more similar.
8. When someone praises UH, it feels like a personal compliment.
9. What UH stands for is important to me.
10. I talk up UH to my friends as a great organization to work for.
11. I am proud of UH.
12. The reason I prefer UH to others is because of what it stands for, that is, its values.
13. I feel a sense of "ownership" for UH.
Similar Work Goals and Values

1. My supervisor and I have similar work values.
2. My work goals are similar to those of my supervisor.
3. My supervisor and I agree on what the goals of our department should be.
4. My supervisor and I value the same things in our work products.
5. Overall, my supervisor and I want and value similar things at work.

Work Centrality

1. Work should only be a small part of one's life. (R)
2. In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work oriented.
3. Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.
4. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work.
5. The most important things that happen to me involve my work.
6. I have other activities more important than my work. (R)
7. Work should be considered central to life.
8. I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.
9. To me, my work is only a small part of who I am. (R)
10. Most things in my life are more important than work. (R)
11. If unemployment benefits were really high, I would still prefer to work.
12. Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence.

Psychological Similarity

1. In general, my supervisor and I have similar attitudes.
2. My interests in life and those of my supervisor are dissimilar. (R)
3. People who know my supervisor and I would describe our personalities as alike.
4. My supervisor and I are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, values, and habits.
5. My supervisor and I see things much the same way.
Openness in Communication

1. When a change in policy or procedures is necessary, my supervisor will explain the reasons for those changes.
2. When important requests are made of me, my supervisor gives reasons for them.
3. My supervisor informs me about important matters that affect me or the department.
4. I feel comfortable about sharing my ideas with my supervisor.
5. My supervisor seriously considers any opinions or suggestions I offer.
6. I feel free to tell my supervisor what is on my mind.
7. My supervisor lets me know what he or she expects of me.
8. As far as my work is concerned, I know where I stand with my supervisor.
9. My supervisor asks and seriously considers my opinions on important matters.

Frequency of Interaction

1. My supervisor frequently initiates work-related interaction with me.
2. I frequently initiate work-related interaction with my supervisor.
3. I frequently interact with my supervisor at work.
4. I frequently interact with my supervisor informally or socially at work.

Supervisor Support

1. My supervisor values my contributions to the well-being of our department.
2. If my supervisor could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary he/she would do so. (R)
3. My supervisor appreciates extra effort from me.
4. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values.
5. My supervisor wants to know if I have any complaints.
6. My supervisor takes my best interests into account when he/she makes decisions that affect me.
7. Help is available from my supervisor when I have a problem.
8. My supervisor really cares about my well-being.
9. If I did the best job possible, my supervisor would be sure to notice.
10. My supervisor is willing to help me when I need a special favor.
11. My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work.
12. If given the opportunity my supervisor would take advantage of me. (R)
13. My supervisor shows a lot of concern for me.
14. My supervisor cares about my opinions.
15. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments.
16. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible.
Need for Approval

1. My value as a person depends greatly on what others think of me.
2. What other people think about me is very important.
3. If others dislike you, you cannot be happy.
4. It is awful to be disapproved of by people important to you.
5. My happiness depends more on other people than it does on me.
6. I do not need the approval of other people in order to be happy. (R)
7. If you don't have other people to lean on, you are bound to be sad.
8. I can find happiness without being loved by another person. (R)
9. I cannot be happy unless most people I know admire me.
10. Being isolated from others is bound to lead to unhappiness.

Overall Supervisor Trust

1. Sometimes I can not trust my supervisor. (R)
2. I can count on my supervisor to be trustworthy.
3. I feel that my supervisor can be trusted.
4. I trust my supervisor.

Competence

1. My supervisor does things competently.
2. Unfortunately, my supervisor does things poorly. (R)
3. My supervisor performs his/her tasks with skill.
4. My supervisor does things in a capable manner.

Fairness

1. My supervisor treats me fairly.
2. My supervisor treats others better than he/she treats me. (R)
3. My supervisor always gives me a fair deal.
4. My supervisor treats me on an equal basis with others.

Integrity

1. My supervisor always tells me the truth.
2. My supervisor would not lie to me.
3. My supervisor deals honestly with me.
4. Sometimes my supervisor does dishonest things. (R)

Promise Fulfillment

1. My supervisor follows through on promises made to me.
2. Keeping promises is a problem for my supervisor. (R)
3. If my supervisor promises something to me, he/she will stick to it.
4. My supervisor does things that he/she promises to do for me.
Supervisor Satisfaction

1. In general, I am satisfied with my supervisor.
2. I am satisfied with the supervision I receive.
3. I am satisfied with the working relationship I have with my supervisor.

Open-ended Questions

1. Do you feel committed to your supervisor? Why or why not?
2. Are you more or less committed to your supervisor than you were 6 months ago? Why?
3. What would it take for you to feel more committed to your supervisor?
LIST OF REFERENCES


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